



# SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Revised August 2022

## **VISITATION CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

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*Visitation Catholic School  
Handbook Acknowledgement Form*

As a ministry of Visitation Parish, the school functions as part of the community as a whole. As such, the school staff, volunteers and organizations are subject to the policies of the larger parish. In addition to its role as a parish ministry, the school is also subject to the policies outlined in the Administrative Manual of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph as well as the guidance of the Catholic Schools Office.

The School Handbook for Visitation Catholic School includes many of the policies and procedures that govern the school. As partners in the ministry of Catholic education, the school and families agree to follow those guidelines. The handbook is available on the school website. Printed copies are available upon request through the school office.

Parents/guardians sign below to acknowledge that they understand how to access the Visitation School Handbook and agree to be governed by the policies and procedures as promulgated in the version in effect when the agreement is signed. Updates to the handbook will be communicated in writing.

\*\*\*\*\*

I acknowledge that I have access to the Visitation School Handbook and agree to be governed by the policies and procedures.

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_

This form is signed electronically at the beginning of each school year.

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## HANDBOOK CHANGES

Every year, school handbooks change. No matter the reason, schools always seek ways to improve their practice or address new situations. If you are an experienced Visitation family, you might not notice some of the changes, woven into the handbook, so they are listed here for your convenience. Be sure to at least skim through the rest of the book, to refresh your memory. **Three areas that everyone should check out are uniform policy (Appendix I), bringing in outside lunches (p. 35), and smart watches (p. 36).**

- 1. Handbook Acknowledgement Form** – Along with this edition of the Visitation School Handbook, families are receiving an electronic copy of the handbook acknowledgement form for your signature. This form documents that parents know how to get to the school policy book. **(p. 2)**
- 2. School-Family Covenant** - This document from the Diocese has been updated with a clearer description of the commitments that the school and families make to each other. Currently enrolled families will receive an electronic copy to sign along with other annual school forms. **(p. 8)**
- 3. Volunteer Update – Mandatory Reporter** – This summer, parishes and school received updated guidance from the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP) regarding required trainings and procedures for allowing new staff and volunteers to work with young people. **(p. 9)**
- 4. Inclusive Community**  
Visitation Catholic School strives to create an inclusive community. Meeting the needs of all students, including those with behavioral, academic, emotional, physical, or other considerations, to the best of the school’s ability, is a priority. For the complete statement, visit **p. 15**.
- 5. MO Scholarship Program** – Beginning in the fall of 2022, students who live in the Kansas City boundaries in Jackson and Clay Counties are eligible to apply for scholarships to send their children to private or parochial schools also located in those two counties. **(p. 16)**
- 6. Summer School/Tutoring** – Student success in elementary school sets children up for achievement in high school and beyond. Visitation teachers and administrators reviewed and revised the policy to make clearer when students would be recommended or required for summer learning in order to continue to attend Visitation School. **(p. 19)**
- 7. Testing program** – For four years, the Catholic Schools Office administered a benchmark testing program aligned to the diocesan curriculum. Although there was value in assessments that were specific to our diocesan curriculum, the process became cumbersome and the data were not available at an individual student level. Going forward, all schools will administer the Iowa Flex diagnostic assessments for reading and math that are aligned to the end of year Iowa standardized assessment. Since there is no science assessment in Iowa Flex, diocesan schools will continue to administer only the science benchmark assessment. **(p. 21)**
- 8. Eligibility Policy for Extracurricular Activities** – As a new year begins, with the expectation of a full program of athletics and other extracurricular activities, the Visitation Eligibility Policy will be in effect at the beginning of the school year. **(p. 21 and Appendix E)**

**9. Visitation Behavior Plan**

In November of 2021, there was an update to the behavior plan at Visitation, especially for children in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Go to **p. 22** to view the complete plan.

**10. Uniform Policy** – Both ASL, the Academic and Student Life Committee of SMT, and the faculty have reviewed the Visitation Uniform Policy. During the health protocols of the last two years, uniforms were “lightly” enforced. This year will bring a more consistent enforcement of the policy. There are a few changes to highlight. (**p. 34 and Appendix I**)

- a. Shorts timeframe** – Students may begin wearing uniform shorts in the spring as of March 1. This makes the time frame for shorts March 1 – October 31 annually.
- b. Girls leggings/tights** – Between November 1 and the last day of February, girls wearing skirts or jumpers must wear either tights or leggings. These will need to meet the uniform guidelines in the policy found in Appendix I.
- c. Uniform skirt length** – Girls uniform skirts/jumpers need to be worn no more than 3-4 inches above the knee. This is a change in required length. Many girls have been wearing skirts that are too short for Catholic school uniforms. Please ensure that uniform skirts and jumpers are checked before the start of the new year.

**11. Asbestos**

Visitation Catholic School complies with federal and state regulations governing asbestos, asbestos removal, asbestos files and public notification of the presence of asbestos in the building. Visitation School has been designated as “asbestos free.” Parents may arrange with the principal for a time to review the asbestos safety record. (**p. 36**)

**12. Parking Lot Procedure** - As kindergarten has moved from Tighe Hall to the Baltimore building, arrival and dismissal parking lot procedures have changed. The School Lot will operate much as it has in the past for both morning and afternoon routines. There will be no morning drop off in the church lot. In the afternoon, the spaces in the Church Lot will be assigned to families with older children, keeping the younger ones from having to cross Main Street. Please review the details and diagrams beginning on **p. 44**.

**Diocese of Kansas City – St. Joseph Catholic Schools**  
**Family - School Covenant**

This Covenant Agreement represents a commitment for the school and family to work together for the academic and spiritual formation of our students.

