

GENERAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL TIME AT SCHOOL

Arrival time for students eating breakfast is 7:55am.

Please do not arrive any earlier than 7:55am.

Arrival time for students that are **not** eating breakfast is 8:10 am. (New 2023-2024)

School hours are from 8:30am until 3:15pm. **ALL STUDENTS** upon arrival at school, **MUST REPORT TO THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA**. Breakfast is served from 7:55am-8:20am. Students are to remain in the cafeteria until they are brought over for classes. Students may eat breakfast, read, or do homework. Students are expected to VISIT QUIETLY, AND REMAIN SEATED AT ALL TIMES. Students that habitually do not abide by these rules will not be allowed in the cafeteria prior to 8:30am. Because our staff meets daily at 7:45, there will be no students allowed in until 7:55am.

STUDENT ENTRANCE AND EXIT

Students are to report to the cafeteria via the Northeast gym door. Only students using Dietrich's Bus Service are allowed to use the North doors of the school, and they are to report to the cafeteria immediately upon arrival. At dismissal time, students are to use the playground door at the Southeast entrance of the school. Parents please use the east parking lot for pick up. **NO STUDENT IS ALLOWED TO USE THE NORTH DOORS EXCEPT STUDENTS RIDING THE BUS.**

ABSENCES

As a safety precaution and so that both the home and the school are aware of where students are, parents must either call (845-1453) or e-mail the office to report an absence. This should be done by 8:30am.

Excuses for medical and dental appointments are to be called in or e-mailed to the office one day prior if possible. Students who leave the school for such appointments will not be counted absent if they are away for less than half a day. Appointments requiring more than half a day will be counted absent.

LEAVING PARISH GROUNDS

Students MAY NOT leave the grounds during school hours without permission from a staff member or notification from parents. This includes going outside the fenced in area of the playground. Doing so may result in suspension or expulsion from school.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/ DELAYS

Please see the Winter Weather Plan included in this Handbook.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips, either by walking or other transportation, are important class activities. St. Catherine School is responsible for students during field trips. Diocesan guidelines require that a permission slip form be completed and signed prior to the start of the school year.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OVERVIEW

St. Catherine School recognizes the dignity of each person and the rights of students to an appropriate education in academics and Catholic values. To ensure this is available to all students, the school also recognizes its obligation to provide a proper atmosphere for learning. See *St. Catherine School Expectations* page in this Handbook.

CARE OF TEXT BOOKS- WORKBOOKS- LIBRARY BOOKS

Textbooks, Workbooks, and materials used for regular class work are very costly. Therefore we expect each student to use them carefully and responsibly. The parent will be required to pay for replacement costs associated with unusual wear, damage or loss of book or materials.

USE OF TELEPHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Telephones may only be used by the student at the discretion of, and with permission from a supervisor. Cell phones are not permitted, unless this has been discussed and approved by the administration. If such permission is granted, the cell phone must be kept in the student's locker during school hours. Students are not allowed to bring **ANY** electronic devices to school without permission. **This includes smart watches.** (New 2023-2024 School Year)

ILLNESS

Students who become ill during class time should speak to their teacher who will determine if they should be sent home. If this happens, parents will be notified to pick up their student from the school office. No student will be sent home without parent permission.

PLAYGROUND RULES AND REGULATIONS

Bicycles must be parked in the bike racks. Locks are encouraged. Bike riding on parish grounds is prohibited. Throwing of rocks, snowballs, etc. is strictly forbidden.

Fighting will not be tolerated.

Tackle football or any other contact sport that may cause injury are not permitted.

The playground is supervised during lunch time recess. Any injuries or issues should be reported to the supervisor or classroom teacher as soon as possible. **Students are expected to display proper sportsmanship and conduct at all times. Students are to display proper behavior such as cooperation, teamwork, respect for others and consideration.** Students who do not display proper behaviors will not be allowed to participate in lunch time recess.

VANDALISM AND MISCHIEF

St. Catherine School understands that accidents happen. Students who cause damage deliberately will be held accountable. Parents are asked to cooperate in such cases by covering the cost to have the repair made.

