

# **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

***2022-2023***

***Nativity School***

1125 Pittsford Circle      Charleston, SC 29412

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[www.nativity-school.com](http://www.nativity-school.com)

Dear Parents and Students,

***“What greater work is there than training the mind and  
forming the habits of the young?”  
St. John Chrysostom***

Welcome to Nativity School! In choosing Nativity School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education. You have joined the Nativity School community which is committed to a common mission of promoting the philosophy and vision of Nativity School.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of Nativity School for the 2022-2023 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of Nativity School during the 2022-2023 school year.

The faculty and staff of Nativity School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,

***Patricia W. Dukes***

Patricia W. Dukes  
Principal

# **Nativity School**

Diocese of Charleston

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# **I. Diocese of Charleston Elementary Schools Statement of Common Belief**

The elementary schools of the Diocese of Charleston offer learning communities that are formed by the Catholic faith and deeply rooted in an appreciation for the dignity of the human person as “created in the image and likeness of God”. This foundational belief informs the schools’ missions, visions, and approaches.

Similarly, all the schools deeply appreciate the infinite value of human life from life’s very beginning to its natural end, in all. This foundational belief impacts the approach to everything that the schools do.

**“Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.” *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2270-2275.***

Based upon this belief of human life the elementary schools of the Diocese of Charleston are led to be fully welcoming communities. They welcome families of diverse backgrounds that seek a Catholic education for their children. They value all students, acknowledge their unique gifts, and believe diversity and inclusion are blessings that enrich their communities. (See <https://sites.google.com/stanneschool.net/doc-teachertoolbox/catholic-identity/diversity-equity-and-inclusion>). Their missions direct them to help students rise above cultural insensitivity and to teach them to treat all men and women, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or political background, with the utmost respect and dignity that every child of God deserves. Each empowers and encourages students to act for justice and to become Christ-like leaders filled with empathy and respect for all -- both within their own schools as well as within the greater global society.

**“Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the fourfold purpose of Christian education, namely to provide an atmosphere in which the Gospel message is proclaimed, community in Christ is experienced, service to our sisters and brothers is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of our God is cultivated” (US Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005).**

## **II. Our Catholic Identity**

### **Mission Statement of Nativity School**

Nativity School is a Catholic Christian School that serves Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade children from the Church of the Nativity, Holy Spirit and Our Lady of Good Counsel parishes as well as children from the surrounding community. Since 1960, Nativity School has been dedicated to the academic and spiritual growth of its students in a culturally diverse environment. Nativity School provides a comprehensive religious program incorporating daily prayer, worship and sacramental preparation. Each child is educated in the Catholic faith and its values and is given opportunities to achieve one’s overall potential.

## **History of Nativity School**

The Church of the Nativity was established by the Bishop of Charleston in 1959. Nativity School was opened as a Catholic diocesan school in September 1960 with two Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius on loan from Blessed Sacrament School. Total enrollment in 1960 was 179 students in grades one through four. In 1963 Nativity School expanded to eight grades with an enrollment of 344 students. At that time the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy were responsible for staffing the school. In addition to the religious sisters, the faculty included four lay teachers. In 1964 the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius returned and eventually took over responsibility for the school from the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. A kindergarten was added in 1967. In 1995 the Sisters of SS. Cyril and Methodius departed from the school.

Today Nativity School operates under the auspices of the Bishop of Charleston. It serves the parishes of the Church of the Nativity, Holy Spirit, and Our Lady of Good Counsel. The school offers a first-rate preK-8 Catholic education to the students of James Island, Johns Island, Folly Beach, and surrounding communities.

## **Philosophy**

Nativity School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Charleston.

1. To develop the total Christian personality by instilling in the students a respect for life and reverence for Christian living.
2. To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.
3. To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods such as small and large group instruction, departmental classes, and other tools for basic knowledge and formation.
4. To aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities.

## **Sacramental Program**

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at Nativity School. Reconciliation and Eucharist preparation form the core of instruction in Grade 2, and Confirmation preparation in Grade 8. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of

Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist. **The Pastor will make the final determination on students in grades 2 and 8 as to whether diocesan guidelines and requirements have been met for receiving the sacraments.**

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

### **III. Admissions Information**

#### **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

Nativity School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to Nativity School:

1. Members of the Church of the Nativity, Holy Spirit, and Our Lady of Good Counsel Parishes
2. Members of other parishes
3. Non-Catholic students

Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Students will be conditionally accepted into Kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on displayed readiness.

Children entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade must be 6 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Students will be accepted into 1<sup>st</sup> grade with displayed readiness on the MAP (Measuring Academic Progress) Test, SRA 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Readiness Test or the equivalent.

At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to Nativity School are evaluated on the basis of current standardized test scores and report cards.

Requirements include:

- \*Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- \*Immunization Records
- \*Birth Certificate (original)
- \*Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- \*Report Cards
- \*Standardized Test Results

\*Record of Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or record of learning accommodations

Students applying for admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at Nativity School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student may be part of the admission process.

Testing in some academic areas may be held for new incoming students in Grades 3-8. This will be determined by the Principal once current records have been evaluated.

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one semester in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at Nativity School.

### **Financial Obligations –Tuition and Fees**

2022-2023 School Year

<b>NEW STUDENTS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>DUE</b>
Registration Fee	\$175 per student	At time of registration
<b>RETURNING FAMILIES</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>DUE</b>
Re-registration Fee	\$125 per student	Due with re-registration papers
<b>ALL FAMILIES</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>DUE</b>
FACTS Agreement	\$45	Billed with 1 <sup>st</sup> FACTS payment (Waived if paying in full)
School Improvement Fee	\$250 per family	<b>Included in tuition</b>
Instructional Fees	\$170 per student	<b>Included in tuition</b>
Technology and Diocesan Fees	\$250 per student	<b>Included in tuition</b>

### **TUITION**

	<b>PARISHONER*</b>	<b>12 MONTHLY PAYMENTS</b>	<b>NON-PARISHONER</b>	<b>12 MONTHLY PAYMENTS</b>
<b>One Child</b>	\$ 5,978	\$ 498*	\$ 7,752	\$ 646*
<b>Two Children</b>	\$ 11,104	\$ 925*	\$ 14,460	\$ 1,205*
<b>Three Children</b>	\$ 16,158	\$ 1,348*	\$ 20,969	\$ 1,747*
<b>Four Children</b>	\$ 21,288	\$ 1,774*		

- **\*Parishioner:** Those families registered with and contributing to either the Church of the Nativity, Holy Spirit, or Our Lady of Good Counsel. Parishioner status is verified with each parish office.
- **\*The monthly payment assumes families pay over 12 months. Families may pay 4 times or 2**

times a year, but they must notify the school office upon registration or re-registration.