**Catholic schools in the Diocese of Kansas City – St. Joseph pledge:**

- a. To provide an authentic Catholic education in an academically and spiritually Catholic environment;
- b. To make student safety a priority;
- c. To have your child’s learning needs met if the school can reasonably accommodate them;
- d. To have your children cared for and taught by competent, faith-filled, and joyful teachers;
- e. To speak with or schedule meetings with you in a timely manner;
- f. To review your student’s records and respond to them; and
- g. To provide opportunities for you and your family to participate in the life of the school and parish.

**Parents of Catholic school student’s pledge:**

- To be a partner with the school in the education and formation of our child(ren);
- To read and acknowledge the student/school handbook;
- To fulfill all financial obligations to the school;
- To understand and support the moral and social doctrine of the Catholic Church;
- To participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, on all Sundays (weekends) and Holy Days, OR, if not Catholic, attend weekly church services in our denomination;
- To read all communications from the school and request clarification when necessary;
- To know our children’s teachers and to participate in parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings;
- To discuss concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved before contacting others;
- To support the mission and ministry of the school through tuition, volunteer, and fundraising support;
- To promote the parish and the school and to speak well of the school to others: and
- To know and support the school rules.

**We enter this covenant freely and with firm determination to fulfill our responsibilities.**

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form will be sent to all Visitation families during the summer for electronic signature.

## The Role of Volunteers in Diocesan Schools

Volunteers, especially parents, guardians, grandparents, parishioners, and civic resource personnel, shall be incorporated into school programs for the benefit of the students. Visitation volunteers are responsible to the principal or her/his designee. Volunteers must comply with the diocesan Critical Policies, receive an appropriate orientation and instructions, and only those who are able and willing to follow school rules and procedures are allowed to volunteer. Volunteers who fail to follow all rules and procedures set forth in this handbook will no longer be permitted to volunteer.

## Screening of Volunteers in Diocesan Schools

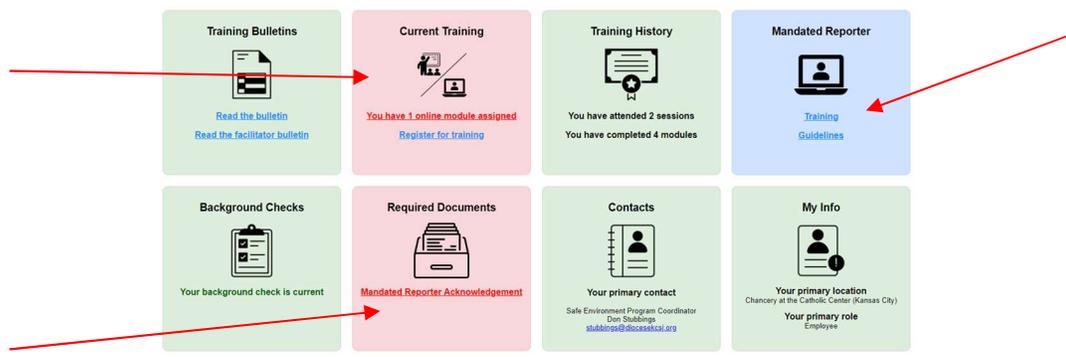
Each year, the Office of Child and Youth Protection in our Diocese reviews the [Safe Environment Program Policies and Procedures](#). This year's focus was on two areas: Protecting God's Children and Mandated Reporter Training. For current employees and volunteers, the main change you will see is a new requirement to complete the State of Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Reporter Training and sign the Mandated Reporter Acknowledgement located in the required documents box on your Virtus home page. This new online training will take about 90 minutes.

To access the training, go to <https://protectmokids.com/>, register, and complete the training module. You may also use the link on your [VIRTUS®](#) home page in the "Mandated Reporter" Box. If you do not see a specific position for your work with children during the registration process, please select the "Other person with responsibility for the care of children." Once completed, save your certificate and provide a copy of your certificate to the Safe Environment Coordinator at your parish, Janet Ridder, or to Bridget Winget in the Visitation School office. Note: If you have already completed this specific State of Missouri training, please provide documentation of the completion and sign the acknowledgment on Virtus.org.

Mandated Reporter training for a majority of employees\* and volunteers is renewed every five years much like the rest of our safe environment requirements. The Mandated Reporter Acknowledgment, is an annual affirmation of your responsibilities to report abuse and neglect. If you have already completed this specific State of Missouri training, please provide documentation of the completion and sign the acknowledgment on your VIRTUS® account.

**\*Schools may have an annual requirement.**

**Additionally, please complete any other assigned requirements indicated on your VIRTUS account. These may include Protecting God's Children 4.0 online module, Background Checks, and EIM ((Ethics and Integrity in Ministry) documents. Below is a sample of your Virtus.org homepage.**



For additional information regarding volunteering at Visitation Catholic School, refer to Appendix F.

## GENERAL RELIGIOUS, EDUCATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

### 1. Mission and Philosophy of Visitation Catholic School

#### *Mission Statement*

Visitation Catholic School, a ministry of Visitation Parish, strives for academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment as it provides quality spiritual, moral and social development for young people in the community we serve. We cultivate and share Catholic values, knowledge, and culture with a spirit of mutual respect, responsibility and love.

#### *Philosophy*

Visitation Catholic School commits itself to the education of the whole child. We strive to help students recognize their potential as life-long learners and productive members of society. Visitation is committed to creating an environment in which every child is a respected, valued, and safe member of the community.

Catholic faith and values provide the foundation for everyday life at Visitation Catholic School. To support Catholic faith and values, Visitation:

- provides religious education that is age-appropriate, integrated into the academic curriculum and reflected in the school atmosphere and policies;
- seeks service opportunities both within the school and in the larger community for all grade levels; and
- strives to develop Christian leaders who will be committed to live as Jesus did.

