

# SACRED HEART SCHOOL

## PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK



**Sacred Heart Elementary School**  
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## **DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT**

In order to assist the Catholic Church of Pittsburgh to participate more fully in the teaching of Christ and to aid the bishop in his own task as Shepherd and teacher of this local Church, the Secretariat for Education has been established to proclaim the gospel, the teaching of the Church, to fashion a people in whom the Word of God has taken root, to provide the coordination and administration of those programs and services which foster a living, conscious, informed, and active faith.

The vision for the Department for Catholic Schools is to promote and sustain Catholic schools of unparalleled quality, which integrate faith into every aspect of life and culture, producing graduates who continually strive for human and Christian perfection.

## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

As a Catholic school, our primary purpose is to form students in the values of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Catholic schools are distinctive religious education institutions operated as programs of the Catholic Church; they are not private schools but are administered and supported by the sponsoring parish(es) and the diocese. Attending a Catholic school is a privilege, not a right. While academic excellence and involvement in extracurricular activities, e. g. sports, clubs, etc., are important, fidelity to the Catholic identity of the school is the fundamental priority. We have the responsibility to make certain that Catholic values and moral integrity permeate every facet of our school's program. In all questions involving faith, morals, faith teaching, and Catholic law, the final determination rests with the diocesan bishop. In full partnership with you and your family, we are committed to uphold the principles which underlie our presence in the community as a Catholic school.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF SACRED HEART ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The administration, faculty, and staff of Sacred Heart Elementary School believe that the primary purpose of Catholic Education is the formation of the intellect with the sound foundation in the Catholic faith.

It is the natural right and obligation of parents to be the primary educators of their children. Sacred Heart Elementary School assists and enables parents to fulfill this obligation. Sacred Heart Elementary School provides the spiritual, academic, and social dimensions of a formal Catholic education. The students learn through instruction and example to participate fully in their faith. They are encouraged to accept and apply the Gospel message to their own lives and to their roles as members of the community. The students are expected to realize their obligation of service and responsibility to that community.

Academic experiences are based on sound educational principles consistent with the developmental stages of each student. The uniqueness of each student and the cultural heritage of his/her family is recognized and respected within the development of the curriculum. A conscientious effort is made to treat each person in a way that will allow each to grow into the person he/she is called to be.

## **MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION**

Sacred Heart Elementary School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Middle States accreditation is an expression of confidence in our school's mission, goals and objectives, performance and resources and a public validation of the quality education that is happening here. The Middle States Evaluation is an ongoing process requiring the submission of updated plans every three years. After ten years the school is reevaluated for continued accreditation. Sacred Heart School was in reaccredited in May of 2001 and is currently participating in a new reaccreditation protocol to be completed in the fall of 2011.

## **CATECHESIS**

Catechetics or religious education is the center of the Catholic school. A conscious effort is made to create a Christ-centered atmosphere by stressing Christian values in the classrooms and throughout the school and by integrating catechetics into every aspect of the school curriculum.

Our belief in Jesus has drawn us to this community. Our beliefs are expressed in and strengthened by daily communal prayer. Students develop skills and a love for the Church's daily worship. Prayer includes morning prayer and simple prayers before and after lunch and at the end of the day.

The children are introduced to the lives of the saints, feasts, and liturgical seasons, anniversaries of historical figures and peacemakers of our time, and civil holidays that have significance for children.

Faith experiences are an integral part of catechetics. Opportunities for liturgy, reconciliation, stations of the cross, classroom prayer and service are included. Community is at the heart of Catholic education, not simply as a concept to be learned, but as a reality to be lived.

The principal, along with the pastor and parish religious education director, works with the teachers in the religious development and sacramental preparation of the students. The parish provides sacramental preparation programs each year for parents of all eligible children of the parish.

## **DAILY PRACTICES AND POLICIES**

### **ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION**

Sacred Heart Elementary School admits students of any race or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies, athletic or other school administered programs. Children who are not Catholic are expected to participate in religion classes and to attend all religious functions of the school/church.

Beginning in October, registrations are accepted for the next school year. The children of parishioners who are active members of Sacred Heart Parish receive first preference in registration until December 31. Consideration is then given to other applicants according to the date of application with preference given to brothers and sisters of current students and then to Catholic families from parishes without schools.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

A student entering Kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1. Official certificates of birth and baptism are required at the time of registration. Students entering Level 1 are required to take a readiness test and must be six years of age by September 1. Those registering for levels 2-8 must fulfill the age requirement for the desired grade and present letters of recommendation from the previous school. A mini-battery will be administered to all new students to verify placement. Grade level and academic group determinations are made on the basis of school records.

Immunization records must be complete before any child may enter school. The requirements are as follows:

- 4 doses of tetanus (1 dose after 4th birthday; 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age)
  - 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose must be after the 4th birthday) 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
  - 3 doses of oral polio vaccine
  - 2 doses of measles vaccine after the first birthday (or proof by blood test of having had measles)
  - 2 doses of mumps vaccine after the first birthday (or proof by physician's letter of having had mumps)
  - 1 dose of rubella vaccine after the first birthday (or proof by blood test of having had German measles)
  - 3 properly spaced doses of hepatitis B vaccine (K-4).
  - 2 doses of varicella for all students or written statement from physician/designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity
- Grades 7-12:   1 dose of tetanus.diphtheria/pertussis (Tdap)  
                  1 dose of meningitis vaccine (MCV4)

### **RIGHTS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gives full rights to each parent, unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, state's statute or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights. Such an order is to be on file in the school and those persons responsible for the child(ren) are to be informed of the circumstances. Every effort is made to keep the non-custodial parent apprised of the progress of the child(ren) through reports, report cards and parent/teacher conferences.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is established by the pastor, principal, and School Board and is reviewed annually. Three tuition options are offered to meet family needs: 1) One payment in full, 2) Two payments, 3) SMART Tuition Plan. Parents who register a student in the school enter into a contractual obligation with the school. They are expected to make payments promptly according to the plan chosen or a late fee is added. Families whose children are enrolled late may receive an extension from the April tuition deadline at the time of registration.

Prompt payments are required for the school to operate in a fiscally responsible manner. A late fee will be assessed monthly on all delinquent accounts. Families experiencing difficulties which affect tuition payments must contact the parish office to address their situation. Families with a three month delinquency will have ten (10) days to bring their account current. Failure to meet this payment obligation could result in dismissal from school. Children of families with a delinquent account will not receive a report card nor will they have access to the online reporting on grades (GradeBook). No grades or records will be sent for eighth graders or transferring students until tuition is paid.

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

Scholarship money is available for families that qualify. The Private School Aid Service (PSAS) application is used. The applications, which are assessed by an independent evaluator are due by March 15th, and are used for Scholastic Opportunities Scholarships, Bishop's Education Fund, the SHES Endowment Fund, and the SHES Annual Fund Appeal. Application forms are available in the school office.

## **FUNDRAISING**

The Diocesan policy for funding elementary Catholic schools calls for each school to have fundraising activities to generate enough income to keep tuition rates at 60% of the total cost. School parents are expected to participate in these fundraising activities to the best of their ability through monetary donations, purchases and/or volunteer work.

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN**

The purpose of the SEP of Diocese of Pittsburgh is to take reasonable measures to assure that adults who have contact with minors (1) are committed to providing a safe environment for children and youth and (2) are capable of identifying and preventing abuse of children and (3) have no personal history of behavior that would be a threat to children.

Adults (18 or older) volunteering with children at Sacred Heart School must be compliant in the requirements of the safe environment policy:

- \* Complete application [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org) which processes the PA State Police Criminal Record Clearance
- \* Read and sign the Code of Pastoral Conduct
- \* Receive the Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance
- \* Attend the Protecting God's Children Program.

## CURRICULUM

Sacred Heart offers a strong traditional curriculum. In the "Continuous Growth Program" of the Diocese of Pittsburgh students advance through a defined curriculum according to individual need and abilities. In addition to meeting all the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the curriculum gives special attention to the integration of Gospel values.