- Families not paying in full must enroll with FACTS Tuition Management Company.
- FACTS payments must begin July 2022 and all accounts must be paid in full by June 2023.
- **Those families who have any outstanding tuition or fees owed to the school may not participate in any extracurricular activities including sports teams, social events, and clubs.**

#### **Enrollment/Re-Enrollment**

- The \$175.00 Registration Fee for new students must be submitted with the application. The Enrollment Fee for new students is due upon acceptance to the school.
- Returning students must reserve their spot by paying the Enrollment Fee of \$125.00 by the date designated.
- All Registration Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.
- There will be a returned check fee for all checks made payable to Nativity School that do not clear the bank.

#### **FACTS® Tuition Management Service Overview**

- There is an annual non-refundable \$45 administrative fee for enrollment in the FACTS® program per family. This fee will be added to your first tuition payment made to FACTS® – please do not make this payment to the school.
- Pay tuition over 12 months via personal check, money order, or automatic deduction.
- Your enrollment form to FACTS® must be returned with your registration.
- All families not selecting the FACTS® tuition plan will be expected to make one direct payment to Nativity School for the entire amount of tuition no later than August 5, 2022. You may drop off your payment to the school office.

#### **Withdrawal Policy**

- Families must notify the school in writing prior to June 1, 2022 if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- Any tuition or fees paid to the school are non-refundable after June 1, 2022.
- The school will not forward records for students who were withdrawn with an outstanding balance.

**PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE at 843-795-3975.**

## **IV. Educational Program**

### **Academic Information**

#### ***Curriculum***

Nativity School follows the Diocese of Charleston curriculum guidelines, which have been adopted based on national and state guidelines. The diocesan curriculum is comprehensive for all subjects and offers students opportunities for growth in all areas.

The following subjects are offered on a daily basis: Religion, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Special area classes, which enhance student potential, are offered in music, art, physical education, computer literacy, Spanish and library.



## ***Religion***

Catholic doctrine and tradition, bible study, and social justice are introduced and fostered in all grades. Sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion are done in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade and Confirmation is done in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade.

In an effort to expand prayer opportunities and engage students, faculty and staff in reflective prayer, the rosary is prayed daily during the months of October and May. October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary and the respect for life is emphasized when praying the rosary during October. May is the month we honor Our Blessed Mother, Mary. During this month we pray to Mary to express our love and devotion.

During Lent, the Living Way of the Cross is performed by our students as a prayerful journey through the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. The Living Way of the Cross takes place on Wednesdays during Lent.

Students attend Mass on Thursday mornings at 9:30 and on Holy Days as part of their faith development.

## ***Language Arts***

A comprehensive language arts program is offered in all grades. Reading, English, spelling, vocabulary, composition, are developed across grade levels. Appreciation for literature is developed in all grade levels but particularly fostered in middle school. All skills are taught to meet college and career readiness standards.

## ***Mathematics***

Mathematics skills are developed through a comprehensive math program. Beginning in the primary grades, emphasis on math literacy is the focus. Students learn computation skills, problem solving and real life application skills. Critical thinking and reasoning skills are integrated to meet college and career readiness standards for all grade levels. Students who are eligible to take Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and meet the standards of the course will receive a Carnegie high school credit.

### **Grade 8**

At the end of Grade 7, students in **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Algebra** will be eligible to **take Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade** if the following criteria have been met:

- Final average of at least 85% in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Algebra.
- Math MAP test score in the 231-250 RIT score range.
- Recommendation from teacher indicating the student has demonstrated a strong work ethic, consistently completed homework, and displays the ability to master Algebra I course material.

**Upon meeting the criteria listed above**, students will be placed in **Algebra I** in their eighth grade year. This placement is probationary and contingent upon ongoing acceptable

performance in the Algebra I class. This is a high school level course taken for high school credit.

Students **not eligible** to take **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra I**, according to the criteria outlined above, will be placed in **8<sup>th</sup> Grade “Bridge to Algebra”**.

## ***Science***

A comprehensive science is taught across the grade levels with general sciences being the focus in the primary grades. Life, physical, earth, and environmental sciences are given specific priority in the primary grades. Middle school science standards are based more specifically on earth, life and physical sciences in their respective 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. STEAM projects and laboratory experiences are also integrated into the science curriculum.

## ***Social Studies***

Social studies involve a curriculum developed and implemented in the concentrations of history, geography, economics, state history, and current events. Communities, geography, and economics are emphasized in the early primary grades. South Carolina history and colonization and a general introduction to US History are covered in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. World, United States and South Carolina history are taught more in depth in middle school. Geography and current events are also an emphasis of the middle school curriculum.

## ***Computer Literacy***

Computer literacy is achieved through focusing on the fundamentals of learning and using applications and understanding the roles and responsibilities of software, hardware, and operating systems. Key applications, such as word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software, coding, web design, and data collection and presentation are introduced and practiced. Security, social and ethical issues around the internet and the appropriate use of information are all focused on so that comprehensive computer literacy is achieved.

## ***Fine Arts***

Fine arts are offered in music and art. Music is an opportunity for students to learn the parts of the Mass as well as appropriate songs and responses that coincide with the liturgical calendar. Students in the primary grades learn songs that are cross curricular and students in middle school work on reading music and developing music appreciation.

Art is taught in all grades. Artists and period artwork are discussed; technique demonstrations are provided; and art appreciation, art production and art criticism are developed.

## ***Physical Education***

Physical fitness programs appropriate for each grade are implemented. Students learn valuable lessons in the health benefits of an active life, sportsmanship and competition when playing a sport or game, and the importance of positive interactions with peers of all levels and abilities.

## ***Spanish***

Spanish is taught in all grades. Vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, and culture are emphasized. Middle school students have Spanish daily in preparation for taking Spanish I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade for high school credit.

## **Academic Probation**

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two week improvement plan. At the end of the two week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. **Students whose average is an F will not be allowed to participate in any sport or academic competition until the grade has improved to a passing grade of D (70% or higher).**

## **Grading Scale**

Teachers regularly assess student progress. Normally, this is done through teacher generated tests and quizzes, student homework and projects, class participation (asking and answering questions), and other activities which demonstrate learning. Students in grades K4 – 2<sup>nd</sup> are graded on their progress. Their grades indicate progress toward grade level expectations. The grading system for grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> is:

A+ = 98 – 100	B+ = 89 – 91	C+ = 80 – 82	D = 70 – 73
A = 95 – 97	B = 86 – 88	C = 77 – 79	F = Below 68
A- = 92 – 94	B- = 83 – 85	C- = 74 – 76	

Students in 8th grade will take mid-term and final exams. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade will take final exams. Exam grades count as 20% of the semester grade for which they are taken.

## **Nativity School Honor Roll Program**

*Principal's List:* All students who achieve a grade of A or higher in all subjects and who receive a conduct grade of 3, 4 or 5 in all areas will be named to the Principal's List.

*High Honor Roll:* All students who achieve a grade of A- or higher in all subjects and who receive a conduct grade of 3, 4 or 5 in all areas will be named to the High Honor Roll.

*Honor Roll:* All students who achieve a grade of B or higher in all subjects and who receive a conduct grade of 3, 4 or 5 in all areas will be named to the Honor Roll.

