

HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ELEMENTARY PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019-2020

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HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER

This policy handbook is limited in content. Emphasis has been placed on those things which are deemed most pertinent to the students, parents, and Holy Spirit Catholic School at the present time.

It would be impossible to anticipate all problems which may arise in the future. Yet, each year, a few distracting fads and circumstances show up on our school grounds. Anything that detracts from or disrupts the spirit, education, philosophy, or dignity of Holy Spirit Catholic School will be held to be unacceptable, even though not explicitly set forth in this handbook. Such situations will be dealt with in accordance with the principles implicit in our existing policies.

Any information that comes to the school which could endanger the life, health, or safety of a student, parent, or faculty/staff member will not be held in confidence.

In the absence of a policy in this handbook, the administration (in accordance with diocesan policy) reserves the right to determine policy should the need arise. All diocesan policies are listed in the *Policies and Regulations for Educational Institutions in the Diocese of Birmingham* apply to our school. In the event of inadvertent conflict, the diocesan policies supersede. The administration reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time.

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August, 2019

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Holy Spirit Catholic School! In choosing Holy Spirit, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education. Thank you for making us your choice.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of Holy Spirit Catholic School for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of Holy Spirit Catholic School during the 2019-2020 school year.

The faculty and staff of our school look forward to working with you to promote the academic excellence and spiritual development of the students who have been entrusted to our care. We are glad to partner with you this year. We promise our prayers and support and ask for yours as well.

May God bless us as we journey together to bring the best to our children.

Sincerely,
Mr. Josh Saibini
Principal

HOLY SPIRIT ELEMENTARY PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision for Holy Spirit Catholic School is to create an environment in which Gospel values are integrated into the life of our school community. We envision a school community where all people are welcome and encouraged to grow spiritually and academically.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Holy Spirit Catholic School family honors the dignity of each person and provides a strong foundation for life-long learning within the framework of a Catholic faith community.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

Holy Spirit is committed to educating each student by promoting spiritual, academic, physical, emotional and aesthetic development in a Christ-centered environment.

Holy Spirit challenges students to develop their abilities to attain academic success.

Holy Spirit motivates students to live and serve as part of a Catholic faith community.

Holy Spirit encourages students to appreciate various cultures and creeds and to respect the diversity of God's kingdom.

Holy Spirit promotes a curriculum which prepares students to become life-long learners enabling them to become responsible, productive citizens.

Holy Spirit believes the school and family share the responsibility for preparing students for a life long journey of faith and learning.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

As partners in the educational process at Holy Spirit Catholic School, we ask parents to set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
- Is dressed according to the school dress code
- Completes class assignments on time
- Has lunch ordered or sack lunch every day

Your attitude toward the school and the teacher is most important because it will be reflected in the attitude of your child. Parents are asked to:

- Maintain a united authority between themselves and the school so that the teacher in the classroom is an extension of their parental authority.
- Remember that criticisms, complaints, gossip, and words spoken in jest or anger are absorbed by the child and often greatly influence his/her own attitudes. Also, gossip hurts the school.

- Be cognizant of the fact that obedience has to be taught. It cannot be learned at school if it has not been taught and insisted upon at home.
- Teach your child to develop responsibility and to accept consequences for his actions.
- Remember that each child is different and unique. It is very important to have an accurate assessment of your child's capabilities. High IQ has no particular relation to success. Success is determined from a combination of many character traits and the way in which they are developed. Your child will be successful if he is encouraged to work up to his ability and if he is not frustrated by expectations to perform on a higher level than his ability will allow.
- Teach your child respect for school personnel, for other students, and for the property of others.
- Always encourage your child to do a good job. Be pleased when he does his best, even if his best is average. Go over progress reports with your child. Allow him to take pride in his accomplishments. Do not over-emphasize his shortcomings. You add to your child's incentive when you show a sincere interest in his work.
- Be aware of and know your child's friends. Recognize that not all parents follow the rules of Christian living and common sense. Parents, through discipline and example, must teach and convince their children that they will be expected to obey certain rules regardless of what friends may choose to do or think.
- Help your child develop good study habits. A specific period of time allowed for homework helps the child in school adjustment. Study should be done in an orderly and quiet atmosphere. Papers should be checked for neatness.
- Develop and instill in your child the proper attitude toward school and learning.
- Consult teachers by holding individual conferences as needed, in addition to those routinely scheduled. It is also most important to withhold judgment on what appears to be a grievance until you get all the facts. Classroom teachers appreciate first calls. If necessary, contact the principal.
- Help your child in his school work in the area of developing self-organization and good study habits.
- Attend school activities involving your child. Accompany your child to other activities he wishes to attend and supervise him while he is there.
- Say no to your child when in order.
- Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities offered by the school.

There is no sure way to guarantee that your child will grow up to be the kind of person you would like him to be. The most likely way is for you to be the kind of person you would like him to be.

As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians freely make the choice of a Catholic education for their sons/daughters. Registration at Holy Spirit Catholic School is an agreement by the parent/guardian to accept and abide by the rules and regulations of the school and to

support its mission and belief statements. A cooperative relationship between the Holy Spirit Catholic School personnel and a parent/guardian is essential for the overall education of a student. It is critical that a cooperative relationship be maintained through constructive dialogue with the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian refuses to abide by the rules and regulations of Holy Spirit Catholic School, is unsupportive of its goals by word or action, or otherwise fails to meet his/her obligations according to school or Diocesan policies, the administrator may require the parent/guardian to withdraw his/her child or children from Holy Spirit Catholic School. Additionally, parents/guardians will be held to the same standards of respect as students are in regards to their interactions with administrators, teachers, staff, and students. This applies to members of a child's extended family as well.

ACCREDITATION

Holy Spirit Catholic School is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), and is part of the Diocese of Birmingham district accreditation through AdvancEd®.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum followed by Holy Spirit meets the requirements of the Diocese of Birmingham, the Alabama State Department of Education, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition to the required courses, classes in art, computer, **guidance, library/media,** music, and PE are provided.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Children of all denominations are welcome at Holy Spirit Catholic School. Catholic/Christian values and service to others are an integral part of the total school program. In addition to regularly scheduled religion classes, Holy Spirit provides many opportunities for each student to deepen his or her relationship with Christ. Students, with the faculty and staff, participate in the celebration of the Eucharist, morning and afternoon prayer, classroom prayer, and other paraliturgical activities.

Mass is usually held on Thursdays at 8:15am. and also on Holy Days that fall during the week. Parents and guests are always welcome to join us at Mass on these days.

ADMISSION POLICY

The State of Alabama and Holy Spirit Catholic School require that a child must meet the following requirements for admission:

- Kindergarten – 5 years of age on or before September 1
- 1st Grade – 6 years of age on or before September 1

Parents must furnish a certified birth certificate, social security number, and a health/immunization record when applying for admission. A non-refundable registration fee must be submitted with the completed application. New registration forms must be submitted each year.

Students applying for admission must present a copy of the latest report card and any standardized test results. Testing/screening in some academic areas will be held for all new incoming students during an interview process with the teacher(s) of the grade for which the student is applying. Applicants are evaluated on the basis of academic standing and social behavior. Teacher Recommendations from previous teachers are also considered. Holy Spirit

reserves the right to refuse admission to any child who has been expelled from any other school. All new students are accepted on a one-quarter probation period. If, during this trial period, there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at Holy Spirit Catholic School.

In keeping with the Diocesan policy, Holy Spirit Catholic School admits Catholic and Non-Catholic students whose needs can be served by the school's program. Holy Spirit does not discriminate on the basis of gender, color, race, or national or ethnic origin. All students enrolled in Holy Spirit are required to participate in all religious programs and activities.