Curriculum guidelines for all subject areas are provided through the Department for Catholic Schools. The guidelines endeavor to guide and give continuity to the teaching/learning process and to meet individual needs of students. All textbooks are selected from texts, recommended by the Curriculum Directors of the diocese, that have a philosophy consistent with the Catholic philosophy of education and presentation of subject matter which is sequential, consistent, and adaptable to the Continuous Growth Program.

Religious education is the center of the Catholic school. A conscious effort is made to create a Christ-centered atmosphere by stressing Christian values throughout the school and by integrating religion into every aspect of the curriculum. The administration, faculty, and staff are deeply interested in and involved in developing spiritual values and good moral conduct. Priests, teachers, and principal actively participate in the planning and implementation of a viable religion program. The Diocesan human sexuality program, the Catholic Vision of Love, is incorporated into religion classes in Levels 5-8. Formal religion instruction is enhanced by faith experiences, including involvement in school masses, prayer services, sacramental programs, and service-learning experiences.

Reading is taught in each level in small groups based on reading competence. In the primary levels, reading is taught twice daily. In levels 6-8, middle school students receive intensive instruction in literature.

Mathematics is taught daily in small groups based on competence. In levels 6-8, students meeting established criteria may take Transitional Algebra and Algebra.

## COURSE OFFERINGS

The following disciplines are included in the Sacred Heart School curriculum:

Religion  
Reading: (K-3) Phonics  
Vocabulary  
Comprehension  
Literature  
Mathematics: Concepts  
Computation  
Problem Solving  
Pre-Algebra (6, 7-8)  
Algebra (8)  
English  
Spelling/Penmanship  
Science/Health  
Social Studies  
Spanish (1-8)  
Computer Science (1-8)  
Library Science  
Music  
Art  
Physical Education

## **SCHEDULE**

7:40	School doors open. All students enter via front door
7:45	Students move to cafeteria. Breakfast is available.
8:05	Students must be in classrooms for attendance, lunch count, etc.
8:10	Late bell
8:15	Opening prayers
8:20	First class
8:45	Morning preschool begins.
11:15	AM Preschool dismissal
11:30	AM Kindergarten dismissal
11:20	Lunch: Levels 6-7-8
11:30	Lunch: Level K (full day)
11:40	Lunch: Levels 4-5
11:45	Lunch: Level 1-3
2:45	Full day preschool dismissal
2:40	Closing prayers/announcements
2:45	End of last class (K-8)
3:00	Dismissal

## **COMPUTER**

Computer instruction is essential in today's educational process. A computer is a basic tool for teaching logical thinking and problem-solving, creative writing, communication, the handling of information, and many other aspects of the curriculum. At Sacred Heart computers are available in the primary classrooms as tutorials. Formal instruction in the computer lab begins in third grade where the students learn keyboarding. At fourth grade level, students learn word processing, data base, and spreadsheets, which they master in subsequent grades. Inspiration software is available as an aid to visual learning.

In Level 8 computer instruction is integrated into various subject areas. Before students in any grade are permitted to use the internet, guidelines for its use are sent home along with an Internet Use Contract, which must be signed by parents and students and returned to the school office.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Every class is permitted field trips during the year. Each student must have a signed permission slip before he/she is permitted to participate. Transportation, in accordance with diocesan directives, is provided by bus, and a fee is charged to cover costs. Eighth level students may not participate in the end-of-year field trip unless tuition is paid in full.

Guidelines for both students and chaperones are in effect for each field trip. A copy of the student guidelines will be sent home by the teacher so that the parent may help reinforce the guidelines presented. Parents acting as chaperones on field trips must have all clearances required by the Safe Environment Program for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

## **HOMEWORK**

A reasonable amount of homework, according to grade level, is of great educational value and is assigned every day. Assignments are not always written. Study and memory work are frequently assigned. Homework is assigned on a regular basis to enrich school experiences, provide practice and review, develop good study habits, teach responsibility, and foster originality. Parents can assist students with home assignments in the following ways:

1. Provide a quiet spot away from the television, telephone, or other distracting elements;
2. Check to see what was accomplished during the designated study time regarding completeness, neatness, and correctness;
3. Be willing to listen to reading, spelling, and math facts and to explain procedures, but never do the assignment;
4. Consult the teacher if the child uses the excuse "no homework" too often.

If a child cannot complete an assignment, the parent should inform the teacher by written note stating the reason. Arrangements should be made as soon as possible to make up incomplete assignments. It is recommended that the children spend fifteen minutes in homework, study, or reading for each grade in school; up to 15 minutes for kindergarten; 15 for 1st; 30 for 2nd; 45 for 3rd; one hour for 4th; etc., up to 2 hours for 8th. This time is especially needed in the upper grades when the students are doing advanced math, Spanish, and literature. If your child cannot work for an extended period, the time can be broken into smaller periods, such as before and after dinner.

At the discretion of the teacher, homework is not generally assigned on weekends. In case of a student's absence, requests for homework should be made before 8:30 a.m.

## **LIBRARY**

The library is an essential element in the development of lifelong learning skills for students. A primary objective of education is to learn how to identify, locate, organize and present needed information in a clear, concise and persuasive manner. As technologies change, students need to develop skills to manage complex information. The school library program is the vehicle that provides opportunities for students to achieve these skills and to foster a lifelong interest in knowledge. A research process is taught that provides students with specific strategies and tools to enable them to become independent learners. Skills focus on locating and evaluating information in varying formats.

The school library is open from 8:10 a.m. to 2:50 p.m. Monday through Friday. In Levels 1-3, books are checked out for one week and a fine of two cents a day is charged for overdue books. In Levels 4-8, books are checked out for two weeks, and the fine is five cents a day. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by students.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

The students at Sacred Heart Elementary benefit from Pennsylvania's Act 195 and 90 whereby the school places orders for textbooks and instructional materials of a non-religious nature. The PA Department of Education pays for these textbooks and materials to be used in the education of children. A parent form with permission to have their child use these books is kept on file in the school office. Students are responsible for the condition of the books given to them for their use. All textbooks are to be covered but *not* with contact paper or other materials that damage the book when removed. Books taken to and from school are to be placed in a book bag. Students are required to pay for items that are damaged or lost.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

For the convenience of families, supply lists are available each June for the following year. They are also posted on the school web site. Students provide their own school supplies but are expected to comply with individual teacher requirements. Items not easily available elsewhere, such as primary tablets, student planners, homework folders, etc. will be sold at school. A small number of basic items will be available for sale at school.

## **TESTING**

Standardized tests, textbook tests, and teacher-made tests are administered to students throughout the year. These assessments require students to synthesize information, apply what they have learned and demonstrate their understanding of what has been taught.

Readiness Tests: Students entering kindergarten are administered the Bergance Standardized Test to determine if they meet common expectations for children their age. At the end of the year they take the Metropolitan Readiness Test to determine readiness for first grade.

Achievement Tests: Students in grades 2-8 are administered the Terra Nova Standardized Achievement Tests to measure progress from one year to another. A component of the program is the InView Cognitive Abilities Test that helps to define the ability of a student in relationship to the results on the achievement tests. To help the testing to reflect the best that your children can do, please see that they get adequate rest the week of the tests. If a child should be absent due to illness, every attempt will be made to enable the child to make-up the tests. However, since the tests must be mailed on the last scheduled test day, make-up testing often necessitates taking more tests daily than is ideal. To prevent this, we ask that you do not schedule trips or appointments during the time of standardized testing.

Performance Assessment: Each child in grade K-8 participates in a performance assessment. This task allows students to respond to open-ended questions and to demonstrate the ability to use higher order thinking skills.

Teacher-Made Tests: Teachers frequently give tests which they construct to measure, evaluate, and determine what students have learned.

Textbook Tests: Tests which accompany the textbooks are administered at the conclusion of a chapter and/or unit to test the objectives covered by the text.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Sacred Heart offers an After School Program from 3:10 to 6:00 p.m. for parents of those children (K-8) who need child care. This service is available on a daily, weekly, or yearly basis for an hourly rate which is subject to change. An additional late fee is charged for those children not picked up by 6:00 p.m. At the end of each month parents receive a summary of program fees for each child. Parents are asked to pay in full within two weeks of billing. Refer to After School Program Handbook for billing policy.