## **Promotion Policy and Retention Policy**

Advancement to the next grade in Nativity School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

Students may also be TRANSFERRED to the next grade. A student who is transferred to another grade may not be allowed to continue as a student at Nativity School.

## **Report Cards/Progress Reports**

**Report Cards** are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be given every nine (9) weeks for a total of four (4) times during the academic school year.

**Progress Reports** will be given mid-way between each nine-week grading period.

No student will be given a Progress Report or Report Card if any tuition or fees are outstanding.

## **V. Student Expectations**

### **Absence/Attendance**

Attendance is taken every morning and reported to the school office. Students are

expected to be in attendance when school is in session. An excusable absence would be in the case of illness (when substantiated with a doctor's excuse), medical or family emergency (when substantiated with a doctor's excuse or parental note respectively), or in the case of death of a family member. When a student reaches the absence limit of 10 days, a doctor's excuse is required for every absence beyond the initial 10 days. A parental note will not be accepted for absences beyond the initial 10 days except in the case of family emergency. Absences due to planned vacations are not approved and will not be excused. Excessive absences could result in retention.

**When a student is absent from school, a parent should call the office by 9:00 AM each day of the absence.** If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of Nativity School students.

**Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever will not be allowed to return to school the next day as this would not allow for the 24 hour protection of the entire school community.**

**Any student with a fever will be immediately sent home. NO FACULTY/STAFF OR STUDENT WITH A TEMPERATURE WILL BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN THE BUILDING WITH A FEVER. If you are aware that your child has a fever, please keep him/her home and notify the school office.**

**DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL ON FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION TO MASK A FEVER. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE PROTECT ALL FACULTY/STAFF AND STUDENTS FROM ALL CONTAGIOUS VIRUSES.**

Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.

When a student is absent for **three or more days due to illness**, a parent may call the school office before 10:00 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 PM – 3:30 PM or in EDP from 3:30 -5:30 PM.

For short absences, students should make arrangements with classmates regarding assignments. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. **Trips, vacations or family outings should not be planned during scheduled times out of so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.** Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.

**Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation. Please do not ask teachers to make exceptions to this rule. All make-up assignments are the student's responsibility. Zeros (0) will be given for assignments not made up within the allowed time.**

Arrangements for regular classroom tests missed because of an absence are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests must be taken within one week of the original test date.

### **Absences Due to Weather Emergencies/Wide-spread Illness**

The Diocese of Charleston does allow for potential make-up days to be excused in situations where teachers can provide students work and assess students upon returning to school. This is preapproved through the Catholic Schools Office and is on a case by case basis. In cases where it is possible, students will be provided with work from their teachers to complete while out of school due to weather emergencies or wide spread illnesses. All work must be completed in order for students to receive credit and for a day's absence to be excused. Students will receive an absence for each day of incomplete assignments during the school closure. In the case of extenuating circumstances (displacement, etc.), the Principal is to determine the appropriate consequence. If an extended closure is necessary, Nativity School will implement its Distance Learning Plan (DLP). Under this plan, students/ parents will be expected to follow all the guidelines outlined in the DLP. Absences during this time will be recorded and students will be expected to complete all missed work in order to receive a grade.

### **Absence during the School Day**

Students needing medical appointments during school hours require a written note by the parent. Parents are required to sign out their child. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office and provide a doctor's excuse.

If a student is away from school for an appointment for 3 ½ hours or more they will be

counted as absent for ½ a day. **Students who are absent from school for half the day or more will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities sponsored by Nativity School. This includes but is not limited to, school productions, athletics, and fundraising events.**

### **Tardies**

**Five (5) tardies is considered a one-half day absence.** Excessive tardies will have a direct impact on a student's academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade.

Students with any absences, excused or unexcused, and students with unexcused tardies **are not eligible** for "Perfect Attendance" awards.

### **Acceptable Use Agreement**

Access to the Internet is available in the library, the computer lab, and the classrooms to students, teachers and staff of Nativity School. The Internet offers vast, diverse and unique resources directly applicable to our educational programs. Our goal is to promote academic excellence at Nativity by encouraging students, teachers, and staff to make innovative and resourceful use of the Internet.

The operation of the Internet depends on its users adhering to a set of strict protocols, standards and guidelines. This means that students must not only abide by technical standards but, also, ethical and courteous conduct.

#### **Internet Resources**

The Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, web sites and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Nativity students and teachers will have access to:

- \*Materials from some of the world's greatest libraries, such as the Library of Congress.

- \*Scholarly works from some of the world's premier scientific and academic institutions, and the opportunity to correspond with professionals and peers.

- \*Information, news and publications from local, state and national government institutions.

- \*Multi-disciplinary discussion groups on a wide-range of topics of interest

to the scholar.

\*Electronic mail (E-mail) communication with people all over the world.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school's setting. However, on the global interconnected network it is impossible to control all materials and controversial information that can be found. Questionable material is not casually available but must be sought, and may be unearthed by a determined user. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network, and the development of the skills necessary to find and utilize it, far outweighs the possibility that a few users may obtain material inconsistent with the objectives and values of Nativity School.

### **Internet Terms and Conditions**

If a user at Nativity School violates any of these provisions, his or her future access will be denied. The signatures at the end of this document are legally binding, and indicate the parties who signed have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance and agree to the parameters. If a parent or guardian is uncomfortable with the option of his or her child (ren) accessing the Internet, the student(s) may be assigned a different activity when classmates are using the Internet.

#### **1. Acceptable Use**

Each person using the Internet is expected to use it in support of educational and research activities consistent with the educational objectives of Nativity School.

#### **2. Privileges**

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Each person using the Internet will be instructed in the proper use of the network. Inappropriate use will result in termination of privileges. The school will determine what inappropriate use is and the decision to terminate privileges is final.

#### **3. Prohibited Usage: The following are expressly prohibited:**

- A. Accessing Internet resources for non-academic purposes
- B. Transmission of any material in violation of any local, state or national law regulation
- C. Engaging in any illegal activity
- D. Posting, transmitting, or distributing copyrighted materials without permission, obscene, profane, abusive, or threatening materials, racist or sexually explicit materials
- E. Illegal installation of unlicensed, copyrighted software on Nativity School computers



- F.** Accessing ‘chat rooms’ of any kind
- G.** Accessing social networking sites such as **but not limited to** Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Snapchat, TikTok and Kik.

#### **4. Network Etiquette**

You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include the following:

- A.** Be polite. Do not be discourteous, abusive, harassing, or threatening in messages to others.
- B.** Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language or pictures.
- C.** Do not reveal your personal address or phone numbers or those of others.
- D.** Note that privacy of electronic mail (email) cannot be guaranteed.
- E.** All communications and information accessible via the Internet should be treated as private property and not revealed to others unless specifically identified otherwise; however, messages relating to or in support of illegal activities should be reported to a teacher or a staff member.

#### **5. Liabilities**

Nativity School makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school will not be responsible for any damages you or your children suffer through the use of the Internet. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of the information obtained from the Internet is at your own risk. Nativity School denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through Internet services.