Visitation Catholic School utilizes teaching approaches based on what is currently known about the way children learn. To accomplish this, Visitation teachers:

- strive to make connections across the curriculum through thematic units;
- encourage students to find patterns in subject matter;
- build on students' prior knowledge to deepen comprehension; and
- encourage critical thinking, problem solving and decision making.

Emotional learning, inseparable from intellectual learning, is fostered by:

- creating an environment that is emotionally safe;
- allowing student choice;
- encouraging individual best;
- responding to individual strengths, talents and interests; and
- building personal integrity and a respect for human dignity.

## **2. Communication among Teachers, Administrators and Families**

Active and open communication is essential to the successful operation of the school. The greater the communication, the more successful the school will be in defining and achieving goals for its students.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to communicate on an individual basis with their child's teachers and administrators. Normally, parents desiring to discuss any aspect of their child's spiritual, academic, and social development may either call the school office or send a note to the individual at the school requesting a phone conference or meeting. The principal or the teacher may also initiate such communications.

All teachers will communicate regularly with parents through classroom newsletters or other communication vehicles. A weekly school e-mail will be distributed to inform families about upcoming activities.

Parents and students are provided the formal opportunity to meet with teachers at scheduled conferences to discuss the child's progress. It is essential that parents and students attend these conferences.

## **3. Visitation Catholic School Ministry Team**

The operation of Visitation Catholic School shall be overseen by the pastor, the principal and the Visitation Catholic School Ministry Team (SMT), which shall consist of 13 members, eleven of whom shall be selected to serve for a term of three years. The methods and procedures for such selection are set forth in the Constitution of the Visitation Catholic Church Parish Council and Parish Ministry Teams and shall be announced in writing to school parents each spring.

In addition to the eleven selected members, the chairpersons of two school committees will also serve as members of SMT: Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Visitation Catholic School Athletic Committee (VAC).

### **a. Purpose of the SMT**

The SMT is an advisory board to the principal. The purpose and mission of the SMT shall be to ensure in every way possible that the mission statement of Visitation Catholic School is achieved and maintained.

### **b. Responsibilities and Duties of the SMT**

The responsibilities and duties of the SMT shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Defining and proclaiming the Catholic identity.
- ii. Recommending policies under which Visitation Catholic School will operate.
- iii. Collaborating with the principal on a responsible fiscal budget which shall be submitted to the pastor and the Administrative Ministry Team (AMT).
- iv. Overseeing and monitoring, in consultation with the principal, the purpose, operation and funding of all activities designed to benefit the students.
- v. Ensuring that a means of open communication exists among the school parents, parishioners, the faculty, the principal, the pastor and SMT. If a parent/guardian would like to have a particular concern addressed to SMT, they may contact the SMT

President regarding that concern.

- vi. Advising on facility repair, improvements, and safety.
- vii. Assisting with marketing and development efforts for student recruitment
- viii. Supporting the integration of technology.
- ix. Submitting reports to the pastor or Parish Council or both, as requested.
- x. Assuming whatever duties or tasks the Parish Council, pastor, or principal shall, at their discretion, assign to SMT.

**c. The Parent Teacher Organization**

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a permanent subcommittee of SMT composed of school parents and staff members. The PTO oversees fund-raising activities throughout the year. (See Appendix D) Additionally, the PTO sponsors social events, programs, and informational sessions for school parents, faculty and the administration, all with the object of encouraging high standards of family and community life. The PTO also manages the school's Cultural Arts program. (See Appendix B)

**d. The Visitation Catholic School Athletic Committee**

The purpose of the Visitation Athletic Committee (VAC) is to assist in the implementation of the mission statement of Visitation Catholic School by providing the best extracurricular athletic program possible for Visitation students. VAC is a permanent subcommittee of SMT and is composed of school parents. The interscholastic and intramural athletic program at Visitation is administered by VAC, which establishes policy for each sport, recruits coaches, provides equipment and uniforms, registers teams in the appropriate leagues, assists the principal in scheduling Visitation athletic facilities and funds the athletic program through sanctioned fund-raisers and voluntary contributions. (For a list of school-sponsored sports and corresponding grade ranges, please see Appendix C or refer to the school web site.)

**e. Fundraising**

PTO and VAC budget to raise funds during each school year. This is accomplished through approved fundraising events during the school year. These funds, raised primarily through the efforts of school families, are parish funds used solely for the school. All students and their parents are strongly encouraged to participate in these fundraising events, since they represent a significant source of revenue for the school. (For a list of school-sponsored fundraisers, see Appendix D.)

**f. Prize Policy**

The purpose of this policy statement is to ensure general equity in prizes among the various fund-raising efforts of the school and to provide guidelines to all fund-raising chairs. All prizes shall be proposed to the administration for approval, prior to the distribution of sales packets to families. This proposal shall be in writing, and there shall be no exceptions to this rule.

#### **4. Religious Responsibilities**

The primary faith development of a child takes place in the home and is the responsibility of the parents and family. Visitation Catholic School has the responsibility to support and nurture this development. The course of study for all grades at Visitation Catholic School includes a written religion curriculum and service opportunities.

At school, children participate in various worship activities including Mass, reconciliation and morning prayer. Visitation Catholic School is responsible for preparing Catholic children for their First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. It is essential that families play important, participatory roles in these processes. Non-Catholic students are welcome at Visitation Catholic School and help enrich its spiritual atmosphere.

Attendance at school Mass during the week does not in any way relieve parents of their children's obligation to attend Mass on Sundays. That is an on-going obligation for all school children and a primary responsibility of all parishioner parents.