FAITH DEVELOPMENT AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The goal of the Religious Education Curriculum is to form the total person by faithfully transmitting the Word of God and focusing upon the Person and the Mystery of Jesus Christ and salvation through Him in order to foster a living, conscious, and active Catholic faith in the student.

This goal is realized through the following means:

Doctrine: The core resource for the religion curriculum is the Catholic doctrine. This is taught within the daily religion class period and reinforced through the school day. The life of Jesus Christ, Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the classroom teacher are central resources.

Prayer: The prayer life of each student is nurtured. The memorization of basic prayers, the creativity of spontaneous prayer and the understanding of our daily activities being a prayer to God are all taught and encouraged. The importance of ritual is stressed. The school day begins with Chapel (8:50-9:00 all are

welcome), and ends in prayer. Students learn to be prayer leaders and time is given for special intercessions offered by the students.

The Liturgy: Teachers prepare students for the summit of our faith, the Liturgy. Students attend Mass weekly and assist at the monthly All School Mass by proclaiming the scriptures, reading prayer petitions, and leading in song. Students are guided in how to live out the gospel message throughout the week.

The Liturgical Year: “The Easter Triduum is the source of light for the liturgical year and fills the year with its brilliance” (CCC 1168). The students gain a deeper understanding of Ordinary Time, Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. The total school environment reflects the liturgical seasons. This happens through Eucharistic Celebrations, visuals (Crucifixes and statues in every classroom), songs, readings and school wide outreach projects. Students see how our faith life touches all that we are and do.

Lay Ministry: Students learn of their baptismal call to be part of the Church. Opportunities are given for students to experience different ministries which will encourage them to someday be active adult members in their parish.

Social Teachings: St. Catherine School provides opportunities for students to learn of the needs of others. Outreach Projects are on-going throughout the school year. World events are discussed within the light of the Gospel message. The school’s Behavior Expectations Overview flows from the Church’s teaching on dignity of the human person. An example would be providing musical entertainment to local retirement homes.

Catholic Schools Week: Is an annual national event which occurs every winter. This is an opportunity to showcase our school in the community with extra activities including BINGO, and recognition of various groups with a program and complimentary lunch.

HOMEWORK

Work that must be assigned outside of the classroom should be supervised with a wholesome attitude by parents. This is helpful to keep your student encouraged and motivated. The type of homework, and how often it will be given, will be left to the discretion of individual teachers. Please note that not all homework is in written form, but may be required reading, studying or work projects.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

HOW CAN YOU AS PARENTS HELP IMPROVE YOUR CHILD’S ABILITY TO LEARN AND SUCCEED

Provide a stable home environment so that your child will come to class physically fit and free from emotional strain.

RESTRICT the use of screen time at home. (New 2023-2024)

Attend Parent Teacher Conferences, and other school functions.

Respond to requests from your child’s teacher.

Show an interest in what your child does and encourage them to do their best.

Check Book Bags **daily** for homework and important information.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Only through parent participation can we achieve the support and fellowship needed to maintain a strong, effective program. Families of St. Catherine School are encouraged to join in the activities sponsored by the PTO.

PARENT/ TEACHER CONFERENCE

Parent/ Teacher Conferences are scheduled in October and January of each school year. If you feel there is a need to discuss a matter at any time during the school year, teachers are willing to meet with parents upon request.

FALL AUCTION

This is our school's **PRIMARY** and annual fundraiser. All families are required to participate. Important and helpful information regarding the Fall Auction is given at the annual PTO Back to School Picnic and Meeting. Family representation is critical. May the Lord bless you for your involvement. "Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God" ¹ Peter 4:10

CARDINAL CAFÉ HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Please see Healthy Nutrition Policy included in this Handbook. St. Catherine School participates in the federally funded school nutrition program. Application for Free or Reduced meals are available. Kindergarten students have the option to participate in Milk Break for .45 per carton.

All fees should be paid ahead by 1 month. Statements will be mailed monthly.

LIBRARY

Books may be checked out for a period of time specified by Librarian. Please return them on time. Parents will be responsible for any costs associated with damaged or lost books.

ACCIDENTS AND INSURANCE

All accidents involving property damage or personal injury must be reported.

