

# Holy Family Catholic School

## Notice of Implied Agreement

The registration of students at Holy Family Catholic School is deemed to be an agreement on their part, and on the part of their parents/guardians, to fully comply with all policies and procedures of the school as outlined in the Handbook. Holy Family reserves the right to change or delete, supplement or otherwise amend at any time the information, requirements and policies contained herein and related hereto. The President is the final interpreter of the content of this handbook. Parents will be notified when changes are made.

## SECTION I. OUR SCHOOL

### Our history

Holy Family Catholic School is the result of years of praying and hard work on behalf of families in seven Catholic parishes with no parish school. Those parishes are St. Albert the Great, St. John Vianney, St. Margaret Mary, St. Mary, Our Lady of the Lake, St. Thomas More, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. William. Individuals from these parishes formed a non-profit corporation which sponsored and governed the school. Holy Family opened its doors in August 2000. Holy Family became a Diocesan school for the Catholic Diocese of Austin in 2008.

### Our mission statement

Holy Family Catholic School is a diocesan school that works with parents to nurture the growth of the whole child- spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Our school is Catholic- promoting the teaching of the Church and inclusive of diverse cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds.

### Our philosophy and goals

It is our philosophy that the Catholic faith and Gospel values are fully integrated in the learning and culture of our school.

Our goals provide clear statements of commitment in five key areas that are used to guide the development of our students, including:

- Spiritual- Fostering a commitment to know, love, and serve God and one another
- Intellectual- Encouraging each child to attain his or her fullest potential
- Social- Guiding students to become conscientious, successful members of a global community
- Emotional- Respecting and celebrating each child's individuality
- Physical- Promoting a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle

### Our core values

Holy Family Catholic School holds firm to core values which define our identity and culture and are the fundamental beliefs that guide the daily life of the school.

- Catholic Identity- The atmosphere at Holy Family provides a sound spirituality for the students. The school provides experiences and opportunities for students to know that God is a real presence in their lives. Our Catholic expression is embodied in Christian living, faith symbols and sacramental participation. Worship and spirituality are the essence and moral fiber of Holy Family. The Catholic identity of Holy Family is not taken for granted- it is worked at, it is nourished, and it is engaged by the students, the faculty, the families, and the community.
- Faith Formation- The Holy Family Catholic School community strives to foster spiritual growth by modeling the Gospel values of faith, hope, love, community, reconciliation, service, justice and courage. Daily prayer and the Good News of Jesus Christ are integrated into the total school community through education and witness.
- Academic Excellence- Holy Family Catholic School is dedicated to the highest academic standards. Excellence is the norm. Teachers are expected to teach; students are expected to learn. Holy Family offers students the means to receive a comprehensive, well-rounded education built on traditional foundational knowledge and skills. This education also includes training in technical and scientific skill, complex communication, collaborative processes, and the Christian ethical formation to use these tools to make a positive contribution to society.

- **Stewardship-** The Holy Family Catholic School community promotes stewardship in our daily lives. As Jesus teaches us, Holy Family promotes living Gospel values with a call to action for all students, faculty and families through the offering of time, talent and treasure to the Church and to the community. Holy Family will act as responsible stewards of the gifts it has been given and will require fiscal responsibility in all its activities. Holy Family must provide students, our most precious responsibility, an environment where they are protected and safe.

**Our vision:** Challenging the Mind, Inspiring the Heart

### **Living our Name- Holy Family**

Holy Family Catholic School intends to live up to its name. All students, staff, parents and community members are called upon to show unity of purpose, as well as other characteristics of holy families such as respect for all things sacred, respect for all life, inclusiveness, responsibility, collaboration, and having each other's best interest at heart. We seek to establish a school climate that mirrors family life through trust, spirituality, closeness, collaboration and responsibility, where faith, culture, and life are brought into harmony (Congregation for Catholic Education, Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, n. 33).

**School Mascot: Angels**

**School Colors: Navy and Silver**

### **Accreditation**

Holy Family Catholic School is fully accredited through the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED). This process is approved and authorized by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC), which monitors organizations that accredit private schools in Texas. As part of this state Catholic system, we meet or exceed all applicable standards and guidelines from the [TCCB ED](#).

### **School governance**

In 2013, the Diocese of Austin created a shared governance model between Holy Family Catholic School and St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School. This model ensures that we have two strong schools that work collaboratively to provide a positive Catholic school presence in the north Austin area. While the two schools share a common governance model that primarily involves the administrative and board structure, the two schools have not "merged" as one school. Each school enjoys its unique traditions and mission, while maintaining their relationships with area parishes.

The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the schools and has primary responsibility for advancement, finance, facilities management and strategic planning for the schools. Each school has an appointed Principal, who shares the responsibility of Catholic identity and mission for their school with the President. The Principals are charged with hiring and evaluating the faculty and designated staff, implementing a comprehensive curriculum, supervising instruction, program evaluation, staff development, and implementing programs that meet accreditation requirements.

Holy Family has a Board of Directors that includes Diocesan personnel, the President of the school, and several appointed Directors. In addition, the Board includes several advisory members who provide specific expertise related to strategic planning and operational needs.

### **How the school is financed**

As a Diocesan, incorporated school serving grades pre-kindergarten through eighth within the Catholic Diocese of Austin, Holy Family is a self-funding entity. Unlike a parish school, our school is solely responsible for generating the necessary annual income to fund operations, enhancements, maintenance, emergency reserves, and debt service. While this income is derived mainly from tuition & fees plus the Angels Appeal and annual fundraising events, the school also relies upon the contributions from the parishes that students attend.

The planning and management of the school's finances are guided both by our core values and by our fiscal principles of integrity, affordability, justice, and practicality. The responsibility for the school's financial security and future is shared by the whole school community for the children's benefit.



## **SECTION II. HOME & SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

### **The family relationship with the faculty and staff**

The Catholic Church teaches that parents are the primary educators, and the faculty and staff at Holy Family are honored when a family entrusts a child to the program that has been designed for our school. You know your child better than anyone. At the same time, the individual and collective experience of people who work their ministry at Holy Family can offer valuable perspective on not only your child's educational development but on a wide range of other developmental issues.

Sometimes parents wonder what to call the teacher. At school and in front of children, parents and all school staff should address each other by their title and last name, such as "Mrs. Perez" or "Mr. Jones."

### **Communication from and to the school**

Holy Family places a high value on keeping you informed about upcoming school events and other developments. The school will regularly communicate through school email, the school website or the Thursday e-newsletter. Teachers will communicate with families through a weekly newsletter. Occasionally, printed material will be sent home. The primary source for communication from the school is the weekly e-newsletter. Parents are responsible for reading information and staying informed about upcoming events and deadlines.

Parent conferences will be held in the fall and again in late spring. Parents are expected to meet with the teacher at minimum during the fall conference. Parents and guardians may request a conference at any other time, if needed. Parents are welcome to reach out to teachers via phone or email. Due to the teaching schedule, parents should expect to leave a voicemail when trying to call the teacher. Due to student privacy concerns and supervision expectations, teachers cannot accommodate unscheduled conferences during arrival, dismissal, and lunch.

We take pride in our intent to minister to families and individuals. Our hope is that you will keep your child's teacher informed of important events at home and their possible effect on your child.

### **Concerns & resolution of conflict**

As Catholics, we have been called to teach as Jesus taught and to put those lessons into practice. In the course of our daily lives together, conflict, confrontation and hurtful words and behaviors will occur. These incidents can occur between students, teachers, parents and administrators. When these events happen, it is important that a spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness is fostered throughout the conflict resolution process.

Occasionally matters may arise which will require an objective review by third parties in order to assure the maintenance of positive relationships within the school community. To facilitate this reconciliation, Holy Family has adopted the following informal and formal processes of conflict resolution.

### **Informal Reconciliatory Process**

1. In any conflict, an effort shall first be made to resolve the issue in a spirit of fairness and justice between the people involved. This should happen through open and honest communication via notes, email, and conferences with those directly involved stating their perceptions of the problem, mutual ownership of contribution to it, and forgiveness and plans to avoid a recurrence.
2. If the conflict cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved, the parent or guardian may email, call, and/or make an appointment with the assistant principal\* to discuss and resolve the situation. The parent or guardian may choose to send the concern via email or set up a meeting to share the concern. Given the nature of the conflict, the assistant principal may need to investigate before reaching a decision. The assistant principal will communicate with the parent or guardian regarding the decision.
3. If the conflict cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved, the parent or guardian may email, call, and/or make an appointment with the principal to discuss and resolve the situation. The parent or guardian may choose to send the concern via email or set up a meeting to share the concern. Given the nature of the conflict, the principal may need to investigate before reaching a decision. The principal will communicate with the parent or guardian.

4. If decision is still not satisfactory, the parent or guardian may appeal in writing to the president. The appeal should include all documentation to that point. The president may investigate by calling in any of the parties involved. If the president feels that the issue does not merit further investigation, the president may state this as the decision.

\*If the initial conflict is with the assistant principal, the parent or guardian should make an appointment with the principal.

### **Chain of command**

Teachers and teaching assistants report to the Assistant Principal. The assistant principals and office staff report to the principal. The principal and other specific staff report to the president. Please refer to the [organizational chart](#).

### **Non-custodial parents and student custody**

Non-custodial parents must have contact information in the Family Portal (FACTS) to receive copies of the student's academic and health records, including report cards and school e-newsletters that can be sent to the parent electronically. Visiting the office in person to get copies is also an option.

Any legal custody documentation that impacts a student's education, including but not limited to pick-up, parent communication, and custody must be shared with a school administrator. In all custody arrangements when parents are not living together, parents are expected to communicate how both parents would like to receive communication.

### **Family service to the community**

We encourage each family to support the school community by offering at least 20 service hours per school year. These can be completed through participation in the Parent Association service committees, fundraisers and other opportunities offered by the school. To log service hours, parents must log into [Family Portal](#).

The identification of total service hours is required in many grant applications for the school, so please be sure to record your hours.

### **Parent Association/Grandparents**

The Parent Association provides services to the school and supports fundraising efforts. The Executive Committee meets monthly during the academic year, and their minutes are published on the Holy Family school [website](#). Committee chairs carry out various school community activities throughout the year for service and fundraising. Parent volunteers actively participate in school life through the many services and activities offered by the Parent Association. The Parent Association general assembly meets as the Executive Committee deems necessary to update parents about PA business, upcoming events or fundraisers, or to provide parent education speaker opportunities. The Parent Association is not part of the governance structure of the school. The Parent Association also has a committee for grandparents. All grandparents are welcome to join this committee.

### **Holy Family Catholic School Branding/Use of school logo**

The use of a branding guide assists with unifying the school brand among the community. These standards have helped refine our brand across various admission, communication and advancement purposes. The guide reflects key elements of our unique brand to the internal and external community of Holy Family Catholic School. Our school colors are distinct, and branding standards help provide information and tools to help advance this vision in a clear, consistent and compelling way.

The Holy Family school logo and the Holy Family athletic logo may only be used with written permission from the Director of Communications. Please contact the Director of Communications for more information.

### **Photo Release**

The school will take photographs of students and/or their work in various school-related activities. Holy Family will display or publish these photographs in various public forums such as bulletin boards, newsletters, newspapers, the website, social media, etc. Parents are responsible for notifying the Director

of Communications, and completing the [appropriate form](#), if you do not wish for your child to be photographed or videoed. Otherwise, acknowledgement of this handbook implies permission.

## SECTION III. SAFETY AND HEALTH

### **School hours and supervision**

Holy Family office hours are: 7:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Holy Family classroom hours are:

PK-4<sup>th</sup> grades- 8:00 a.m.-3:20 p.m.