#### **5. Privacy and Permitted Dissemination of Student Education Records**

To the extent it is required to do so, Visitation Catholic School will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1221, regarding both the privacy of and permitted dissemination of a student's education records.

#### **6. Statement of Non-discrimination**

Both faculty and students, in true ecumenical spirit, welcome students into the Christian educational community of Visitation Catholic School. We admit students of any sex, race, color, national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded to the students of the school. This concurs with Diocesan Policy No. 300.2.

While no distinction or preference is observed regarding sex, race, color or national and/or ethnic origin, we do reserve the right to screen applicants regarding their religious orientation and practice. Visitation Catholic School is a Catholic school and participation in religious instruction and services is an integral part of the educational experience .

#### **7. Enrollment Process**

##### **a. Age Requirement (Kindergarten)**

In order to be admitted to Kindergarten, a child must be five years of age before July 31 in advance of the upcoming school year. At the time of admission, parents must present to the school office the child's birth certificate, baptismal certificate and immunization records. All incoming students will be required to take an Incoming Kindergarten Evaluation prior to entering into kindergarten.

Exceptions to the Age of Entrance requirement will be granted rarely and only after considerable deliberation. Visitation will comply with Missouri state law as provided in Section 160.051 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri. In the case of early admission, the acceptance is always conditional, subject to review, and dependent upon the individual child's needs and performance. In any case, the principal makes the final determination.

To be admitted to first grade, a child must be six years of age by July 31 or have successfully completed kindergarten.

**b. Student Admission Guidelines**

Among its many ministries, Visitation Catholic Parish provides a Catholic education to the children of established parishioners who are registered members of Visitation Parish, active in the practice of their faith, and who have maintained a tithing commitment to the parish for a period of at least 12 months prior to enrollment (“established parishioners”). For those parishioners who have been registered and active for a period of less than 12 months, tuition will be required for the first school year. Admission of these families to the school will depend on availability of space. When all else is equal, priority will be given to the established parishioner who resides within the parish boundaries. Children of current, qualified, registered members of the parish, who have completed the school enrollment process within the designated timeframe, will receive preference over tuition-paying applicants when class size consideration warrants. When applicants exceed space, the length of the tithing history will be the deciding factor. A waiting list will be created when necessary.

The order of priority for admission will occur as follows:

1. All children currently enrolled in the school and their siblings.
2. Children of established parishioners (as defined previously)
3. Children of families moving into the parish boundaries who were established members of another Catholic parish at their previous address.
4. Children from families established in another Catholic parish.
5. Children from families who would be tuition paying.

**c. Non-Parishioner and Transfer Student Admission**

If a child is enrolling from another Catholic school, the principal will check with the previous institution to ensure that all financial obligations are met prior to finalizing the enrollment. Students (whether parishioner or non-parishioner) seeking to transfer from another school to Visitation Catholic School will be eligible for admission to Visitation following:

- i. A determination by the principal that their admission will not disrupt the class size guidelines set forth in this handbook; and
- ii. A determination by the principal, following a review of the applicant's transcript, and, where necessary, meetings with his or her parents or guardians and a discussion with the principal or teacher at the applicant's prior school, that the student will benefit by and be an integral part of the Visitation Catholic School community.
- iii. Mid-year transfers will be considered on an individual basis. Visitation Catholic School typically does not accept transfer students during the academic year, unless they have been newly transferred into the parish or the Kansas City community.
- iv. Potential transfer students in Grades 4 - 8 are accepted pursuant to the following procedure:
  - a. a record request form is signed by the parent(s) and sent to the previous school;
  - b. an appointment is set for the child and his/her parents/guardians to interview with the principal and/or other appropriate school personnel;
  - c. school records are received by Visitation Catholic School before the time of interview;
  - d. enrollment forms and fees are paid; and

e. an interview is completed.

All non-parishioner students admitted to Visitation Catholic School will sign a contract and will pay an annual tuition as per the published fee schedule available for inspection at the school office. Class size alone will not affect the continued enrollment of non-parishioner students.

A given student's eligibility for enrollment is, ultimately, deferred to the pastor and principal for a final decision.

**d. Inclusion of Students**

Visitation Catholic School strives to create an inclusive community. Meeting the needs of all students, including those with behavioral, academic, emotional, physical, or other considerations, to the best of the school's ability, is a priority. However, sometimes due to staff or budgetary restrictions, Visitation may encourage or require outside testing or services to best meet the needs of a child. These determinations will be made with data and input from multiple sources including the classroom teachers, administration, resource staff, and the Student Intervention Team. It is Visitation's goal to partner with parents in order to provide the most appropriate educational experience possible for their children.

**e. Custody Information**

The school is not responsible for failing to honor custody arrangements or other legal actions that have not been provided in writing. Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the principal's office when the legal determination is made, at the time of enrollment, or by the first day of school.

**8. Enrollment Fee and Tuition Fee Schedules**

**a. Enrollment (All Students)**

Enrollment for the following school year begins by March 1st and ends mid-April or when classes are full. In order for the school office to consider pending applications for admission from parents of new or transfer students and to set class size, this enrollment form must be completed and returned to the school office before Easter. For tithing families, enrollment forms will be considered accepted if the following criteria are met:

- Enrollment form is returned with payment or payment options noted;
- Current year pledge card is complete; and
- Prior and present year tithe is current.

For tuition families, enrollment forms will be considered accepted if the following criteria are met:

- Enrollment form is returned with payment or payment options noted; and
- Tuition payments are up to date.