The staff consists of teachers, parents and area college students. The general format of the program strives to balance the children's need for relaxation with the need for order. Parents should contact the school office for further information.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE**

The Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP) for students in grades K-5 and the Student Assistance Program (SAP) for students 6-8 are mandated in Pennsylvania by Act 211 of 1990. These comprehensive programs exist to identify and obtain help for students experiencing serious academic or behavioral problems. The team members are the principal and a committee of faculty members who have received special training. The programs exist in order to promote the growth and development of the child.

Referrals for the programs are made by faculty and/or parents. Once a referral has been received by the team, classroom teachers are asked to complete a form which helps identify the behaviors. The team then makes recommendations as to what is needed to help the student, and conveys this information to classroom teachers and parents/guardians. If necessary, after consultation with parents, appropriate referrals are made to outside agencies. Team members maintain confidentiality with regard to all information pertaining to students and their families.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM**

Sacred Heart has a Conflict Resolution Program designed to help students develop peacemaking skills, both to further their own social development and to uphold the Christian atmosphere of Sacred Heart. Students are trained in communication and conflict resolution skills and meet periodically to practice these skills, using common situations which may be encountered. When disputes occur between students, they are offered the opportunity to meet with two members of the Conflict Resolution Team to work out the problem. It is hoped that the experience will enable students to develop positive relationships.

## **CAFETERIA**

**Breakfast:** Because of the importance of good nutrition for learning as well as health, Sacred Heart offers a breakfast program each day between 7:45 and 8:05 a.m. The children may choose from a variety of menu items. Those eligible for free or reduced lunches may receive free or reduced breakfast.

**Lunch:** All students must bring or buy a lunch. Those bringing lunch may purchase milk. Lunches can be purchased daily or weekly. Students who forget lunches or tickets may borrow a ticket from the office or homeroom teachers. Those in Levels K-3 repay with a ticket or the price of a ticket. Those in Levels 4-8 pay an additional 25-cent fee. Parents of primary students will be notified of late accounts. Students in Levels 4-8 will be warned and then given a lunch detention.

**Rules:** The use of good manners is encouraged and, therefore, the following cafeteria rules are to be observed:

- ◇ Remain seated unless disposing of garbage, etc
- ◇ Always walk while in the cafeteria.
- ◇ Refrain from shouting or screaming; enjoy the company of those nearby.
- ◇ Be courteous and respectful to all those helping during the lunch period.
- ◇ Do not take food from the cafeteria.

The cafeteria is operated in accordance with U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA-related activity should write to:

USDA  
Director of Office of Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.  
Washington, D.C 20250-9410

Each family must assist by serving five turns in the cafeteria or by sending payment for a substitute; \$15 for each turn / \$75 total. A Parent Lunch Duty calendar is prepared monthly. In addition, adults can volunteer for additional days in the cafeteria or on the playground.

## **GIFTED PROGRAMS**

Each local school district offers programs in their schools for gifted students. All except the Wilkinsburg School District provide busing from the students' home schools to and from the gifted center. The specific eligibility requirements vary from school district to school district. In general, the student must score in the top percentiles on the standardized achievement tests administered each year in the school, be achieving well in classes as shown by report card grades and teacher recommendations, and, finally, obtain at least 130 on an individually-administered cognitive abilities test.

Each spring the principal and teachers review the most recent Terra Nova and In-View scores to determine the eligibility of high-achieving students. The teachers may ask the parents if they wish to have their child considered for the program and parents are welcome to inquire about their children's eligibility. The children must be able to keep up with work here while missing school for a whole or half-day, depending on the school district's program.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

A nurse practitioner is assigned to serve at Sacred Heart on most Mondays. The nurse checks immunization records, updates health records, and performs routine screenings according to the following schedule:

Height, weight, and vision testing are done each year at all levels;

Hearing is checked for all new students and for those in Levels K, 1, 2, 4, and 6.

Scoliosis screening is done at Levels K, 6 and 7.

Physical examinations are required in Levels K and 7. Forms are sent home the preceding summer so that, if desired, the exam can be completed on a scheduled visit to the child's own doctor; otherwise, a physical examination is scheduled by our own nurse practitioner.

Students in Level 6 complete a self-administered health questionnaire which is reviewed with the school nurse practitioner.

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Dental screenings are scheduled in Levels K, 3, and 7 and are handled in much the same way. A dental hygienist visits the school to check those children who have not been checked by their own dentist. She also teaches dental health lessons in grades K, 1, 3, and 7.

### **Accident and Injury**

In case of accident or illness at school, parents are contacted to take their child home, to the doctor, or hospital. It is important for your child's safety and comfort, as well as the effective operation of the office, that emergency information needed to locate parents is available for each child and that this information is kept up-to-date by parents.

Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the principal, school nurse, or teachers to make them aware of the problem. All cases of head lice should be reported at once.

### **Illness**

It is often difficult to decide if you should keep a child at home when he/she complains of illness. One objective sign is an elevated temperature. It is recommended that a child be kept home from school until the temperature has remained normal (below 100) for 24 hours. Another consideration is whether the child is too sick to profit from instruction.

### **Medication**

Whenever possible, medicine is to be given at home, and parents are to request that physician adjust the schedule for administration so that it can be given before and after school hours. The Diocese has established guidelines regarding the administration of medication during school hours:

1. The medication must be delivered to the school by a responsible adult along with a physician's written request for distribution by school personnel.
2. Medication brought to school must be in a container labeled by a pharmacist or doctor. The label must include the student's name, the name of the physician, date of prescription, dosage, and frequency of administration.
3. Parents must sign an Indemnity Agreement which has been prepared by the Legal Office and distributed through the school office.

### **Asbestos Notice**

Pursuant to the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act (AHERA), our school was inspected by a certified AHERA Inspector. A Management Plan was developed and submitted to the State of Pennsylvania Department of Education. A copy of our Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan is on file in the school office.

The school is re-inspected by a certified AHERA Inspector every three (3) years. The maintenance and custodial staff has received two (2) hours of Awareness Training and conducts a periodic surveillance twice a year, in December and June.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING**

Psychological testing is available by parent request or at the recommendation of the teacher in consultation with the principal. Generally, testing is done to discover the cause of learning problems. Results are formally reported to parents, principal and teachers along with a list of recommendations made by the psychologist. THIS INFORMATION IS KEPT CONFIDENTIAL and not shared with anyone without parent permission.

### **INTERMEDIATE UNIT - REMEDIAL READING (TITLE I)**

The Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit #2 offers the Title I remedial program to provide additional assistance to students who are not demonstrating grade level proficiency in reading. Referrals for the program are based on teacher referrals, standardized test results, and parent approval. Alternate strategies are planned for students in accordance with individual instructional goals and in support of the classroom curriculum to help students develop mastery of basic skills.

### **SPEECH PROGRAM**

The Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver Intermediate Unit #2 offers speech therapy services at Sacred Heart which provide for the diagnosis and remediation of speech, language, and hearing problems. Students are seen individually or in a group, usually for 1/2 hour sessions once a week during the school day. The initial screening occurs in September, although children may be referred at any time during the school year. The speech/language clinician works closely with the classroom teacher. Parental involvement is strongly encouraged to insure success.

### **RESOURCE ROOM**

Sacred Heart School has a Resource Room to assist students who are performing below grade level in reading and/or math. Children are instructed daily by the Resource Room teacher in small groups. Using alternative texts and materials and delivering instruction in a small group setting enables the teacher to maximize learning for these students and to provide additional learning support to those who need it. Students are referred to the program through standardized test scores and teacher recommendation and enter the program after consultation with parents.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

It is important that we know the ordinary means by which each child arrives and departs daily. A note is to be sent when a change is necessary. For reasons of safety and insurance, each child is to ride his/her assigned bus. No child is permitted to ride a bike, skateboard, scooter or roller blades to or from school. If a student is not on the bus roster, he/she is not allowed to ride the bus, even if a parent writes a note. This directive from the bus companies is made for insurance reasons. Students are dropped off only at assigned stops.