5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades- 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Early dismissal classroom hours are:

PK-4<sup>th</sup> grades 8:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades- 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Building doors open at 7:30 a.m. Students will go to their academic building where they will be supervised by teachers. Parents are welcome to walk their child to the door of the building. Students arriving at campus before 7:30 a.m. should coordinate with the third party before school provider, [The Hive](#), to arrange for supervision. At dismissal time, all students will be escorted and supervised by staff in the gym area. Drivers should use extra caution when entering and exiting the Holy Family property.

### **Police officer Before School**

Parents must obey traffic laws, posted guidelines and the direction of police officers in the morning. Traffic tickets may be given by police officers for violations. To assist police officers with traffic control on Neenah Avenue, please activate **your turn signal** before entering Holy Family's campus.

### **Security guard**

Holy Family Catholic School employs a security guard who patrols the campus and buildings to maintain a safe environment. Students and visitors are required to follow the guard's instructions to comply with campus safety and security policies. All faculty, staff, parents, and students are responsible for the safety and security of the Holy Family Catholic School campus. Do not open doors or "prop open" doors to any individual for any reason unless given specific permission by a school administrator or security guard.

### **Arrival Procedures**

#### **Driving: Carline**

Parents using the carline must remain in their vehicle while dropping off students. Please drop off ONLY in the designated area between the pavilion and the gym. Student safety patrol members will open the door to allow your child(ren) to exit the vehicle. Please pull up as close to the curb as possible so the patrollers do not have to step off into the drive. Parents with students who are not able to unbuckle from their seats by themselves must park in the Grace or Hope parking lot and walk their child to their building.

#### **Parking: Grace & Hope Lots**

Parents walking students to the building MUST park in front of the Grace Building or in the lot next to the Hope Building. Please walk with your child to ensure that s/he gets to their academic building door safely. Students must be accompanied by an adult while walking in the parking lots. The parking area at the back of the school is reserved for faculty and staff. This is not a designated drop-off zone. Please do not park there to walk your students to the buildings.

### **Walking and Biking**

Students who walk to campus with or without parents should go directly to their academic building before school starts. Students who ride bikes to school must walk their bikes to the racks once they are on campus. Walkers and bikers are expected to use the main crosswalk and the Neenah Avenue sidewalk in front of the property.

### **Dismissal Procedures**

The school uses the School Pass App for dismissal. To assist the teachers during dismissal, we will distribute signs prior to the start of school. Please use the signs *throughout* the year.

Parents should not arrive more than 15 minutes before their child's dismissal time. Parents should pick up all children at the oldest sibling's pick-up time.

**Driving: Carline**

To assist the teachers during dismissal, signs must be displayed on the passenger side visor clip. Please continue this practice *throughout* the year. A staff member will use the app to communicate and coordinate student pick-up.

Parents using the carline must remain in their vehicle while picking up students. Please pick up **ONLY** in the designated area between the pavilion and the gym. Student safety patrol members will open the door to allow your child(ren) to enter the vehicle. Please pull up as close to the curb as possible so the patrollers do not have to step off into the drive. Parents with students who are not able to buckle themselves into their seat should use the Grace parking lot for parent walk-up.

**Parent Walk-Up, parking in Grace**

Parents should line up and have their sign or app visible. A staff member will use the app to communicate and coordinate student pick-up. Once children have been released to the parent, the parent must supervise their children. For safety reasons, students must remain close to their parents. Students should not use balls, play with sticks, climb trees, or run through campus near the road, or throw rocks.

**Dismissal to Savio**

Dismissal to Savio is available for students with siblings enrolled at Savio and/or parents who work at Savio. Parents will select this option on School Pass. Students will be escorted from the Holy Family campus and brought to a Savio staff member. The Savio student is expected to pick up their younger sibling(s) at Savio.

**Walkers and cyclists**

Parents who wish for their children to walk or bike off the campus unsupervised or with an older sibling must file a [Walker/Biker Permission form](#). The school does not accept responsibility for Walkers/Bikers following dismissal from their designated check-out location. Walkers and bikers are expected to use the Neenah Avenue sidewalk across the front of the property and the main crosswalk.

The safest dismissal plan is for students to be picked up in the carpool line at dismissal. We **strongly discourage** parents from directing their children to walk to another location off campus to be picked up. Please note that St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School does not allow children who are not students at the high school, including younger siblings, to wait on their property without an adult supervising them. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church does not allow students to be picked up on their property.

**Driving on Campus**

It takes every single adult to drive safely on campus to keep the students safe. To provide for the safety of our students and staff, drivers are not permitted to use cell phones while driving on campus. Drivers are expected to follow posted speed limit and direction signs.

Drivers who fail to follow the arrival, dismissal, and driving safety expectations may lose carline privileges.

**Crosswalk**

All school community members must use the main crosswalk when crossing the street.

**After-school care options**

[The Hive](#) offers afterschool care on the Holy Family Campus. To arrange for space in the after-school program, please coordinate with the director of the Hive.

Several local licensed day care facilities provide transportation and after-school care for our students. For information about their after-school programs, please contact the facilities directly. Holy Family does not endorse any of these programs. Parents are strongly encouraged to research each program thoroughly to find one that best meets your child's needs. If you would like a licensed day care facility to pick up your child from our campus, please have the facility contact the office at 512-246-4455.

**Ethics and Integrity in Ministry**



At Holy Family Catholic School, all employees, and all persons who volunteer at school in any capacity must first complete the on-line application. It is Diocesan policy that anyone who serves in ministry to minors, or vulnerable adults must have completed a criminal background check and attended an Ethics and Integrity in Ministry workshop. **The workshop must be retaken every three years**, but the application process is completed only one time. **For more information regarding Ethics and Integrity in Ministry including the dates and locations for training, please visit:**

### **[Ethics and Integrity in Ministry](#)**

The directive from the policies of the Diocese mentions many categories of volunteers affected by the policy, including youth ministry volunteers, classroom volunteers, leaders and volunteers of Catholic boy and girl scout troops, anyone serving in a program for minors hosted on school property, anyone transporting minors in vehicles, and anyone who fills a one-time need in ministry to minors or vulnerable adults.

All volunteers wear badges to indicate they are a volunteer with Holy Family Catholic School which must be worn **at all times** when helping on campus or on school related trips. Once you have completed the EIM workshop, please contact Dr. Danna Kelemen for a new badge or replacement badge, or if you have any questions regarding EIM compliance at [dkelemen@saviochs.org](mailto:dkelemen@saviochs.org).

We encourage all adults in the school community to complete this process as promptly as possible in order to participate fully in the life of the school and to be prepared to help with the needs we have for volunteers. (Diocesan Policy 326)

### **Empowering God's Children**

This interactive program for students helps young people understand their sacredness and how to prevent others from violating their emotional, physical and behavioral boundaries. Empowering God's Children is an education program for youth; it does not fulfill the EIM requirement for serving in ministry to minors. For more information about the program: [Empowering God's Children](#)

### **How to report abuse**

Texas State law requires that abuse and/or neglect of a minor must be reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services through their website or at 1-800-252-5400, and/or through local police. To report abuse or any violation of the diocesan EIM policies, please follow the steps through the Diocese of Austin website: [Report Abuse - Diocese of Austin - Austin, TX \(austindiocese.org\)](#) You may also contact the EIM office or the Vicar General at 512-949-2400.

**If you, or someone you know, have experienced abuse by someone representing the Catholic Church, please contact the Coordinator of Pastoral Care for the Diocese of Austin at (512) 949-2400. (Diocesan Policy 326)**

### **Sexual harassment and child abuse**

The Diocese of Austin Catholic schools are committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for staff and students. Sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and child abuse will not be tolerated. (Diocesan Policy 326)

### **Visitors**

To keep our students and staff safe and to prevent interruptions to the instructional program, no visitor on campus is permitted to proceed directly to a classroom, office or library for any reason, including scheduled appointments. All visitors must come to the school office to sign in, receive a visitor's badge, and wait for staff member directions. If the visit involves a message or a delivery to a student (such as a forgotten lunch), the office staff will take care of the delivery at a suitable time.

Visitors must report to the front office before going to any other building or outdoor space including the pavilion during school hours.

### **Safety precautions**

All persons driving on school outings or providing any transportation for Holy Family students must provide proof of insurance and a valid driver's license. Transportation of students as part of official school

activities must comply with seatbelt laws and Ethics and Integrity in Ministry policies. (Diocesan Policy 326)

Because we take seriously the safety and health of all persons on our campus, the following prohibitions are enforced:

- (1) Holy Family is a non-smoking campus, both indoors and outdoors.
- (2) Adults and students may not share restrooms. Adult restrooms are labeled in each building.
- (3) Only Holy Family students may attend school field trips and retreats for the designated grade(s). Chaperones may not bring additional children.
- (4) Parents on campus for a meeting or for volunteering in areas such as sports or liturgy set-up must keep their children under their direct supervision.
- (5) **According to Texas safety laws-** A child under the age of 7 may not be left unattended in a motor vehicle for longer than five minutes. A child is considered supervised if accompanied in the vehicle by someone age 14 or older. Holy Family staff strongly discourages parents from leaving their children unattended in the parking lot for any period of time.

For the health and safety of all our families, we ask that you not bring family pets onto the school campus without prior approval from an administrator.

### **Safety - procedures & drills**

The foundation for our security plans is rooted in a relationship with the Texas School Safety Center, the Central Texas School Safety Consortium, and TX2 Security Group which all support our safety procedure development and annual training for staff. This training focuses on how campuses respond to unforeseen events such as fires, evacuations, lockdowns, and campus emergencies by conducting drills throughout the year. Holy Family Catholic School employs a security guard who patrols the campus and buildings to maintain a safe environment. Students and visitors are required to follow the guard's instructions to comply with campus safety and security policies.

The school maintains and routinely updates a comprehensive emergency operations plan to respond to any emergency which brings normal operations to a halt. (Diocesan Policy 121)

State law requires that schools conduct quarterly **evacuation/fire drills**. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom and office area. When the fire alarm sounds, all students line up at the classroom door and proceed outside under the direction of their teacher. Students walk quietly to a designated spot and remain there until cleared by an administrator that the buildings are safe to return.

**Severe weather (shelter) drills** are conducted several times a year. Shelter locations are posted in each classroom and office area. Staff and students will be notified over the PA system when severe weather is imminent. Students and staff will return to classrooms when cleared by an administrator. Students and staff will be notified over the PA system when an emergency requires a **lockdown, hold, or secure protocol**. **Faculty are trained in procedures in each of these emergencies. An administrator will notify all staff and students when the emergency is over.**

### **Suspension of classes**

The principal may elect to suspend classes due to reasons of inclement weather, student health, safety and emergencies. (Diocesan Policy 120)

### **Parent Alert**

The Parent Alert system allows the school administration to notify parents via text message, voice message, and email in case of an emergency. Parent Alert is part of the Family Portal school management software. It is crucial that parents keep all emergency contact information updated on Family Portal.

### **Evacuation**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to evacuate all or part of the school. The level of the emergency and emergency personnel involved will determine the evacuation process. If emergency services (police, fire, EMS, etc.) are called to the scene, they will decide the level of evacuation needed. Their main concern will be to contain the emergency; if necessary, they will evacuate students and personnel to the closest safe area available. School officials' responsibility will be to cooperate with these authorities.

Once the situation is under control, it may be necessary to have secondary locations to regroup. Parents will be notified of the locations to be used, which will depend on the type of emergency and the level of evacuation. We ask that parents not call the school office until the school has sent out communications regarding the emergency and procedures for release of students.

In the case of evacuation, a student will be released to his/her parent, or the individual named as the alternate emergency contact as indicated in FACTS, but to no one else. Please be prepared to show identification in this situation. If unplanned early release for reasons other than weather occurs, you will be notified.