**b. Enrollment Fee/Instructional Fee (All Students)**

Enrollment and instructional fees help cover expenses such as textbooks, instructional materials, study trips, and classroom supplies. These fees must be returned with the enrollment form described in the preceding paragraph. The enrollment process will be deemed incomplete and void in the absence of such payment or alternative arrangements.

**c. Failure to Complete the Enrollment Forms (All Students)**

Visitation Catholic School cannot guarantee a place on the school roster for either parishioner or non-parishioner families who have failed to comply with paragraphs 8(a) and (b) of this handbook. Unless specific arrangements have been made, enrollments completed after the date described in paragraph (a) above, may result in a student being placed on a waiting list for a particular class.

In any event, NO STUDENT will be admitted to class on the first day of school unless the enrollment process, including the payment of the enrollment fee, is completed.

**d. Adjusted Tuition (Parishioner Students)**

Adjusted tuition is a fee charged per student to compensate for the expenses of major facility and equipment replacement needs over the coming years. Please refer to the School Website, under Enrollment and Information, School Fees and Tuition, for the current calculation of these fees.

**e. Tuition (Non-Parishioner Students)**

Non-parishioner students will pay tuition and sign a tuition contract. This contract sets forth the method and timing of tuition payments. Failure to comply with the terms of the contract, including failure to make timely tuition payments as per the contract, may result in the withholding of a student's grades or may jeopardize continued enrollment.

**f. MO Scholars Program**

The Missouri Legislature approved a scholarship program in the state that takes effect in the fall of 2022. Funded by tax credits, the MO Scholars Program strives to make educational opportunities available to children who may not have had the resources in the past.

There

**g. Withholding of Transcripts**

In the event of student withdrawal at any time during the year, no academic records or transcripts will be furnished to the family or to another school until all financial obligations to Visitation have been fulfilled. Additionally, transcripts for students graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade will not be released until the tithe or tuition is complete.

**9. Completion of Enrollment Process**

An enrollment packet will be distributed in late July to families who have completed the enrollment process by the specified deadline. This process includes: (a) verification that the family's current

year tithing is up to date through June 30; (b) receipt of a completed application for enrollment together with payment of enrollment fees; and (c) submission of a tithing pledge card for the current calendar year. Failure to meet published deadlines for any aspect of the enrollment process will jeopardize enrollment.

**10. Class Size Guidelines**

Diocesan Policy states that "local schools will establish policies regarding class size".

It is the intention of Visitation Catholic School to maintain the following guidelines, as possible, relating to class size:

Grades K - 3: 23 students per classroom

Grades 4 - 8: 25 students per classroom

**B. EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES**

**1. Curriculum (K - 8)**

**A. Core Curriculum**

The course of study for all grades at Visitation Catholic School shall include Religion, Mathematics, Reading, Social Studies, Science, Language Arts, Computer Science, Music, Art, Physical Education, and Spanish. The curriculum shall meet the requirements of both the State of Missouri and Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Parents are not allowed to have their children opt out of a particular lesson or curricular program.

**B. Study Trips**

Study trips are a privilege afforded students to enhance learning and are directly related to the curriculum. No student will be taken on an off-campus trip without signed permission. Verbal or telephone call permission is not acceptable. A student who does not go on a study trip with his/her class will remain at school under the supervision of an assigned staff person and will be required to complete class work assigned by the teacher.

***Study Trip Policy:***

The policy is intended to state and clarify the position of the administration and SMT regarding study trips made by students as part of the school curriculum.

- Study trips shall be initiated by the classroom teacher in order to enhance the curriculum and the learning opportunities of the students.
- Study trips will be evaluated by the administration, based on the educational value of the trip.
- Study trips should not ordinarily or generally extend past the Kansas City Metropolitan Area.
- The transportation for all study trips will be via bus or commercial vehicle.
- The administration shall give final approval to all study trips.

**C. Class Trips**

Schools may sponsor class trips outside of regular study trips for a specific grade of students. These trips should reflect the mission and philosophy of the school, Diocese and

Church. Class trips sponsored by an elementary school may not involve overnight stays or air travel.

If a school chooses not to sponsor a class trip, then students, parents/guardians, or other patrons may not use the school's name or tax identification number in connection with promoting or organizing a privately-sponsored trip. In addition, the principal and Pastor may stipulate that students, parents or other patrons may not conduct fund-raising activities on school premises in connection with a privately-sponsored trip.

## **2. Homework**

The school day is too short to provide a student the practice time necessary to learn all the various skills taught. Therefore, all children, grades 1 through 8, are expected to spend some time outside of school engaged in "homework." This is material that each student should be comfortable with and which reinforces what has been taught in school. Although some students may require more or less study time depending on their ability level and the nature of special projects assigned during the year, the following amounts of time for home study are considered by the faculty in making their assignments:

### **PRIMARY**

Grades 1-3: 10 to 30 minutes

### **INTERMEDIATE**

Grades 4-6: 40 to 60 minutes

### **JUNIOR HIGH:**

Grades 7-8: 60 to 90 minutes

Teachers attempt, as much as possible, to coordinate homework and testing schedules within a grade level. Teachers develop policies for grading homework and the acceptance of late or incomplete homework for their classrooms. Parents are responsible for providing a home environment conducive to such learning and encouraging their children to develop regular home study habits.