DRESS CODE

The following guidelines are to assist students in determining appropriate attire for an educational setting. The purpose of the dress code is to ensure that the students have a clean, well groomed, modest and neat appearance. This contributes to a positive self-image and a more conducive learning environment. Students are to comply with the dress code at all times, including field trips, unless specifically excused by the administration.

References on clothing that are inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals are not allowed. (Such items include those that reference drugs or alcohol and/ or songs or musical groups whose lyrics have contents inconsistent with Catholic teaching.)

TOPS: Modest sleeveless garments are allowed. Tank tops, halter tops, and spaghetti strap tops may be worn **under** another top with sleeves. Tops must have modest necklines and completely and continuously cover the midriff. All straps and undergarments must be concealed.

BOTTOMS: Pants must be neat in appearance and appropriate in size and length. Pants must completely conceal all undergarments. No tear-away, pajama or flannel pants are allowed. Leggings may be worn with a dress or skirt at a modest length. We encourage that stand-alone yoga pants/leggings not be worn. **No oversized or form fitting clothes will be allowed.**

Shorts may only be worn in the months of August, September and May. Shorts shall be no shorter than mid-thigh. (A reasonable guideline for this is whether or not the shorts extend past a student's fingertips) Students are required to have a coat, hat, mittens or gloves, snow pants, and snow boots at school during the snow season.

FOOTWEAR: Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times in school and on the playground. Tennis shoes must be worn for P.E. class and kept at school. For sanitary and safety concerns, students may not wear "flip-

flops” or similar type footwear. Sandals, crocs, etc. are allowed provided they have a back strap. High heels may be worn for special occasions and only during the special occasion, (i.e. Mass).

ACCESSORIES: For safety reasons, dangly earrings are not allowed.

MASS ATTIRE: It is the policy of St. Catherine School that students and staff show respect for the Eucharist and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Manner of dress is one way to show respect. Unless otherwise specified, students will wear a red St. Catherine School polo shirt to designated All School Masses and PTO Masses. These shirts are provided by the school and given out to the students prior to Mass. They may be worn over existing shirts, and will be returned to the classroom teacher following Mass. For the regularly scheduled weekly Mass, students should follow the regular dress code.

VIOLATIONS OF THE DRESS CODE:

First offense- a phone call to the parent or guardian OR a note sent home that is to be signed by the parent or guardian, and returned to the classroom teacher.

Second offense- a phone call will be made to the parent or guardian to replace the dress.

Third offense- a phone call will be made to the parent or guardian to replace the dress and a detention will be given.

Beyond third offense- a phone call will be made to the parent or guardian to replace the dress, detention and a conference between the parent or guardian, student, and administration.

Interpretation of the dress code and any issues not listed are at the discretion of the administration. Periodic exceptions may be made to the dress code for special situations (such as Catholic Schools Week).

St Catherine Tuition Policy

This policy has been created to ensure that school tuition is collected in a timely manner, making it possible to guarantee St. Catherine School remains fiscally solvent and is available for future students. As a Christian Catholic School, we expect all families to make a good faith effort to pay their share of the costs of education for their children. Tuition assistance is available for those meeting income levels.

Tuition schedules will be followed according to the signed Tuition Agreement before the first day of school. Payments are due based on the schedule agreed upon; they may be:

One-time payment in August

Semi-annual payments in August and February

Quarterly payments in August, November, February, and May

10 monthly payments beginning in August

12 monthly payments beginning in August and ending in July (New 2023-2024)

If after each school quarter, a family has been identified to have past due tuition:

1. A letter will be sent as a notice encouraging the family to pay and to speak with principal for payment plan options. Family will also be reminded of the tuition assistance policy.
2. If no response or no payment is received in 2 weeks a call will be made by the principal to develop a payment plan.
3. If no response or payment is received 4 weeks after initial contact, parents will be called by principal for a meeting to develop a payment plan. Payment plan may include applying for tuition assistance.
4. If no response or payment is received after 6 weeks, the Education Board will be notified and an Education Board member will contact the parents. A meeting will be called with Pastor, a representative of the Education Board, principal, and parents.

A written report will be provided to the Education Board after each quarter noting tuition accounts that are in arrears. The report shall include documentation of any contact that has been made as well as action steps developed.