All applicants are given consideration and priority as follows:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Active, practicing Catholic families of Holy Spirit or St. Francis parishes
3. Other Catholic families
4. Non-Catholic families

NOTE: During re-registration, currently enrolled students are given first priority.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Grading System

Grading is a method of communicating student learning and shall be based on the philosophy that students and not subjects are being taught. Any diversion from these guidelines is to be requested in writing from the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. It is the principal's responsibility to acquaint the faculty with the Diocesan and local grading policies and to supervise the implementation of these policies periodically, particularly during grading periods.

The following is the Diocesan Policy concerning Grading and is adhered to by Holy Spirit School.

Kindergarten and Grade One: Grading for Kindergarten and Grade One will be a checklist developed for all schools in the Diocese. Some flexibility of items will be available at the local level. The coding system for each skill will be:

MS	Meets Standard
AS	Approaching Standard
NS	Needs Support
X	Not assessed at this time

Grades 2 through 6: Teachers record letter grades on the report card for religion, reading/literature (language arts), math, science, social studies, music, and physical education. They record grades of S, NI, or U for art and handwriting. Both percents and letter grades are listed on the interim progress reports. Percents or letter grades may be used on assignments, quizzes, and tests. Students do not receive a computer grade. Computer skills are integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

The grading scale will be as follows:

A	93-100
B	84-92
C	74-83
D	65-73
F	64 and below

Teachers determine the criteria for quarter grades, which include, but are not limited to, quizzes, tests, class participation/preparation. Semester grades are computed by averaging the first and second quarter grades.

Homework

Children can expect to have homework every day except Fridays. Students are expected to be responsible for writing down their own homework assignments in their planner as well as packing up the appropriate materials needed. Parents are strongly encouraged to review their child's homework every evening to reinforce the concept of homework as a valuable activity. **Parents are not to complete a child's homework, but rather assist as needed.** Every child is expected to return assignments on time. Consequences will occur if work is not submitted on time. Homework is part of the quarterly grade which may include studying for a test, reading assigned pages, or memorizing poetry or multiplication facts, etc. If there are parental concerns about the amount of homework given and the time involved, please contact the teacher or teachers involved. **Please note that students are not allowed to return to their classrooms after dismissal to retrieve homework materials.**

Tests

Tests are given in Math, Science, English, Reading/Literature, Social Studies and Religion. Teachers may give tests in any of the remaining subjects. Teachers focus on the application of learning rather than the memorization and recall of information alone. Test anxiety is kept to a minimum with every effort made to foster a positive attitude and approach to tests.

Effort and Conduct

Good effort and conduct are expected. On the report card, these areas are reported as **S (Satisfactory)**, **NI (Needs Improvement)**, or **U (Unsatisfactory)**. A grade of **U** is given for serious misbehavior. Comments may be made for specific cases. If classes are basically self-contained, only one effort/conduct grade is given. Exceptions can be accommodated through comments.

Promotion and Retention

In order to retain a student in **Grades Two through Six**, the actual grades on the report card must indicate failure. If a student receives an "F" in either Reading or Math, he/she must attend summer school or be tutored by a certified teacher over the summer in order to be promoted. In addition, a student fails for the year if he/she has a yearly average of "F" in two or more of the following areas: Reading/Literature, English, Math, Science or Social Studies.

For **Kindergarten and First Grade** students who do not receive letter grades, the criteria for what constitutes failure is made at the local level with discussion between the teacher and principal. Each student's status should be clearly indicated on the final report card. Retention will be discussed among teacher(s), parents, and principal. A consensus will be reached. If there is disagreement, the decision of the principal is final. (Diocesan Administrator's Manual)

Progress Reports

At the midpoint of each grading period, an achievement report is sent home with all students. The dates for progress reports are listed on the school calendar.

Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences

It is important that there be open lines of communication between home and school. Teacher conferences held with the parents/guardian, and at times with the student as well, are essential to keeping all concerned aware of the student's educational progress. These conferences are an integral part of the reporting system. At the end of the first quarter marking period, teachers discuss student report cards at scheduled parent conferences. The Diocese allows the school to dismiss early on two days for this purpose. Teachers notify parents of the scheduled appointment time and request that they adhere to the allotted conference time.

Parent-Teacher conferences are encouraged at other times during the year as well for better communication. If a conference is desired, please call the school office for an appointment or email the teacher directly. **Please do not phone us at home, drop in, or stop us during the school day while we are working with the children.** For the safety of all students, teachers are not allowed to have discussions with parents while in the carpool dismissal line.

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll is a motivator to encourage students to achieve. Students in Grades 3-6 will be named to the Honor Roll if they earn a grade of A or B in all subjects. Honor Roll awards will be given at the end of each grading period.

Parents and students alike are urged to remember that being named to the Honor Roll is not the ultimate goal of education, nor is it a means to discriminate between certain types of students. Any child who performs to the best of his/her ability is considered a successful student. They are all winners!

Effort Award

In addition to the Honor Roll awards, special recognition will be given to students in Grades 3-6 who have displayed exceptional effort toward their school work. Only students who are not named to the Honor Roll will be eligible for an Effort Award. This award is based solely on effort and enables students to be recognized for their hard work in earning their grades.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance Requirements

Attendance at school is a state law. There shall be a minimum attendance requirement for grading purposes. If a student is in attendance for less than 160 days in a year, the student's attendance record will be reviewed. Any student absent more than 20 days is subject to repeat the grade unless extenuating circumstances exist, and the principal gives special consideration.

Arrival: Students are expected to be punctual for school. Prior to the first bell at 7:50am, all students must report to the gymnasium. The tardy bell rings at 8:00am. Students must be present in their classroom prior to the ringing of the tardy bell.

Dismissal: At the end of the school day, the final bell rings at **3:10pm, at 1:00pm on early dismissal days, and at 2:15pm every Monday.** Students not picked up by 3:30pm (1:20pm or 2:35pm, respectively) will go to the After School Care Program for supervision. Parents will be responsible for the payment of this service. Please refer to the 2018-2019 Extended Care Handbook for a complete list of policies.

Check In/Out: Students who must leave school before the regular dismissal time must check out at the office. Only a parent or person designated by the parent on the Emergency Release Card can check out a student. Identification may be requested. No parent or other adult is allowed to go to a classroom to get a student. If at all possible, please send a note to your child's teacher as early as possible if you know you are going to check him/her out of school. Parents or an approved adult must sign the Check Out book prior to leaving the building with the student.

In order for the student to grow in skills and good habits, and make the most of the school day, checking out before the end of the day should only be a very occasional occurrence. Our instruction is provided from morning bell to afternoon bell, and checking out early disrupts this process. When students check out early on a regular basis, their learning opportunities are seriously compromised. In addition, attendance records will reflect absences or tardies for this time missed.

Any student missing more than 4 hours of the school day (beginning, middle, or end) will be considered absent. If a student checks in or out at 11:30, it is counted as a ½ day absence. Morning or afternoon tardies will be issued for students who arrive or leave within these hours.

***Please note that students may not attend after-school activities if they are not present at school on the day of the activity.**

Excused Absence or Tardy

A student who has been absent or tardy must provide the teacher with a written statement signed by a parent or legal guardian as to the reason for the absence or tardy. Attendance records are legal documents and must be accurate. Therefore, all absences and tardies must be recorded regardless of the reason.

Excused absences are:

- Illness (Please Note: **No student should return to school within 24 hours of having nausea symptoms or running a fever.**)
- Serious illness or death in the immediate family
- Emergency medical or dental attention
- Medical or dental appointments (after-school appointments are preferred)
- Court appearance

Unexcused absences are:

- Oversleeping
- Running late
- Truancy
- Missing a ride
- Personal activities, attendance at sporting events, birthdays, or other celebrations

Any other absences must be submitted in writing to the principal for a decision.