### **Bad weather closings**

In case of inclement weather, Holy Family will make a decision in the best interest of the safety for all Holy Family families. Official notification of school closings or late start announcements are sent through the FACTS Parent Alert notification system. Families are encouraged to follow the news and websites of their local school districts in order to monitor the safety of local conditions. Families are permitted to make individual decisions that best assure the safety of their children regarding road conditions.

If unfavorable weather develops during the school day but not so bad as to cause the school to close, parents are discouraged from picking up their child early. The staff at Holy Family is committed to the students' safety, and we would prefer to be able to direct our attention to that end, as well as continuing instruction.

If severe weather prevents students from waiting outside or in the gym at dismissal safely, then students will be held in their classrooms until the weather improves. In this event, parents are welcome to park in a designated parking space and pick-up their children from the building.

### **Health care at school**

Holy Family Catholic School employs a School Nurse. The School Nurse will provide basic required school health services and will be trained and certified in First Aid and CPR. Emergency contact and medical information is kept on file for every child enrolled in the school. Parents must keep this information updated on Family Portal so we may reach you right away in an emergency. When an ambulance is needed, EMS officials will transport the child to the hospital. (Diocesan Policy 309)

### **Medication at school**

#### **A student may take medication at school ONLY if:**

1. a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant or dentist has prescribed the medication, or a parent requests the administration of non-prescription medication (over-the-counter);
2. the parent/guardian delivers the medication to the school office;
3. the medication is delivered in its prescription container with a current pharmacy prescription label or, if the medication is over-the-counter medication, in the original labeled and sealed container (unopened);
4. the school office personnel administer the medication to the student; and
5. the parent/guardian completes and returns the medication form to the school office.

\*Item 4 above does not apply if a parent authorizes a student to self-carry and self-administer medication through an epi-pen, inhaler, insulin pump, or glucose meter and completes and delivers the form to the school. (Diocesan Policy 310)

### **When to stay home for illness**

Coming to school every day and being on time are very important routines that support a successful experience at Holy Family. However, when illness occurs, students should be kept at home to avoid contagion and to rest. A student should be [free of symptoms](#) including fever, vomiting, and diarrhea (without fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. Additional reasons to stay

home include contagious or spreadable illnesses such as conjunctivitis (pinkeye), strep throat, pediculosis (head lice), chicken pox, and ringworm. (See *“When a student is absent”* in Section IV.)

### **Communicable diseases**

To avoid contamination, children are taught to handle their own biohazards, e.g. blow their own noses and handle their own tissue, to the best of the child’s ability. Teachers also instruct and support best practices in hygiene, including handwashing. To meet health standards called “universal precautions”, staff will wear disposable gloves when there is a possibility of encountering a child’s body fluids.

If your child gets a serious disease or condition that could have already spread to other children, it is important to notify the School Nurse right away. (See *“When a student is absent”* in Section IV.)

### **Food allergies**

Holy Family recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and welcomes all students with food allergies. To minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, Holy Family will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life-threatening allergy.

### **Immunizations and health screenings**

Students must be up to date on required immunizations and must provide written proof to the school. If someone from school contacts you about a needed immunization, it is important to follow up right away. Please note that although conscientious objections and waivers may be accepted in some schools, they are not acceptable for use within schools of the Diocese of Austin. (Diocesan Policy 311)

The School Nurse will screen students in certain grades to find problems with vision, hearing, the formation of the spine, and signs of Type 2 diabetes. You will be contacted about required follow-up if a concern is found. The school may also choose to screen for pediculosis (head lice). Here again, it is very important that you follow recommended procedures all the way through and provide follow-up information to the school.

### **Use of school grounds**

Only persons and activities with permission from the school administration may be on the school grounds at any time. Persons waiting on the campus for certain activities must follow all safety rules. (See *“Safety Precautions”* in Section III.)

### **Lunch procedures**

Students at Holy Family in grades K-8 eat lunch in the pavilion when weather permits. In the event of inclement weather, the students eat in their classrooms. Preschool students usually eat lunch in their classrooms. Students need to bring their own lunch (unless participating in a purchase program at school) as well as all utensils needed.

We are unable to warm, cook or refrigerate lunch items for the students. A lunch purchase program is available Monday through Friday. Please visit [Yay Lunch!](#) for more information about ordering lunches and to view available menus.

Students pray and wash their hands before lunch. Each teacher will establish standards for table manners, cleanliness of the environment and appropriate lunchtime behavior.

We suggest lunches be simple and nutritious in nature so that your child can enjoy and manage them as independently as possible. In order that your child’s mealtime, be as safe and pleasant as possible, the following are not allowed:

- Glass containers of any type
- Soft drinks
- Sharing or selling lunch items of any type
- Buying lunch items for others

- Delivery of a forgotten lunch to the classroom by a parent. (Bring the lunch to the office.)

Parents may eat lunch with their child in celebration of their child's birthday. If a parent desires to eat lunch with their child, the parent must contact the teacher a minimum of 24 hours in advance. The teacher will assign a specific space for the child and parent to eat.

We **strongly discourage** delivering your child's lunch just before their lunch time on a regular basis as it puts a strain on office resources.

### **Snacks and treats**

Students need to bring their own nutritious snack each day.

Parents who wish to send a snack to the homeroom to share in honor of a student's birthday are welcome to do so, by notifying the homeroom/advisory teacher ahead of time. Please be especially careful of food items that contain peanuts since they are a common food allergy in our community. Parents of students with summer birthdays are invited to coordinate with the teacher in order to select a school day for this observance.

Recommended treats include:

1. Decorated cookies (single large or several small)
2. Muffins or cupcakes
3. Rice Krispie treats

Parents are asked not to send any type of snack or birthday treat that requires utensils, such as cakes or any other item that takes preparation on the part of the teacher. Only snacks are permitted (do not send or order lunches for the class). Please do not send balloons or flowers as they create a distraction on the instructional day.

## **SECTION IV. ATTENDANCE AND ADMISSIONS**

### **Calendar**

All schools in the Diocese of Austin are required to have a minimum of 180 days or 75,600 minutes of instruction in the school year. School is in session for grades PK-8 at least seven hours every day, “bell-to-bell.” (Diocesan Policy 119) See the website for a school calendar: [Calendar - Holy Family Catholic School \(holyfamilys.org\)](http://holyfamilys.org)

### **Attendance requirements**

Regular and prompt attendance is an important component to the success of your child’s school learning experience. The education state law requires students must be in attendance 90% of the school year. More than 10% absences for any reason at any grade level may result in failing the class/course for the year (Diocesan Policy 305).

Absences include, but are not limited to, sickness, death in the immediate family, and weather or road conditions making travel dangerous or any other unusual cause acceptable to the principal. Appointments such as doctor and dental visits should be scheduled outside school hours whenever possible. Family vacations on school time, including leaving early for holidays, are discouraged. (Diocesan Policy 305)

According to diocesan policy, to be counted present, a student must be in attendance at school for a minimum of four hours of the instructional day. (Diocesan Policy 120)

### **Consequences of absences**

Once a student’s total number of absences exceeds 10% of the class days (PK-4) or class periods (5-8), the student and their parents may discuss the matter with the Assistant Principal. After discussing the issue with the students and parents, the Assistant Principal and Principal will determine a course of action according to each individual case. Possible recommendations available to the Assistant Principal include the following:

- The student may be required to attend detention
- The student may receive an Incomplete in the class with excessive absences
- The student may have limited involvement in co-curricular trips or activities that involve missing class (including athletics, fine arts, and other competitions)
- The student may not receive academic credit for his/her courses in which absences occur
- The student may not be invited to return the following year

### **When a student is absent**

When a child is absent from school, parents should notify the school office by updating the Schoolpass and indicating that the child will be absent. The parent may choose to email the teacher as well.

Families are to provide absence documentation on the day the student returns to school that includes the dates of and reasons for the absence(s) in the following format:

- Email of explanation from the parent sent to [attendance@holyfamilys.org](mailto:attendance@holyfamilys.org)
- Scanned copy of a medical note to be sent to [attendance@holyfamilys.org](mailto:attendance@holyfamilys.org)
- Paper copy of a medical note to be turned into the receptionist

Proper absence documentation (email) should be received by the school within 2 full school days of the student’s return. Documentation received after the 2-day window may result in an unexcused absence.

### **Obtaining make-up work**

If a student has a one-day absence, s/he should take the day to rest and recover. In the case of an extended absence, parents may contact the teacher(s) to obtain missing work. If the student is too ill to complete work, the student can complete the missed work upon returning to school. The teacher is not required to provide the work in advance. Students will be given one day to make-up work for each day that the student has been absent.

### **Release of students during school hours**

If you know in advance that a student must leave early, for example, for a dentist appointment that could not be scheduled outside school hours, you should make the change in Schoolpass. Please come to the office early enough to sign out and pick up your child. Please plan to pick up your child before 3:00 pm to avoid heavy traffic at dismissal time. **We recommend that if appointments must be scheduled during the school day, that they are scheduled during physical education or elective classes not during School Mass or academic core classes.** See Family Portal for your middle school students' daily schedule.

If the need arises during the same day to pick up your child early, please call the office in advance. To avoid disruption, parents may not go to the classroom for the child. If the child returns during the day, s/he should come to the office to check back in, and then school staff will escort the student to class. If the student has been in class for any part of the day, it is not necessary to provide a note the following day when the student returns.

### **Long term absences**

In the instance of long-term absences due to serious injury, severe illness or special circumstances, the Assistant Principal will meet with the parents and student to construct a makeup work plan and schedule. Teachers are consulted to help devise this plan and provide the student with the necessary support. The makeup work plan should include tasks and deadlines agreed upon by the Assistant Principal, student, parents, and teachers. The student will have incomplete grades in each affected class until their work is completed.

### **Late arrivals & tardies**

Teaching children to be on time starts very early in life. When they arrive on time and are picked up on time, children learn lifelong skills. Students who arrive to the classroom after 8:00 a.m. are required to obtain a tardy slip from the office before they will be admitted to class. A staff member will escort the student to class.

**Excused Tardies** are designated as students arriving late due to a medical/dental appointment when proof of the visit has been presented in the office.

**Unexcused Tardies** are given to students who arrive for school after 8:00 a.m. and who have not had an excused medical/dental appointment. Students are counted tardy if they are not in the classroom by the start of class.

Excessive unexcused tardies at the start of the day will result in a parent meeting with administration.

For students in grades 6-8, attendance is taken for each class period. Students with excessive tardies to the same class risk losing credit for that particular class. A classroom tardy occurs when a student is not present in the classroom when the bell rings. Teachers will record the tardy in FACTS without a pass from the office. Unexcused tardies during the school day are level I violations.

Students who arrive more than 30 minutes late for a class will be counted absent for that class.

### **Admissions procedures for new students**

Holy Family has a relationship with seven supporting Catholic parishes that includes special consideration in the admissions process. New students who have met the admissions requirements (age, ability to succeed academically, behavioral acceptability and immunization requirements) may be accepted into the school in the following order:

- Sibling relationship with a continuing student
- Participating parishioner in one of our 7 supporting parishes
- Catholic students
- Non-Catholic students

School parents and the community at large will be notified in a timely way about the deadlines, requirements and fees for new admissions. Continuous enrollment is usually in early February.

Diocesan policy 300 provides details regarding the age of the entering students by grade and the requirements of age verification by an official birth certificate. Students must reside with their parent/legal guardian.

All students applying for Pre-kindergarten through Eighth grade must participate in readiness screening through the school. There will be a small fee, which is included in the application fee, for the assessment conducted by trained evaluators. The results will be available to the family and school and used to make developmentally appropriate placement decisions.