If at the end of the school year a family has past due tuition, full payment is expected by the end of June. Unless 80% of tuition has been received by July 31st, the family will not be allowed to enroll in the upcoming school year.

This policy was approved November 10, 2015.

Cardinal Café

The Cardinal Cafe is a program for students attending St. Catherine School to receive healthy, nutritious breakfast and noon meals. The Cardinal Cafe is bound by federal guidelines since it receives commodities and a subsidy based on the number of students and free and reduced meals. It is a self-sustaining program - receiving no subsidy from the school - reliant on fees charged for meals, the federal breakfast/lunch subsidy, commodities provided through the federal breakfast/lunch program, and the management of the cafeteria director.

No child will be denied a healthy and nutritious meal because they cannot afford it. However, in order to maintain the program, patrons must pay their charges in a timely manner.

Should an account reach one month (or more) in arrears, the school administrator will contact the family, at which time the following options are available:

- A) Pay either the balance in full or enough to put the account less than one month in arrears.
- B) Apply for free or reduced meals.
- C) Make other payment arrangements with the school administrator.
- D) Bring a sack lunch until such time as payment arrangements have been made.

Note: A sack lunch is a cold lunch brought by the student. Pop, fast foods, restaurant foods, lunchables/snackables and/or deli food **are not allowed** as a sack lunch. Students are not allowed to use a microwave.

Breakfast is served from 7:55 - 8:20 a.m.

Students who are eating breakfast should **not** arrive prior to 7:55 a.m.

Students who are not eating breakfast should not arrive before 8:10 a.m. (New 2023-2024)

Approved August 2015 Revised August 2023

Please see website for the full St. Catherine School Wellness Policy

ATTENDANCE

According to the North Dakota Century Code 15.1-20 (School Attendance), all children between the ages of seven (7) & sixteen (16) years are required to attend school. The responsibility for compliance with this law belongs to the parents or the person who has custody of the child.

Age of Attendance: Effective June 30, 2010, children may not enroll in kindergarten or first grade unless the child has had his/her fifth or sixth birthday prior to August 1 of the year of enrollment. A school district may not enroll a child in grade 1 who is not six years old before August 1, unless the child will be six years old before December 1 and the child can demonstrate academic, social, and emotional readiness or the child has completed an approved kindergarten program. A school district may not enroll a child in kindergarten who is not five before August 1 unless the child is five years old before December 1 and has been able to demonstrate academic, social, and emotional readiness.

See website for full Attendance Policy

ANTI-BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Bullying is strictly prohibited by St. Catherine School on school premises, and at any school sponsored activity or event. Retaliation or reprisal against a victim of bullying or anyone who witnesses, reports, or provides information on acts of bullying is also strictly prohibited. Any person who is being bullied or who is aware bullying is taking place must immediately report it to St. Catherine School's faculty, administration, Pastor, or other employee. St. Catherine School's administration shall deal with reports of bullying or reprisal promptly and confidentially.

See website for criteria and procedures

CHILD ABUSE LAWS/MANDATORY REPORTING

St. Catherine School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law requires designated persons including; School Administrators, School Counselors, Teachers, School Nurses, and Members of the Clergy, who have reason to suspect that a child under the age of 18 has been abused or neglected, to report the matter to the Child Protection Agency of the state in which the child resides.

POLICY RELATIVE to REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD NEGLECT and ABUSE

North Dakota law mandates that school teachers, school counselors and administrators report suspected cases of abuse and neglect relative to a child coming before them while in their official capacity. (NDCC 50-25.1-1 1)
Child abuse or neglect may be:

- **Emotional:** failure to provide warmth, attention, supervision or normal living experiences.
- **Physical:** shaking, beating, burning or failure to provide the necessities of life.
- **Verbal:** excessive yelling, belittling or teasing.
- **Sexual:** incest or exposure to other inappropriate sexual activity in the family.

St. Catherine School

Winter Weather Plan

St. Catherine School follows the lead of Valley City Public Schools with regard to any weather related school closing. Before deciding to close school due to extreme weather, the VCPS superintendent consults with a number of experts outside the district.