#### **Bus**

Students who live more than 1.5 radius from school are eligible to be bused to school. Those who live along a route that has been declared "hazardous" are also eligible for busing. The Board of Education Transportation Division determines "hazardous route" claims. The student transportation policies and procedures of the local school district responsible for busing students are applicable to all students in Pennsylvania.

Students are expected to behave properly while on the bus and to remain in their seats at all times. This insures their safety and the safety of others. If improper conduct occurs, the driver prepares a report which is sent home to alert the parents to the problem. If the behavior persists, the bus company has the right to ask the school district to recommend that a student be removed from the bus. The principal will support this recommendation. This will result in the student losing bus privileges. The parent will then be responsible for transportation arrangements.

The following bus rules are to be obeyed:

1. Do not ask to ride a bus other than the one to which you have been assigned or ask the driver to let you off at another stop. Only the Department of Transportation can authorize such changes.
2. Observe the same conduct as in the classroom. Loud talking, etc. may distract the driver, prevent students from hearing instructions, or prevent the driver from hearing signals from emergency vehicles.
3. Remain seated at all times until the correct stop has been reached. If the driver has assigned seats, these seat assignments are to be honored.
4. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
5. In vehicles where seat belts are available, use them properly.
6. Be courteous; use no profane language.
7. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.
8. Keep the bus clean.
9. Cooperate with the driver.
10. Do not put anything out the window of the bus.
11. Do not be destructive.
12. The driver is in charge. Any directions in addition to the above are to be followed.

### **Car/Walkers**

Please exercise caution when driving near school. When approaching Sacred Heart by car during a.m. arrival, parents are asked to move clockwise in the direction from Walnut to Emerson Streets. Do not approach the school on the opposite side of the street from the front entrance, as this creates an unsafe crossing for children.

Parents stopping at the school office at the beginning and end of the school day should drop children off a distance from the main entrance so as to allow buses access to the front door. In addition, please avoid parking your car close to the corners of Walnut and Emerson Streets. Buses need room to navigate the turn.

Bus riders are dismissed shortly before walkers and car riders. Teachers escort the car riders and walkers to meet parents on Walnut St. at the front of Sacred Heart Church. Preschool and kindergarten children are dismissed at the ramp on Walnut Street.

Please park your car and walk to the church grounds to meet your child/children. Teachers are not permitted to dismiss children to parked cars or cars idling in the street. Parents cannot park on Emerson Street during dismissal. However, the church driveway on Shady Avenue can be used as a pick-up lane for car riders.

The teacher needs to see the person who is picking up your children. Teachers are not permitted to dismiss children to adults standing far down the street.

Walkers, unaccompanied by an adult, must go to the corner before crossing the street.

If you cannot leave your car because you have a younger child with you, or for any other reason, please drive to the front entrance of the school ONCE THE BUSES HAVE LEFT that area and meet your child there. Children waiting at the front door at 3:10 will go to the cafeteria and report to the After School staff.

Please encourage your child/children to show respect for the lawns and gardens around Sacred Heart Church. Discourage play around the flower gardens, in and between bushes, and on the steps and railings of the church buildings.

The children who attend DePaul School for Hearing and Speech, our neighbors on Alder Street, are dismissing children at the same time as Sacred Heart. Extra caution is advised.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

### **ALTAR SERVERS**

Students in Levels 5 through 8 who are members of Sacred Heart Parish have the privilege of serving on the altar. Altar servers receive training under the direction of a parish priest and the parish sacristan. Altar servers are expected to fulfill assigned responsibilities and be on time. They are to be in the sacristy 10 minutes before the Liturgical Service.

### **ART ATTACK**

An after-school arts program, ART ATTACK, coordinated by the Educational Enrichment Committee of the PTG, is designed to enrich the arts at Sacred Heart. At the beginning of each semester a schedule of classes is distributed with registration forms. Generally, classes in art, etc. are offered at two instructional levels. The classes provide outlets for the students' interests and talents, and the fees provide stipends for instructors and enrichment materials.

### **BAND/PRIVATE PIANO LESSONS**

Band instruction is available for interested students from Levels 4-8. The Diocesan Program determines the monthly fee annually. Instruments can be rented with the option to buy. Small group lessons are provided one period a week and the band practices together weekly. Class periods are rotated so the same subjects are not missed too often. However, it remains the responsibility of the student to make up missed class work. A meeting is held at the beginning of each school year to provide more information for interested parents.

Private piano lessons are provided during school hours. Classroom teachers are consulted regarding what class period will be missed when the student is taking a piano lesson. It is the responsibility of the student to make up any class work that is missed.

### **CHESS CLUB**

Students from Levels K-8 are invited to take beginner and advanced chess classes. Classes typically are given in six-week sessions in the fall and in the spring. The Chess Club meets after school once a week from 3:15 to 5:00 to learn the rules and strategies of the game. Students pair-off against one another to sharpen their skills. Learning the game of chess improves problem-solving skills, discipline, memory and mathematical skills. Volunteers are always welcome to assist the students.

### **FAMILY ENRICHMENT**

The Educational Enrichment Committee of the PTG plans activities for evenings and weekends to provide enriching learning experiences for the enjoyment of the whole family. Activities include group outings to plays and museums, a family fitness event, family fun events, trips to areas of interest and speakers. Suggestions are welcome.

### **MATH 24**

Math 24 is offered to students in Levels 4-8 to promote interest in mathematics. Interested students meet once a week at lunchtime to compete in pairs in the mental math game. Class competitions produce one finalist per division to attend a diocesan competition in the spring.

## **SAFETY PATROL**

The Safety Patrol, a member of AAA, is comprised of interested volunteers in Levels 7 and 8 who are motivated by service to others and school safety. Their selection is based on parent consent, and willingness to strive for the following qualities: leadership, reliability, good attendance, punctuality, observance to rules, courtesy, respect for others, and an understanding of the limits of their authority.

Safety Patrol members help students find their buses, assist them in boarding/debarking in a safe and orderly manner, and monitor students crossing at intersections. Members do not monitor conduct on the bus (this is the bus drivers' responsibility). The job of the Corner Patrol is to usher students/parents across the street when traffic is stopped. The Safety Patrol is a serious responsibility. All students are expected to respect patrol members.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Student Council consists of approximately twenty students from Levels 5-8. Students desiring to be on the Student Council write an essay, receive teacher endorsements, and make a speech to fellow students. Finally, elections are held in individual grades and representatives chosen. At the first meeting of the new council, four officers are chosen, who plan and run meetings with the help of the faculty advisors.

The organizational goal is to foster esprit de corps through student planning and implementation of school activities. The Student Council sponsors social events, such as dances, pep rallies, and talent shows. The students plan for school outreach activities to benefit the community and organize fundraisers for various charities and mission efforts.

## **SACRED HEART CHORISTERS**

The Sacred Heart Church Choristers is a children's choir for students in grades 2-5. The program is committed to fostering knowledgeable participation in the liturgy and an active prayer life. Areas of focus include: music theory, ear training, sight singing, fundamentals of liturgy and involvement in the prayer life of the community.

## **SPORTS PROGRAM**

### **Basketball**

Under the auspices of the Athletic Association, basketball is offered at all levels, beginning with instructional in the primary grades and continuing with separate boys' and girls' development, junior varsity and varsity teams at upper levels. Fund raising for all teams is provided almost entirely through refreshments sold at games and during the summer programs and tournaments. A general organizational meeting is held in the fall to acquaint parents and students with the basketball program.

### **Cross Country**

In the fall, students in Levels 5-8 can participate in Cross Country. A few times each week, students run a two-mile course set in local parks. Meets are set up with area schools and at the end of the season with a diocesan competition ending the season. As well as improving fitness, the club gives the students the opportunity to interact socially.

### **Volleyball**

The Sacred Heart Girls Volleyball program is open to girls in Levels 5-8. Junior varsity and varsity teams participate in the Pittsburgh Diocesan Volleyball League beginning in late August. Because of the early start to the season, open gyms are scheduled in the summer with practices beginning in August. The goal of the program is to develop volleyball skills and teamwork.