#### **6. Exception terms and conditions**

All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to users of Nativity School Internet services. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement and understanding of the parties. The terms and conditions will be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of South Carolina and the United States of America.

By signing the Nativity School Handbook Acknowledgement page at the end of this handbook, parents and students are verifying that they understand and will abide by the above *Terms and Conditions for the Internet*. They understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should any violation be committed, access privileges will be revoked, school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

By signing the Handbook Acknowledgement page, the parent or guardian of the student,

indicates that the Acceptable User Policy has been read. It is the understanding that access is designated for educational purposes. It is understood that it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials, and Nativity School and the Diocese of Charleston will not be held responsible for materials acquired on the network.

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher should they have questions regarding topics their child is researching, or how their child is using the Internet.

### **Bullying and Cyber bullying**

Nativity School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (**seriously or in jest or online**) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Parents will be contacted when such incidences are reported to the school office.

### **Cheating**

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. A student athlete who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports for period of time determined by the Principal.

### **Conduct**

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

The Pastor or Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, Sharpie® markers, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, toys, trading cards, cell phones, laser lights, CDs, iPods, cameras, fidget spinners or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time. Students may bring toys and games to school with a teacher's permission. K4 and K5 students who participate in "Show and Tell" may bring toys according to class policy.

The school administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. **Items**

taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year or at the Principal's discretion.

### **Cubbies/Locker Storage**

Each student is assigned a cubby/locker in which to store clothing and textbooks. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their cubbies/lockers only at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect cubbies/lockers at any time. Cubbies/lockers may not be decorated inside or out.

**Storage is limited to cubby areas and classroom hooks. For this reason, NO ROLLING BOOKBAGS ARE ALLOWED!**

### **Discipline**

Classroom discipline is handled by each teacher in the classroom. Parents are informed of the discipline procedures prior to the start of the school year. The teachers, with the guidance and approval of the Principal, reserve the right to modify discipline procedures.

***Suspension:*** Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work with a substitute teacher paid for (\$75.00 each day) by the suspended student's parents. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but failing grades will be recorded for this work.

***Expulsion:*** Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from Nativity School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Pastor and/or Principal.

### **Drugs – Alcohol - Tobacco**

Students who possess drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion. This includes all forms of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, cigarettes and vaping devices. Nativity School is a smoke free environment.

### **Gum**

Students should not chew gum at any time that they are at school. This includes before school, during school, and after school. Disciplinary action will occur for any student chewing gum during the course of the school day or during carpool.

## **Harassment**

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face suspension, and/or expulsion.

## **Homework**

Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences.

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.

Homework may be assigned to students Monday through Thursday. Homework may be assigned to students for the weekend at the teacher's discretion. However, students enrolled in Algebra I and Spanish I may expect weekend homework.

## **Homework due to Vacations/Planned Absences**

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. **Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Planned vacations other than those scheduled during the school year must have the approval of the Principal.** Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.

**Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation.** There will be no exceptions to this policy. Please do not ask the teacher to make an exception.

## **Homework Policy Due to Illness**

When a student is **absent for three or more days**, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 PM – 3:30 PM.

For **short absences**, students should make arrangements with classmates regarding assignments. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school.

Students will be allowed one day for each day of absence due to illness. For example, a student who was absent three days should be given three school days to complete the missed work.

## **Lunch**

Students bring their lunch each day. Students should not bring glass bottles or soft drinks. **Candy is not allowed.** Only candy given as a reward or at a party may be eaten at the teacher's discretion. **Parents may not bring lunches or drinks from carry-out restaurants except on First Friday lunch.**

Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with lunch monitors are in order at all times. All students are expected to eat the majority of the lunch that has been packed for them, beginning with the healthiest item, before they will be allowed to go to recess or purchase ice cream.

## **Off-Campus Conduct**

The administration of Nativity School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off campus behavior includes, but is not limited to, cyber-bullying or other inappropriate uses of social media. Damages, financial or otherwise, that may occur as a result of inappropriate behavior will be the responsibility of the student or students involved.

## **Online Activities**

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, Instagram, Snapchat, KiK, Facebook®, Twitter®, TikTok, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's or parent's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, the parish or the beliefs of the Catholic Church.

## **Returning to School after Dismissal**

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after 2:50 PM. A student may only return at the discretion of the Principal. **Students who choose to return to school after 2:50 PM without permission face detention, suspension, or expulsion.**

## **School Property**

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks rented by the student must have a proper book cover. No writing in rented textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement fee for

damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

### **School Safety**

Nativity School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. All exterior doors are locked at all times except doors adjoining the buildings. Cameras are installed around the exterior of the building and are monitored for suspicious activity. All fences are locked during the school day.

Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (**seriously or in jest or online**) face suspension, and/or expulsion.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face suspension, and/or expulsion.

Parents will be contacted when such incidences are reported to the school office.

### **Technology Concerns**

**Cell Phones:** If a student needs a cell phone after school due to walking home from school, entering a house where no one is home, or attending sport practices or games, he/she may use the cell phone with the permission of a teacher or school staff member. All cell phones should be in the off position for the day. Cell phones will be collected from students in the morning and stored in the school office area. Cell phones will be returned at the end of the school day. At no time during the day should a cell phone be in a student's possession. **Cell phones are not allowed to be used in afternoon carline nor in EDP without permission from the Principal.** Cell phones (and iPods) will be taken away from students and will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones or cell phone accessories.

**Texting or Accessing Social Media** Students should at no time be involved in texting or accessing social media during the course of the school day through cell phone or other electronic devices such as smart watches, iPods, or tablets. Cell phones, of all students or at the discretion of the Principal, will be collected each morning and returned at the end of the day. Students involved in texting or accessing social media at school face suspension and/or expulsion. If the use of smart watches becomes a distraction for students and or teachers, they will be banned from school.

### **Telephone**

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from the school office manager or Principal. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in

case of an emergency. The telephone in the teacher's lounge is for the use of the teachers only. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

## **Testing**

Students will not be permitted to retake a quiz or a test in order to improve their academic standing. The Principal and teacher reserve the right to amend this policy.

The MAP (Measuring Academic Progress) is given in Grades K5 through 8. These tests are administered 3 times a year; in September, January and May. The Kindergarten Readiness Test is administered in the spring in K4. This is a secure test administered on a computer with a lockdown browser. No devices including, iPads, iPods, tablets or smart watches are allowed during testing.

Middle School students (Grades 6 – 8) may be given a **maximum of three quizzes or tests per day.**

8<sup>th</sup> grade students will take mid-term exams to assess their knowledge of first semester. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be involved in Final Exams to assess the cumulative knowledge of subject matter taught during the academic year. Final Exams will help students be more fully prepared for the assessment challenges and expectations of high school.

## **Uniforms and Dress Code**

Nativity students are expected to wear the designated uniform on all school days. The judgment of the Principal is final in all questions regarding the school dress code. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian that their child is dressed according to the uniform code.