In reviewing the file of a new applicant with a diagnosed special need, the school will review the applicable diagnostic and evaluative information and evaluate its ability to satisfy the special needs in light of the overall impact to the school and the ability to accommodate the student. (Diocesan Policy 300)

### **Continuous enrollment**

Once a student enrolls at Holy Family, it is assumed the student will remain at the school through 8th grade unless the family notifies the school of withdrawal or the school determines it is not in the best interest of all involved for the student to return. Starting in February, each family's FACTS account will be charged the non-refundable re-enrollment fee in 2 billings, unless the school is notified of withdrawal prior to the scheduled deadline.

### **Membership in the supporting parishes**

For purposes of admissions priority, membership in the supporting parishes means that the family has satisfied their respective pastor's definition of a participating parishioner. Different pastors use different criteria, so families should communicate directly with their church office for questions. Students from the seven parishes receive admissions priority. Verification of parishioner status is conducted annually by the Director of Admissions.

### **Inquiries/Application process**

A parent may submit an online inquiry on the school's website for a new student up to 24 months in advance. The school will maintain contact via the parent's method of choice, to provide additional admissions information. The admissions cycle begins in the fall preceding the year of enrollment. Families should watch the school website for information regarding Parent Information Sessions. The inquiry form can be found online in the Admissions section.

### **Nondiscrimination**

Schools within the Diocese of Austin do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in: (i) the admission of students; (ii) the offerings of rights, privileges, programs, or activities generally made available to their students; or (iii) the administration of educational policies, admissions policies, loan programs, athletic programs, employment practices or policies, or other school-administered programs. Holy Family Catholic School complies with all applicable State and Federal discrimination laws. Catholic schools may show preference in admission for Catholic students (Diocesan Policy 122).

### **Teacher/Class requests**

Sometimes at re-registration a parent may have a belief that a certain type of teacher will best serve the child in the coming year. The administration respectfully declines to accept requests for specific teachers because such requests are often based on limited information or information taken out of context. In preparing classroom assignments, the administration and faculty do consider classroom balance and individual student needs.



## SECTION V. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

### **School climate**

Holy Family Catholic School intends to live up to its name. All students, staff, parents and community members are called upon to show unity of purpose, as well as other characteristics of holy families such as respect for all things sacred, respect for all life, inclusiveness, responsibility, collaboration, and having each other's best interests at heart.

Holy Family Catholic School seeks to establish a school climate that mirrors family life through trust, spirituality, closeness, collaboration and responsibility, where *faith, culture, and life are brought into harmony* (Congregation for Catholic Education, *Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, n. 33.).

### **A climate of inclusiveness**

Students of all ages will be taught that name-calling, bullying, harassing, ridiculing, teasing, and excluding have no place at school and are not only unnecessary, but also intolerable. Parents are encouraged to reinforce these ideas at home.

### **Behavioral expectations**

All students in grades PK-8 are expected to obey school rules and to develop the skills of personal responsibility and polite interaction with others. Students enrolled in Holy Family Catholic School are responsible for their compliance to the academic and behavioral guidelines of the school. Each parent and student are responsible to act in a manner that upholds the mission of Holy Family Catholic School.

As parents are their children's primary educators, it is their responsibility to ensure their positive behavior and adhere to the school's rules. Parents must actively monitor their child's progress in all areas of the school, including behavior.

All students and parents must act politely and respectfully to teachers, administrators and employees of the school. Anyone who acts inappropriately to any Holy Family employee may be asked to leave the property. If further action is needed, the police may be notified.

### **Disruption of school activities**

No person or group of people acting in concert may engage in disruptive activity or disrupt a lawful activity on the campus or property of the school. The school may report any person who violates this policy to local law enforcement officials. Violations of this policy by a student are grounds for disciplinary action. (Diocesan Policy 322)

### **Standards of behavior for adults**

Staff, parents and other members of the school community are called upon to model similar good standards of behavior as well. Adults in the Catholic community should be good listeners, remain mutually supportive and inclusive of one another, maintain appropriate confidentiality, and handle disagreements in a spirit of conciliation, including any social media conversations or group texts.

Volunteers on the campus are especially reminded to keep conversation positive and limited to appropriate topics. Volunteers are also asked to refrain from posting pictures of students involved in school activities on their personal social media sites without the express permission of other students' parents. Observations of concern should be reported to an administrator.

### **Standards of positive behavior for students**

Classroom and school policies are designed to offer increasing self-discipline that is an indication of one's capabilities of accepting the responsibilities and privileges of being a Christian adult. To that end, below are expectations for student behavior:

Expectations	Responsibility	Respect	Kindness	Self-Control
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<b>All the time</b>	-Keep Campus clean -Follow dress code	-Use manners and appropriate language -Be helpful	-Include others when appropriate -Stand up for what is right	-Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself -Follow voice level expectations
<b>Lunch</b>	-Throw away trash -Clean up after yourself	-Ask before getting up	-Talk with others	-Only eat your own food
<b>Recess</b>	-Take care of belongings and equipment	-Respect boundaries	-Take turns	-Follow teacher directions -Use good sportsmanship
<b>Assemblies</b>	-Keep track of your belongings	-Ask before getting up	-Listen to the speaker -Actively participate	-Stay with class
<b>Church</b>	-Ask for help when needed	-Follow Mass postures (kneeling, standing, etc.)	-Actively participate	-Maintain prayerfulness
<b>Classroom</b>	-Ask for help when needed -Be prepared, on time, and ready to learn	-Follow classroom rules -Ask before leaving room	-Actively participate -Listen when others are speaking	-Try your best turn in assignments on time
<b>Bathroom</b>	-Wash your hands -Clean-up after yourself	-Respect the privacy of others use only what you need	-Take turns wait quietly in line	-Return promptly to class
<b>Hallways and Sidewalks</b>	-Go directly to destination -Stay on sidewalk	-Let others go first -Stay on right side to pass	-Use buddy system -If you see trash, pick it up	-Walk with a purpose -Wait patiently at the door

### **Student Recognition for Following Expectations**

Holy Family students are expected to adhere to the expectations of the school. However, the faculty and staff recognize that positive praise and recognition encourage students to continue to make positive choices that align with the virtues. Faculty and staff may recognize students through several different manners including verbal praise, classroom rewards, and communication with families.

### **General guidelines for students & families**

- Selling items on campus which are not part of a Holy Family fundraiser is not allowed.
- The distribution of party invitations of any kind on the campus is not allowed, except for school sponsored events or if the entire class/grade is invited.
- Cameras are never permitted on campus, unless used for yearbook purposes.
- Students may only drink water inside the classroom buildings. The only exception is when lunch is served in the classroom due to inclement weather or when the class is engaged in a classroom party/event.

### **Cell phones/Personal electronic devices**

It is generally recommended that young children should not bring cell phones, tablets, or any other electronic devices to school. Individual family needs should be discussed with the homeroom teacher.

Cell phones and other electronic devices may be brought to school under the following conditions:

- Electronic devices must be kept in the OFF position between 7:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m. and during any after-school activity in which the student is participating. If a student needs to use a phone to contact a parent/guardian, a teacher/staff member must give permission and supervise the call.
- Electronic devices must be stored in lockers (grades 5-8) or backpacks (grades 4 and below) during school hours.
- No personal electronic devices may be used for taking pictures.
- Personal electronic devices may not be used for game playing, applications, internet or email access or making purchases of any kind.
- Students who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones or other electronic devices may forfeit their privileges of bringing them to school and receive disciplinary consequences. The consequences for misuse of the cell phone or other electronic device can include, but are not limited to, seizures, fines, retention, or disposal. (Diocesan Policy 323)

Smart watches may be brought to school under the following conditions:

- The communication capabilities are disabled during the school day.
- The watch may not be used for phone calls, text messages, game playing, applications, internet or email access, or making purchases of any kind.
- Students who violate any of the rules regarding smart watches may forfeit their privileges of bringing them to school and receive disciplinary consequences. The consequences for misuse of the smart watch can include, but are not limited to, seizures, fines, retention, or disposal.

Holy Family is not responsible for lost, damaged, stolen, or misplaced electronic devices, smart watches, and cell phones.

**\*\*A special note about social media-** Students are expected to always act responsibly and respectfully on social media sites. Research shows that what students post online has a significant impact on their daily interactions at school and on their emotional well-being. Parents are expected to monitor what their students post on social media to guide them in proper online interactions.

### **Bullying Policy**

All students must respect and abide by principles of good, Catholic, moral conduct. Teachers will teach students that bullying others, including teachers and other personnel, will not be tolerated in a Catholic school. Parents/legal guardians are expected to reinforce these standards at home.

**Bullying is prohibited.** The Holy Family School community shall not tolerate any bullying on school grounds or at any school activity on or off campus.

**For the purposes of this policy, “bullying” means:**

- A form of overt and aggressive behavior that is intentional, hurtful, and repeated.
- With bullying, there is an imbalance of strength: bullied children are taunted, harassed, rejected, and assaulted by one or more individuals.
- A bully’s goal is to have power over people.

**Bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following types of conduct:**

- Relational (intimidation, coercion, inciting others to commit acts of bullying, spreading rumors or lies, and deliberate exclusion or isolation of an individual or group),
- Verbal (name-calling, teasing, threats, and racist, sexist or bigoted remarks),
- Physical (pushing, shoving, tripping, hitting, slapping, kicking and punching)

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of any electronic means, including, but not limited to, text messages, e-mail, applications, social media sites, or phone calls. Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying.

### **Harassment**

Holy Family expressly prohibits any form of unlawful harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or status in any group protected by state or local law. Harassment is defined as “a course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such a person and serves no legitimate purpose.”

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Continuous threats or intimidation
- Continuous unwanted romantic and/or sexual attention or contact
- Repeated obscene comments or actions in person or through any form of electronic communication
- Repeated gestures or body language that cause emotional distress in another person

### **Reporting Procedures**

When an individual believes that he/she feels uncomfortable with the actions or comments of another, or observes similar treatment of another person, the individual must report his/her concerns immediately as follows:

- Alleged or believed cases of harassment, or bullying are to be reported immediately in person and in writing by the affected students(s) to any of the following adult personnel: the Principal, Assistant Principal, or any other faculty/staff member
- All allegations will be investigated by the Assistant Principal
- Persons who allege harassment by others should, to the extent possible, maintain evidence of the alleged harassment (including witnesses, emails, texts, screenshots, electronic messaging of any kind, or phone messages).

### **STOPit**

Holy Family subscribes to the [STOPit](#) web program, where students can anonymously report the following via mobile apps, web forms, or phone calls: bullying, cyberbullying, inappropriate teacher/student relationships, violence/threats, weapons possession, drugs/alcohol, substance abuse, and intolerance/discrimination. As soon as the report is filed, it is shared with the school administration and an investigation is conducted. (Diocese Policy 321)

**Staff intervention.** Holy Family Catholic School expects all staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying or harassment to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene – unless intervention would be a threat to staff members’ safety. He/she shall report the bullying or harassment to the school administration for further investigation.

**Students and parents shall report bullying or harassment.** Holy Family School expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying or harassment to report it. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to the administrative consequences.

### **Investigation of Bullying/Harassment**

1. Once a report of harassment or bullying is received, it will be promptly and carefully investigated. Depending on the report, the investigation may include a review of evidence and conversations with students, parents, and staff as appropriate. Proper outcomes take time; therefore, cooperation by all individuals involved in a complaint is necessary to conduct the investigation equitably. The proceeding section on Reporting Procedures provides information on how the initial report is presented for investigation.
2. The confidentiality of each individual involved with the investigation or complaint will be observed, provided it does not interfere with the ability to investigate the allegations or take corrective action.
3. If Holy Family determines that a student has engaged in behavior which violates the school policy, the student is subject to disciplinary action (see discipline).
4. Individuals should recognize that knowingly and willfully bringing false accusations of harassment or discrimination can have serious effects on innocent individuals and may also subject individuals to consequences for school violations.
5. If a harassment episode has occurred between Holy Family students, or a Holy Family student has harassed others, teachers and administrators work together with the people involved to

rebuild trust and respect if possible. This is best achieved and resolved through direct meetings and constructive dialogue.