## **3. Evaluation**

### **a. Grading Scale**

Grades are one of the many ways that teachers have to communicate academic progress by students. However, they are not the ONLY means. Emphasis is placed on ability, effort and improvement rather than the grade on an assignment, test or report card. At times, teachers may use peer review and feedback as part of the instructional process. Final grades are communicated to the student via Sycamore or in writing. Student grades will not be posted publicly. Students' progress is evaluated using the following scales:

#### **i. Grades K through 2:**

E = Excellent

S = Satisfactory

P = Progressing

NI = Needs Improvement

NA = Not Assessed at this Time

**ii. Grades 3 through 8:**

A+	100	B	85 – 91	C-	74
A	94 - 99	B-	84	D+	73
A-	93	C+	83	D	70 – 72
B+	92	C	75 – 82	D-	68 – 69

Sycamore School Access

All parents/guardians have access to student information, including grading, through their Sycamore School accounts. Students are taught how to access grading information which is also encouraged for families to stay current on students' progress.

To access your account, log in at <https://app.sycamoreschool.com/index.php> or use the link on the school website. Contact the school office for your login credentials.

**b. Schedules**

Starting in fourth grade, students receive instruction from other grade level and content area teachers. Fourth grade students receive reading, language arts, math and religion instruction from their homeroom teachers and social studies and science from either their homeroom teacher or another fourth grade teacher. Fifth grade students begin and end each day with their homeroom teachers. At the beginning of the school year they travel with their homeroom groups to all classes. During the second semester, they may transition to individual schedules. Students in sixth – eighth grades begin each day with their homerooms and are individually scheduled in classes throughout the day.

**c. Report Cards**

The purpose of any report card is to communicate progress made by an individual student over a period of approximately nine weeks. In addition to report cards, teachers of grades K-2 send home mid-term reports and teachers of grades 3-8 post grades to Sycamore School. It is the responsibility of parents and students to be aware of their grades. Teachers shall communicate with parents about the progress of their students throughout the year.

**d. Incomplete and Failing Grades**

A student receiving two U's in a core subject during the year, or a U in the fourth quarter in any core subject, on his/her quarterly report card will only be promoted and allowed to re-enroll at Visitation after completing summer school. A student who has not completed one or more major assignments will receive an Incomplete as a grade on the report card until the assignment is completed satisfactorily. At that point, partial credit may be given. A student will not be promoted to the next grade level with a grade of Incomplete on his/her report card. An eighth grade student who has a grade of Incomplete or who is required to attend summer school will receive his/her diploma only after completing all incomplete work or summer school. Teachers will inform parents/guardians at least 3 days prior to graduation that the diploma will be withheld.

**e. Summer School**

Grades: K-4<sup>th</sup>

Students who have continue to need academic reinforcement or who have failed to make satisfactory academic progress may need additional time and support to be ready to move to the next grade level. By the middle of the third quarter, teachers of kindergarten through fourth grades will communicate to parents that participation in summer tutoring is either recommended or required. Typically, 4-6 weeks of tutoring are scheduled.

Tutoring is arranged on an individual basis. A list of Visitation teachers who are able to tutor will be made available to families immediately after Spring Break. Tutoring fees are paid directly to the tutor.

Subjects: Reading, Writing, Math

Grades: 5-8<sup>th</sup>

Students who have failed to make satisfactory academic progress may need additional time to be ready to move to the next grade level. Students who are **required** to attend summer school must satisfactorily complete the program in order for their enrollment at Visitation in the next grade level to be approved. Students may be **recommended** for one or more of the core subject areas listed below.

Grades 5-6 Subjects: English, Math, Religion, Science, Social Studies

Grades 7-8 Subjects: English, Math, Religion, Science, Social Studies, Spanish

Summer school is **required** if:

- A. Students earn two U's in the same subject as end-of-quarter grades
- B. Students earn a U at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter in a core subject

Summer school is **recommended** if:

- A. Students receive a D and a U in the same subject as end-of-quarter grades
- B. Students earn three D's in the same subject as end-of-quarter grades

Students may attend summer school at Visitation, if offered, or another approved program. A list of approved summer school programs swill be made available to families after Spring Break. Any summer school option not on the approved list from Visitation must be submitted in writing to the principal and approved in advance. Visitation will determine the feasibility of hosting summer school based on the number of students.

**f. Honor Roll**

Students in 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades can earn Honor Roll status by achieving the following grades:

**Principal's Honor Roll:** All grades in core curriculum subjects and specials must be A's. (A-qualifies)

**Vis Honor Roll:** The student must earn all A's and no more than two Bs. (B- qualifies)

**Behavior:** Certain behavioral standards must be met for a student to qualify for Honor Roll. Any student who has been suspended from school for behavioral reasons does not qualify for Honor Roll in the quarter in which he/she was suspended.

**g. Honors and Awards**

Presidential Volunteer Service Award

All students at Visitation School are strongly encouraged to give back to the community through volunteer service. The Stewardship parent volunteers will organize service projects, however, students may earn service hours through activities as a family or individually. There are three levels of Presidential Volunteer Service Awards:

1. Bronze: 50-74 hours of community service
2. Silver: 74-99 hours of community service
3. Gold: 100 or more hours of community service

National Junior Honor Society

Junior high students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades may be eligible for National Junior Honor Society.

Msgr. Tighe Award

The Monsignor Tighe Award, a long-standing Visitation tradition, is awarded annually to one girl and to one boy from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade who exhibit Msgr. Arthur Tighe's qualities of faith, hospitality, kindness, generosity, and integrity. The award is voted on by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class.

Robert Griffin Award

Created in honor of long-time custodian Robert Griffin, this award recognizes a person of compassion, humility, perseverance, and tireless service to others. Like Mr. Griffin, the recipient of this award does not draw attention to self by seeking praise or credit for each kind deed. The award is voted on by all 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers.

Angel Award or "V" Award

This award is given annually to two eighth grade students by a group of parents whose children attended Visitation School and who have also experienced the death of a child. The award is given in recognition of "Excellence in Leadership, Sportsmanship, Team Spirit and Effort while maintaining Christian, Academic and Conduct Standards" by the VAC and the parents of the Visitation Angels.