All decisions to cancel or delay school will be made by 6:30 AM the morning of the decision. If school is delayed, it is important that parents/guardians continue to monitor the situation, as a decision may eventually be made to cancel school. Likewise, in the event that the public school determines that an early dismissal is necessary, an announcement will be made in that regard. Valley City Public Schools has implemented the use of Virtual Learning Days. At this time, St. Catherine School has no plan to implement virtual learning days for inclement weather cancellations, delays, or early dismissals. If VCPS has a virtual learning day, St. Catherine School will be CANCELLED for that day. (New 2023-2024)

Communication Plan for Weather Related Announcements

Notification will be sent directly to families by e-mail once we have been made aware of any decision made by the public school. Information would also be posted on the public school website and Facebook page, as well as the St. Catherine School webpage. Notification is also sent to the following media outlets.

Radio

KOVC (1490 AM)

KQDJ (101.1 FM)

KSJB (600 AM)

Television

KXJB – Channel 4

KVRR – Channel 9

WDAY – Channel 6

KVLY – Channel 11

Late Start to School -- When a decision is made to start school one or two hours late, the following schedule will be used:

One hour late: School starts at 9:30 AM. Bus pick-up time will be one hour later than normal time.

Two hours late: School starts at 10:30 AM. Bus pick-up time will be 2 hours later than normal time.

The Cardinal Café does not serve breakfast on Late Start days.

Other Information

When the weather is cold and/or snowy, teachers will have all students wear hats, mittens, boots, and coats before leaving school at the end of the day, regardless of whether they walk, ride the bus, or ride with a parent or someone else.

You have the right to keep children at home if you feel the weather conditions are not safe for travel. There will be no penalty to grades/attendance in that event. Parents may also pick up students early under similar circumstances with the same expectations.

If you have a designated storm home for your child, please provide the school office with the necessary contact information.

If school is canceled or dismissed early due to weather conditions, there will be no school activities.

ST CATHERINE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

"Helping Students become the best version of themselves"

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Be aware of your surroundings and watch out for others.

HALLWAYS

Walk only

Use quiet voices

Stay to the right

Keep your hands and feet to yourself

CAFETERIA

Use good manners

Clean up after yourself

Use quiet voices

Keep your hands and your feet to yourself

BATHROOMS

Use quiet voices

Clean up after yourself (**WASH YOUR HANDS**)

Keep your hands and feet to yourself

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Swings: Swing only back & forth, SITTING. 1 child per swing.

Slide: Slide down only, facing forward, 1 at a time.

Tunnel: Crawl through only.

Use equipment properly

Do not sit on top of equipment

Group activities may be split up by grade

Use jump ropes for jumping only

Stay off of the parking lot

Do not throw rocks, snow or ice

Treat others as you would like to be treated

Use common sense. Keep yourself safe, keep others safe

Consequences:

First offense: Name on the board, warning issued.

Second offense: Check mark behind name, 10 minute detention during noon recess.

Third offense: Additional check mark behind name, stay in at noon recess.

Fourth offense: 30 minute detention after school, parents will be notified ahead of time.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Student will be sent directly to the office by classroom teacher or supervising staff member.

Direct defiance of an adult.

Creating an unsafe environment for students or staff

Stealing, vandalism, violence

In cases of zero tolerance behavior-

1st offense – Parent will be notified immediately and student will serve in-school suspension the remainder of the day

2nd offense- Parent will be notified immediately and student will serve out of school suspension the remainder of the day

3rd offense- Parent will be notified immediately and student will serve out of school suspension for 5 school days. A re-entry meeting must be completed with: parent/s, student, and appropriate staff members.

4th offense- Parent will be notified immediately and student will be dismissed from school for the remainder of the school year.

- All decisions are at the discretion of the principal and pastor. (New 2023-2024 school year)

ST. CATHERINE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS AGREEMENT

STUDENTS: I have read the “school expectations” and understand it. I will honor it while at St. Catherine School.

Student Signature

Date

PARENTS: I have read and discussed the “school expectations” with my child(ren). I understand it and will support it.

Parent Signature

Date

TEACHER: I will be fair and consistent in administering the expectations for St. Catherine School.

Teacher Signature

Date