6. Retaliation against individuals who in good faith file a complaint of harassment or participate in the complaint is prohibited. Any person who feels he/she has been subjected to retaliation should report such conduct as outlined above in the "Reporting Procedures."

**Consequences/Intervention.** Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and include consequences outlined in the student discipline section. Depending on the severity of the incident, the Assistant Principal may also take additional steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing staff support for students as necessary; and developing a supervision plan with the parents.

### **Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

The Diocese of Austin Catholic schools are committed to providing an Internet safety policy which includes technology protection measures. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school computers and other devices capable of accessing the Internet. The school's Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy meets and exceeds all requirements of CIPA. All parents will be asked to sign that they agree to uphold the acceptable use policy for technology at school, in school-related activities, and away from school. Students in grades 2 and above will be asked to sign as well. (Diocese Policy 331) (*See "Technology" in Section VII.*)

### **Academic integrity**

In keeping with our school's mission, students are expected to participate in the learning process through earnest participation and preparation, honesty and personal responsibility. Each student should do their own work and credit sources properly. Any violation of cheating or plagiarism will result in disciplinary action and a loss of credit until the work is completed individually and independently.

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's words, ideas, or work without giving proper credit. This includes:

- Copying from books, websites, artificial intelligence (AI) sources, or other sources without citation
- Submitting another person's work as your own
- Failing to use quotation marks when directly quoting
- Paraphrasing someone else's ideas without proper acknowledgment

Students are encouraged to ask teachers for help if they are unsure about how to properly cite sources or complete assignments honestly. Our goal is to help students grow as responsible learners and faithful stewards of their gifts.

### **Student Behavior and Discipline**

Holy Family students are educated to become men and women of faith and character having sound moral principles and the academic training necessary to assume their responsibilities as productive citizens. All rules and regulations are created and enforced with the expectation that Holy Family's philosophy and mission will be met.

School discipline is necessary to maintain a safe learning environment for students and adults. Ultimately, the goal is for a student to self-regulate appropriate behaviors. Adherence to these policies and procedures indicates a student's willingness to be a positive member of the Holy Family community.

Holy Family recognizes that students are personally responsible for their actions and behavior. Inappropriate actions and behavior will not be accepted or tolerated, and students will be held accountable. Holy Family expects that students, as well as all members of the school community, will treat others equally and respectfully. They will refrain from the willful or negligent use of slurs of any form against persons on the basis of race, language spoken, color, sex, religion, disability, national origin, immigration status, age, sexual orientation, or political belief. Holy Family expects that students will not be

involved with illegal activity, gangs, or inappropriate groups. Holy Family maintains a “Zero Tolerance” standpoint regarding weapons, illegal drugs, and gang affiliation. Students are expected to actively support and assist the school in maintaining a campus free from drugs, alcohol, weapons, gang activity, and/or any situation harmful to the school or school community.

As a member of the Holy Family community, students have the responsibility to help care for others, their property, and the image of Holy Family. Students are encouraged to inform a staff member when students violate their behavioral expectations.

Holy Family recognizes that parents have a key responsibility in the discipline of their children and actively includes them in the school’s disciplinary process. Communication lines will be kept open by parent phone calls, letters, emails and conferences.

The purpose of the Holy Family disciplinary process is to clearly indicate to students when their actions and behavior are inappropriate and unacceptable. Classroom discipline is the responsibility of each teacher who informs students and parents of their behavioral expectations at the course's beginning. Teachers will communicate with parents if a student’s behavior does not meet the expected behavior guideline. If the classroom teacher’s disciplinary measures fail to produce a change in behavior a student may be referred to the Assistant Principal for further consequences and actions which may include, but are not limited to administrative detention, suspension, behavioral contract and expulsion.

Holy Family does not use physical force for disciplinary purposes or corporal punishment. (Diocesan Policy 319)

### Holy Family School Discipline

Students are responsible for overall good conduct in or out of school. Students represent themselves, their family and their school both on and off the school campus. We believe all students can and will meet expectations (rules, guidelines) and expect students to come to school in an environment that allows them to learn and grow through their heart, mind, body and soul. We believe that consistent discipline provides this safe and nurturing environment, is not meant to be punitive, and matches consequences with individual choices.

**Level 1-Behavior Addressed by the Faculty-** a lapse in expected behavior on the part of the student.

Examples of Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bringing Toys/Gadgets to school</li><li>• Cell Phone/Smart Watch Use</li><li>• Cheating on homework/classwork</li><li>• Difficulty with Transition/Tardy</li><li>• Disrespect toward others</li><li>• Distracting Noise</li><li>• Failure to Follow Directions</li><li>• Inappropriate Language</li><li>• Inappropriate Mass Behavior</li><li>• Leaving Classroom without a Pass</li><li>• Lying/Tattling/Teasing/Gossiping</li><li>• Misuse of School Property</li><li>• Name Calling</li><li>• Not Having Materials</li><li>• Off-Task Behavior</li><li>• Refusal to Comply</li><li>• Rough/Rowdy Behavior</li><li>• Running in hallways</li><li>• Public Display of Affection</li><li>• Uniform Code Violations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redirection</li><li>• Reflection/Think Sheet</li><li>• Communication to parent/guardian</li><li>• Classroom detention/cool down period</li><li>• Parent Conference</li></ul>

**Level 2-Behavior Addressed by the Administration-** a lapse in expected behavior on the part of the student. When a behavior occurs, the teacher will notify the assistant principal as soon as possible. In each instance, the assistant principal will investigate, and the assistant principal will contact the parent/guardian. The behavior and assigned consequence(s) will be recorded in FACTS.

Examples of Behaviors	Possible Consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuous or extreme Level 1 Behaviors</li><li>• Academic Dishonesty (grades 6-8) (Plagiarism/Cheating on assessments)</li><li>• Blatant/persistent defiance/disrespect toward others</li><li>• Destruction of Property</li><li>• Intentional, Inappropriate Physical Contact</li><li>• Missed Detention</li><li>• Technology Violations</li><li>• Threatening harm</li><li>• Unauthorized Use of School Property</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Detention</li><li>• Suspension-in school</li><li>• Suspension-out of school</li><li>• Referral to law enforcement</li><li>• Financial responsibility</li></ul>

**Level 3-Behavior Addressed by the Administration-** a grave lapse in expected behavior on the part of the student. When a behavior occurs, the teacher will refer the student to the assistant principal as soon as possible. In each instance, the assistant principal will investigate, and the assistant principal will contact the parent/guardian. The behavior and assigned consequence(s) will be recorded in FACTS.

Examples of Behaviors	Possible Consequences
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous or Extreme Behaviors from Above</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Creating a False Emergency</li> <li>• Cutting Class/Skipping School</li> <li>• Drug/Alcohol/Vape Possession</li> <li>• Harassment</li> <li>• Hate/Derogatory Speech</li> <li>• Physical Fight or Aggression</li> <li>• Theft/Gambling</li> <li>• Threatening Violence</li> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Weapon Possession (including knives, pepper spray, guns, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension-out of school</li> <li>• Expulsion</li> <li>• Referral to law enforcement</li> <li>• Financial responsibility</li> </ul>
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### **Restorative Practices**

Holy Family Catholic School seeks to create a nurturing a Christ-centered learning community. In alignment with our Catholic values and mission, we may implement restorative practices as part of our discipline approach to help students repair harm, restore relationships, and grow as disciples of Christ. Restorative practices support students in:

- Taking responsibility for their actions
- Understanding how their behavior impacts others
- Making things right
- Restoring relationships
- Developing moral character and empathy

Restorative responses may include, but are not limited to:

- Restorative conversations using guided questions
- Reflection sheets
- Acts of service to repair harm
- Behavior support or accountability plans
- Collaborating with the school counselor

### **Detention: Teacher Assigned**

Students may be assigned a classroom detention for various misconduct by the teacher. Students are required to attend detention at the scheduled time. This discipline obligation takes priority over all school requirements (sports practices, games, competition, club meeting, etc.) Failure to meet a detention assignment will result in a referral to the assistant principal and may result in additional consequences. All school rules and expectations (including dress code and electronic devices) are in effect during detention.

If a student earns an accumulation of 3 classroom detentions, the student will be referred to the Assistant Principal for an administrative detention.

### **Detention: Administrative Assigned**

Students may be assigned an administrative detention for various misconduct by the assistant principal. Students are required to attend detention at the scheduled time. This discipline obligation takes priority over all school requirements (sports practices, games, competition, club meeting, etc.) Failure to meet a detention assignment may result in additional consequences which may impact co-curricular activities. All school rules and expectations (including dress code and electronic devices) are in effect during detention.

If a student earns an accumulation of 3 administrative detentions, the student will earn a suspension.

### **Suspension**



The Assistant Principal will make a reasonable attempt to communicate with the parent/guardian prior to the suspension and provide a written notice to the student indicating the day(s), date(s) and type of suspension to be served (in or out of school). The suspension is recorded in FACTS. Before returning to school, the student and parent must meet with an administrator (Diocesan Policy 320).

During a suspension, a student may not attend or participate in any Holy Family sponsored events (on or off campus). Suspended students are also responsible for keeping up with classroom assignments and content that is missed during their suspension.

If a student receives suspensions totaling 10 school days in a school year, they will receive notice of an expulsion review meeting. In rare cases, the student may be suspended for ten (10) days with an immediate recommendation for an expulsion hearing review.

## **Expulsion**

The expulsion of a student is a last resort. It is used when the matter is serious and other corrective actions are not effective or appropriate. Expelled students may not attend Holy Family sponsored events. Expulsion is for the remainder of the year (Diocesan Policy 320). Readmission for the following year is unlikely.

Anyone convicted of a delinquent or criminal matter inside or outside of the school environment is subject to expulsion. Any student serving an existing expulsion from another school and requesting enrollment into Holy Family will not be enrolled at Holy Family during the length of the expulsion and will go before a review board to determine if admittance into Holy Family will be approved at a later date.

### *Expulsion Review Board*

This Board is made up of four (4) members. The Principal, the Assistant Principal and two (2) teachers not directly involved with the specific incident. This discipline review will include all documentation of the incident(s) and any/all student records on file. A recommendation to expel or offer a consequence "in lieu of" expulsion will be provided to the President. The final decision will be made by the President.

## **Enrollment continuation**

Attending a Catholic school is a privilege, not a right. The Principal or President can, at any time, withdraw any student when such is in the best interest of the school. (Diocese Policy 300)

A student who leaves Holy Family or any Diocesan Catholic school, under unfavorable terms, or who is requested to leave, will not be re-admitted to the school or another Catholic school in the Diocese of Austin without the receiving principal consulting with the former school. (Diocesan Policy 300)

Unfavorable terms include, but are not limited to:

- academic performance
- emotional or behavioral concerns
- unpaid financial balances

## **Search and seizure**

Lockers, desks and other storage spaces are school property, and the school reserves the right to search them at any time. Dangerous weapons, illegal substances, cell phones and any possessions forbidden by the school handbook may be seized. If the principal or a teacher believes that a student is carrying any such items, the principal/teacher should ask the student for it. If the student refuses, the student may be asked to empty pockets, purses, backpacks, etc. If the student still refuses, the principal/teacher will make the decision to either:

- gain possession of the article immediately if persons are in danger;
- request the parent/legal guardian come to school to conduct the search of the student;
- follow suspension and/or expulsion policies;
- call the local police department

Holy Family has a policy on acceptable use of cell phones and the consequences for misuse of the cell phone, which may include but are not limited to seizures, fines, retention or disposal. (Diocesan Policy 323)

## SECTION VI. SCHOOL UNIFORMS

### *Uniform Policy 2025-2026*

FlynnO'Hara Uniforms serves as our uniform vendor and sells our required uniform elements and other accessories. The company website for Holy Family's landing page is [www.flynnohara.com/school/TX017](http://www.flynnohara.com/school/TX017). There is also a FlynnO'Hara store in San Antonio that carries Holy Family's uniforms should you be in their area. The address is 2108 NW Military Hwy., San Antonio, TX 78213. The Austin location will be opening soon.