**h. Testing Program**

The main purpose of the testing program is to provide additional information for teachers to use in planning individual and group instruction, provide supplemental information about a child's knowledge and skills, as well as to give an indication of the general developmental level of a child.

There are three national tests being administered to students beginning in the fall of 2022:

- 1) All schools in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph will administer the Iowa Flex assessments three times a year. These are diagnostic tests that will help identify strengths and gaps in a student's learning. At Visitation, these assessments will be given in grades K-8.
- 2) The iReady assessments are a diagnostic test given at Visitation to students in grades K-8. This assessment is linked to a toolbox of student learning activities that can be assigned at

each student's grade level. This test is currently being used by intervention staff to identify student needs for support, remediation, or enrichment.

- 3) The Iowa Assessment is administered in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph in the spring to students grades 3 - 8.

In addition to the tests listed above, many eighth graders also take the High School Placement Test in December/January to determine admission to private Catholic high schools and to apply for scholarships.

**i. Extracurricular Eligibility**

A student must attend school on the day of any extracurricular event in order to be eligible to participate, other than in cases of exceptional circumstances approved by the principal.

Students at Visitation Catholic School must perform to the best of their academic ability as determined by the teacher and administration. Academic eligibility, based on teacher grading, is used to ensure that every student is working to his/her capability. Extracurricular eligibility is a tool that helps each child learn to budget and use his/her time and talent constructively. Extracurricular activities include athletics, Junior Board, academic clubs and other after-school activities. (For review of Visitation Catholic School's Eligibility Process, see Appendix E.)

***Eligibility Process***

1. Extracurricular eligibility pertains to grades 5, 6, 7 and 8.
2. Teachers assign grades.
  - a. The first time a student earns below a C- (74%), he/she is warned and the parent is notified.
  - b. The second week in a row for the same subject, the student becomes ineligible.
3. Teachers will turn in grades for the past week every Monday before 3:30 p.m.
4. The school office will process and notify the moderator/athletic director by Tuesday morning. Written notification is sent via backpack mail and by email to the parents on Tuesday. Eligibility runs from Tuesday to Tuesday.
5. Suspension from practices/games/events will begin at the time of notification and will be for a minimum of one week with further eligibility to be determined on a weekly basis.
6. An ineligible student may **attend** games/rehearsals/performances but may not play/participate. (In sporting events, the scorer's table should be notified if a team player on the bench is ineligible before the game or match starts.)
7. If a student is ineligible three times during the first semester, he/she is no longer eligible to participate in extracurricular activities for that semester. If a student is ineligible three times in the second semester, he/she is no longer eligible to participate in extracurricular activities for that semester.
8. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, approved by the principal, a student must attend a full day of school on the day of an extracurricular activity in order to participate in that activity.

Final authority and decisions regarding academic eligibility rest with the principal.

#### **4. Visitation School Behavior Plan**

Discipline is a valuable and important element in helping students become well-formed disciples. Creating and maintaining a positive environment where all students and staff strive to model Christ-like behaviors involves reinforcing the good behaviors that Visitation students demonstrate. The first priority at Vis will be to regularly and consistently acknowledge and praise positive, appropriate behavior. The ultimate goal is to form individuals who are able to make informed decisions regarding their own behavior. This happens not only by hearing praise for the good choices but also by having consequences for the less desirable ones.

##### **Goal of Visitation's School Behavior Plan**

The ultimate goal of the school behavior plan is to create and maintain a truly Catholic, positive, and safe environment that is conducive to learning and growth for the entire school community. Visitation Catholic School's environment will be characterized by the following:

1. A welcoming, positive, Catholic atmosphere created by both the adults and students
2. Frequent reinforcement for positive behavior
3. High level of behavioral expectations with explicit limits for unacceptable behaviors
4. Appropriate consequences used consistently

##### **Visitation's School Positive Behavior Approach**

When any staff member observes a Vis student displaying positive behavior that is beyond expectations, they will reward/compliment the student. At the homeroom teacher's discretion, these rewards/compliments may be accumulated and exchanged for individual rewards. The students can also earn class level rewards that will be awarded as class goals are met (i.e. movie/snack party, extra recess, etc.). Positive behaviors may be tracked on the demerit/merit card for 4th-8th grade students.

##### **Grades 4-8 Specifics**

Fourth grade students will begin to use the system described below during the second semester. In fifth through eighth grades, students will participate in the positive behavior approach by exhibiting virtuous behaviors. These again, at the teacher's discretion, may be turned in for rewards that will be determined in each classroom. However, when a school rule has been broken, the student's behavior will have a consequence. When a minor offense occurs, the student will receive a demerit. Examples of minor offenses are listed below.

##### **Minor Discipline Offenses**

1. Failure to follow teacher directions
2. More than two behavior reminders during a class period
3. Inappropriate comments, behaviors, or noises
4. Inappropriate Mass, hallway, cafeteria, recess, or bathroom behavior
5. Minor disruptions
6. Inappropriate use of equipment, materials, or food
7. Minor rough play
8. Throwing objects
9. Late for class
10. Dress code violation
11. Eating or drinking in class without the teacher's permission (candy, gum)
12. Other - Administration reserves the right to enforce disciplinary measures for any misbehavior

even if not specifically listed here.

**Accumulation of infractions that lead to a detention by grade level:**

4 <sup>th</sup> grade	5 demerits
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	5 demerits
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	4 demerits
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	3 demerits

Each child will have a demerit/merit card. When an offense occurs, the teacher will mark the card. This allows the students to monitor their own behavior and keep track of demerits. Any time a child receives a demerit or detention, the parents will be notified via email or phone call. Each semester, the students will receive a new card and begin with a clean slate.