Tardiness: Students are required to be in class by 8:00am. An adult must sign in a tardy student at the office. Consistent, unexcused tardies will result in disciplinary action. **Four unexcused tardies in one quarter will result in an infraction, which will then follow our Discipline Code.**

Here at school, we thoroughly discuss with our students the importance of being on time for school everyday. Please reinforce this with your child at home as well. Please work with your child to establish a regular morning routine so that getting ready for school and getting out of the house will be as stress-free as possible. This may involve getting clothes, bookbags, or lunch boxes ready the night before so that your morning is not so rushed. In addition to helping you leave on time, this routine will also help your child with his/her organizational skills.

Absences: If a student is absent, the parent or guardian must call the office by 8:30am to report the absence. If no call is received, absences will be verified by a phone call home or to the place of business after 8:30am. Any student who has been absent three consecutive days or has had excessive absences (as determined by the principal) must furnish a written doctor's excuse for all subsequent absences. A readmission notice from a doctor may also be required.

Make-Up Work

In the event of an excused absence, a teacher will allow a student time to make up work/tests (one day per day of school missed with a maximum of five school days). However, if an assignment, a long-term project, or test was assigned prior to the student's absence, the assignment will be due on the first day the student returns to school. Make-up work is the student's responsibility. Any student who has not completed the make-up work during the allotted time will receive zeroes for those assignments. Class work and tests cannot be made up for unexcused absences.

**** Please note that no work is given in advance of an excused absence.**

When a student is absent, the parent can request homework to be prepared for pick-up. If the homework is requested at the time the parent phones the school to indicate a student's absence (by 8:30am), the work can be picked up on the same day after 2:30pm. However, if the phone call is received later in the day, work may not be ready until the next day.

DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

Discipline Code

Students are expected to exemplify the Gospel values which form the foundation of our mission statement. Thus, they are to exhibit concern and charity for others as well as respecting the rights and dignity of all persons in the school community. Students are taught that their behavior has consequences and that they must accept responsibility for their behavior. Therefore, students are expected to demonstrate appropriate self-discipline and behavior.

All teachers use a variety of classroom management/behavior strategies. All methods of discipline seek to be educational rather than punitive. Teachers formulate their own classroom procedures, which are shared with parents at the beginning of the school year. Parents and students sign off on the procedures to indicate that the expectations have been read by both parents and students, and they agree to be governed by them.

Infractions

An infraction is a violation of a law, rule, or pact. Infractions committed by students will result in some form of disciplinary action. Infractions will be considered minor, major, or serious depending upon the severity of the situation and will be communicated by verbal warning, written notice, parent conference, suspension, or expulsion.

Minor Infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to obey Classroom rules
- Failure to obey Cafeteria rules
- Failure to obey Recess rules
- Four Uniform Code violations in one quarter
- Four unexcused tardies in one quarter
- Writing and/or passing notes in school or class
- Disrespectful behavior in church
- Chewing gum or eating inappropriately in school, church or playground
- Inappropriate behavior in the hallways
- Bringing inappropriate/nuisance items to school (School reserves the right to determine what is considered inappropriate.)
- Running, pushing, shoving, yelling, or horse-playing
- Putting hands on or hurting another student
- Any other conduct that is inconsistent with the mission statement of Holy Spirit Catholic School

Minor infraction notices will be sent home with the student on the day the infraction occurs. A parent must sign and return the infraction notice the next day. The parent keeps one copy and returns the top copy to school.

The following is the procedure for the enforcement of **minor infraction notices** within a quarter:

- Two Infractions: Parent/Student conference with the principal
- Third Infraction: ½ day suspension*
- Fourth Infraction: Minimum of one full day suspension*
- Additional Infractions: Discretion of the administration

**The process begins again at the start of each new quarter.

Major Infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Dishonesty
- Disrespect in any form toward faculty or other adults
- Inappropriate physical contact between students, including biting
- Fighting, including provocations that are verbal and/or physical (may be deemed serious)
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Removing, hiding, or destroying another's possessions
- Harassment/name-calling or disrespect to other students (may be deemed serious)
- Defacing school property (may be deemed serious)
- Academic dishonesty/Plagiarism
- Copying or cheating on tests or schoolwork
- Any type of forgery or misrepresentation of parents' signature
- Abusive or inappropriate language or gestures
- Violation of acceptable technology usage guidelines
- Possession of any type of weapon or dangerous item
- Any other major misconduct that is inconsistent with the mission statement of Holy Spirit Catholic School

Consequences for **major infractions** are:

- First Offense: Parent conference with principal and possible suspension*
- Second Offense: Minimum of one full day suspension*
- Additional Offenses: Discretion of the administration

Serious Offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Defiance/Open resistance to authority
- Harassment/Bullying (See School Safety)
- Threatening words or gestures made to another student or faculty/staff member
- Fighting
- Theft
- Possession of any type of weapon or dangerous item
- Violation of Diocesan Policy pertaining to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Any other serious offense that is inconsistent with the mission statement of Holy Spirit Catholic School.

The school administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning serious offenses committed by students. In addition, Holy Spirit Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day.

Suspension

Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from his/her regular program. The principal determines the length of the suspension. During in-school suspension, a student is separated from his/her class for the entire day and not allowed to participate in any activities with other students. The student completes assigned work in a separate area, under supervision. Out-of-school suspension is served under parental supervision.

***Depending upon the circumstances, parents of students who are given a ½ day or full day suspension(s) may have the option of requesting either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. If an in-school suspension is chosen, parents must pay \$65 per day/\$30 per ½ day for a substitute teacher to come in and supervise the child during the suspension. In this case, all class work and tests may be completed and full credit will be given for the work. If an out-of-school suspension is chosen, students will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Work will be given to the student, but he/she will receive failing grades. The principal reserves the right to determine when an out-of-school suspension is required.**

Expulsion

Expulsion is the result of a very serious violation of the philosophy of Holy Spirit Catholic School. It warrants the removal of a student from the school for the remainder of the school year. Expulsion can also be used if a student who has been suspended previously has not shown any indication of improvement. Once a student is expelled, he/she may not be readmitted at any time. If a parent voluntarily withdraws a student from school due to disciplinary reasons, the student will not be readmitted at a later time.

DRESS CODE

Every student at Holy Spirit is encouraged to develop good grooming habits. Standards of neatness and appropriateness in clothing help support an atmosphere conducive to learning, work, and discipline. Respect for school and self is influenced by appearance. Students must present a neat, clean and modest appearance at all times.

Parents are held responsible for their child complying with the established dress code. Teachers are held responsible for monitoring the dress code at the beginning of each school day. Students who are out of dress code may be asked to call a parent to bring the appropriate item(s) to school. Students will receive a dress code violation for each offense. **Four violations in a quarter will result in an infraction.** The principal is the final judge for suitability of grooming and dress.

UNIFORM CODE

***Land's End and Dennis School Uniforms carry every item that is approved by the school.**

***McStitches(Formerly Custom Embroidery) carries shirts, sweatshirts, and jackets that are approved by the school.**

****Please make sure that all clothes fit properly.**

Shirts: Long-sleeved or short-sleeved polo-type shirts with Holy Spirit School logo with dove. Simple HS logo is not allowed on polo shirts. Colors permitted are red, white, and black. For special events, all students will be required to wear a red uniform shirt. Plain, white, button-down oxford long-sleeved shirts may be worn under V-neck sweater vest. Boys may wear white, long-sleeved oxford shirts with the uniform plaid tie and long pants. Girls may wear white blouse with peter-pan collar under jumpers. All undershirts must be solid white, with no writing. Long-sleeved undershirts may not be worn under short-sleeved shirts. Turtlenecks are not allowed. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Pants: Plain or pleated front **dark** khaki-colored trousers/slacks. Slacks must be plain (no cuffs), have a comfortable, loose fit, and not be skin-tight. Sand or light khaki is not permitted. Khaki-colored jeans, jeans-style slacks, slacks with rivets, corduroy slacks, and cargo pants are not allowed.