**The following is the procedure that will be followed if students are not in compliance with the school's dress code:**

- In the case of earrings, makeup, bracelets, etc., the student will be asked to remove them.
- If a garment is inappropriate, the student will be required to call home to get a change of clothing as necessary.
- If a parent/guardian is unable to expeditiously bring a change of clothes, the student will be required to wear an appropriate garment from a supply in the Principal's office.
- Students will receive one written warning for a dress code violation. Additional dress code violations will result in a lunch detention. Repeated dress code violations can result in Saturday detentions and/or out-of-school suspensions.

***There will be no exceptions to these rules!***

General Rules

1. **Black shorts or pants may NOT be painter's type pants, pants with large pockets, or jeans.** All pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at the waist. Waistbands may not be rolled over.
2. Shorts, skirts, jumpers must be no more than 1 inch above the knee. Shorts may not be below the knee as in "skateboard" shorts.
3. Physical education shorts must be no more than 1 to 2 inches above the knee. Physical Education Uniforms must be purchased through the school.
4. Socks must **completely cover the ankle of boys and girls at all times and be visible above the shoe.** Tennis-type socks or "no show" socks are not allowed. Socks may not have any emblems or designs unless authorized by the Principal.
5. Sweatshirts or wind shirts must be black with the embroidered gold Nativity School emblem. These are available through the school.
6. Pre-Kindergarten (K4) students must follow the K4 uniform policy at all times.
7. Students are expected to dress neatly and be neat and clean in appearance at all times. Clothes should not be torn or frayed. Clothing should be free of holes stains, and ripped hems need to be sewn.
8. Uniform shirts must be tucked into the waistband at all times. Simply tucking shirttails under is not acceptable.
9. Shoes with laces or buckles must be tied or buckled securely at all times.
10. No tattoos (this includes writing on hands or fake tattoos).
11. Shirts must be long enough to be tucked in at all times, so as not to expose the midriff. If the midriff is exposed when the student's arms are raised above the head, the shirt is too short.
12. On dress down days students must follow guidelines for: 1) *length of shorts and skirts and they must follow the dress code season.* 2) Height and type of shoes, and 3) restrictions on hair, jewelry and makeup.
13. Shirts worn on dress down days may not have any offensive words or pictures on them or references to drugs or alcohol.
14. No sleeveless tops, no tank tops or tops with shoulder strings allowed on dress down days.
15. Students may wear PE appropriate clothes and shoes if they have PE on the day of a Dress Down.
16. No nail polish or artificial/acrylic nails, no makeup to include lip-gloss. Chap Stick must be without any coloring.
17. Belts and belt buckles are to be free of any words or symbols.
18. All buttons on shirts and blouses except the top one must be buttoned. When wearing a tie the top button must be buttoned.
19. Only plain white t-shirts without emblems, logos or advertisements and plain white undergarments are allowed under shirts and blouses.
20. School ties for boys are **required on all Mass Days and field trips (unless**



approved by the principal for the entire school year). They must be purchased through the school. 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys are required to wear ties as part of their winter (Nov. – Mar) uniform every day except PE day. Only school ties will be allowed. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings to school or school functions. 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls are required to wear a tie everyday as part of their uniform.

21. Physical education shoes must be athletic type shoes.
22. Fashion type athletic shoes are not allowed. Shoes with laces must be tied on top of the shoe tongue, not under the tongue. Shoes with laces must be kept tied at all times.

## Girls

1. Solid black dress shoes or tennis shoes. Shoes must fall below the ankle; **no boots**. Socks may be white or black, and completely cover the ankle. No sandals, open back or open toe shoes. No high heels (e. g. heels greater than 2 inches on the instep and narrower than the foot). No boots or booties may be worn. Shoes may not have white markings.
2. Only 1 pair small earrings, 1 bracelet, and 1 necklace. No earrings that extend below the bottom of the ear lobe. No hoop earrings are allowed. No other jewelry, including ankle bracelets.
3. Hair shall be neatly groomed and kept out of the eyes and be of natural color. No bandanas will be allowed. **Hair ties or headbands to bind the hair and braids shall be modest. No headbands depicting characters or animals may be worn.** No extreme haircuts are allowed, to include but not limited to shaving all or parts of the head. Any unnatural coloring of the hair, including highlights, is not allowed.
4. Tights and socks may not be worn together. **No leggings may be worn.**

### **K5 – 4<sup>th</sup> grade Girls**

Jumpers only (all year) purchased at Nativity School or Land's End with peter pan collared blouse (long sleeved blouse may be worn in winter)

Solid black or solid white socks covering the ankle at all times; black or white tights may be worn in winter; **NO LEGGINGS**; Solid black shoes

Black sweatshirt with gold embroidered emblem worn in winter; purchased through the school.

### **5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Girls**

Plaid skirt (Nativity School or Land's End) with peter pan collared blouse and tie.

Solid black or Solid white socks covering the ankle at all times; black or white tights may be worn in winter; Solid black shoes

Black sweatshirt with gold embroidered emblem worn in winter; purchased through the school.

## **NO SKORTS OR LEGGINGS ARE ALLOWED.**

### **Boys**

1. Shoes must be solid black shoes. NOT brown and black shoes or grey/silver and black shoes. **Shoes may not have white markings. This includes white soles.** Sandals and flip-flops are not allowed. No high top shoes or boots may be worn.
2. Only one necklace may be worn at any one time. Necklaces must be worn under the student's shirt. A religious necklace may be worn over the student's shirt **ONLY**. No earrings. No other jewelry.
3. Hair shall be neatly cut above the collar – no extreme haircuts, including shaved heads or excessively spiked hair as determined by the Principal is allowed. No rattails or ponytails are allowed. Hair must be cut 1 inch above the eye brows and cut around the ears.
4. Boys *may not* grow facial hair; they must be clean shaven at all times. Any unnatural coloring of the hair is not allowed.

### **K5 – 4<sup>th</sup> grade Boys**

#### **Aug. – Oct 31<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> – June**

Black shorts and short sleeved white embroidered polo with Nativity emblem; Solid black belt (Grades 2-4)  
Solid black or solid white socks covering the ankle at all times; Solid black shoes – **No high top shoes or boots**

#### **Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>**

Black pants and white embroidered polo (long sleeved polo may be worn in winter) Solid black belt  
Solid black or solid white socks covering the ankle at all times  
Solid black shoes  
Black sweatshirt with gold embroidered emblem

- Long and short sleeved embroidered polo's will be ordered from Nativity School.
- Long pants will be worn on all Mass days by all boys K5 through 8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- **No sweatshirts with names on the back may be worn to Mass.**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade boys may wear a tie on Mass Day (optional for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> only)

### **5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Boys**

#### **Aug. – Oct 31<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> - June**

Black shorts and short sleeved white embroidered polo with

Nativity emblem Black belt

Black or white socks covering the ankle at all times

Solid black shoes – **No high tops or boots**

- Long pants and white oxford with school tie will be worn on all Mass days.