## **Soccer**

Sacred Heart partners with St. Raphael School to offer soccer with a developmental team, a junior varsity, and a varsity team. The soccer season runs for eight weeks in the fall and in the spring.

## **Tennis**

Group tennis lessons for children from kindergarten through grade eight are offered as an after-school activity in the fall and spring. Classes are taught by a certified tennis pro and are held in the Activity Building.

# **REGULATIONS**

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance and punctuality are major factors in determining academic success. Students who are absent for more than thirty days during the school year may be denied academic promotion. Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences are required to provide documentation from a physician, indicating that the absences are related to an existing medical condition.

Parents should call the school office on the first day that a child is absent from school. Give the child's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for absence. Messages can be left on the school answering machine. Unless the absence will be for an extended period of time, please make arrangements with another child to have assignments brought home. Upon returning to school, a student must submit a written excuse to the homeroom teacher within three day as required by state law.

Assignments and tests missed during absences must be made up upon return to school. It is the student's responsibility to see each teacher about work missed and to see that it is completed within a reasonable time after the student returns to school.

According to the Pennsylvania School Code, Section 1332, "The absence of any pupil who remains out of school with or without his parent's permission, and is not absent because of illness or for other urgent reasons, as defined in the School Code, shall be unexcused. Such absence will be recorded as 'unlawful-unexcused' for a pupil under the compulsory attendance age." Section 1333 states that, "Any such child who has been absent three days, or their equivalent, during the term of compulsory attendance, without lawful cause... shall be given written notice. If, after such notice is given..., attendance is again violated by the person, such person shall be liable...for referral to the magistrate."

To be excused from gym because of illness or injury, a student must bring a note to be presented to the homeroom teacher and the gym teacher. If the excuse from gym is for an extended period of time, a note from the doctor is required.

## **TARDINESS**

A student is tardy if she/he is not in homeroom for the opening exercises at 8:10 a.m. Students tardy for school or class must report to the office and receive a tardy slip before being admitted to their classrooms. The tardy slip is then given to the homeroom teacher. Children who arrive after 10:30 a.m. are marked absent for the morning session. Children who leave school before 1:00 p.m. are marked absent for the afternoon.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

If possible, physician and dental appointments should be arranged on days when school is not in session. However, if it is necessary for a child to have an early dismissal, he or she must have a written note to be presented to the homeroom teacher. Students must report out and in through the office. Parents or an authorized adult must meet the child at the office and sign him or her out at the authorized time.

## **CLOTHING**

Parents are strongly urged to mark their children's personal belongings with their names. Since children do not readily claim lost items, proper identification helps us to find the owner and save parents the cost of replacement. The lost-and-found area is located in the cafeteria. Parents and children are encouraged to look for lost clothing items there. Other lost items, such as glasses, watches and purses, if found, are turned in to the office.

## **DRESS CODE**

The goal of the dress code is to reinforce a careful, responsible attitude appropriate to serious pursuits and to prevent externals from being a distraction to learning. Students are to be properly groomed at all times. Attire is to be neat, clean, and modest. Unless special dress has been designated, the school uniform is to be worn at all times during the school day. The students are expected to arrive at school in the uniform as outlined below. The school reserves the right to enforce the following standards as well as those that it may deem necessary.

### **BOYS: Levels 1-5**

**Uniform:** Navy dress slacks and dress shirt in white or light powder blue worn with a coordinated tie knotted at the collar, pants are to be worn with a belt at the waist.

Navy shorts may be worn during August, September, May and June.

Sweaters are limited to crew, v-neck, or cardigan in solid red, white, or navy blue.

White and navy Polo shirts may be worn during August, September, May and June.

The navy Polo shirts with the school name must be purchased from School Belles Uniform Company.

Only solid white t-shirts without logo may be worn under school shirts.

Dark colored dress socks or crew socks may be worn.

**Non-Uniform:** Sweaters or sweatshirts with hoods, including school logo-wear, are not permitted.

Turtlenecks, sweatshirts, and pullover shirts of any type are not permitted.

Sport pants, jeans or jeans-type corduroys may not be worn; extra zippers and patch pockets are unacceptable.

Logos, other than the school logo, are not permitted on the white Polo shirts.

T-shirts, of any color or style, may not be layered under a school shirt.

“No-show” socks or low cut crew socks are not permitted.

### **BOYS: Levels 6-8**

**Uniform:** Beginning in Level 6, boys may wear either khaki or navy dress slacks.

Uniform and Non-Uniform Guidelines for Boys Levels 1-5 apply.

### **GIRLS: Levels 1-5**

**Uniform:** Plaid jumper or navy slacks are worn in these grades.

Navy shorts may be worn during August, September, May and June.

White or light powder blue Peter Pan blouse or oxford shirt with short or long sleeves (with cross-tie if wearing slacks) are the norm.

White, red, or navy long-sleeved turtleneck may be worn.

White and navy Polo shirts may be worn with during August, September, May and June.

The navy Polo shirts with the school name must be purchased from School Belles Uniform Company.

Knee socks, ankle socks, or tights (white, red, navy) may be worn.

Sweaters are limited to crew, v-neck, or cardigan in solid red, white, or navy blue.

Navy or black tights may be worn under the jumper.

Long pants worn to school under the uniform should be removed after arriving at school.

**Non-Uniform:** Sweaters or sweatshirts with hoods, including school logo-wear, are not permitted.

Sweatshirts and pullover shirts of any type are not permitted.

Sport pants, jeans or jeans-type corduroys may not be worn; extra zippers and patch pockets are unacceptable.

Logos, other than the school logo, are not permitted on the white Polo shirts.

T-shirts, or any color or style, may not be layered under a school shirt.  
“No-show” socks or low cut crew socks are not permitted.

### **GIRLS: Levels 6-8**

**Uniform:** Beginning in Level 6, plaid skirt or uniform culottes are worn no higher than three inches above the knee. Khaki or navy uniform slacks are also acceptable.

Uniform and Non-Uniform Guidelines for Girls Levels 1-5 apply.

**Non-Uniform:** White turtlenecks are not permitted.

### **SHOES/BOOTS**

**Uniform:** Solid, dark colored black, brown or navy dress shoes that do not rise above the ankle and are non-athletic are the norm.

**Non-Uniform:** Tennis, gym or athletic sport shoes are not permitted.

Boots are not to be worn in school. When boots are worn to school, school shoes should be brought to school to change during winter months.

Backless shoes, flip flops, or slippers are not permitted.

### **JEWELRY/MAKE-UP**

Accessories (earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings) may be worn in moderation.

Only a single ear piercing per ear is permitted.

Head adornments (hats, scarves, etc.) may not be worn.

Make-up may not be worn.

### **HAIR**

Bleached or dyed hair or shaved hair styles are not acceptable.

Boys' hair should not cover the ears or eyes or fall below the shirt collar.

### **OUT OF UNIFORM**

Permission to be out of uniform for a day must be obtained from the principal.

Students who are out of uniform without official permission will lose merit points and parents will be called to bring appropriate attire.

All students are required to bring (not wear) their tennis shoes and gym clothes on gym day.

A doctor's excuse will be accepted for wearing tennis shoes other than in gym.

Students who attend the gifted program are granted permission to wear neat, modest casual clothing.

### **SPECIAL DRESS**

#### **Dress Up Day:**

Students can wear attire equal in formality to the uniform or better, on occasions such as Picture Day.

#### **School Spirit Day:**

Students may dress in school colors (red, black, white). If these colors are not available, wear neutrals such as beige or light gray.

Tennis shoes may be worn; pants in school colors (but not shorts or tight stretch fabric); shirts, blouses, or jerseys in school colors.

Sweaters or sweatshirts without hoods may be worn.

#### **Sports Team Day**

If a special day is held to celebrate a Pittsburgh sports team, the School Spirit Day dress code applies, with sports logo and/or team colors. Jeans may be worn. Sweaters or sweatshirts without hoods may be worn.

### **Dress Down Day:**

Tennis shoes, jeans or sweat pants are permitted.  
T-shirts with appropriate writing are permitted.  
Sweaters or sweatshirts without hoods may be worn.

