Holy Cross Academy Preschool
Parent Handbook

2026-2027

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

Table of Contents

I.	PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT	5
	Diocesan Philosophy of Catholic Education	5
	Diocesan Mission Statement	5
	School Mission Statement/Philosophy	5
	Student/Parent Handbook	6
	Parental Role	6
	Non-Discrimination Clause	7
	Non-Catholic Children	8
II.	CURRICULUM	9
	Class Schedules	10
	Supplies and Materials	10
	Assessment	10
	Parent-Teacher Communication	10
	Scheduling and Other Conference Information	11
	Progress Reports	11
	Retention/Promotion/Placement	11
III.	ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	12
	Admissions	12
	Diocesan Initial Admission Requirements	12
	Eligibility	12
	General Requirements for Preschool Admission	12
	General Conditions of Admission	13
	Class Placement	13
	Attendance	13
	Absence/Tardiness/Leaving School	13
	Attendance/Reporting Procedures	13
	Absence	13
	Tardiness	14
	Medical excuses	14
	Anticipated absence	14
	Release of children	14
	Late Pickups	14
	Transferring to Another School	14
	Lunch/Milk Program	14
	Arrival and Dismissal	15

IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES 16
Administrative 16
Child Custody and Guardianship 16
Access to Records 16
Retention of Records 17
School Visitors 17
School Communications 17
Principal/ Director's Communication 17
Take-Home Communication 17
Telephone Use 17
Inclement Weather/School Closings 18
Emergency Closures 18
Photos and Other Media 18
Library 18
Field Trips 19
Overnight Trips 20
Parent Organizations 20
Fundraising 20
Transportation/Parking 21

V. FINANCES 22
School Tuition Policies 22
Tuition and other Fee Schedules 22

VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR 23
Code of Conduct 23
Discipline 23
Use of Disciplinary Action 23
Specific Disciplinary Policies 24
Suspension 24
Dismissal 24
Expulsion 24
Regulations and Procedures 25
Care of School Property 25
Dress Code 25
Dress Code Requirements & Other Pertinent Information 25
Toilet Training 25
Playground Regulations 26
Lunchroom Regulations 26

Show & Tell 26

VII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE 27
Student Health, Safety, & Welfare 27
Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse 27
Wellness Policy 27
Accidents and First Aid 28
Illness 28
When to Keep Your Child at Home and Checkpoints for Returning to School After Illness 28
Medication Administration Overview 29
Specialized Student Care Needs 30
Toileting/Incontinence 30
Use of Crutches 31
Use of Microwave Oven 31
Life Threatening Allergy 31
Control of Communicable Diseases 32
DISEASE 32
Lice 33
COVID 33
Bloodborne Disease 33
Fire/Emergency Drills 34
Sexual Harassment - Students 34
Bullying 34
Hazing 36
Use of Parish Life Center and Grounds 36
Asbestos Mandatory Yearly Notification 37
Asbestos Notification (Sample letter) 37
Video Surveillance Cameras 37

VIII. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS 39

IX. PROGRAM INFORMATION 40
Licensing Information 40
Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan 40
Over-the-counter Skin Products 40
Insurance 41
Tax Information 41
Parental Involvement 41

X. APPENDICES 42
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*)
Letter to Parents Regarding Possible Reimbursement of Medical Costs (*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*)

I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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

Matthew 28:19-20

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

[1] Declaration on Christian Education #3

DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT

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

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Holy Cross Academy forms young men and women to be saints, scholars, and leaders in the image of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Blessed Mother.

HCA Core Beliefs

Holy Cross Academy forms saints by:

- instilling a love of the Church and her Sacraments so each student might take up their cross and follow Jesus.
- leading students in love to greater personal growth as a ministry of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish under the direction of her pastor and priests.

Holy Cross Academy forms scholars by:

- developing the whole child: academically, emotionally, spiritually and physically.

- ensuring that parents, teachers, and students work together to see our students fully develop their unique, God-given gifts and talents.
- supporting children to learn their best in a safe, supportive environment, surrounded by caring adults using a variety of traditional and modern educational practices and social experiences.

Holy Cross Academy forms leaders by:

- igniting in our students a passion for supporting their community through acts of service.
- fostering in our students the virtues and character necessary to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ at the foot of His Holy Cross standing with the Blessed Mother.

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 Catholics 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.

OTHER FAITH STUDENTS

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 "Preschool" class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:10 am - 12:00 pm. Students attending the Preschool extended day program will dismiss at 2:50 pm.