### **Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>**

Black pants and white oxford with school tie; Black belt

Black or white socks covering the ankle at all times

Solid black shoes - **No high tops or boots**

Black sweatshirt with gold embroidered emblem

- Short sleeved embroidered polo's will be ordered from Nativity School.
- **No sweatshirts with names on the back may be worn to Mass.**

### **P.E. Boys and Girls**

**K4** – Students wear the Nativity School P.E. shirt that is purchased from the school, and solid black shorts August - October. Solid black sweatpants (of sweatshirt material) and the Nativity School P.E. shirt will be worn November 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **K5 – 8<sup>th</sup> grades**

**Aug. – Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> - June** - Black mesh shorts with embroidered Nativity emblem and long or short sleeved gold t-shirt with black emblem.

**Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>** – Long or short sleeved gold t-shirt with black emblem Solid black sweatpants, black sweatshirt with Nativity gold emblem

**During November and March PE shorts may be worn when weather permits. December 1<sup>st</sup> through February 28<sup>th</sup>, the complete winter PE uniform must be worn.**

White athletic socks above the ankle and athletic shoes are worn on all P.E. days. Athletic shoes must be tied at all times.

- P. E. uniforms will be ordered through Nativity School.
- No solid black shorts or any other t-shirts are allowed.
- No sweat pants that **are not sweatshirt material** are allowed.

### **K4 Uniform Policy**

K4 boys and girls will wear khaki **and/or** blue bottoms (pants, shorts, skorts or skirts).

K4 boys and girls will wear long or short sleeve polo style shirt (any color, solids or stripes, any brand).

K4 students will wear tennis shoes and socks every day. No "open toe" or "open back" shoes may be worn.

The K4 students will wear this "uniform" everyday with the exception of PE day. On PE days the K4 students will wear black bottoms and the Nativity School gold PE shirt.

The bottoms and polo shirts may be purchased at any store.

**All other general uniform rules apply for both boys and girls.**

### **“Dress Down Day” Guidelines**

#### **Students may wear:**

- \*jeans
- \*tennis shoes
- \*short socks
- \*shorts no shorter than **three** inches above the knee
- \*skirts no shorter than **three** inches above the knee
- \*skorts
- \*sweatshirts
- \*jewelry
- \*Small hoop earrings
- \*dresses
- \*slacks

**ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PASTOR AND PRINCIPAL.**

#### **Students may not wear:**

- \*crocs or flip-flop sandals
- \*large earrings
- \*“open back” shoes
- \*nail polish
- \*tank tops or strapless shirts
- \*T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- \*tennis shoes that convert to roller skates
- \***Leggings or yoga pants**
- \*biker shorts
- \*pajama pants
- \*make-up
- \*low cut blouses/tops
- \*clothing that is extremely tight
- \*hats

**Good Rule: If you think you shouldn’t wear it, you shouldn’t.**

## VI. Health Information and Student Care

### **Medical/Illness Policy**

Children who are ill should remain at home. **A child needs to be fever free for 48 hours without the aid of a fever reducing medication before he/she returns to school.** If a child becomes ill during school time, the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or the emergency party will be called. A child running a fever will not be allowed to remain in their classroom; they will be required to stay in the Main Office until the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) can be reached to pick him/her up from school.

In case of a communicable disease, consult your family doctor as to when it is permissible for the child to return to school. Please inform the school at the outbreak of a communicable disease. Children receiving antibiotics for a communicable disease need to remain out of school until they have been taking the antibiotic treatment for at least a 24-hour period. If a contagious outbreak occurs in the classroom, you will be notified via a letter stating that information so you can be on the alert if this condition should show up with your child.

Children who have an allergy will be required to have on file at school a note from their attending doctor outlining the allergy and describing any accommodations needed while the student is at school.

#### **Illness –**

##### **A student must not come to school if:**

- They have vomited or had diarrhea the night or morning before school.
- Has or had a fever the night or morning before school.
- Has or had any symptoms of any contagious disease  
(including, but not limited to flu and flu like symptoms).
- Has pink eye (can return after 2 doses of antibiotic).
- Has head lice (see below).

**Ringworm-** Ringworm is not caused by a worm but by a fungus that lives on the top layer of the skin and in the hair. Ringworm is contagious and spreads primarily by skin-to-skin contact. Students with Ringworm may attend school, but the Ringworm must be covered with a band-aid – not just clothing.

**Head Lice-** Although many think that head lice occur with an unclean scalp, this is quite untrue. In fact, head lice are more prevalent in clean hair. Nevertheless, it is a **contagious** situation that frequently occurs in schools. A pharmacist can recommend a suitable product for treating head lice or you may want to contact your pediatrician.

If head lice are found:

- The affected student's parent is called to take the child home.
- The parent should immediately begin to treat the **child and the home environment**.
  - The affected child may return the next day following treatment. If live lice are found during a recheck by a school official, the child will have to return home for further combing. The student may then return to school the next day, and will be rechecked by a school official. If live lice continue to be found, the parent will need to consult a doctor or treatment facility. The student may only return to class if no live lice are found. A follow up treatment 7 -10 days after the initial treatment is imperative. The school will take every precaution to ensure that the incidences of lice are limited. It is up to the parents to make sure that the home environment, including vehicles, is treated.

**First Aid-** If an accident occurs, first aid will be administered and the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be notified. If the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) cannot be reached, the emergency party will be called. This person's (s') name should be on the Emergency Information card, which is filled out at the beginning of the school year and returned to school. Please instruct this person as to what to do in your absence, especially if both parents work. Inform the school of a NEW emergency party if a change occurs.

### **Medication Policy**

#### **PLEASE DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD.**

Non-prescription medication (e.g., Advil, Tylenol) and long term medication may be given by school personnel provided that the prescribing physician completes a Diocese of Charleston Catholic School System Medication Permit Form. Parents must bring the medication to the school office along with the permit form. *School personnel will not give antibiotics unless authorized by the Principal and all appropriate paperwork is completed and on file.* All medication must be in the original prescription bottle, properly labeled by a registered pharmacist. It is the parent's (s') and/or guardian's (s') responsibility to refill and return the prescription when needed. The Diocese of Charleston Catholic School System Medication Permit Form is available in the Nativity School office.

## **VII. General Information**

### **Accreditation**

Nativity School is accredited through Cognia, formerly AdvancED.

### **Awards**

Achievement awards will be given to students after the first semester and at the end of the year. Awards will be given for students who achieve Principal's List, High Honor Roll, and Honor Roll. Additional awards may be given per grade level and per subject at the end of the year. These awards are below:

Pope John Paul II Award for Excellence in Religion

St. Cecelia Award for Excellence in Music

St. Francis of Assisi Award for Excellence in Science

St. Thomas More Award for Excellence in Social Studies

St. Thomas Aquinas Award for Excellence in Math

St. Paul Award for Excellence in Language Arts

St. Sebastian Award for Excellence in Physical Education

St. Joseph Award for Excellence in Art

St. Clare Award for Excellence in Computer

Our Lady of Guadalupe Award for Excellence in Spanish

The criteria for receiving one of these awards are:

- +Displays effort and cooperation in class
- +Academic Achievement (A's and B's)
- +Exhibits interest in the subject area
- +Active participation in class
- +Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- +Exhibits respectful behavior in class

Additional awards may be given at the discretion of the teacher and approved by the Principal. The Principal reserves the right to amend awards.

### **Birthday Observances**

Birthday treats may be brought to school for students in **Grades Pre-K through Grade 8**. Arrangements should be made prior to treats being sent. Students with allergies may be at risk if this policy is not followed. **No birthday presents are to be sent to school and please do not have floral arrangements, balloons or other gifts delivered on a student's birthday.** Party invitations may only be passed out in school if every student in class is invited. Parents will have to mail invitations otherwise.

### **Buckley Amendment**

Nativity School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to student records and the rights of non-custodial parents.

### **Car Line- Arrival and Dismissal**

Children are to be dropped off at the main door of the school or the side door, depending on the direction you wish to take after drop off. **During construction students may only be dropped off at the side door.** Teachers are on duty at each door. Children may not be dropped off before 7:40AM. The school doors will open at that time. Any child arriving before 7:40AM will be required to go to morning EDP. No children may wait in front of the school for school to open. The morning EDP Room is in the EDP classroom, and will open at 7:00AM for children needing early morning care. **The cost of morning EDP will be \$2.00 a student or \$5.00 a family per day. This is payable directly to the teacher on duty.**

Children may not be signed out early during the last 10 minutes of school, beginning at 2:40PM. Students being picked up early (before 2:40 PM) will be called to the office once the parent/guardian arrives. Students will *not* be called to the office to wait for a parents/guardians arrival unless the Principal authorizes.

Children are to be picked up at 2:50PM dismissal in the carpool line. All students will be picked up in front of the school. **During construction students may only be picked up at the side door. No parents may park in the parking lot to pick-up students.** Student safety is very serious. On rainy days, all students are to be picked up in a single file car line under the school overhang adjacent to the EDP classroom. Please follow the car in front of you when lining up for “rainy day” dismissal. A teacher will instruct the first car where to pull up when it is a “rainy



day” dismissal. No limousines may pick-up students to take them to parties/after school activities so as to not make other students feel inadequate. Children not picked up by 3:10PM must go to the Extended Day Program (EDP). Students are not allowed to wait by the school doors for their afternoon transportation due to supervision requirements. Any child checked into EDP will pay the minimal EDP charge. Please be considerate of the faculty and staff, and arrive on time to pick up your children.

### **Child Abuse Laws**

Nativity School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of South Carolina. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to the appropriate authorities.

### **Crisis Plan**

Nativity School has implemented a “crisis plan” in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to one of two secure designated locations:

1. Nativity Church
2. Off Campus – James Island Presbyterian Church

### **Emergency Drills**

Nativity School participates in emergency drills. They include fire drills, tornado drills and earthquake drills. During the drills students should follow regulations that will be outlined to them by their teachers.

### **Field Trips**

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. A field trip is a privilege and not a right.
3. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
4. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience ensure a successful learning opportunity.
5. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.

6. A written **official permission slip**, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission **cannot** be accepted. Permission slips should be returned by the due date. **Note:** a fax does not take the place of an original signature.
7. A **telephone call** will **not** be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
8. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
9. All monies collected for the field trip are **non-refundable**.
10. **Cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
11. Parents who are not “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company insures the “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip.
12. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.
13. All chaperones must have completed Safe Haven training and a background screen prior to attending any field trips. Those that are driving must produce a declarations page that is proof of coverage. Coverage must be \$100,000/\$300,000 liability.

### **First Friday Lunch**

Parents, Grandparents and/or other family members are invited to enjoy lunch with Nativity School students, on the 1st Friday of every month or as scheduled on the calendar. Lunch will begin at 11:50AM. First Friday lunches will resume but with modifications due to construction. Guidelines and procedures will be sent home in the Knightly News.

### **Food Allergies**

A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent or guardian.

Tables will be washed with soap and water or appropriate and safe surface cleaning material following any food related events held in the classroom.

Proper hand cleaning techniques will be taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food.

### **Gifts and Invitations**

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.

Invitations for slumber parties or birthday parties should be mailed unless an invitation is being given to every student in the class.

Valentines **will be** distributed at school in grades K4-5<sup>th</sup>. The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom teachers will decide with their students on card exchanging. Every student in the class should receive a valentine card.

### **Home-School Communication**

In order to insure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, Nativity School issues its newsletter, the Knightly News, on Friday. It is sent in paper form or via email. Official school-wide emergency communications and or reminders will be sent using the FACTS messenger phone system. A phone message and/or an email will be sent.

### **Ice Cream Sales:**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade class will be selling ice cream everyday at lunch for students to purchase. Sales will begin after Labor Day. All ice cream is \$.50 or \$1.00. Lower grade teachers will notify you of their preferred ice cream days.

### **Library**

The school has a well-equipped library and media center. Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. The following rules are to be observed:

1. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition.
2. Books damaged or lost must be paid for by the student before any other materials may be checked out. Students who have lost or damaged books do not receive progress reports or quarterly report cards until their account is cleared.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school office manager to be placed in the Lost and Found area. **Items**

**placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 10 days. After 10 days, items are donated to charity.**

Students who lose a library book, textbook or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy.

### **Office Records**

Parents/Guardians should notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

### **Parents as Partners**

As partners in the educational process at Nativity School, we ask parents:

1. To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
  - Gets to bed early on school nights;
  - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
  - Is dressed according to the school dress code;
  - Completes assignments on time; and
  - Has a nutritional lunch every day.
2. To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, PTO general meetings, and fundraising events;
3. To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
4. To notify the school with a doctor's excuse when the student has been absent or tardy;
5. To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
6. To meet all financial obligations to the school;
7. To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
8. To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;

9. **To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;**

10. To support the religious and educational goals of the school;

11. For our Catholic families, attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example. We encourage our non-Catholic families to practice their faith as appropriate.

12. To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;

13. To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

### **Parent Teacher Organization**

Nativity Parent Teacher Organization works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, and building community are goals of this organization.

### **Class Parties**

Students are permitted three class parties a year: Halloween Party, Christmas, and End of Year. Valentine's Day and Easter are celebrated with a "special" snack. Room parents may assist the classroom teacher with these three parties. We request that treats be already prepared into individual servings and not be excessive.

### **School Hours**

Grades Pre-K through 8: 7:55AM – 2:50PM. Students not in their class line when morning assembly dismisses at 8:05AM are considered tardy.

At Nativity School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child (ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. Various classes invite parent involvement or visitation on particular occasions.

The school doors are opened for students at 7:40AM. Students arriving at that time will go to the Main Hall until they are dismissed to their classrooms following morning assembly.

Prayer and afternoon announcements begin at 2:50PM each day. Dismissal immediately follows. Please check the school calendar and weekly newsletter for early dismissal dates.

Parents are to make arrangements for their child (ren) to arrive at school on time and be picked up at dismissal time. Students who are not picked up by 3:10PM will be sent to EDP. A fee will be assessed.

### **School Office Hours**

The school office is open on all school days from **7:30AM – 3:30PM**.

### **Student Directory**

Within the first month of the school year, each family may receive a Student Directory listing students' and parents' names, addresses, home telephone numbers.

The Student Directory should be used to acquaint parents with the names of their children(s) classmates and parents. These directories should not be **used** or **sold** for other purposes.

### **Student Records**

Nativity School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Postal Service. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the Nativity School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the US postal Service. **No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.**

### **Title IX**

Nativity School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

## **Transfer of Students**

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. **No student records will be forwarded to another school until all accounts have been settled.** (See previous section on Student Records for transcript information.)

## **Safe Haven Training/Creating Safe Environments**

### **Volunteer Requirements**

As part of Nativity Parish's commitment to "Creating Safe Environments" for our children, we continually strive to maintain compliance with the Diocese of Charleston program to screen and train all diocesan staff and volunteers having access to and responsibility for children in our schools and programs.

All Nativity volunteers who minister in programs involving the children of Nativity parish are required to complete the following steps:

### **Safe Haven Training:**

**Background Screenings** – All volunteers must complete a Diocese of Charleston Background Screening Basic Data Form to have a criminal background check. Anyone volunteering in areas that involve money or driving of youth may need additional screenings.

**Volunteers Code of Conduct** – All volunteers must read the Diocesan Sexual Abuse Policy Statement and Volunteer Code of Conduct. This statement may be found by going online to [www.catholic-doc.org](http://www.catholic-doc.org) and clicking on the diocesan policy for reporting sexual misconduct. Everyone is being asked to read this policy and sign the volunteer code of conduct / Diocesan Sexual Abuse Policy Statement. The office has printed copies of this information.

To sum it up, all volunteers need to have a Safe Haven Training Attendance Certificate, a background screening verification form, and a signed volunteer code of conduct / Diocesan Sexual Abuse Policy Statement which will be kept on file at a centralized locked location. The costs of all screenings/trainings are covered by the school/parish/diocese.

We thank you all in advance for taking time out of your schedules to comply with these requirements. Volunteer packets containing all needed documentation are available in the office.

Parent support and volunteerism are an essential and integral part of the success of Nativity's ministries and we appreciate your help as we all strive together to ensure the safety of our most precious gifts, our children.

There are different gifts but the same spirit; there are different ministries but the same Lord; there are different works but the same God who accomplishes all of them in everyone. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (adaptation)

For more information on ***Creating Safe Environments*** or required forms, contact Mary Smith at the church office, 795-3821.

### **Visitors**

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure.

Parents who volunteer in the school **may not drop into a classroom to see their child** during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

**VISITORS WILL BE ALLOWED WITH RESTRICTIONS. ALL WILL BE ASKED TO WEAR A MASK.**

### **Volunteers**

All individuals who volunteer in the school must complete **Safe Haven** training, and will be asked to complete the Diocesan mandated background check.

All volunteers are expected to dress appropriately. Clothing should be modest and neat.

The main responsibility of a volunteer is to assist the administration or teachers. For this reason, **pre-school siblings are not allowed to accompany parent volunteers to school for meetings, to serve lunches, or to assist with class parties.**

**VOLUNTEERS WILL BE ALLOWED WITH RESTRICTIONS. ALL WILL BE ASKED TO WEAR A MASK.**



## **Weather Emergencies**

If it should be necessary to close the school because of weather conditions, announcements will be made over local television stations when possible and deemed necessary. A message will be sent to the home phone, cell phone, and e-mail account listed on a student's file via the FACTS messaging system.

WCBD ABC Channel 2 (Non-Cable)

WCIV NBC Channel 4 (Non-Cable)

WCSC CBS Channel 5 (Non-Cable)

Parents will be notified through the FACTS messaging system if modifications will be made to Charleston County School District's closings. Please DO NOT call the school office or the Church Office. Days missed for the closing of school due to circumstances we cannot control, may be made up at a later time. Parents will be notified of make-up dates as early as possible.

Please refer to **Absences Due to Weather Emergencies** for policy and procedures for make-up work due to weather related emergencies.

## **COVID-19 Information:**

The COVID-19 virus will continue to be monitored as in years past. Protocol for quarantine and isolation periods will be followed per DHEC and the Catholic Schools Office. Any updates to protocols will be communicated to parents via email, the school newsletter, and social media.

## **VIII. After-school Programs and Activities**

### **Athletics**

Nativity school offers a variety of athletics for all students. Sports offered are volleyball for middle school girls, basketball for K4-8<sup>th</sup> grades, soccer for K-1<sup>st</sup> grades, and tennis for 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Information regarding each sport/season will be sent home in the Knightly News. All athletic teams will be assessed a fee at the end of each season.

## **Curriculum Assistance**

**After school tutoring days and times** - All Nativity School teachers will be staying after-school 1 (one) day a week to assist any student that may need extra help. Middle school teachers will stay 2 afternoons a week when necessary. Both teachers and parents may request that students stay for tutoring. The tutoring schedule for your child's teacher will be published in the Knightly News and on Nativity School's website. This program is open to all Nativity School students.

## **Extended Day Program**

Nativity School offers an Extended Day Program. This program is from 2:50PM-6:00PM. Students who are enrolled in the program must pay a registration fee. An additional fee is charged for students remaining in the program after 6:00PM. If your child will be attending EDP, they need to be registered in advance through the School Office. All students are expected to complete written homework or study during EDP. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure that homework is completed and correct.

## **Right to Amend**

Nativity School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Knightly News or through e-mail communication.

# **Please return this page to school**

**Please return this page by the first Friday of school to indicate you and your Student's (s') have received and read the *2022-2023 Handbook for Parents/Students***

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My Signature verifies that my student(s) and I have received a copy of the 2022-2023 Nativity School Handbook for Parents/Students. I have read the handbook, discussed it with my child/children, and we will abide by all the rules and policies as outlined in the *2022-2023 Handbook for Parents/Students*. This handbook supersedes all previous handbooks.

Parents are reminded that all registration fees, instructional fees, and tuition payments are non-refundable. If tuition is late by 40 days, Nativity School Finance Committee may notify the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) for the withdrawal of the student(s) until the tuition account has been made current.

***I do / I do not*** (you must circle one) grant permission for my child/children to access information on the Internet. I agree to abide by the Acceptable User Agreement as stated in the Nativity School Handbook.

***I do / I do not*** (you must circle one) grant permission for my child/children to participate in media coverage regarding his/her involvement in the wonderful things that are happening at Nativity School.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student/Family Name - please print**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Please return this form by 8/19/2022**

**THIS SIGNED PAGE MUST BE ON FILE IN THE MAIN OFFICE BEFORE  
YOUR CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED ANY COMPUTER ACCESS.**