Backless shoes, flip flops, or slippers are not permitted.  
T-shirts with inappropriate slogans are not permitted.

**Final decisions about the appropriateness of attire will be made by the principal.**

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

At the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete a Family Information Update Form. It is imperative that the school be able to reach you to inform you of illness or an emergency situation. It is also important to list the names of others who can be contacted should you be unavailable or who have your permission to take your child in the event of an emergency. Please keep the form updated by notifying the office of changes.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS**

Whenever there is a question of school being in session because of inclement weather, Sacred Heart School follows the decision of the Pittsburgh Public School System. The TV stations and websites post information about the Pittsburgh Public Schools as well as Sacred Heart School. Radio stations KDKA, 3WS, WTAE, and KQV will also have the most current information. Please do not call the school or parish office.

If the Pittsburgh Public Schools call for two-hour delay, Sacred Heart School children should report to school at 10:00 a.m. If the City of Pittsburgh does not delay, but the districts that provide your child's busing do delay, your transportation will follow your school district's announcement.

### **EMERGENCY DISMISSALS**

In the event of a weather or other emergency once school is in session, Pittsburgh Public School officials notify the school and the news media that the City of Pittsburgh schools will be closing and that students will be bussed home as soon as possible. Your children may stay at school until you or another authorized adult can come, or they can go home on the buses when they arrive. We will follow the directive you give on the Family Information Update form. The school office will not be able to make individual calls. If you have chosen to have your child take the bus, you must make plans for such an emergency. Please make arrangements and alert your child where to go if he/she arrives home in your absence. Please do not depend upon school phone lines and availability of staff to address individual needs.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire drills are held monthly. Exit directions, which are posted in prominent places in each room, are to be followed. No one may remain in the building during fire drills. When the students hear the bell, they are to leave the room quickly and quietly in single file. Students remain outside until summoned back to class. Students are to maintain silence during all drills.

Weather emergency drills are practiced twice a year. Teachers instruct the students regarding the directives for the particular weather emergency.

### **INTERNET USE**

The computers in the lab and at least one computer in each classroom have access to the Internet. The following guidelines have been established to ensure the correct use of the Internet. Parents and/or guardians are asked to review these guidelines with their child/children and complete and return a parent/guardian consent form. The guidelines include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- ◇ Information and news from a wide variety of sources and research institutions
- ◇ Public domain and shareware software of all types
- ◇ Discussion groups
- ◇ Access to any educational institutions and libraries
- ◇ Acceptable use of camera

Etiquette:

- ◇ Be polite when sending written messages to others.
- ◇ Appropriate language is expected in all messages.
- ◇ Anything pertaining to illegal activity is expressly forbidden.
- ◇ Do not reveal access information, personal or otherwise.
- ◇ Do not disrupt others' use of the internet access.
- ◇ All users should remember that deleted materials can be retrieved.

The following actions, which are not inclusive, are considered unacceptable:

- ◇ Using camera without permission;
- ◇ Placing unlawful information on the Internet;
- ◇ Using the Internet for non-school related activities;
- ◇ Sending messages that are likely to result in loss of the recipients work or systems;
- ◇ Using the Internet for commercial purposes;
- ◇ Sending or receiving copyrighted material without permission;
- ◇ Plagiarism;
- ◇ Using Internet access to send or retrieve pornographic material, inappropriate file text, files dangerous to the integrity of the system, violent or threatening material or messages;
- ◇ Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks;
- ◇ Vandalism;
- ◇ Falsifying one's identity;
- ◇ Using social networking sites.

Conduct, whether inside or outside the school, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school can result in discipline. Therefore, defamatory or threatening statements and images exchanged on social media can result in discipline of the student account holders.

No one may use the school name, logo or motto on any type of social media or in any other way, e.g. putting the name on t-shirts, for example, without the express written permission of the principal or pastor.

## **PLAYGROUND**

Every school day, weather permitting, the students enjoy an outside break supervised by parent volunteers. Organized play is encouraged. Rough games are not permitted. Students are never to leave the playground area. In case of illness or accident, the student is to report to the school office.

Lunch monitors have the responsibility of enforcing rules. They are to be obeyed and treated respectfully. When the bell rings to end the playground session, the students will be met by their homeroom teachers and move to their classrooms quietly.

The following rules are to be observed on the playground:

Food and drinks are not permitted to be taken out of the cafeteria.

Do not reenter the building unless for an emergency.

Stay in assigned areas and on school grounds.

School grounds is defined as all property which belongs to Sacred Heart Parish.

Display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control.

Play fairly at all times.

Refrain from all types of fighting, name calling, etc.

Courteously and promptly, obey the directives of the playground supervisors.

Stop playing at once when the bell rings and walk quietly to line.

If inclement weather makes it necessary to stay indoors at lunchtime, classroom rules are to be observed:  
Remain in own homeroom.  
Stay in assigned areas of classroom.  
Engage in quiet activities.  
Food and drinks are not permitted to be taken to the classroom.

## **SCHOOL REGULATIONS--GENERAL**

- ELECTRONICS:** No student is permitted to have any electronic device on his/her person or in the lockers during school hours. Students must deposit these items in a container at the front desk in the first floor hallway. Electronics should be clearly marked with the children's names. Students can pick up their electronics at dismissal.
- HALLWAYS:** When in the hallways, students are to behave in an orderly fashion. No running, loud talking, pushing or shoving is permitted. When changing classes, students are to keep to the right, moving from room to room in an oval pattern.
- LOCKERS:** Students may go to their lockers at locker breaks in the morning and afternoon. Additionally, students may go to the lockers before and after lunch, and at dismissal. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers if circumstances arise which seem to warrant such action.
- RESTROOMS:** Restroom breaks are provided for the primary grade levels. Intermediate and upper level students use a sign-out procedure in each classroom when necessary.
- SCHOOL OFFICE:** Students must have a hall pass/note from the teacher to go to the school office or the nurse during school hours.
- SCHOOL PROPERTY:** When damage or defacement of any school property occurs through deliberate abuse, carelessness, or neglect, the person responsible will pay the cost of the repair or replacement.
- TELEPHONE:** No student is permitted to have a cell phone on his/her person or in the locker during school hours. Students who carry cell phones to school must deposit them in a container at the front desk in the first floor hallway. Cell phones should have the children's names clearly marked on them and must be turned off. Students pick up their cell phones at dismissal.  
The office phone is available for use as deemed necessary.  
The same rule applies for students attending the After School Program.  
Students may use the office phone to call home if necessary and with the permission of the principal and or a note from the teacher. When children forget personal items such as gym clothes/shoes, band instruments, lunches, etc., phone calls to parents are subject to the discretion of the the principal.
- TEXTBOOKS:** Textbooks are to be kept neatly covered and well protected. Lost, damaged or defaced books must be paid for by the student.
- WATER BOTTLES:** Students are not permitted to use individual water bottles during the school day. Bottles are available for lunch time use and students are given water breaks at the water fountains during the school day,

## **DISCIPLINE**

Sacred Heart faculty and staff are committed to teach and model Gospel values which help our students live their lives as a reflection of Christ. Our philosophy calls us to recognize and respect the dignity of each individual and offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment based on the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church.

Discipline is essential to learning and the key to good conduct and respecting the rights of others. The purpose of the discipline code is to foster the growth of self-discipline, to enable students to be responsible for their own actions, to develop self-control, and to accept consequences for inappropriate behavior. All members of the faculty and staff share the responsibility to model appropriate behaviors, to support the structure necessary for learning self-discipline, and to maintain these standards throughout the school community.

To create a Christ-centered environment that fosters good discipline, efforts at home and school should seek to model and instill the following behaviors: 1) recognizing and fostering the uniqueness and dignity of each individual; 2) nurturing respect in all relationships; 3) developing a sense of rights and responsibilities and commitment to the entire school family and community; and 4) teaching, modeling, practicing, and infusing social skills into daily life and experience.