The four-year-old "Pre-K" classes meet either on Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Monday-Friday from 8:10 am to 12:00 pm. Students attending the Pre-K extended day program will dismiss at 2:50 pm.

We encourage parents to arrive at school on time and be prompt in picking their children up.

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. Teachers may use a variety of mediums and tools to keep

parents informed. These may include but are not limited to email, use of a parent engagement app, written notes, and/or in person. Parent-teacher conferences are officially offered during the fall but 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.

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 at the conclusion of each trimester. The initial progress report will be anecdotal and the subsequent progress reports will be on the formal diocese form.

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 email or through Talking Points. In the event of an unplanned absence, please notify the Director at 540-286-1600 or by email at agardner@holycrossweb.com.

Tardiness
Arrival at school on time is strongly encouraged as it helps students settle into the classroom before formal instruction begins. A student who arrives at school after 8:10 am should report to the main office for check in. Students will be brought to class from the office.

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 the child is released to them.

LATE PICK UPS
While it is understood that unforeseen circumstances such as traffic delays or accidents may occasionally cause a parent or guardian to arrive late for pick-up, prompt arrival at dismissal time is both expected and appreciated. Chronic or habitual lateness in picking up a child will result in a late fee of $15 for any portion of a quarter hour beyond the scheduled dismissal time. Parents will receive a verbal notice upon the third occurrence and a written notice from the Director upon the fourth occurrence prior to the first assessment of this fee. Once the late fee has been assessed, each subsequent late pick-up will incur the same charge. Continued or habitual lateness may result in further administrative action, up to and including dismissal from the program.
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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 each day. If the student is enrolled in the extended day program, parents are requested to provide a snack and lunch for their child.

Holy Cross Academy Preschool has opted for a water and milk only policy while the children are in attendance unless there is a medical necessity for other beverages.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: Families may arrive at two different doors at drop off between the hours of 7:30a.m. and 8:10a.m., the front main doors and the back preschool playground doors.

Main Doors: All families dropping off at the main doors must follow the established K–8 Carpool Directions and morning arrival procedures. Preschool and Pre-K students are not eligible for Aviat Care and must be escorted to their classrooms. Students who have older siblings enrolled at Holy Cross Academy may be walked to their classroom by the older sibling. After escorting the younger child, the older sibling should proceed directly to Aviat Care or to their classroom as appropriate. In cases where no older sibling is available, a designated middle school volunteer will be assigned to escort preschool and Pre-K students safely to their classroom.

Preschool Playground Doors: Families may park in the designated Preschool and Pre-K parking spaces located along the building in the first parking lot. After parking, families should walk their child to the preschool entrance located past the playground. Please note that this lot also serves as the elementary teacher parking area; therefore, children must remain close to their parent or guardian at all times for safety. Upon arrival, parents or guardians should knock at the preschool door for entry. All children must be escorted to the classroom door by a parent or another responsible adult in order to enter the building for school.

Arrival at school on time is strongly encouraged as it helps students settle into the classroom before formal instruction begins. **A student who arrives at school after 8:10 am should report to the main office to check in. The side preschool doors will not be used for drop off after 8:10am.**

Dismissal: All Preschool and Pre-K students will be dismissed through the preschool playground doors. Parents and guardians are asked to park in the side parking lot and proceed to line up inside the designated playground area. For the safety of all students, children will only be released when their parent or designated pick-up person is present within the playground fence. After dismissal, parents and guardians are required to keep their child within arm's reach while walking to their vehicle.

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 and wear an identification tag when visiting the school.

School Communications

Principal/ Director's Communication
To contact the Preschool Director or the Principal, you may call Holy Cross Academy at 540-286-1600.

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 office at 540-286-1600.

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 will open at the time designated by the Principal, short day classes will dismiss at 12:00 pm. Dismissal for extended day learner will be at 2:50 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 support the principal to advance the school’s mission. Every school should have an effective parent-Teacher Organization. It can help mobilize the parent community regarding legislative proposals impacting Catholic education. The work of PTOs and like organizations shall be guided by the PTO Handbook and the direction of the pastor and principal. All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents for release to the Parish or school community must be submitted to the principal or designee for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution. All PTO monies must be deposited in the parish or school account as designated by the pastor. In consultation with the principal, the PTO officers should prepare a budget and submit it to the pastor and principal for approval PTOs shall have by-laws which establish, among other things, term limits for officers as well as the organization of committees. Persons nominated to serve as

a PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

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

Family Service Program

The support of each family is critical to the success and continued growth of our school community. Holy Cross Academy offers many opportunities for parents to be involved in the education of their children. All parents are encouraged to participate in school activities and to find some opportunity to be involved in the school. Together the home and the school can accomplish great things! Each family with children in grades K-8 is required to contribute a minimum of eight (8) service hours per school year. Parents of Pre-K students (4 year old class) are required to contribute four (4) service hours per school year. Parents, guardians and other adult family members may contribute to their family's required service hours by volunteering to support events, activities and initiatives that strengthen the school community. Family members must be background compliant in order to supervise children on or off campus. See the office staff, business manager or school website for information and instructions on how to fulfill this requirement. There are some opportunities that are more extensive and require more hours of service. These opportunities will completely fulfill the family's 8 hour requirement for the year. They are:

- PTO board positions
- Room parents
- Grade level PTO liaison
- Extra-curricular club moderator
- Athletic coach or assistant coach

Other opportunities will be tracked by the hour and include:

- Lunch/recess monitoring at the K-8 school
- Working a PTO or school event Assisting with a "specials" class (spanish or music)
- Scrip program volunteer

If you are unsure about qualifying hours that you have or plan to serve, please check with the office. The academic year for counting service hours is from July 1st – May 31st. Families who fall short of the service hour obligation will be billed at a rate of $20 per unserved hour. This amount must be paid in full before final report cards or transcripts are released.

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 using the side preschool doors are required to fully park their vehicles. Cars must be turned off and children escorted into the building. When using the main entrance drop off, please follow the flow of traffic and the arrows painted on the ground of the parking lot.

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. 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

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.

VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

CODE OF CONDUCT

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

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

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

a. Will be honest and committed to integrity.
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 complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
g. Will respect all school and personal property (see Care of School Property).
h. Will refrain from any deliberate disruption of school.
i. Will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
j. Will comply with the Internet Responsibility Use Policy.
k. Will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-sponsored co- and extracurricular activities.
l. Will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
m. Will adhere to the dress code (See dress code).
n. Will not give or receive any unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes or assignments.
o. Will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the principal/administration.
p. Will not bring to school, or possess at school, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension or expulsion may occur.
q. Will maintain, and support others who maintain, a safe and drug free environment at, or near, school and at all school-sponsored functions/activities with the understanding that possession of distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any other substance that may be harmful or dangerous and forbidden, to include drug paraphernalia will result in suspension or expulsion from school.
r. Will not engage in any physical or verbal contact with another student which could be interpreted to be an inappropriate display of affection. Such conduct is prohibited on school grounds or at school sponsored activities.
s. Will, at all times, whether at school or in the community, conduct themselves in a manner which reflects on the Catholic values and principles of the school.

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

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

Injustice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily

or permanently from the particular school setting.

Classroom rules are designed to protect persons and property and to promote 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. Holy Cross Academy Preschool requires students to wear the designated preschool uniform on specified days throughout the school year. The uniform consists of a Holy Cross Academy Preschool spirit shirt paired with solid-colored pants, shorts, or skirts. Uniform days include field trips, picture days, Mass days, Spirit Day, and any other occasions announced in advance. Holy Cross Academy Preschool spirit shirts are available for purchase in the school's main office during both the summer and the school year.

Families will be notified in advance through the school calendar and newsletters regarding the dates when uniforms are required. On all other school days, students may wear comfortable play clothes appropriate for active learning and play.

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 that are well fitting 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 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

Preschool 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 backpack 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 have clearance to return by a healthcare provider while symptomatic
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 using 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 COVID, 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 clinics, 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.

EMERGENCY ANAPHYLAXIS

Due to the age of our students, there may be an instance where they come into contact with an unknown allergen that causes an adverse and serious allergic reaction. If a student with no prior identified allergies begins to demonstrate signs of anaphylaxis, emergency stock epinephrine will be administered to that child by a MAT trained staff member.

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.

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 two annual shelter in place drills, one lockdown drill, and 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..

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. 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.

VIII. ACCOMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS DIFFERENCES

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

In order to accommodate a student 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 grounds for terminating enrollment in the school. A student may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.

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. Students 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.

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

VIII. PROGRAM INFORMATION

LICENSING INFORMATION

Holy Cross Academy Preschool at St. Mary is currently a religiously exempt child day center. The Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) for the Diocese of Arlington will be responsible for ensuring the standards for health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program and record keeping are followed. OCS in conjunction with the Office of Child Protection for the Diocese of Arlington will oversee criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. The Office of Risk Management for the Diocese of Arlington will ensure that the facility meets applicable fire, health, and building codes.

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).

IX. 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