Shorts: Plain or pleated front **dark** khaki-colored shorts. Shorts must be plain (no cuffs), have a comfortable, loose fit, and not be skin-tight. Bermuda-type shorts are not allowed. Sand or light khaki is not permitted. Khaki-colored jean shorts, jeans-style shorts, shorts with rivets, corduroy shorts, and cargo shorts are not allowed. Shorts may not be more than 2 inches above the knee.

***Parents may purchase pants or shorts from an alternate vendor, provided the material, style, and color meet the code described above.**

Jumpers/Skirts/Skortts: Girls may choose to wear the plaid jumpers, plaid skirts, or plaid skortts. Uniform polo shirt or white blouse with peter-pan collar may be worn under jumpers. Uniform polo shirt must be worn with skirts or skortts. The length of skirts, skortts, and jumpers must touch the top of the knee. Shorts must be worn under skirts and jumpers. **Khaki jumpers or khaki skirts are no longer allowed.

****Sweaters:** Girls' cardigans are available in red or gray. V-neck sweaters are available in red or black. V-neck sweater vests are available in red, black, or gray.

****Fleece Outerwear:** Fleece pullover or zip-front jackets in black or red with the Holy Spirit Catholic School logo or simple HS logo.

****Sweatshirts:** Crewneck sweatshirts with the Holy Spirit Catholic School logo or simple HS logo in gray, red, or black may be worn. Gray crewneck sweatshirt with Holy Spirit screen may also be worn.

****A Holy Spirit School logo shirt must be worn under all outerwear—sweaters, vests, sweatshirts, fleece jackets, etc.**

Belts: Plain navy, brown, or black traditional style belts. Uniform plaid belts may also be worn. Belts must be visible at all times.

Shoes: Solid black or solid white tennis shoes; Solid black, tan or dark brown leather Sperry®-type, Merrell®-type shoes, or classic Mary–Jane type shoes with straps. All shoes must be one solid color. Shoelaces must be the same color as the shoe. White shoes and/or shoelaces must be kept clean and polished. All shoes must have backs and be appropriate for indoor/outdoor PE activities. Ballet flats, slip-on “Tom®-type/Bob®-type” shoes or shoes with lights or wheels are not allowed. Boots or high-top shoes may not be worn with shorts, jumpers, or skortts.

*****Please make sure that shoes fit properly.**

Socks: Only solid white or solid black, mid-calf socks are permitted. Socks with logos or writing are not allowed. Low-cut or ankle socks are not allowed. In cold weather, girls may wear solid red, white, navy, or black footed-tights. Leggings are not allowed.

Heavy Outerwear: Cold weather jackets, hooded sweaters, and flannel shirts, etc., may not be worn in the school building during school hours.

Hats: Headwear (Hats, caps, visors, sweatbands, etc.) may not be worn during the school day or in the school building at any time.

Hair: Hair must be neat, clean, combed, and dry upon coming to school. Boys' hair must be above the eyes, above the ears when combed straight down at sides, and may not exceed the top of the shirt collar in the back. Girls' hair worn long must be kept out of the eyes. Sculptured/spiked haircuts are not allowed. Uniform plaid headbands may be worn. Distracting hair beads, bows, or headbands may not be worn. When violations occur, students will receive a dress code violation.

Accessories: Chokers may not be worn. Nose rings, navel rings, or rings through any exposed area of the body, including tongues may not be worn during school hours. Permanent or temporary tattoos may not be visible. Only one necklace and bracelet may be worn. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings/studs during school hours or at any school-sponsored activity or event. Girls may only have one piercing in each ear, and earrings may only be studs. Dangling earrings are not permitted. Girls' nails must be kept to a moderate length and nail polish must be clear or a soft, neutral color. Make-up may not be worn.

Physical Education (PE) Attire: The regular school dress code is worn for PE class. Appropriate Uniform Code shoes are required for PE. If inappropriate shoes are worn, children will sit out of PE. Girls wearing jumpers/skirts must wear appropriate shorts underneath. Jumpers/skirts may be removed for PE if properly fitting shorts are worn underneath.

FREE DRESS ATTIRE

On days when free dress is allowed to be worn to school, the following rules apply:

- Jeans/Pants must not have any holes.
- Shorts (when allowed) must be an appropriate length—no more than 2 inches above the knee.
- Rompers are not allowed.
- Shirts must have full sleeves—sleeveless shirts, shirts with spaghetti straps, shirts with cut-out shoulders are not allowed.
- All shoes must be closed-toes—sandals and/or flip-flops are not allowed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Before/After School Care Program

This program is available from 7:00am to 7:40am and from dismissal to 6:00pm. The program provides professional care, supervision, recreation, and enrichment activities. Time is also set aside for homework completion. The cost for before school care is \$2.00 per day per child. The cost for after school care is \$10.00 per day per child. Students are expected to be respectful to adults and other students present. Failure on the part of the student to abide by the policies of Holy Spirit Catholic School and to cooperate in a Christian manner with all involved in the program may result in the removal of the student from this program. Please refer to the 2018-2019 Extended Care Handbook for a complete list of policies.

Birthdays

Birthday parties are **not** to be held at school. Only cupcakes or cookies for the entire class may be brought to school in recognition of your child's birthday, but no further celebration is permitted. No gifts, balloons, decorations, flowers, etc. may be brought or delivered to school. Parents are asked to consult with the teacher prior to making plans and to please send a note confirming those plans. Invitations to outside birthday parties **may not** be distributed at school. The school directory has addresses available to mail/[email](#) invitations.

In addition, Holy Spirit Catholic School assumes no responsibility for parties/events that take place outside of school and/or are not related to our school.

Cafeteria Conduct

Students are expected to keep the cafeteria as clean as possible. In order to accomplish this, the following cafeteria rules must be followed:

- Students are to put all used disposable articles in the containers provided.
- Students are not to misuse any cafeteria facilities, including equipment, chairs, and tables.
- Microwave ovens are not to be used to warm any students' food.
- Food or drink is never to be taken out of the cafeteria.
- Students who spill food or drink are expected to clean up the spillage.
- Students are to be orderly, courteous, and respectful in the serving lines.
- Students may not, under any circumstances, allow other students to charge to their cafeteria account.
- Students participating in the hot lunch program may not give food to those students who brought their lunch from home.
- Students are not to share their lunch with other students.
- Students, parents, or school personnel may not bring in carbonated drinks.
- Students, parents, or school personnel may not bring in fast food items.
- Students are to remain seated until the teacher gives permission to leave.
- Students are expected to speak in a regular tone of voice without shouting.

Change of Address/Telephone Number

It is essential that the school office has at all times the correct address and telephone number for all families in the school. In the event of any change, including the number where you can be reached in an emergency, please notify the school office immediately. Within the first month of school, the P.T.O. will make available to all parents the telephone directory. All families will be listed unless specific instructions are given. Parents are responsible for the proper use of the telephone directory, and it is not to be used or sold for other purposes.

Child Abuse Laws

Holy Spirit Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Alabama. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Human Resources/Child Protective Services.

Classroom Parties/Activities

Several times throughout the school year, parents may be asked to help assist the teacher by supervising at a classroom party or other activity during the school day. While we certainly appreciate and welcome the willingness of our parents to volunteer here at school, we cannot underestimate the importance of **active supervision** for the safety of our children. Therefore, we ask parents who volunteer at school to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Babies or younger siblings are not allowed while a parent is supervising an activity.
- Please refrain from texting or talking on cell phones.
- Please do not handle any disciplinary matters. Any issues should be directed immediately to the teacher.
- Please refrain from having private conversations with the teacher or other parents while supervising the students.