The "required" uniform elements are ones that must be worn on Mass days, group and individual picture days, and other specified days. Items listed as optional may be worn on other days. These items must be purchased at FlynnO'Hara Uniforms.

The following details are provided for the fully adopted uniform and their proper guidelines:

	<b>PreK-4 Girls</b>	<b>PreK-4 Boys</b>
Required Bottoms (purchased through the vendor) <i>"Mass Uniform"</i>	Plaid jumper	Youth Navy Pull On Pants (PreK required, K optional) or Boys Navy Flat Front Pants
Optional Bottoms (purchased through the vendor)	-Navy pants -Plaid skort	-Youth Navy Pull On Shorts (PreK and K) -Boys Navy Flat Front Shorts
Required Top (purchased through the vendor) <i>"Mass Uniform"</i>	White puff sleeve blouse with navy piping (or long sleeve blouse with piping)	White oxford shirt (short or long sleeve)
Optional Top (purchased through the vendor)	White or light blue logoed polo	White or light blue logoed polo
	<b>5-8 Girls</b>	<b>5-8 Boys</b>
Required Bottoms (purchased through the vendor) <i>"Mass Uniform"</i>	Plaid Knife Pleated Skirt. Skirts may not be rolled and must be worn at the natural waist. Skirt must be fingertip length of longer	Khaki flat front pants
Optional Bottoms (purchased through the vendor)	Khaki skort worn fingertip length of longer Khaki pants	Khaki flat front shorts worn fingertip length of longer
Required Top (purchased through the vendor) <i>"Mass Uniform"</i>	Light blue short-sleeved blouse	Light blue oxford (short or long sleeve)
Optional Top (purchased through the vendor)	White or navy logoed shirt	White or navy logoed shirt
Optional P.E. Uniform (purchased through the vendor)	-Logoed navy basketball short -Logoed grey athletic t-shirt	-Logoed navy basketball short -Logoed grey athletic t-shirt
	<b>All Girls</b>	<b>All Boys</b>
Socks/Tights	-Solid black, white, or navy blue socks with no logo -Solid black, white or navy blue tights/leggings - no logos, patterns, or sequins are allowed	-Solid black, white, or navy blue socks - no logos, patterns, or sequins are allowed
Shoes	-Saddle shoes in navy and white -All white (including stitching and logo) athletic shoes*	-All black (including stitching and logo) athletic shoes* Clear air soles are permitted. *Velcro required for PK-K

	Clear air soles are permitted. *Velcro required for PK-K	
P.E. Shoes	Students in grades 2-8 may wear uniform shoes or bring athletic shoes to change into for P.E. class.	Students in grades 2-8 may wear uniform shoes or bring athletic shoes to change into for P.E. class.
Belt-required for all pants with belt loops	black, solid leather or braided belt	black, solid leather or braided belt
Jackets/sweater/sweatshirts (purchased through Flynn O'Hara)	-Logoed navy fleece jacket -Logoed dark grey or navy sweatshirt -Logoed navy pull over or cardigan sweater	-Logoed navy fleece jacket -Logoed dark grey or navy sweatshirt -Logoed navy pull over or cardigan sweater

	Additional Guidelines for All Students
<b>Hair</b>	<p><b>Girls:</b> Hair should be natural in color. Eyes should be visible. Worn in a non-distracting style. Bows/headbands must be school colors (navy, light blue or white). Bows may not exceed 3x5 inches in size. Barrettes/clips may be gold or silver.</p> <p><b>Boys:</b> Hair should be natural in color. Eyes should be visible Hair should not exceed the eyebrows, mid ear or the top of the uniform shirt.</p>
<b>Shirts</b>	Shirts must be tucked in throughout the day unless the no-tuck oxford is worn.
<b>Undershirts</b>	A t-shirt worn under the shirt may not show at the collar or sleeve.
<b>Jewelry</b>	<p>Scapulars and religious medals are allowed. Students may wear 1 bracelet. Rings are not permitted. One small stud earring per ear may be worn in the earlobe. Hoop earrings and earrings that extend below the lobe are not permitted.</p>
<b>Wristwatches</b>	Wristwatches are allowed. Please see Section 5 of the Handbook for the policy regarding smart watches.
<b>Other accessories</b>	Any other accessories including tattoos, temporary tattoos, hair extensions, or jewelry not named above are not allowed.
<b>Make-up and Nail Polish (Girls Only)</b>	<p><b>Girls:</b> Clear nail polish is permitted Students in grades 6, 7, 8 may wear foundation, concealer, clear/natural tinted lip gloss, and mascara.</p>

#### Spirit-dress Guidelines

- Students should follow the guidelines for the uniform policy.
- The only change to the uniform policy is that students are permitted to wear a Holy Family Catholic School t-shirt or sweatshirt.
- Students are required to wear the appropriate themed spirit shirt for the day.

**Themed-dress and Non-uniform guidelines**

- Students are expected to be neat and well groomed, following the standards of modesty and good taste.
- Parents should assist children with choosing clothing that matches the theme and is appropriate for the school day or a school spirit shirt.
- Clothing should cover the abdomen.
- Clothing with writing, embroidery or advertising that is obscene, offensive, or in contradiction to the teachings of the Church are not permitted. In addition, students may not wear, distribute, or display items that promote a political agenda, campaign, cause or individual running for political office.
- Open-toed shoes are not permitted.

## SECTION VII. ACADEMICS/ SCHOOL PROGRAM

### **The curricular program**

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten at Holy Family are developmental programs that offer the student a gateway to a multi-year educational experience. They consider the emotional, physical, social, spiritual, and intellectual development of 4- and 5-year-old children, exposing them to a wide variety of curricular elements at an age-appropriate level. These programs are substantially different from day care settings. Students participate in religion, language arts, mathematics, physical education and recess daily. They participate in social studies, science, guidance, and social emotional activities at least weekly.

Students in grades 1-5 will study according to minimum daily time requirements:

- religion
- language arts (includes reading, vocabulary, English grammar and composition, spelling, handwriting, speaking, listening)
- mathematics and,

according to minimum weekly time requirements:

- social studies (includes elements of history; geography; economics; government; citizenship; culture; technology in society; and social studies skills)
- science
- physical education
- health
- fine arts (art, music, theater arts)

An appropriate curriculum or set of concepts will also be taught for guidance, Spanish, and STEM. Students will be assigned to a homeroom teacher each year and will have other special areas and core teachers assigned as students progress in grade levels.

Students are expected to participate in all curricular areas.

Students in grades 6-8 will study a year each of religion, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Students in grades 6-8 will take three elective credits annually. Spanish is a recommended elective course for all students in the middle school. Over the three years, students are expected to earn 1.5 credits in physical education. Physical education credits can be earned by enrolling in a physical education class or meeting the expectations for the physical education [waiver](#).

Middle school students are expected to participate in all curricular areas.

### **Religion Program**

#### **Holy Mass and worship activities**

Our most important activity of the week is participation in the Holy Mass. Students in grades 1 and above attend Mass weekly on Thursday mornings. The only exception to Thursdays is if a Holy Day of Obligation falls on a different day of the school week. PK and Kindergarten students begin attending Mass weekly later in the fall. Parents and guests are always welcome. Mass begins promptly at 10:00 a.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, and it is important for students to be on time, just as any other day.

While our aim in worship activities is joyful praise, the school staff also seeks to ensure the highest standards of respectfulness at these times. Students enter the church in silence and in prayerful preparation for the celebration and participate with disciplined reverence. Parents and guests in attendance are asked to model this same disciplined reverence by maintaining quiet before, during, and after Mass.

Other examples of how we recognize the special atmosphere of these activities:

- Because student contributions to Mass or a prayer service are acts of worship, we do not applaud them.

- No video or still pictures may be taken during these celebrations since students are helping to facilitate prayer and worship as opposed to performing.

### **Sacraments**

The religion curriculum includes knowledge and application of concepts regarding the sacraments of the Catholic Church. However, only a parish has jurisdiction to oversee and provide specific preparation for first reception of the sacraments, such as First Holy Communion and First Reconciliation. Therefore, children preparing for these sacraments will need to participate in their home parish programs designed for this purpose. Parents may request information about the content being taught in the religion class at Holy Family. This information can be shared with the parish religious education coordinator to help families determine what the parish expectations are for sacramental preparation.

At Mass, students in grades 2-8 who have not made their First Communion and non-Catholic students will have the opportunity to approach the altar with their class. These students may cross their arms across their shoulders and receive a blessing from the priest.

### **Service activities**

Service in charity is an important part of the religion program and the overall school experience. The priorities for these activities at Holy Family include: (1) school wide activities that support Austin area needs 2) class/grade level activities that support areas of focus or study; and (3) school wide activities that support global needs.

In addition to these school wide service activities, students enrolled in the Faith in Action class will participate in service projects in the community that highlight the social justice component of the religion curriculum.

### **Report cards/Progress reports**

Teachers monitor student progress in many ways, including direct observation, teacher-made tests, published tests, and performance assessments. Each nine weeks, marks are determined for each subject area for the report card to be issued electronically to parents and students. Midway through the first quarter, a brief parent conference is held to discuss strengths, areas of improvement, and the student's overall adjustment. Progress reports are sent twice per quarter in grades 3-8 and once per quarter in grades PK-2. Parents are encouraged to visit the [Family Portal](#) frequently to see their child's academic progress. An optional parent conference is held in the late spring.

### **Grade Report Schedule 2025-2026**

	<b>First Quarter</b>	<b>Second Quarter</b>	<b>Third Quarter</b>	<b>Fourth Quarter</b>
<b>Start of Quarter</b>	August 12	October 14	January 6	March 9
<b>End of Quarter</b>	October 9	December 19	March 6	May 22
<b>Report Cards Issued</b>	October 16	January 9	March 13	May 22 (PK-5) May 29 (6-7) May 19 (8)

### **Eligibility for student activities**

Eligibility - Academic Requirements: If a player's grades (Progress Reports and/or Report Card) fall below a 70 or he/she receives a "U" in conduct in any subject including specials, the student will not be allowed to attend games or scrimmages until the next progress report or report card shows improvement above a 70 or an "N" or better in conduct. The student may participate in practices on campus. On the date the student becomes eligible again, he/she may resume his/her position as a team player. This information is listed in the student's progress report.

At the next eligible period, the student must have 70 averages in all subject areas and may not receive a U conduct grade on a report card or progress report. Students who continue to earn below 70 in any subject become ineligible.

Eligibility is determined at progress report and report card time.

If a student becomes ineligible for participation in student activities at progress report or report card time, he/she will not be eligible until the next reporting time. (Diocesan Policy 307)

### **Grading scale**

In grade levels and courses where letter and/or number grades are used, the following grading scale conversion will apply:

A = 90-100      B = 80-89      C = 70-79      Failing mark = 69 and below

Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's progress on [Family Portal](#) for those students receiving numerical grades in grades 3-8. They are encouraged to sign up for e-mail notifications for grades that drop below 70.

### **Promotion requirements**

Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten, as developmental programs, recognize that students make progress at different rates. Promotion is based on a holistic picture of the student's readiness for the expectations of the next level. Students are assessed on a list of skills as to their level of mastery, which provides information for student progress.