**Detention Procedures**

Detentions can result from an accumulation of demerits or a single serious infraction. Detention will be held from 7-7:45 am on Thursday mornings. If a detention is missed, it will result in an additional detention. If the student arrives late, they will serve the detention on the next designated detention day. The following may directly result in a detention:

1. Accumulation of demerits - This will be deferred to Administration
2. Disrespect, defiance, irreverence
3. Extremely inappropriate behavior, touching, sexual comments/behavior (written, verbal, gestures)
4. Inappropriate use of cell phones, Chromebooks, laptops, or other electronic devices
5. Severe or repeated behavior in Mass, hallway, bathroom, lunchroom, on computer, or at recess
6. Serious disruptions in the classroom
7. Destroying equipment, materials, property
8. Rough play that is dangerous in nature
9. Safety Violation
10. Deceit, forgery, cheating, and stealing
11. Inappropriate language
12. Other - Administration reserves the right to enforce disciplinary measures for any misbehavior even if not specifically listed here.

**Serious Misbehaviors**

Administration will determine consequences for any significant, severe, patterned, or repeated misbehavior. These consequences could include but are not limited to behavior contracts, discipline hearings, in-school or out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions. Extreme and/or serious offenses will be immediately referred to administration. Below is a list of some, but not all offenses that may be considered severe.

1. Serious threat (written, spoken, or gestured)
2. Sexual harassment (written, spoken, or gestures)
3. Fighting
4. Severe safety violations
5. Possession or use of weapons
6. Possession, use, distribution of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vape
7. Slanderous or harassing comments about students, teachers, and/or administrators on internet sites/social media, texts

- 8. Unlawful behavior
- 9. Accumulation of detentions

### **Suspension**

A suspension is a form of discipline requiring the removal of a student from the classroom environment. Suspensions will be assigned by the administration, if the intervention of the grade level teaching team has not changed the behavior, or as the result of a more severe offense that disrupts the learning atmosphere, compromises the safety of the school community, or harms or injures another person.

During an in-school suspension, the student remains in isolation and completes required work for that day. The student will receive credit for completed work during an in-school suspension. For supervisory and safety purposes, a substitute will be provided for a student serving an in-school suspension. The student's parents are required to pay the daily rate for the substitute (currently \$120).

During an out-of-school suspension, a student is counted as absent and may not participate in any school activity (extracurricular activities, sports, dances, study trips, etc.). All work must be completed and will be graded for partial credit.

Whether the suspension is in or out of school, the student will be required to complete an equal number of service hours as the hours they miss from class. Written notification of any suspension will be sent to parents. A conference will be held in conjunction with this procedure prior to readmitting the student to class. A student may be kept out of class at the office for the remainder of the school day in which an infraction occurred or while it is being investigated.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion of a student will occur when a student chooses to disregard the values and expectations of Visitation Catholic School and, in effect, chooses not to be a member of the school community. Final determination of expulsion rests with the Superintendent of Schools after communication with the principal and the pastor about the situation.

Expulsion of a student from Visitation Catholic School shall meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Other avenues of remediation for the unacceptable behavior have been exhausted.
2. The moral and/or physical well-being of the student and/or school community is at risk.
3. The student in question exhibits prolonged, severe, and/or open disregard for policy, personnel, fellow students and/or property.

The following general procedures are followed when necessity dictates the expulsion of a student:

- h. The principal shall inform the Diocesan School Office and the pastor of the situation and surrounding circumstances prior to the act of expulsion.
- i. The student and his/her family shall be informed formally of the expulsion by a conference including the parent/guardian(s), principal and, if necessary, teacher and/or counselor. Written communication will follow.

Any behavior, on or off school property, which creates a problem that affects the school community and its reputation may result in consequences for the students involved, up to and including expulsion.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Any employee or student who believes he or she has been sexually harassed should report the complaint to the Principal. The Principal will gather preliminary information and then report the complaint to the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office. Upon receiving a complaint of sexual harassment against an employee or student, the CSO will investigate and, if the complaint is substantiated, will confer with the Principal to initiate the appropriate disciplinary action.

A complaint of sexual harassment against a Principal should be reported directly and immediately to the CSO.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is a deliberate and repeated attack over time, with the intent to harm or intimidate another student emotionally or physically. Bullying can be verbal, non-verbal, written, electronic, and/or physical. Visitation Catholic School does not allow these actions by students, staff, or parents.

Any act of bullying by either an individual student or group of students is expressly prohibited on school property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying.

No teacher, administrator, or employee of the school district shall permit or condone bullying.

Perceived permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Retaliation against a victim, good-faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. Under any circumstance, retaliation is unacceptable.

A person who engages in the act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying, or who permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures. The school may consider the following factors: the ages of the parties involved; the developmental and maturity levels and/or special education needs of the parties involved; and the severity of the behavior.

Discipline guidelines for student bullying will be progressive in severity, beginning with a visit to the assistant principal to elicit behavior modifications. The severity of the initial bullying behavior may dictate a more aggressive first step than the behavior policy would otherwise indicate.

If a parent believes that a child has been the victim of bullying, they should first inform the child's teacher. After working with the teacher and school administrator, parents may also report the issue to the TIPS/Awareity website, <https://edu.moatusers.com/>. Incidents may be reported anonymously if desired. If a parent feels that the situation is severe (i.e. immediately harmful or threatening), then he/she should contact the Principal or Assistant Principal. The Administration may also include a school counselor in some situations.

### **Reporting Safety Concerns, