

Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary Parent Handbook



2022-2023



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

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I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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

Matthew 28:19-20

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

¹Declaration on Christian Education #3

DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT

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

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

As part of Holy Cross Academy, Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary abides by the mission statement of Holy Cross, which states:

‘It’s about the children!’

At Holy Cross Academy, we are guided by the spirit of Saint Francis de Sales as we dedicate ourselves to

- Create an atmosphere of prayer and reliance on our heavenly Father;
- Spread the message of Jesus in our families and our community by treating all persons with respect and showing reverence for the the gift of God in each of us;
- Build up our Spirit-filled faith community within Saint Mary Parish;
- Serve the needy in our local community and in the Missions through an awareness of our global responsibility to all humanity;
- Develop the whole child: spiritually, emotionally, academically, and physically;
- Promote academic excellence by challenging all of our students to recognize their gifts and fulfill their God-given potential.

May God be Praised!

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

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

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook.

The handbook shall be updated annually to reflect policy and procedural changes. Principals shall establish a process for review and revision of local school policy to ensure changes reflect the input of key stakeholders. All parents, along with students in middle and high school, are required to provide a signature of receipt acknowledging they have read the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook, and they agree to abide by those rules (Appendix AG-1 and AG-2). A signature form will be provided to students upon receipt of the handbook and the form must be signed and returned as soon as possible, but no later than the date of the school's Parent/Teacher Conferences. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies and or preventing a student from enrolling or continuing to be enrolled at the school. Faculty and staff members shall be given access to all school handbooks.

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

PARENTAL ROLE

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

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

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

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

policies, and regulations.

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

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

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

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

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

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

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

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

NON-CATHOLIC CHILDREN

The presence of children from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic children in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious

formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such:

- a. Non-Catholic children are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
 - b. Non-Catholic children must participate in liturgies, retreats, and other religious functions incorporated within the program.
 - c. Non-Catholic children may not be exempted from the catechesis held during the school day.
 - d. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the children attending the Catholic school, parents must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.
- In light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this manual. In addition, in view of the unique and essential religious mission of the school, it is expressly understood that the school may take action in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Community of Faith.

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

II. CURRICULUM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- a. foster positive self-concept;
- b. foster spiritual development;
- c. encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment;
- d. develop social skills;
- e. encourage language development;
- f. enhance physical development and skills;
- g. encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices;
- h. encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts;
- i. respect cultural diversity.

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

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

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

children.

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

CLASS SCHEDULES

The three year old classes meet on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:45-11:45 am or Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:45 - 11:45 am.

The four year old morning class meets on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:30 am - 11:30 am.

A four year old extended day class that meets from 8:30 am -2:00 pm is also offered either three days a week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or two days a week on Tuesday, Thursday. Students may opt to attend the extended class five days per week based on space available.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

Children will be given a list of school supplies to bring to class. All materials will be kept at the preschool. Teachers will have adequate supplies for all children and will supplement when necessary utilizing funds from the \$100 supply fee that is collected from each child annually.

ASSESSMENT

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

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

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

SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Optional mid-year or end of year conferences will occur following parent review of their child's January and May progress reports as needed. Parents or teachers may initiate scheduling a conference at any other time of the year as necessary.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Evaluation of the child must be based on teacher judgment, observation, daily performance, class participation and effort. Children will receive a progress report twice a year, in January and at the end of the year.

RETENTION/PROMOTION/PLACEMENT

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

- a. The final decision to promote or retain a child is based on the child's developmental performance and best interests, as determined by the principal/director.
- b. Parents will be kept informed about the inability of their child to progress satisfactorily.
- c. Children who would not benefit from being retained may be "placed" in the next level; however, the school may prepare and implement an Intervention Plan for the child as a condition of placement.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS

DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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

ELIGIBILITY

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

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

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

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL ADMISSION

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

- a. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of custody where applicable
- d. Progress reports (if available)
- e. Completed Diocesan Application Form (*Appendix J*)
- f. A non-refundable application fee
- g. A fully executed MCH-213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
 - i. Proof of exact dates of immunization as required by the Code of Virginia
 - ii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH-213G, within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A preschool physical does not take the place of the required

kindergarten entry physical unless it is completed within 12 months prior to kindergarten entry.)

h. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school if previously enrolled in a Diocesan school.

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION

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

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

CLASS PLACEMENT

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

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE/TARDINESS/LEAVING SCHOOL

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

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

ATTENDANCE/REPORTING PROCEDURES

ABSENCE

Parents will notify the teacher of any planned absences via Seesaw messaging. In the event of an unplanned absence, please notify the Director at 540-373-7553 or by email at preschool@holycrossweb.com.

TARDINESS

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

Frequent cases of tardiness should be brought to the attention of the principal/director so that the

parent may be contacted.

MEDICAL EXCUSES

All medical excuses must be signed by a physician.

ANTICIPATED ABSENCE

Please notify the teacher or director of any anticipated absences.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Students may only be released to their custodial parents/guardian or other persons identified on the child's authorized pick up form. Persons picking up, with the exception of custodial parents/guardians, should be prepared to show identification to staff before child is released to them.

LATE PICK UPS

While staff understand that parents may on rare occasions be late to pick up their child(ren) based on circumstances beyond their control (i.e. traffic/accident); pick up promptly at dismissal time is expected and appreciated. Chronic and/or habitual lateness to pick up a child will result in the parents being billed \$15 for any portion of a quarter hour that the parent is late picking up. Parents will receive a verbal and written notice from the director prior to this fee being assessed the first time. Once this fee is assessed, each subsequent occurrence of late pick up will be similarly charged.

TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

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

LUNCH/MILK PROGRAM

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

There is no lunch/milk program at Holy Cross Academy Preschool. Parents are requested to provide a healthy snack for their child and a lunch if the student is enrolled in the extended day program.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: All children will arrive at the doors of the Parish Life Center that are closest to the bell tower. Parents are asked to help their children go to the bathroom prior to bringing them to the

classroom. Students will be admitted to their classroom by their teacher at the designated arrival time.

Students arriving late will need to proceed to the doors closest to the drive circle. The interior glass doors remain locked at all times there are children in the building. There is a doorbell on the side wall to alert those in the building of your arrival.

Dismissal: All students will be dismissed from the main preschool door of the Parish Life Center that is adjacent to the drive circle. Parents are asked to park in two rows within the drive circle and then come line up outside the preschool door. For safety, children will only be dismissed when their parent or designated pick up person is on the sidewalk. Parents are asked to keep their child within arm's reach while proceeding to their cars. Parents are required to wait to leave the drive circle only when all parents and children are securely in their vehicles. Passing another car or backing out of the drive lane is not permitted.

IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMINISTRATIVE

CHILD CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

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

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

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

ACCESS TO RECORDS

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

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

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

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

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

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

RETENTION OF RECORDS

The following student records are to be retained indefinitely:

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

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL VISITORS

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

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

PRINCIPAL/DIRECTOR'S COMMUNICATION

To contact the Preschool Director, you may call the preschool office at 540-373-7553.

To contact the Principal, you may call Holy Cross Academy at 540-286-1600.

The Director will provide an annual calendar of events to the parents at the beginning of the year and whenever a change to the calendar is made.

TAKE-HOME COMMUNICATION

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

TELEPHONE USE

The classrooms are not equipped with telephones for incoming calls. In case of the emergency, a teacher or the director may be reached by calling the Parish Office at 540-373-6491.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

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

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

Emergency Closures

Emergency closing of the school and/or delayed start of school will be at the discretion of the Director and Principal based on safety interests. Parents will be notified of a closing or delay by email, phone call, and text message to numbers and addresses on file with the school. Weather related closings will usually be the same as those for Holy Cross Academy.

In the event of a delayed start, Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary will open at 10:00 am, half day classes will dismiss at 12:00 pm. Dismissal for extended day classes will be at 2:00 pm as usual in the event of a delayed start.

It is the school’s intent to be open as much as possible, however in the case of emergency closure, tuition reimbursement is not available if the school makes efforts to inform parents of its anticipated reopening as soon as possible following the emergency or crisis. In the event that it is necessary for the school to close due to health concerns for an extended time, the school will transition into on-line (eLearning) for the duration of its closure.

PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA

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

LIBRARY

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

Parents or teachers who object to reading or audio-visual/computer materials must complete an Objection to Content Form (*Appendix K*) and submit it to the school principal/director. A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review.

FIELD TRIPS

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

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

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

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

Youth weighing less than 100 pounds may not be seated in the front seat.

Phone calls and texting are not permitted while driving.

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

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

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

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

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Overnight trips are not permitted for preschool children.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

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

"...since parents have conferred life on their children they have a most solemn obligation to educate

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

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

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

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

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. An effective Parent-Teacher Organization helps the principal/director regarding advancement of the school's mission. It can also help mobilize the parents and legislative issues concerning the school as directed by school leadership.

If you would like to join the Holy Cross Academy PTO, please contact the Director for more information.