Disbursement of Publications/ Information

With the principal's approval, Holy Spirit School may disburse information, flyers, advertisements, or other forms of communication to students/parents which may or may not be related to school or church activities. Holy Spirit is not responsible for the accuracy of any information disbursed and is not responsible for the safety or supervision provided at after school activities. Parents and students shall not assume that an event is "school sponsored/school supervised" because the information about the event or activity was disbursed through Holy Spirit School.

Drug Abuse, Alcohol, Smoking

The following is from the Diocesan Board of Education policy on drug abuse:

ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO

Purpose and Intent

The constant teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church uphold the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person. As Catholics we believe men and women are made in the image and likeness of God. We believe our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. The Fifth Commandment, Thou shall not kill, forbids the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs that alters our consciousness and harms our bodies. This profound and overarching belief in the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of life is the foundation of the following Diocesan Policy pertaining to alcohol, tobacco and drugs:

It is strictly forbidden for any student to use, possess, or distribute alcohol, tobacco and drugs on school premises, in a school-owned vehicle, or during any school-sponsored trip or activity. This includes, but is not limited to, alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, opiates, inhalants, mind-altering substances, drug paraphernalia, or controlled substances as defined by federal and state law for which the student has no prescription from a duly recognized medical authority or use of another person's prescription. Students found using or possessing alcohol, tobacco or drugs on their persons, in their personal effects or in their vehicles shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by the school's policies and regulations.

Implementation of this policy is consistent in each of the diocesan high schools. Our Catholic high schools provide a caring family environment that is free of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Our school should present to the community a clear witness of our Catholic commitment to respect our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Our Catholic faith also teaches compassion. The intent of the following regulations is not to punish but to encourage students to make choices consistent with a healthy lifestyle.

School officials have the responsibility to be proactive in providing and maintaining a safe school environment. In order to accomplish this, an important component is providing educational opportunities for parents, students and school personnel. All parents, students and faculty are responsible for attending the alcohol, tobacco and drug presentations offered by the school. By accepting admission into the school, parents assume the responsibility for cooperating with school officials in fostering in their children healthy lifestyle choices.

Disciplinary Regulations

The policy of Catholic high schools strictly forbids the possession, use and distribution of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. The consequence for violation of this policy is referral for suspension and/or expulsion. In each instance, the administrator's final disciplinary decision will be based on an investigation, evidence and consultation with the student and parents. Prescribed medications and other necessary medicines are distributed by the school in accordance with school procedures.

If a school official suspects that a student has violated the policy or may be associated with anyone who has, the school administrator will respond appropriately. For possession, use and/or distribution of a controlled substance, the school has the legal responsibility to notify appropriate law enforcement personnel. School administrators may:

- Search a student's, locker, personal belongings and/or vehicle;
- Require medical evaluation at a designated facility at the school's expense;
- Require additional medical evaluations at the parents' expense if the initial evaluation is positive;
- Require individual and/or family counseling, as needed.

In an effort to maintain a safe school environment, the school administrator may authorize random searches (by school personnel or local authorities) of students, their personal belongings, lockers, and personal vehicles. The administration may also authorize random medical evaluations at the school's expense.

Electronic Devices

The following policy is from the Diocesan Board of Education:

“Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham make every effort to assure that each student is safe while they are at school. Each school also tries to assure that the teaching/learning process is interrupted as little as possible. Since electronic devices can be disruptive to the teaching/learning process, these items should not be in the school building. If any are used, seen, or heard during school hours, they will be confiscated. Consequences will be decided by the principal.”

The above pertains to cell phones, radios, E-readers, iwatches, ipads, ipods, cameras, and electronic planners, but is not limited to these items. The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property.

Emergency Closing Due to Weather

In the event of severe weather or other emergencies, Holy Spirit Catholic School will make the decision regarding school closing or delayed start. While it is impossible to be certain of the impact of predicted severe weather, we will make an informed decision based upon the recommendations of the National Weather Service and Emergency Management Agency (EMA). Announcements will be made via email, phone blast, local TV, and radio. If severe weather causes the school to close early, after-school care will also be closed.

Evacuation Procedures

Safety is important. In order to be prepared for a fire, tornado, or other such emergency, drills are held regularly at school. The drills are to give students practice in using precautions that should help them avoid possible injuries. A Crisis Management Plan is available in the office and all classrooms for parent review upon request. **In addition, all of our school's safety procedures are being evaluated and reassessed in accordance with the Safety Committee of the Diocese of Birmingham. This process will be ongoing throughout the school year.**

Extra-Curricular Activities

After School Activities: In addition to the various sports activities available for students through our parish or city leagues, Holy Spirit provides opportunities for students to participate in Musical Beginnings, Team Lee Karate, school and church choir, and Spirit Squad (5th-6th Grade girls only).

Altar Servers: Students of the Catholic faith in Grades 4-6 participate as altar servers for our school liturgies after proper parish training.

Book Clubs: Students in Grades 4-6 who wish to share their love of reading may join after-school book clubs. A variety of Book Clubs will be available according to grade, genre, or interest.

Children's Choir: Students in Grades 1-3 and 4-6, under the direction of Mrs. McClendon, meet after school from 3-3:45pm. The choir leads the congregation at school liturgies and performs at other special events during the year.

***Please note that students may not attend after-school activities if they are not present at school on the day of the activity.**

Field Trips

Students in Grades 1-6 have the opportunity to participate in field trips throughout the year. Field trips will be age-appropriate and related to an aspect of the curriculum. Only students currently enrolled in the class participating in the field trip will be allowed to attend. **Because the role of a chaperone is to assist in the supervision of the students, younger siblings are not allowed to attend.** School disciplinary rules apply on all field trips. All field trips must be scheduled and approved by the Principal. The classroom teacher will arrange transportation. All students will be expected to assist in the cost of the transportation. When traveling by car, van, etc., students must wear seat belts and may not ride in the front seat.

A child must have a signed and dated Diocesan Indemnity Form before he/she leaves the school grounds. Students who do not present this form to the classroom teacher will miss the field trip and remain at school until the class returns. A telephone call will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip. All monies collected for the field trip are non-refundable. Students choosing not to attend a field trip must remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day, unless directed otherwise by the teacher. The principal may deny a student the privilege of attending the field trip due to behavior or any factor that would hinder the trip for the other students.

Parents serving as chaperones and drivers must complete a diocesan background check form. They must also attend the diocesan Youth Protection I class or take a similar course online. Chaperones are responsible for reading the guidelines before each field trip, signing off to

acknowledge your understanding, and strictly adhering to those guidelines while on the field trip. Failure to do so may result in the chaperone not assisting on further field trips.

For safety reasons, all students must travel to **and** from the field trip in the manner designated by the teacher (car, bus, etc.). If an emergency or extenuating circumstance arises, the parent of the child must notify the teacher on the trip if he/she wishes to have the child return to school in a different manner than he/she arrived.

Financial Information

Fees/Tuition: A registration fee is collected from newly registered students at the time of acceptance into the school. A pre-registration fee is collected from current students in February to secure admission for the upcoming school year. **The registration and pre-registration fees are non-refundable.** All financial obligations must be paid in order to pre-register for the following year. Post-dated checks will not be accepted. Additional fees are due in August at Check-In Registration.