To be promoted in Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten, a student shall attain a mark of Progressing by the end of the year in the skills of: Social/Emotional Development/Work Habits, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies/Science/Health and Religion. In addition, students must meet the attendance requirements for promotion. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grades 1-2: Students are assessed on a list of skills as to their level of mastery, which provides information for student progress in the areas of: Language Arts (Reading and Writing), Social Studies, Math, Science and Religion. In addition, a student shall attain a mark of Progressing by the end of the year for the skills in language arts and in mathematics. Students must also meet the attendance requirements for promotion, which are noted below. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grading Scale for PK – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

M = Mastery of Grade Level Standards  
P = Progressing  
E = Emerging  
AC = Area of Concern

Grades 3-5: To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above which is derived by averaging the final numerical grade for language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and religion. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in language arts and in mathematics. Students must also meet the attendance requirements for promotion, which are noted below. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grading Scale	Personal/Social Development
A= 90-100	O- Outstanding
B= 80-89	S- Satisfactory
C= 70-79	N- Needs Improvement
F= 69- Below	U- Unsatisfactory

Grades 6-8: To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain an overall average of 70 or above for the year in all courses taken. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in four of the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and religion. In addition, students must meet the attendance requirements for promotion, which are noted below. If 8<sup>th</sup> grade students meet the criteria for promotion, they will be eligible for graduation from Holy Family Catholic School at the end of the school year. (Diocesan Policy 301)

Grading Scale	Personal/Social Development
---------------	-----------------------------



A= 90-100  
B= 80-89  
C= 70-79  
F= 69- Below

O- Outstanding  
S- Satisfactory  
N- Needs Improvement  
U- Unsatisfactory

### **Middle school scheduling: grades 6-8**

In grades 6-8, block scheduling will be used in all subjects, which will schedule students on alternate days for all subjects. Homework for these classes should be completed that evening.

### **Attendance requirements for promotion**

More than 10% absences for any reason at any grade level may result in failing the class/course for the year. (Diocesan Policy 305) Students with more than 10% absences may not be permitted to re-register for the following school year.

### **Learning differences**

Holy Family currently serves a wide range of academic abilities within its student population. While all enrolled must be able to meet at least the minimum requirements for promotion, many students with special needs are served at Holy Family. The ability of students to be academically successful at Holy Family depends on the support that a child needs to access the curriculum.

Teachers work with a parent/guardian to communicate a child's progress in the classroom. If a student's progress is falling below the expected learning standards, the teacher will communicate with the parents and share interventions that have been tried. Following those discussions, parents may speak with the Assistant Principal to discuss the eligibility criteria for free evaluation and services through the local public school system.

Those students who have had an evaluation completed that resulted in a diagnosis may be eligible for accommodations and/or modifications at Holy Family. After a student is evaluated, the documentation should be submitted to the school, so that our learning support team can create a student support plan which is shared with the family and faculty.

Current documentation that verifies the need for accommodations and/or modifications is required from a qualified medical, educational, or psychological professional. Current documentation is defined as that completed within three years of the evaluation date. Upon review of the documentation, Holy Family will determine which accommodations, modifications and/or recommendations can be implemented.

Reasonable accommodation is a change made to the teaching or testing procedures to provide a student with access to information and create an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Accommodations address how a student learns; they do not change what is learned.

Modification is defined as a change to the general education curriculum or other material being taught. Report cards can be altered to reflect modifications.

An Individual Education Program ("IEP") is a federally funded plan for students determined eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA"). Principals and teachers in Catholic schools do not develop IEPs; however, the administration of Holy Family can assist in the referral for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services.

Being able to meet a child's educational needs is of paramount importance. However, reasonable accommodations and/or modifications do not ensure success. If a child's educational needs cannot be met by Holy Family, we will inform the parents to allow them to explore educational institutions that have the resources and expertise to meet the child's needs. (Diocesan Policy 305)

### **Classroom enrichment & remediation**

The early childhood years of PreK, Kindergarten and first grade provide an opportunity for the child to grow socially, emotionally and academically. This is the time that a strong foundation is formed and there is broad learning in many new areas. Children begin to develop skills in language, reading, phonics, and mathematics; and while there are developmental milestones, each student progresses at their own

individual rate. Teachers at these grade levels will have benchmark goals for learning that they will share with parents throughout the year. It is important that families support the faculty's efforts and work with their children as suggested. While group learning will be the norm, as they grow and develop, they will be exposed to individualized instruction.

Standardized test scores, given each year to students in the first through eighth grades, will serve as a guide for any needed remediation and enrichment. Students in first through eighth grades whose scores fall at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in Reading Total and/or Math Total will qualify for classroom enrichment in those areas. Students whose scores in Reading Total or Math Total fall at the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile or below will qualify for classroom remediation in those areas. Enrichment and remediation will be provided in the regular classroom setting through a variety of methods by the subject area teacher.

### **Criteria for accelerated classes**

Criteria is established in order for students to be placed in an accelerated class. The criteria used includes achievement scores on the NWEA MAP test, course grades, teacher recommendations, and the Readiness Assessment for math. Based on this data, the student may be placed in an accelerated class which is offered in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The specific information is included in the Middle School Course Catalogue.

The accelerated classes included the following:

	Math	English
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Pre-Algebra Algebra I	7th Grade Accelerated English
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Algebra I Geometry	8th Grade Accelerated English

Determination about class placement will be made each year, following a review of assessment information and grades. *If students do not meet the criteria at the end of an advanced course, repeating the course or placing the student in the on-level course may be required.*

While most parents prefer for their students to be “challenged,” there are sometimes unintended consequences to those decisions. Parents who desire their child to enroll in an accelerated class but do not meet the established criteria will need to meet with an administrator.

### **Important additional information:**

High schools vary widely on how they will view the successful completion of Algebra I in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Currently, public high schools accept Catholic middle school Algebra courses once we verify that the course follows the state TEKS (objectives). For information regarding the process for receiving high school Algebra I credit, families should communicate with the high school.

Catholic high schools vary in how they assess students and what their suggested placement is for their high school math program. In some cases, it will be required to retake Algebra I as a freshman if math placement scores don't meet the criteria.

Receiving high school credit for Algebra in 8<sup>th</sup> grade may result in the child taking considerably harder classes to complete their four years of required math credit in high school. In order to determine the expectations and requirements for whether credit from Holy Family will transfer to a Catholic high school, families should communicate with the high school.

The students who take Algebra I at Holy Family will take the same midterm and final exams that are given at St. Dominic Savio. The math teachers on both campuses communicate to ensure that the same content is taught within the semester. For students who go to Savio, the course grades and final exams will be used by the administration when determining placement. For more information on that process, please communicate with the staff at Savio.

The students who take Geometry at Holy Family will attend the class at Savio. For students who go to Savio, the course grades and final exams will be used by the administration when determining placement. For more information on that process, please communicate with the staff at Savio.

The students who take Spanish 1a, 1b, and 2 at Holy Family will take the same midterm and final exams that are given at St. Dominic Savio. Spanish 1a covers the first semester of high school Spanish 1 within the academic year, and Spanish 1b covers the second semester of high school Spanish 1 within the academic year. Spanish 2 covers the same content that is taught at the high school. The teachers on both campuses communicate to ensure that the same content is taught. For students who go to Savio, the course grades and final exams will be used by the administration when determining placement. For more information on that process, please communicate with the staff at Savio.

### **Homework**

The purpose of homework is for students to be able to support the learning in the classroom through the following:

- Independently practice a skill or concept
- Study for an upcoming assessment
- Become familiar with information in preparation for a new lesson that will be taught

Homework and grading guidelines are designed to offer gradually increasing expectations for students, ultimately resulting in the skills needed for higher education, particularly Catholic high schools. The following are guidelines for homework allotment for the average student with average motivation and ability to concentrate.

- Kindergarten – weekly assignments lasting 15 to 20 minutes that require parent involvement, such as book reading, review of letters or numbers, thematic projects, etc.
- Grades 1-5 - Homework will be assigned Monday through Thursday. Depending upon the level of difficulty or the topic, assignments may vary. However, if your child's homework times regularly exceed those indicated, please contact the teacher(s). Homework may also involve projects assigned over several days or weeks. Parents can help their child by establishing a quiet space to work on homework and helping ensure that the work is completed. Some projects and upcoming tests may require weekend homework.
- Grades 6-8 - Homework will be assigned Monday through Friday and will be due the next day the class is scheduled unless otherwise stated. Depending upon the level of difficulty or the topic, assignments may vary. However, if your child's homework times regularly exceed those indicated, please contact the teacher(s). Homework may also involve projects assigned over several days or weeks. Parents can help their child by establishing a quiet space to work on homework and helping ensure that the work is completed. Some projects and upcoming tests may require weekend homework.

Homework should take about 10 minutes per grade. For example, a student in 4<sup>th</sup> grade should expect about 40 minutes of homework daily.

Grade 1	10 minutes	Grade 4	40 minutes
Grade 2	20 minutes	Grade 5/6	50-60 minutes
Grade 3	30 minutes	Grades 7/8	70-80 minutes*

\*For students enrolled in advanced classes, students should expect to spend additional time completing homework.

### **School outings**

When the faculty judges that a school outing is a significant enhancement for the instructional program, information will be provided to parents, and a signed permission slip is required. Since behavior expectations will be clearly specified for each outing, the school does not accept liability for injuries sustained through not meeting those expectations while participating in a school outing. Parent participation in school outings may be limited by transportation, safety, or the organization's requirements. EIM certification is required of all volunteers who accompany students on school outings. If private vehicles are used, a copy of each driver's valid driver's license and proof of insurance is to be filed at the school. Drivers must follow all federal, state, and local driving laws. Drivers may only take students to the locations listed on the expected itinerary. School outings are a privilege, not a right. Only students who act responsibly will be permitted to go on school outings. (Diocese Policy 329)

### **Testing program**

All students in grades 1-8 throughout the Diocese of Austin take the [NWEA MAP](#) Assessments testing series in the early fall, winter, and spring. This assessment tracks the academic growth and progress of each individual student, and it will compare the student's scores with grade-level counterparts on the national and diocesan level, provide information for future instruction and curriculum planning, and provide a broad picture of our school's performance. The student's individual scores will be sent home within six weeks of testing.

Students in grades K-2 take the [DIBELS](#) three times a year. The assessment tracks a student's academic progress related to reading and phonics. The data compare the student's scores with expected norms and is used to provide information for future instruction and curriculum planning. The student's individual scores will be sent home within six weeks of testing.

All students in grades 5 and 8 throughout the Diocese of Austin take the [ARK](#), a standardized religion test, in the spring. Individualized test scores are not sent by ARK, although the school receives an overall composite to assist us in making decisions about religion activities and resources.

All students applying for Pre-kindergarten through Eighth grade must participate in readiness screening through the school. There will be a small fee for the assessment, which will be conducted by trained evaluators. The results will be available to the family and school and used to make developmentally appropriate placement decisions.

Students in grades 6 and 7 take an algebra readiness test at the end of the school year. This information along with NWEA MAP Assessment scores and report card grades are used to recommend placement in accelerated math courses.

### **Family Portal**

Holy Family uses integrated school management software, [Family Portal](#), that supports the administration, faculty, parents, and students of the school with a comprehensive database of information. Family Portal, which is the parent component of FACTS, can be accessed from the school website and allows families to enter emergency contact, demographic, and other pertinent family information. Students in grades 3-8 will have numerical grades, attendance, and homework entered in Family Portal. The District code is HOLY-TX. You must use the email address the school has on file for you to set up your account. Parents are expected to update the contact information in Family Portal if information changes. Parents are expected to review and update necessary information in Family Portal upon the start of a new school year.

Students in grades 5 through 8 will be given a username and password to access Family Portal. They will be able to see their grades, homework and assignments but not change family demographic information.