FUNDRAISING

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

Students may participate in and cooperate with worthy collections and fundraising projects conducted by a school or parish, provided such activities have been approved by the school leadership (pastor, principal, director).

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

During arrival parents are required to fully park their vehicles. Cars must be turned off and children escorted into the building. Parking in the drive lane in front of the preschool is permitted for dismissal times only.

V. FINANCES

SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES

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

Parents are expected to participate in the FACTS program through Holy Cross Academy. FACTS is a tuition management plan that allows for monthly payments to be made as a direct deposit from a designated account.

Parents also have the option of paying the entire tuition in full by August 1st, before the beginning of school. This is also handled through the FACTS tuition management program.

TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES

Registration Fee - \$85.00

Supply Fee - \$100.00 annually

Tuition:

- 2 day half day program - \$185.00/month or \$1850.00 per year
- 3 day morning program or 2 day extended day - \$260.00/month or \$2600.00 per year
- 3 day extended program - \$372.50/month or \$3725.00 per year

Tuition is non-refundable for any trimester in which the student is registered in school even if the student does not complete the school trimester. If a family prepays tuition and leaves the school for any reason, the school will issue a refund for those trimesters for which the student was not registered. If a student is registered at the school on the first day of any given trimester, including August, the family is responsible for tuition for that trimester. (School website - newsletter links and attachments - Handbooks & Forms block - Family Handbook - page 46, Paragraph 3.)

A 10% discount on preschool tuition is offered to families who have students attending school at both the HCA Stafford campus and HCA Preschool. There is no financial aid offered for preschool students.

Dates of the trimester for the 2022-2023 school year are as follows:

Trimester 1: August 24, 2022 - November 22, 2022

Trimester 2: November 23, 2022 - March 9, 2023

Trimester 3: March 10, 2023 - June 9, 2023

VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

CODE OF CONDUCT

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

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

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

DISCIPLINE

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

USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

Children who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the child, the nature of the infraction and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Teachers will handle minor disciplinary issues within the classroom, usually by taking the child aside to discuss their behavior. The student may also be given a variety of calming tools and/or a space to help them regain control of their behavior. If the teacher feels it is necessary, she will contact the Director. If a child appears to be a harm to himself/herself and/or classmates, he/she may be asked to leave the school for the day. A parent conference will be scheduled with the teacher, Director, and parent upon the child's return to school.

SUSPENSION

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

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

DISMISSAL

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

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

EXPULSION

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

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

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

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

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

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

REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Privacy of individual children must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare and safety of other members of the school community. The principal/director or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare and safety of school patrons by searching a child's person and/or personal property on school grounds or at school activities. Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school personnel.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

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

DRESS CODE

The dress code provides a standard for our children that fosters an environment conducive to learning and respectful behavior. At this time, Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary does not have a school uniform.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

Children should wear clothing that is durable and appropriate. They should wear clothing that they can easily manage independently to foster self care skills. All clothing that may be removed (sweaters, coats, etc.) must be labeled with the child's name.

Tennis shoes or closed toe shoes are necessary for using the playground.

An extra set of clothing should be brought to school for emergencies. This clothing should also be clearly labeled with the child's name.

TOILET TRAINING

It is expected that children will be toilet trained upon entering preschool and will be wearing regular underwear. We ask that parents provide a change of clothes and extra underwear in the event a child has an accident. We are also aware that there is a transition period at the beginning of the school year as children get used to the routine of a classroom and telling the teachers when they have the need to use the toilet. However, if a child has repeated accidents, Holy Cross Academy Preschool may ask the child to leave the preschool until he/she is trained.

PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS

Children are encouraged to wear tennis shoes or closed toe shoes on the playground. Playground equipment must be used appropriately with the safety of all children as the most important criteria.

If a child repeatedly demonstrates behavior that is unsafe for himself/herself and/or their classmates even after instruction/redirection of the teacher, the child may be asked to sit out of playtime for a period of time.

LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS

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

Children will bring a snack for the morning program and a snack and lunch for the extended day program. Parents are asked to provide a snack that is nutritionally balanced and adheres to the nutritional guidelines of the Virginia Department of Education. More information about the guidelines can be found at <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/regulations/index.shtml>.

Due to the presence of allergies, students are not permitted to share food with their classmates during snack or lunch time.

SHOW & TELL

Children are allowed to bring toys from home on specified days for the purpose of Show and Tell only. We ask that you monitor your child's tote to ensure that they are not bringing in toys on non show & tell days. Weapons (whether real or toys) of any kind are not appropriate Show and Tell items, and shall not be brought to school for any reason. If weapons of any kind are brought to school, the child shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action which may include, but not be limited to, expulsion.

VII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the health and well-being of their

children. School health services supplement, rather than substitute, for parental care and concern for the health of the students.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE

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

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

Any clergy, employee, or volunteer with the Diocese who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that an incident of child abuse or illegal sexual misconduct has been perpetrated by any individual, including clergy, employee, or volunteer with the Diocese,

- a. must comply with applicable reporting and other requirements of state and local law;
- b. must report the incident to the Vicar General of the Diocese of Arlington.

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

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services and to the school principal/director who in turn will call the Vicar General. At that point, confidentiality must be respected.

According to the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2 – 1518) *Authority to Talk to a Child or Sibling*, “Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter, may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person standing in *loco parentis* or school personnel.”

WELLNESS POLICY

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

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The parents of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the principal/administration or the principal/administration's designee as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority of providing assistance to the student.

If an incident results in a medical condition or injury which can be reasonably known to the appropriate supervisory faculty/staff member and/or the principal/director, the school and/or its

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

ILLNESS

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

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

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

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME AND CHECKPOINTS FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS

Despite our many precautions, we know that germs tend to find a way so we would like to request your helping all of our children healthy by keeping your child at home if they exhibit the following symptoms at any time during the school year that may indicate the presence of a contagious illness:

Symptom	Student can return to school when
Fever of 100 degrees or above	They have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
Discharge from eyes	They are no longer showing symptoms or until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment has been completed
Unspecified rash with no known cause	When symptoms abate and student is able to make it through the day without ingesting histamine blocking medication or topical treatments

When in doubt, we ask that you use your best judgment on if your child is well enough to be in school. We also ask that if your student is diagnosed with a contagious illness such as influenza, norovirus, conjunctivitis (pink eye) strep throat, etc. that you let us know here at the school so we can be on the watch for other students that may be showing symptoms. We want this to be a safe and healthy environment for all of our students and we greatly appreciate your help throughout the school year!

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS

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

TOILETING/INCONTINENCE

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

Parents will always be contacted in incidents of soiling.

The exception to this policy is the student with a prescribed health-related treatment or procedure plan obtained in writing from a LHCP, with proper authorizations in writing by the parent or guardian.

For preschool students, it is recognized that continence training is an area of development which is reached at different ages for all children and that every child has individual needs which are respected. The preschool director will determine age appropriate protocols for the student population.

USE OF CRUTCHES

An order from a Licensed Healthcare Provider (LHP) is required to use crutches at school. If a student arrives at school on crutches without an order form from a LHCP, the parent will be called to take the student home.

USE OF MICROWAVE OVEN

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

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY

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

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

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

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

CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

DISEASE

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

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

- a. No daycare/preschool student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form (MCH-213G)..
- i. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that they conflict with their religious tenets or practices will notify the registrar of the school to which they are applying that they seek Religious Exemption. The registrar will forward

your information to the Office of Catholic Schools. If religious exemption is what is desired, please refer to Policy 624A.

ii. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for five months or more, where tuberculosis is common, are required to provide documentation, prior to school entry, of a negative tuberculosis skin test or chest x-ray result. All Diocesan schools are responsible for compliance with local health department regulations pertaining to tuberculosis screening and treatment.

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

c. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the *Virginia School Health Guidelines*, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.

d. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish-based influenza vaccination clinics. The liability associated with the vaccination of children is great. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school based vaccination clinics for children during school hours, and in the absence of the parent, with the exception of a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school influenza vaccination program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement. Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the consummation of any contract for services.

LICE

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

COVID

HCA Preschool will continue to follow the following recommendations that have been adopted by the Diocese of Arlington after consultation with the state health department.

In the event a student tests positive

- A student testing positive cannot attend school for 5 days following the appearance of symptoms and/or a positive test result.
- A student may attend school after day 5 if their symptoms have improved significantly
- Students returning to school on day 6 will need to
 - Wear a well fitting mask for days 6-10 or
 - Produce test results showing they are negative on or after day 6.
- The Director will send an email to families of students in class with positive student to ask them to be vigilant about symptoms that may appear in their children.

In the event the in house family member of a student tests positive

- Parents will keep children home if they show any COVID symptoms.
- If a child is asymptomatic, they may attend school with the understanding that if they begin to show any COVID related symptoms, parents will be asked to come pick their child up.

Parents will communicate to the school if their child has COVID or has an in home contact with someone with COVID.