It is the responsibility of each family to keep the Parish Business Manager informed of the need to make any changes in the preferred tuition payment plan or adjustments in the tuition paid. Without such information, the following will apply when tuition payments are received late:

Families who miss a monthly payment due to insufficient funds or other reasons will be assessed a \$30.00 missed payment fee by FACTS and may incur a fee from their own financial institution. The missed tuition payment will be re-attempted by FACTS on the next payment date (5th or 20th of the month). In addition, families who have missed two monthly payments will be contacted by the Parish Business Manager and given 10 business days to bring the account current (No personal and/or business checks will be accepted as payment, only cash, cashier's checks or money orders). If the account is not brought current within that time period, the student will not be allowed to return to school until the account is brought current. In addition, report cards, records, transcripts, etc. will not be released if there is an outstanding financial obligation.

Returned Checks and Late Charges: Checks returned for any reason will be assessed a \$15.00 returned check fee. Payment for a returned check and fee must be made by cash, cashier's check or money order. A flat \$25.00 late charge will be incurred for any late payment.

Parent/Student Obligations: Obligations include tuition, before/after school care fees, lunch money, library fines, lost or damaged library or textbook replacement fees, property damage fees, extra-curricular activity fees, and any other obligations the student/parent have incurred. All payment of fees must be kept current in order for students to continue to participate in programs offered by the school. **All obligations must be cleared prior to distribution of report cards, registration, release of records, etc.**

Tuition Assistance: Limited funds are available for tuition assistance to all currently enrolled students who are parishioners of Holy Spirit Parish or St. Francis of Assisi Parish. All requests for assistance should be directed to the Principal of the school to receive a FACTS financial aid packet. Parents are responsible for completing all forms and submitting them as directed. All information must be received by the deadline date. The tuition assistance committee, comprised of Holy Spirit and St. Francis representatives, meets to determine the assistance available for eligible families. All names are kept confidential. The parish business manager contacts each family in writing of the committee's decision. If a financial need should occur during the year, a family may contact your pastor individually. All information is held in the strictest of confidence.

Grievance Policy

Concerns of students and parents should always go through proper channels. Discussing a problem with others who are not involved does not help to eliminate the problem. On the contrary, it may only create more discontent and animosity between the parties who are actually involved. The steps to follow for dealing with complaints in a fair and mature way are to conference first with the teacher and then with the principal. If the situation has not been resolved, one can conference with one of the pastors, and finally with the Director of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Birmingham.

Health and Medications

It is imperative that we have a family information sheet on each student. Information on allergies or health problems and phone numbers where parents can be reached are important. It is best that emergency numbers include family members or friends who live within the Tuscaloosa area. It is also imperative that the emergency numbers be kept current in the main office. Parents are advised to update this information as needed.

Anytime a child is seriously ill, he/she should be kept at home. Since a sick child will not be sent home without first notifying the parents or individual designated on school records, it is imperative that emergency information be completed and kept up to date. If circumstances warrant (such as in the case of communicable diseases), the principal may request a clearance from the doctor before readmittance of the student to school. Parents will be informed about any possible exposure to a communicable disease.

Individuals trained in CPR and basic First Aid staff the school health room. Limited First Aid is available in the school Health Room. In the event of a major accident at school, an attempt will first be made to contact the parents or designated emergency person, then the local police, fire department, or emergency squad will be called and their instructions will be followed.

Whenever possible, it is preferred that parents administer medication to their own children outside of school hours. School personnel are not allowed to administer any oral medication to students without written consent of the parent, and the parent must supply the medication. Parents must bring all medication to the Health Room or School Office with a prescriptive or medical form stating specific directions for administering the medicine. **All** medications, including cough drops and topical medication/ointments, must be in the original container. Otherwise, the medicine will not be administered. Once the medicine is no longer needed, the parent must collect it from the Health Room and sign that it has been received. **No** medication is to be sent to or from school with a student.

If your child has been sent home sick, he/she cannot return until he/she has been fever-free (without Tylenol) for 24 hours. Students with a contagious disease (Head Lice, Pink Eye, Poison Ivy/Oak, Ringworm, etc.) may not return without a doctor's note.

Immunization Form

All students entering our school must be immunized. An Alabama Immunization Form is required to be on file for each student. This form may be obtained from your doctor or from any health department. The only exception allowed is an official Medical Exemption Form issued by the Alabama Health Department or a licensed medical professional.

Internet Policy

Internet and related technologies usage by all students, volunteers, and employees is set forth below. A separate policy and procedure statement will be given to each student, faculty member and volunteer with access to school computer usage for reading and signature. A new copy of this signed agreement is completed each school year. Access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken for any violations that are unethical and may constitute a criminal offense.

The following policy is from the Diocesan Board of Education:

The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member as well as the good name of each school in the Diocese of Birmingham as an institution of the Catholic Church, is vitally important. Two specific aspects of this are:

1. Internet activities (such as blogs, chat rooms, etc.) that a student may independently choose to participate in can make the student vulnerable to predators. We strongly advise our students to be very careful about the personal identification information they share via the Internet. We also advise parents to monitor these sites to be sure their child remains safe. Should information come to the school regarding a student sharing personal identification information and/or information concerning a student demeaning him/herself, the school will notify the parents and it will be the parents' responsibility to take action.
2. In order to protect each and every student as well as employees and the institution itself each student enrolled in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School is expected to treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect. The same is expected of each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in our schools. Public defamation of any of student, employee, or Catholic school by a student or parent/guardian is serious whether this be done orally, in writing, via email or on the web and whether it is done on a school computer or not and on school time or not. Therefore any student or parent found to be participating in any defamatory activity will be subject to disciplinary/responsive action by the school. This could include dismissal of the student whether the action is by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

(adopted 4-18-06)

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices (sexting) face disciplinary action.

Students should at no time be involved in texting during the course of the school day. Students involved in texting at school face disciplinary action.

Library

The library is open to students every school day during regular school hours. Teachers may send individual students or small groups of students to the library provided a scheduled class is not in the library, and the librarian is present. Classes attend the library each week during regularly scheduled class periods. Students are expected to speak in quiet tones in the library and be respectful and courteous to adults and other students present.

Damaged or Lost Books: If a book has been damaged, it must be returned to the librarian for proper repair. Please do not attempt to repair a book using household tape and/or glue. Deliberate damage to bar codes, labels, or books will result in disciplinary action. The cost of a book, which has been damaged beyond repair, will be paid for by the student. This must be done before any more books may be checked out of the library. Students who lose a book are required to pay for the lost book before any other books may be checked out of the library. Students will not receive report cards until books are returned or payment cleared.

Overdue Books: Circulation policies vary by grade level and will be provided at the beginning of the school year. Students may check out books for a pre-determined length of time. Books should be returned to the classroom basket or the library return box. When an **Overdue Notice** is given to the student, the book must be returned the following day. Failure to return the book will result in a fine of one food item per day (donations to Catholic Social Services) until the book is returned.

Alabama Virtual Library: www.avl.lib.al.us. The AVL provides all residents of Alabama with online access to essential information resources for the purpose of research. Holy Spirit students will learn to use databases and research tools that are appropriate to the elementary level. Access to the AVL is provided free of charge and is available from any computer: school, home, or library. We strongly encourage students to use this excellent resource for school projects and research.

E-Readers and E-Books: Students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 may use E-readers for personal reading during library period. E-Readers include devices specifically designed for reading such as Nook, Kindle, Kobo readers. Cell phones, tablets, iPads are NOT considered dedicated E-readers. E-Readers are for the sole purpose of reading, and students may not use them for games or internet access. Students playing games on their readers will lose the privilege of bringing them to the library. Students will not have access to the library wi-fi. All E-books must already be loaded onto the readers for use. It is the parent's responsibility to monitor their child's E-reader account. Holy Spirit School will not be responsible for damaged/lost E-readers. Students and parents must sign the school's E-reader policy before any devices may be brought to school.