### **Technology**

Holy Family Catholic School intends to teach students to use technology as a tool for acquiring and sharing knowledge. As technology is so much a part of the fabric of our daily lives, the approach used at Holy Family is integration. This approach means that technology is used by all teachers as a support to their content areas.

We believe that technological proficiency is not only a workplace skill but also a high-school skill. Therefore, the Internet principles included in the Technology Applications curriculum used by most accredited schools in Texas must be addressed with our students in a meaningful, timely and developmentally appropriate way.

We believe that it is consistent with a philosophy of challenging Catholic school education that students be taught responsible use of the Internet, implemented through systematic teaching and scrupulous supervision. However, students' use of the Internet should be conducted according to the maturity in responsible use that they have had time to develop.

Technology is experienced throughout the campus. Kindergarten classrooms have access to computers which can be used in small groups. First grade through eighth grade classrooms are equipped with enough laptop computers so that each student has one to use in every classroom. Our campus has

internet access provided through a high-speed fiber internet connection. A network appliance is installed on our network that provides a firewall and content filtering compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act. It offers internet security for our students and protects our network. Classroom computers offer instructional support, and the STEM classroom offers access and training for applications and other technology related learning including coding and robotics. The faculty incorporates the use of classroom computers to enrich instruction. Students are encouraged to do all printing for assignments at home before coming to school.

Students have access to a range of software packages and web-based programs. These accounts are limited to interacting within our school's domain only. Instructional focus is placed on the student's developing thinking, literacy and numeracy skills in a problem-solving process. Additional skills of planning, organizing and evaluating information are taught by the STEM teacher who collaborates with classroom teachers to integrate technology into classroom assignments.

### **Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

All parents will be asked to sign that they agree to uphold the acceptable use policy for technology at school, in school-related activities, and away from school. Students in grades 2 and above will be asked to sign as well. Acknowledgment of this handbook also implies agreement to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. (Diocesan Policy 331)

### **Guidance and counseling**

There is a distinction between guidance and counseling. Guidance consists of instructional practices and strategies that assist students' understanding of their unique worth and their relationship with others.

Holy Family Catholic School's guidance program is a part of the school program and complements learning in the classroom. The guidance program that has been selected is the [Positivity Project](#). It is child-centered, developmental and proactive. The program encourages students' social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and educational growth at each stage of their development. The purpose of guidance with students, parents, and teachers is to help students maximize their potential.

Holy Family has a School Counselor available regularly to meet with individual and small groups of students, parents, and faculty to support students' social, emotional, spiritual and educational growth.

Private Counseling, on the other hand, is more of a one-on-one interaction between an adult and a child and is used when more in-depth counseling is indicated. Holy Family does not offer private counseling services.

### **Library**

The Holy Family library serves as a resource for students, faculty, and families. The library currently houses 20,000+ volumes. Classes have regularly scheduled library visits throughout the school week. The library also maintains a parent collection, which offers a variety of resources for check-out. Parent volunteers and parents visiting the library must sign in at the school office before going to the library during school hours.

### **Private tutoring**

If a parent is considering the selection of an outside tutor or additional educational support, we strongly recommend a conference with the teacher first, to help determine if tutoring is needed and, if so, what type will be most beneficial.

## **SECTION VIII. STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND RECOGNITION**

### **Student activities program**

In keeping with our stated mission to develop the whole child, Holy Family strives to offer a variety of stimulating but developmentally appropriate student activities outside the regular class period. These activities are chosen and approved to enrich the school experience; to provide opportunities for students to extend their abilities and interests and to develop new ones; and to foster self-esteem through purposeful participation. A student activities program should emphasize skill-building, teambuilding, and a student's pride in his or her involvement and improvement.

Student activities are a privilege, and participation implies certain responsibilities on the part of the student and his/her parents. To participate, a student must meet the age requirement for the activity, must be prepared to fulfil the responsibilities of the activity and, in most cases, must be in good standing academically and behaviorally.

A student who is absent from school for illness, who leaves during the school day for illness or is suspended may not attend an athletic or social activity after school or in the evening.

### **Student athletics**

The Athletic Handbook is distributed to all 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade student athletes, and an acknowledgement form must be signed by the athlete's parents before participating in athletics. See section VII for eligibility requirements.

### **Specialty programs**

Occasionally the school may make space available for an extracurricular activity offered by someone outside the school staff for a fee. These persons are screened for permission to advertise and must comply with Ethics and Integrity in Ministry policies. However, if a concern arises with one of these programs, it should be resolved between the parent and the provider.

Students signing up for these programs do not have to remain eligible to participate, but parents should consider withholding the privilege when grades or behavior need to improve.

### **Student Council**

The purpose of the Student Council is to lead and represent the student body. The goal is to form a positive, unified student community. The student council is responsible for planning and facilitating a variety of school events and projects. For students to participate in student council, they must meet the criteria adopted including the eligibility requirements (See section VII). If a student council member's grades or conduct do not meet the requirements, s/he will be placed on probation. If there is no improvement, s/he will be replaced by an alternate chosen by the student council advisor in consultation with the Assistant Principal.

### **Private School Interscholastic Association (PSIA)**

PSIA is an exciting opportunity for private school students in grades 1st to 8th to engage in academic competition, test their skills and knowledge, and receive recognition for academic excellence. PSIA students compete in over 20 different academic areas, including One Act Play. Registration for PSIA occurs in the fall semester.

### **Middle school clubs**

The students in middle school have the option to join several clubs which meet at specified times during the school year. At the start of the year, middle school students will learn about the specific opportunities. There is a process for establishing new clubs with an approval process that includes. For more information, please contact the assistant principal.

### **Choir**

Students in grades 3-8 are invited to join the choirs that sing at the weekly school Mass. Students in grades 3-4 join the Angel Choir, and students in grades 5-8 join the Archangel Choir. Practices are held after school each week. For more information, please contact the assistant principal.

**Student recognition**

The student recognition program is based upon developmental appropriateness and is designed to promote student pride in accomplishment and improvement. Our focus is to recognize personal achievement rather than competition among peers.

In grades 2-8, students are eligible for the Angel awards each month. Each homeroom teacher chooses a student who models each of the virtues being studied that month. The students are recognized after Mass once a month. Grades 5-8 are recognized at each report card for A honor roll or A/B honor roll, both of which require satisfactory conduct grades.

In the spring of each year, the Library Manager recognizes students in grades fourth through eighth who have read five, ten, fifteen, or twenty books on the yearly Lux Libris list.

Students in grades fourth through eighth grade are also recognized in the spring by the local chapter of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas in different academic and fine arts areas that center around a Catholic theme.

Students in grades 6-8 are recognized at the end of the spring semester who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement for each of the courses offered.

At Promotion, eighth grade students who achieve certain academic criteria are eligible for the President's Education Awards Program, given by the United States Department of Education.

## **SECTION IX. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **Tuition and fee policies**

Two tuition categories will be available for families:

- Catholic
- Non-Catholic

The tuition category will be established when the student is notified of admission acceptance. The tuition category is determined by a student's Baptism in the Catholic church or a parish's verification that the family is a participating member of the parish.

Tuition rates may be changed from Non-Catholic to Catholic or Catholic to Non-Catholic in consideration of additional information.

Fees for new students include

- A nonrefundable Application processing fee
- A New Student Fee that is nonrefundable unless an accepted student with fees paid does not enroll at Holy Family due to a family's relocation outside of the Greater Austin area.
- An Annual Enrollment Fee

Refund of a new student fee closes the student's application file. If the family requests that the student's file be reactivated, they will have forfeited any priority consideration as an enrolled student.

Every student, including new students, will be assessed an Annual Enrollment Fee that is nonrefundable.

The school uses a tuition management company which charges an annual administrative fee per family. This fee is nonrefundable according to the company's policy.

### **Early Withdrawal/Tuition Refund**

Twenty percent of gross tuition is assessed for early withdrawal after August 1. A tuition refund will be prorated based upon the number of school days at time of withdrawal and a 20% retainment of gross tuition for early withdrawal.

### **Tuition assistance**

Need-based tuition grants are available. Families who wish to apply must complete an application through the FACTS Grant and Aid Assistance Program and attach the most recent W-2's and the tax return from the prior year. The company conducts a financial need analysis and considers the cost of living in the Austin area plus many other factors. The Business & Finance Committee of the Board of Directors uses this analysis as a guideline when matching need with the funds available. This process is confidential.

The usual time for this process coincides with Continuous Enrollment dates, but a family may apply at any time. Families must apply for tuition assistance each year. Identical awards from year to year cannot be assumed.

### **Financial Obligations**

Considerable effort is made to make the education at Holy Family financially feasible for all families. Prompt payment of bills is expected. All families are required to set up an ACH (auto pay) FACTS Tuition Management agreement for tuition payment scheduling and incidental billing. The following are the payment options for tuition through FACTS billing:

Full payment, quarterly, ten-month, eleven-month or twelve-month (starts in June).. For questions regarding payment and billing options, families may contact the business manager, Mrs. Lan Nguyen, at [Inguyen@saviochs.org](mailto:Inguyen@saviochs.org). For questions regarding the FACTS Tuition Management account, please contact the FACTS office at (866) 441-4637.

The following steps are taken when a concern arises regarding a family who is unable to meet their financial obligations to Holy Family:



1. When a family misses a payment, the FACTS Tuition Management system sends a reminder to parents/guardians that a bill is past due. The family will also be reminded to settle past due obligations from the school business office. Families must address this missed payment within 30 days of the due date or contact the business manager to schedule the makeup payment.
2. If a family fails to correct the missed payment after 60 days, the business manager will request to meet or speak with the family to arrange a payment plan. The business manager will create a payment plan document that stipulates the amounts and due dates for payment of the fees owed and/or tuition. The parents/guardians and business manager will sign and retain a copy of the agreement.
3. If the parents/guardians fail to meet any and all parts of the payment plan, the business manager will send a written notification to the family indicating the non-compliance. If a family encounters difficulty in honoring the payment plan, they are to immediately contact the business manager.
4. When a family is non-compliant or unresponsive in addressing missed payments or fails to honor their payment plan, the student will be withdrawn from Holy Family.

### **Records Release**

All financial obligations must be satisfied before academic records for a withdrawing student may be released.

### **Charitable giving**

Holy Family has a robust annual giving program, led by our Angel Fund Week of Giving, which allows the Holy Family community and other benefactors to support our students in all areas of the school, including tuition assistance, academic resources and technology, teacher professional development and faith formation activities. Launched each school year, giving to the Angel Fund forms the foundation of annual giving at Holy Family. There are two additional fundraising events held throughout the year that also impact our students – The Holy Family Gala, held in February and our Run with The Angels Fun Run, held in May. Families are encouraged to support these events annually at levels that are personally appropriate.

Our RaiseRight online gift card, shopping, and local dining program allows parents, friends, and family members to shop as they normally would and earn rebates that are given to the school at no cost to the user or the organization. This is available to use year-round and is a supplemental way to support the school.

There are numerous ways to make financial gifts to the school including one-time gifts of cash or securities, long-term pledges, planned giving commitments and in-kind gifts. We encourage all parents who work for a company that has a matching gift program to leverage that program to amplify each gift you make to the school. For questions, or for those interested in donating to specific needs or in discussing options for planned gifts, please contact our Director of Advancement at x2111.

Tuition and fees related to initiating or continuing admission are not tax-deductible; however, donations to the school are deductible as Holy Family is designated a 501 3(c) organization.

Families are asked not to request funds from other parents in classes or programs without the permission of the Principal.

### **Patrons' family businesses**

Patrons who have family business enterprises are invited to advertise with us in the Sentinel magazine. Fees may be obtained from the Director of Communications.

There are also several opportunities throughout the year for businesses to serve as sponsors of various events or through our Business Sponsorship Program. These opportunities allow businesses to support our school and to receive additional recognition. Please contact the Advancement Office for more information.