The school and the parents are partners in the education of children/adolescents. If, in the opinion of the administration, that partnership is no longer viable, the school reserves the right to require the parents to withdraw the student from the school.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following seven principles are the basis of Catholic Social Teaching and are the principles that guide us in all of our interactions:

We believe in the life and dignity of the human person. Each person is sacred.

We believe we are called to family, community, and participation. It is our duty to support each other by our actions.

We believe that we have rights and responsibilities. Every person has the fundamental right to life and responsibility to and for one another.

We believe that we have an obligation to the poor and vulnerable. We are called to put the rights of others before our own.

We believe that we are called to care for God's creation. We are all stewards of the earth.

We believe that solidarity is our call. We are one family regardless of our differences.

We believe that workers have rights and that work has dignity. Work is a form of participating in God's creation.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

As a matter of safety, students are expected to behave in the following manner:

Before school:

1. to arrive by 8:10 a.m.
2. to gather in the designated area
3. to engage in quiet conversation
4. to line up quietly when moving to classroom areas

In school:

1. to walk quietly through the halls
2. to use proper language at all times
3. to follow the dress code
4. to respect school property and the property of other students
5. to have a note from their parent/guardian for changes in transportation
6. to come prepared with a lunch ticket or packed lunch
7. to place cell phones and electronics at front desk at the beginning of the school day

In the classroom:

1. to follow the classroom rules
2. to be responsible for submitting homework on time and making up assignments
3. to have a respectful attitude toward teachers and one another
4. to be responsible for appropriate supplies
5. to be honest in all communications
6. to use computers and school equipment appropriately
7. not to chew gum
8. enter classroom only when teacher or designated adult is present

During recess

1. to re-enter the building only for an emergency
2. to display good sportsmanship and exercise self control
3. to play in assigned areas only to stay on school grounds at all times
4. courteously and promptly, obey the directives of playground monitors.
5. to stop playing at the first bell and walk to the designated line and enter building quietly

During lunch

1. to remain seated until finished eating and the teacher dismisses class
2. to clean up, pick up all papers, scraps of food, etc., and dispose of them properly and push in chairs
3. to walk in the cafeteria at all times
4. never throw food or take food out of cafeteria

After school

1. to follow dismissal procedures
2. to walk to assigned place to wait until bus or car arrives
3. to leave the school grounds immediately when dismissed
4. to sign in at the extended care program if not picked up on time

At athletic events and assemblies

1. to practice good sportsmanship as spectators and participants
2. to show respect towards coaches, referees, and visiting teams
3. to maintain an appropriate etiquette during special performances and to show appreciation for the performance by clapping only

Outside of school

1. to behave responsibly off school property  
If the principal is made aware of misconduct off school property, parents will be notified and appropriate action will be taken. The principal will forward disciplinary notices given by school bus drivers to parents.

## **Merit/Demerit**

Sacred Heart has a merit/demerit program in Levels 4-8. All students will be issued nine (9) merit points at the beginning of each of four report periods. Each student will be given a new merit card inside the Student Planner at the beginning of each report period. Any student who does not commit a major offense and retains six merits at the end of the merit period will be eligible for a reward. Loss of the merit card will result in a loss of this reward.

Minor offenses include the following:

1. Name-calling, using "put-downs," teasing in a hurtful way; (The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Policy will also be applied.)
2. Using school equipment and facilities without permission;
3. Being late for school or class 3 times without a written excuse;
4. Loitering in the hall and/or bathroom;
5. Chewing gum or eating outside of the cafeteria;
6. Consistent lack of preparation for class, including incomplete or missing homework, materials, or items requiring parent signature;
7. Disrupting instructional time; writing or passing notes in class;

8. Failing to care for school property, such as computers, lockers, desks, books (including not covering books);
9. Violating or damaging personal property in desks, lockers, etc.;
10. Consistent dress violations, e.g. unkempt appearance, short skirts, untucked shirts, missing belt, etc.;
11. Not conforming to the uniform code relating to make-up, shoes, jewelry, hair;
12. Any behavior which the principal deems to be contrary to the school values.

Major offenses include the following:

1. Disrespectful behavior during prayer and worship;
2. Fighting; violent or threatening behavior; harassment;
3. Repeated incidents of bullying;
4. Cheating; dishonest representation; cutting class;
5. Profane or foul language, gestures, actions, or material;
6. Stealing, extortion, destruction of property, vandalism;
7. Willful disobedience as determined by repeated (4) minor offenses;
8. Having a cell phone/electronic device (parent is required to pick up cell phone, etc. from the office);
9. Refusal to comply with direction from adult;
10. Truancy;
11. Any other behavior which the principal deems to be contrary to the school values.

Major offenses accumulate for the entire year. Each major offense will result in the loss of the merit reward for that merit period. In addition, the following consequences will result:

First Major Offense: The parent/guardian is notified; the student is to write an analysis of the improper behavior and determine what steps can be taken to avoid a reoccurrence.

This is to be signed by the parents and submitted to the principal within two school days.

Second Major Offense: A student/parent/teacher meeting is held to discuss the behavior and develop an action plan in the form of a contract to be signed by student, parent/guardian, teacher, and principal.

Third Major Offense: The student will receive an in-school suspension supervised by a substitute teacher employed by the school. The student or parent/guardian must pay the substitute a per diem salary of \$60

Fourth Major Offense: The student will be given an out-of school suspension for the fourth and each additional major offense.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES/CONSEQUENCES**

The severity or repetitive nature of non-compliance to the above expectations will determine the appropriate consequences. To remediate unacceptable behavior, the following actions may be taken:

### **Separation/Time Out**

Classroom standards and expectations for student behavior vary according to age. In the primary grades, an inappropriate action form is used to report misbehaviors to parents. A student who repeatedly disrupts learning or interferes with the safety of others may be isolated in the classroom or on the playground until she/he evidences the desire to change behavior. If it is necessary to isolate a child repeatedly, parents will be notified to assist the child in developing appropriate behavior. Serious offenses or repeated infractions will result in detention which is served during the normal lunchtime recess and/or loss of gym period. Occasionally, students may be required to serve after-school detention if efforts of parents and teachers do not bring about a change in conduct. Advance notice will be given if after-school detention must be served.

## **Suspension**

In the event of a serious act of misbehavior or repeated acts of misbehavior, a student may serve either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The parents shall receive a written notice of suspension explaining why the student was suspended.

A student may be suspended for the following:

1. The commission of three (3) major offenses;
2. Vandalism;
3. Theft;
4. Possession of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs on school grounds, during field trips, at school functions or on the school bus; (The Diocesan Drug Abuse Policy)
5. Conduct judged by the principal as seriously contrary to the purpose of Catholic education, the goals of school, the physical or spiritual welfare of the students or members of the school community.

An in-school suspension is to be served within one week under the supervision of a substitute teacher arranged by the school. The substitute is paid \$60 by the parent or guardian. If a student commits another major offense, a one day out-of-school suspension will follow. An out-of-school suspension may be given by the principal for a period of one to ten days. Further major offenses may result in expulsion.

Once a student has served an in-school suspension, he/she may not participate in school-sponsored activities, i.e. school play, dance, field trip, band concerts, sports events, etc. for the remainder of the school year.

## **Expulsion**

A student may be expelled for the following:

1. Chronic undesirable conduct detrimental to the physical and/or moral well-being of self or other students as evidenced by an accumulation of three (3) suspensions;
2. A single serious incident, event, or situation involving disregard for or a clear violation of a school rule or regulation, such as possessing a weapon on school property;
3. Conduct judged by the principal as seriously contrary to the purpose of Catholic education, the goals of the school, the physical or spiritual welfare of the students or members of the school community.

In areas where a specific Diocesan policy exists, those policies apply and can result in referrals to law enforcement or other government agencies:

1. Weapons policy
2. Drug/alcohol policy
3. Any purposeful action that results in bodily harm to another

In the case of expulsion the procedures outlined below are followed unless waived by the parents:

1. The student is suspended with written notice to the parents that expulsion is under consideration;
2. The principal and teacher meet with parents/guardians;
3. The proposed action is reviewed by a committee consisting of the pastor, principal and two non-involved faculty members;
4. The review committee discusses the question, giving its opinion and reasons in writing;
5. The opinion of the review committee is then reviewed by the Pastor. If the pastor confirms a decision for expulsion, it is submitted to Department for Catholic Schools for review and confirmation;
6. The parents/guardians are informed of the decision and notified of the opportunity for further review of the matter by Diocesan authorities;
7. If the decision is for expulsion, dismissal is immediate.