BLOODBORNE DISEASE

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

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

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

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

During the first month of school, students will be trained by their teachers to respond to a fire drill in an orderly fashion. Fire drill routes are posted in each room. Fire and emergency drills will be carried out regularly. The school will also conduct an annual tornado drill.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT - STUDENTS

Sexuality affects all aspects of the person including, in a general way, the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Arlington endeavor to provide for their students an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

No student is to sexually harass another member of the school community. Any student who

engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, expulsion.

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

BULLYING

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

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Physical intimidation or assault
- b. Extortion
- c. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
- d. Malicious teasing
- e. Putdowns
- f. Name calling
- g. Threatening looks
- h. Gestures or acts of aggression (Overt and Covert)
- i. Cruel rumors & false accusations
- j. Social Isolation
- k. Cyber bullying

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

In cases of reported bullying, the principal/director or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e. the aggressor(s) and the victim(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation

may include interviews with students, parents and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to appropriate consequences.

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

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

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

HAZING

Hazing is defined as the imposition of strenuous, often humiliating, tasks as part of a program of rigorous physical training and initiation. Hazing is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any hazing on Diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of hazing to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incidence of hazing to report the hazing to school administration for further investigation.

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

a. Consequences for students who engage in hazing shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- i. Counseling
 - ii. A parent conference
 - iii. Detention
 - iv. Suspension and/or Expulsion
- Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal may also report incidents of hazing to law enforcement if appropriate.

USE OF PARISH LIFE CENTER AND GROUNDS

As part of an active, thriving parish, there are times that parish groups will require the use of the Parish Life Center that coincide with times when preschool is in session. During these times, the additional measures will be taken to ensure the safety of students and staff:

- Parents will be notified of when a parish group is using the building during a time that coincides with preschool being in session.
- Teachers will take precautions to ensure that students are kept separate from visiting groups at all times.
- When a parish gathering or meeting is expected to have over 25 persons in attendance, parent volunteers who have been cleared by the Diocese may be asked to come assist and support the visiting group, the teachers, and students.

ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION (SAMPLE LETTER)

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating, sound absorbing, and fire retardant capabilities. Virtually any building constructed before the late 1970s contains some asbestos. Intact and undisturbed asbestos materials generally do not pose a health risk. Asbestos materials, however, can become hazardous when, due to damage or deterioration over time, they release fibers.

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials. Every three years, Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary has conducted an inspection to determine whether the condition of the known or assumed asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) has changed and to make recommendations on managing or removing the ACBM. At the last inspection, all materials listed in the Management Plan as asbestos containing (or assumed to be asbestos-containing) were inspected and found to be in good condition.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. The Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary Asbestos Management Plan has several on-going requirements.

It is the intention of Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary to comply with all federal and state regulations controlling asbestos and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure students and employees a healthy and safe environment in which to learn and work. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours. Chris Lanzarone, as Director of Operations, is our designated asbestos program coordinator, and all inquiries regarding the asbestos plan and asbestos-related issues should be directed to him/her at 540-373-6491.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

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

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

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

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

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

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 30 days, and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

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

VIII. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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

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

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

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

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

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

IX. PROGRAM INFORMATION

LICENSING INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

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

OVER-THE-COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS

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

For all over-the-counter skin products:

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

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

INSURANCE

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

TAX INFORMATION

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

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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

X. APPENDICES

School Forms

Additional School Information

Diocesan Forms

Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)

Confidential Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)

Virginia School Entrance Health Form (*Appendix F-2*)

Virginia School Entrance Health Form Instructions (*Appendix F-2A*)

Inhaler Authorization Form (*Appendix F-3*)

Asthma Action Plan (*Appendix F-3A*)

Epipen/Twinject Authorization Form (*Appendix F-4*)

Allergy Action Plan (*Appendix F-4A*)

Diabetes Reference Emergency Plan: Hyperglycemia & Hypoglycemia (*Appendix F-5*)

Diabetes Medical Management Plan (*Appendix F-5A*)

Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*)

Diocesan Student Accident Report (*Appendix F-7*)

Letter to Parents Regarding Possible Reimbursement of Medical Cost (*Appendix F-7A*)

Insurance Billing Form (*Appendix F-7B*)

Certificate of Religious Exemption CRE-1 (*Appendix F-18*)

Seizure Action Plan (*Appendix F-20*)

Photo, Press, Audio, and Electronic Media Release for Minors (*Appendix N*)

Parent Permission Form for School Sponsored Trip Participation (*Appendix R*)

Use of Personal Vehicle (*Appendix R-1*)

Preschool Handbook Agreement Form (*Appendix AG-3*)

Signature Page