Lockers/Cubbies

Lockers or Cubbies are provided for all students. Students are expected to care for their lockers/cubbies properly by keeping them neat and orderly. Students are not allowed to place stickers on or in their lockers/cubbies or to tape anything to them. Students are expected to care for their lockers properly. Only magnets may be used to hang items in lockers (NO tape or plastic tack allowed). Students are not allowed to place anything on the outside of the lockers. The administration reserves the right to inspect cubbies or lockers at any time. Misuse or damage to lockers will result in the loss of locker privileges.

Lost and Found

Parents are to label all supplies, personal articles, coats, hats, sweaters, lunch boxes, etc. If an item is lost, a student or parent may check the Lost and Found. Unclaimed items will be sent to Catholic Social Services.

Lunch/Milk Program

Students may bring a lunch from home or purchase hot lunches available daily through Christian Catering Company. **STUDENTS MAY NOT CHARGE LUNCH.** Milk is available every day in addition to the cost of lunch. Holy Spirit participates in the federal Special Milk Program, which provides free or reduced milk to those who qualify. This program assists the school financially, so if you think your family may qualify, please complete the appropriate forms found in your family registration packet or ask for a form from the main office.

Students, parents or school personnel may not bring fast food items and carbonated drinks into the cafeteria. Parents/ students may not use the microwave. Students are not permitted to take cups and get water/tea. Due to health reasons, students are not allowed to share food or drink with other students. A doctor's excuse must be provided for students who are allergic to milk.

Newsletter

The school sends home a monthly newsmagazine via email, as well as Friday reminders. Classroom teachers also send home weekly or monthly newsletters.

Parental Rights

The administration needs to be aware if a student's parents are divorced, separated, or if the student is in the custody or care of another person. If the parents are divorced, the custodial parent must provide the Principal a copy of the court order or agreement regarding custody and visitation rights. Any school information on said student will be shared with the parents accordingly. Whenever there is any change in the custodial rights of a parent or other custodian (whether temporary or permanent), the school must be notified immediately in writing; otherwise, the school will be entitled to continue to rely upon the original written arrangement that is on file. It is of great benefit to the child to have both parents involved in his/her education.

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO offers support in a variety of ways to the school family. The officers organize social functions and fundraising activities for parents, faculty/staff, and students. Parents are asked to volunteer their time and talents to serve on various committees that help the school and build community.

Permanent Records

A permanent record file will be maintained for each student containing academic transcripts, academic testing, and emergency information. The school will retain only these records in the permanent record when a student transfers.

Photo/Video Release

On occasion, students may be photographed or videotaped at school. The photos may be used in the newspaper, a magazine, or other publication, or for educational projects at school. Videos may be used for informational or educational purposes regarding the programs or curriculum at Holy Spirit School. **If you object or do not allow your child to participate in any photography/videography, please state this in writing to the director/school administration.**

Recess/Break

In order to provide the students with a short break from their academic studies, a recess time is part of the daily schedule. Students are allowed to eat a snack brought from home. Healthy snacks (granola bars, fresh fruit, raisins, pretzels, etc.) are preferred. No carbonated beverages are allowed. Due to health reasons, students are not allowed to share food or drink with other students. They are allowed unstructured time to play on the playground or run in the open area surrounding the playground. The older students take a short break in their classrooms. Also, when possible, teachers (Grades 5-6) take students outside for break.

Teachers explain all playground rules to their students at the beginning of the year. They also review these rules regularly throughout the school year. For safety purposes, students are expected to adhere to the following recess guidelines:

- After leaving the building for recess, students are to wait on the sidewalk for the previous grade to exit the playground.
- Play inside the fenced-in area and not by classroom windows.
- Refrain from throwing rubberized mulch, sticks, rocks, acorns, food, etc.
- Run only in the open areas of the playground, not around equipment.
- Keep hands to themselves. No undue roughness or horseplay. No tag, no holding on to one another, etc.
- Students are not to hang by their knees from any playground equipment.
- Students are not to practice karate moves, cheerleading jumps, etc. while on the hard ground surface.
- Use the slide one at a time. May not be face down going down the slide. Do not stand at the bottom of the slide. Do not try to walk up the slide.
- Use the swings safely. No pushing, no swinging sideways or twisting. No jumping off or walking in front of the swings.
- Students are to pick up any trash on the playground.
- Students should wait until the bell rings to enter the school for a bathroom break – unless it is an emergency.
- When the bell rings, students are to walk quietly to their lines outside the school doors so the next class may use the playground.
- Open snacks may not be brought into the building unless they are in a resealable and spill-proof container.
- Supervising adults are to correct students for inappropriate behavior. If a student does not heed the warning, the adult will give a student “time out” on the sidewalk.

Release of Records/Transfer of Records

All material in the student's file is confidential and shall be accessible only to the principal, the professional staff, the legal guardian, the parents and the student after his/her eighteenth birthday. If a parent or legal guardian requests that an individual who normally would have the legal right to the possession of the student's records not be allowed access to the student's records, it is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to furnish the principal legal documentation preventing the release of these records to that individual. A copy of the student's permanent record card and the original health record will be released to a receiving school after that school applies directly by mail to Holy Spirit and after all outstanding financial obligations owed to Holy Spirit School are cleared.

School Property

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Depending upon the nature of the situation, the student will also face disciplinary action.

School Safety

Asbestos

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires the inspection of every school in the United States, public and private, for asbestos-containing materials. An Asbestos Management Plan based on the inspection findings has been prepared and is available in the school office for your information.

Harassment

Holy Spirit Catholic School provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest or online) face disciplinary action.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, implicit or explicit request for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal comments, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Verbal harassment involves derogatory or threatening comments, jokes, or slurs about a person's gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, physical characteristics, or family.

Physical harassment involves unwanted physical contact, slapping, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, hazing and any intimidating interference with normal activity or movement.

Visual harassment involves derogatory, demeaning, inflammatory, or threatening material, such as posters, cartoons, writing, artwork, and gestures.

Retaliation involves intimidation, coercion, discrimination, or retaliation in any form against an individual who reports or threatens to report harassment, or who testifies, assists, or participates in any manner in an investigation.

The principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face disciplinary action, suspension, and/or expulsion.

For unsubstantiated incidents, (by adult in authority), parents of all involved students will be notified of allegations, investigation results, and recommended follow-up action.

For substantiated incidents, (by adult in authority), appropriate disciplinary consequences will be applied to the harasser. Parents of all involved students will be notified of the incident, results, and school follow-up actions.

Telephone

Parents may call the school office at any given time during the day. An answering machine is available when the office is closed. Messages are retrieved each morning. Neither students nor teachers will be called to the telephone during class hours except in an emergency. Important messages will be taken by the office staff and relayed to the person concerned.

Telephone Policy

- Students may not use the school telephone without the expressed permission of the office staff.
- Students may call home for a forgotten lunch or for illness. A student **may not** call home for forgotten homework, after school clothes, etc.
- Students **may not** use cell phones during school hours.

Textbooks

The textbooks are rented yearly. Fees are provided at check-in registration each year. Hardback textbooks must be covered. Contact paper or sticky covers are not permitted. No writing in rented textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost textbooks before any final reports or transcripts are provided.

Traffic Procedures

One of our highest priorities here at Holy Spirit is the safety of all of our children. Our morning and afternoon traffic flow plan is designed to unload and load children as safely and efficiently as possible. The plan can only work when everyone adheres to it. Please study the Traffic Flow Plan in our Student-Parent Handbook. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our children safe.

Morning Drop-Off:

- **Drop off your child along the sidewalk and proceed through the parking lot. This traffic line is for drop-off only.**
- Pull all the way down and do not stop your car in the area in front of the steps coming in to the school. This is a high-traffic walking area that does not need to be blocked at any time.
- Make sure that your child exits your car from the passenger side so that he/she does not come near the flow of traffic.
- PLEASE REFRAIN FROM PARKING AND GETTING OUT OF YOUR CAR IN THE DROP-OFF LANE. IF YOU NEED TO GO INTO THE SCHOOL, YOU MAY PARK IN ONE OF THE DIAGONAL SPACES AND ESCORT YOUR CHILD ACROSS THE STREET. PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN A DIAGONAL SPACE AND LET YOUR CHILD COME ACROSS UNACCOMPANIED.
- Drive slowly in all areas of the school.
- Please refrain from using your cell phone.

- If you have pets in your vehicle, please make sure they stay completely inside the vehicle.

Afternoon Pick-Up:

- Place a sign with family name in visible spot on dashboard or visor every day.
- Drive as far as you can in the pick-up line, collect your child, and proceed through the parking lot. **DO NOT PARK OR WALK UP TO GET YOUR CHILD.** This is a safety issue and it slows our traffic flow considerably.
- Have your child enter your car on the passenger side. Please do not park in the traffic line and get out of your car.
- If your child needs help with loading bookbags, etc., please allow the teacher on duty to assist him /her so that we may move the line as quickly as possible.
- After collecting your child, please stay in the pickup lane and follow the direction of the teacher on duty before pulling out into the moving exit lane.
- Do not hold conferences with teachers during dismissal time.
- Please be patient and courteous to our patrol personnel.
- Once your child has been picked up, please do not park and allow him/her to cross traffic to come back into the building for any reason.
- Drive slowly in all areas of the school.
- Please refrain from using your cell phone.
- If you have pets in your vehicle, please make sure they stay completely inside the vehicle.

Afternoon Pick-Up with Children in Both Buildings:

The following procedures should be followed when picking up children from both buildings:

Option 1--You may enter the high school line and pick up your middle school/high school student first, continue on to the Stop sign, wait to merge with the elementary line, and then proceed to the elementary school to pick up siblings who will be in their class lines. Do not wait at the curb between the two buildings. This is a traffic lane during afternoon pick-up.

Option 2--You may enter the elementary line and pick up all of your children together. The middle/high school student may walk over and wait under the awning of the elementary school building. Drive as far as you can in the pick-up line. Your middle/high school student will walk down the sidewalk to enter the vehicle with his/her sibling.

- Whichever option you choose, **always** exit through the elementary parking lot. Do not turn around in the parking spaces to exit the high school driveway.
- Elementary students will **only** be dismissed to older siblings if they are being picked up in a car that is leaving the campus. They are not allowed to walk over to the high school with their older siblings or to their cars in the high school parking areas. Please remember that teachers/coaches do not supervise younger siblings while older students are engaged in activities at the high school.
- Please do not park and walk up to get your children. This is a safety issue and it slows our traffic flow considerably. Do not park in the parking spots in front of the high school and wait for the students.
- **Do not move barriers.** They are placed there for the safety of our students. If you have to get to the area behind the school, you may do so once a faculty/staff member has removed the barrier.

- Drive slowly in all areas of the school.

We certainly realize that our traffic plan requires much patience and courtesy on everyone's part. With the help of all of our faculty and staff members, our traffic line does move very efficiently. We certainly appreciate all of our parents and carpool drivers who cooperate with our traffic plan. Together, we can see to it that our children are safe as they arrive at school in the morning and depart in the afternoon. Your support is most appreciated.

At the beginning of each school year, please notify the teacher in writing as to who is allowed to pick up your child. If there is a change at any time in your preference, please notify the office or your child's teacher in writing. We will not release any student to anyone who has not been previously designated by the parent without written permission from the parent. Those students who have not been picked up within 10 minutes after the dismissal bell will gather on the front steps under the supervision of staff. Students not picked up within the next 10 minutes will go to the After-School Care Program. Parents will be responsible for the payment of such service.

Traffic Flow Pattern: When entering in front of the church between 7:00am – 8:00am and 2:30pm – 3:30pm the RIGHT DRIVE IS ENTER ONLY and the LEFT DRIVE IS EXIT ONLY. We ask all parents to form three lanes of traffic as you enter the parking lot in front of the elementary school. Parents who are dropping off or picking up students in grades K-3 only are asked to keep to the left two lanes. All other parents are asked to keep to the right (outer) lane. The three lanes of traffic should proceed simultaneously into the parking lot. The left two lanes will turn left at a designated area in front of the steps of the school. The right (outer) lane will proceed to the grades 4-6 pickup area of the parking lot. Parents who are dropping off or picking up students in grades 4-6 are asked to keep to the right (outer) lane until they pass the turn in front of the steps then move into the two left lanes designated as the grades 4-6 pickup lanes. An alternating advancement will occur in front of the main entrance to the school for grades K-3, where one lane will form. An alternating advancement will also occur in front of the awning of the school for grades 4-6, where one lane will form.

*Parents who pick up children in Preschool turn left in front of the church and continue around the far left side of the church to the preschool parking lot. Please stop to make sure no traffic is coming in the exit lane. If you have children in elementary and/or middle/high school, please pick up from those buildings first and then proceed to the Preschool building as the traffic plan indicates.

****FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS AND PARENTS PLEASE REFRAIN FROM PARKING AND WALKING UP TO PICK UP YOUR CHILDREN DURING DISMISSAL.**

*****SEE TRAFFIC FLOW PATTERN IN BACK OF HANDBOOK.**

Rainy Day Dismissal: Traffic flow follows the same as for regular day dismissal. A walkie-talkie system is used to call students to the front for dismissal. Parents are asked to remain in their cars and not to park or enter the school building to pick up students. Do not stop in front of the steps. Teachers or aides will escort students to their cars if necessary. If you wish to pick up your child from the building, you are asked to do so prior to the beginning of the dismissal process which begins at 2:50pm on rainy days (12:50pm or 2:05pm). Display family placard on dashboard or visor.

Early Day Dismissal: The same procedure for regular day dismissal will be used on 1:00pm and 2:15pm dismissal days. The final dismissal bell will ring at 1:00pm, or at 2:15pm every Monday.

Visitors

All visitors **MUST** report to the main office upon arrival, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge. No visitors are allowed in the classrooms without prior approval. They may not visit the classrooms before or after lunch. They must wait in the hallway outside of the cafeteria.

Withdrawal from School

If a student withdraws from school, the parent or guardian must notify the office. Notification must be in writing and indicate the date that the student will withdraw. On the student's last day of school, the principal will issue a withdrawal clearance. In addition, all obligations must be cleared before records are released. Parents will be held accountable for the enrollment contract unless the principal deems it necessary to do otherwise.

Social Media Parent Agreement

As a parent or guardian, I recognize that the use of the Internet comes with a corresponding responsibility to use it wisely both for myself and my child. I also recognize that sending my child to a Catholic school is a privilege that comes with the corresponding duty to act in a Christian way towards others. I therefore pledge to refrain from using the internet in any way that might disparage the school's administration or its teachers. If I have a problem with school personnel, I will take my complaints directly to the school's administration and not broadcast vile, hateful or disparaging remarks about the teacher(s) or administration. Broadcasting any such vile, hateful or disparaging remarks is an indication of my intent to withdraw my child or children from the school and the principal has my permission to act accordingly.

Policy Statement from the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama
Adopted July 9, 2018

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

The administration reserves the right to amend the policies and procedures as outlined in the **Parent/Student Handbook**. Parents will be notified of any changes by mail or a note will be sent home.

I/We, the undersigned, have read and agree to be governed by the **Parent/Student Handbook** for Holy Spirit Catholic Elementary School for the 2019-2020 school year. I/We understand fully the regulations contained therein and recognize the right of the school to establish rules and provide for their enforcement.

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

***This form MUST be signed and returned to the school.**