## **PARENT INFORMATION**

### **SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM**

Teachers, coaches and assistants, homeroom parents, chaperones and adults who volunteer with children at Sacred Heart School are required to have the following clearances:

1. Register on the Pittsburgh Diocese Safe Environment Database [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org) (1x only)  
Access code is: protect
2. The Criminal Record Clearance will automatically be generated with registration on the Database.
3. Notify the office when registration is complete.
4. The Criminal Record Clearance and the Child Abuse Clearance Application will be sent to you.
5. Complete and mail to:

Childline and Abuse Registry  
Department of Public Welfare  
Box 8170  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8170

5. Attend the Protecting God's Children Program (1x) at any location in the diocese [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org)  
Submit a copy of Certificate of Attendance to SHES Office.
6. Read booklet entitled and Code of Pastoral Conduct. Sign the last page and return it to SHES (1x only).

### **COMMUNICATION**

Positive communication between home and school is vital to the total educational program.

Annually parents are requested to complete an information update form to indicate any changes in address, phone numbers, or contacts for illness or emergency. Note that these forms are used to update the school records and then to compile the annual school directory. Please complete the form promptly and accurately.

Any change of address, telephone numbers, or email which occur during the school year should be reported to the school office immediately. This is most important for emergencies that may arise at school, as well as for the purpose of accurate record keeping.

The avenues of communication are the monthly envelope, Handbook, the *HeartBeat* newsletter, and website [www.shes-pgh.org](http://www.shes-pgh.org), Homework Folder (Gr. PS-5), Parent-Teacher Conferences and GradeBook. The River Valley Software GradeBook Program, used from kindergarten through grade eight, is a web based application providing secure access to assignment and grading information anytime, from anywhere. Taking advantage of this software tool represents a use of technology to improve accountability, communication and efficiency within our school community.

The monthly envelope is sent home with the oldest child in the family at the end of each month. It contains the newsletter, calendar, lunch menu, and parent lunch schedule. All of these can be viewed on our website. The envelope must be signed monthly and returned to the homeroom teacher. A fine of \$ .25 is charged to replace lost envelopes.

Money or checks should be sent to school in an envelope marked with the child's name, homeroom, and the purpose for which the money is being sent; e.g., lunch, supplies, field trip, SCRIP order, etc. When paying for multiple fees, please use separate checks. Also, a convenient drop-off box is located near the office.

A note should be sent to the teacher or principal for the following reasons:

- ◇ excuse for absence
- ◇ a change of plans in leaving school (bus, ride, walk or after-school program);
- ◇ an excuse from gym class;

- ◇ permission for out of school appointments (which should be made as early or as late as possible in the day so the student misses the least possible amount of school);
- ◇ notice of the need to attend a funeral;
- ◇ information regarding an upcoming vacation;
- ◇ an early dismissal;
- ◇ out of dress code;
- ◇ a birthday treat.

## **REPORT CARDS/CONFERENCES**

Parents are informed of the student's progress through interim reports, quarterly report cards, conferences, and conduct referrals. Any questions concerning your child should be directed to the teacher. Please call the school office, and the teacher will be notified to contact you. You can also use GradeBook to communicate with a teacher. If you have a concern of a general nature, please feel free to contact the principal directly.

Report cards are issued four times a year. The first report card is given to parents at the first conference of the school year. Subsequent report cards are distributed directly to the students. Conferences are scheduled for three report periods. If additional conferences are needed, teachers are available by appointment before or after school. Appointments can be arranged by calling the school or sending a note with your child. Sufficient time should be allowed for arrangements to be made. Because of the importance of class time, no teacher is to be called from class to meet with parents.

Following the Tuition Policy, reports cards will be held and access to GradeBook is restricted when tuition is overdue.

## **LOST and FOUND**

The school is not responsible for money or valuable items, i.e. electronics, brought to school by the students. Money should be placed in a sealed envelope marked with the student's name, room number, amount, and the purpose for which the money is to be used.

Lost items that are labeled are returned to the owner. Lost items of value, such as watches, glasses, keys, jewelry, etc., are kept at the office. Other lost-and-found articles are placed in the cafeteria. Unclaimed items are disposed of at the end of the school year.

## **PARENT TEACHER GUILD (PTG)**

Sacred Heart Elementary School has an active Parent Teacher Guild directed by an elected Board. Standing committees of the PTG are the Educational Enrichment, Newsletter, and Cookbook Committees. Ad hoc committees are organized for various functions. Parents are welcome to join any committee, either by calling the chairperson or by coming to the next meeting of the committee of interest when the meeting is announced in the monthly calendar. Each family is expected to volunteer for two activities each year.

## **PARTIES/PARTY INVITATIONS**

The Homeroom Parents organize parties for special occasions during the school year. No other instructional time should be used for parties without the principal's permission. Birthday treats should be distributed in the cafeteria during lunch or recess. A note should be sent to the homeroom teacher the day before the treat will be sent to school. In the interest of time and nutrition, treats should be easy to serve and to clean up.

Please do not send party invitations to school to be distributed for your child's birthday. This causes hurt feelings among the students who are not invited. The only exception to this is if every girl or every boy or all the students in your child's room are invited.

## **SCHOOL BOARD**

Sacred Heart Elementary School has a School Board which is an advisory body to the pastor and principal. The Board consists of a chairperson, six appointed members and one faculty representative. The Board develops and reviews the annual budget. Monthly reports from the Athletic Association, the PTG Board and the Technology Committee are shared at the Board meetings.

The Board has seven areas of concentration—Spirituality and Ministry, Finance and Development, Curriculum Enrichment, Extracurricular Programming, Cultural Connections, Grounds and Buildings, and Alumni Relations. Those parents committed to helping Sacred Heart continue its tradition of excellence are invited to serve on the Board.

## **SECURITY**

All doors to the school will be locked during school hours. Parents and visitors should use the door bell at the main school door to gain access to the building. Students have been trained not to open doors for visitors.

## **VISITORS**

For security reasons, anyone entering Sacred Heart Elementary School is to report to the office secretary, regardless of the purpose of the visit. For the safety of all students, anyone going beyond the foyer must sign the visitor's log and wear a visitor's pass. After the first two weeks of the school year, parents are not permitted beyond the foyer at the front entrance. Communication with teachers and students will be handled through the school office and will be done in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process in the school.

Any articles or items to be left for a student during the school day should be left in the school office. This will eliminate any unnecessary interruptions to classes and instruction.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are needed to prepare the monthly envelope, maintain the uniform exchange area, and in the classroom working with individuals or small groups for enrichment or re-mediation. If you can help in any other way, please contact the office.

## **YEARLY CALENDAR**

The official school calendar is distributed in the summer mailing. The calendar is subject to change due to snow or other unforeseen events so it is important to rely on the monthly calendar for most current information. The yearly and monthly calendars are available on the school website.

Please use scheduled free days for doctor, dental appointments, etc. Avoid scheduling appointments or trips when standardized tests are given.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Sacred Heart Elementary School's administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment.

Our goal is to make your child's educational experience both meaningful and productive. To accomplish that goal, every family must be informed of school policies and procedures. This handbook serves as the primary reference source for questions about the operation of Sacred Heart Elementary School.

It is important that school personnel know that you have received this handbook. We ask that you read the handbook thoroughly and keep it accessible. It will save much time, ours and yours, if you would become familiar with its contents. The answers to many of your questions lie within its covers! Of course, should you still have questions after referring to this handbook, the staff and I are available to assist you.

Please sign and date this page and have your oldest child return it to his/her homeroom teacher. Furthermore, please sign and return the School Internet Use Policy. This signed document will permit your child access to the computer lab Internet system.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister Lynn Rettinger  
Principal

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I have received the Sacred Heart Elementary School Handbook. I will read it and abide by its policies.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

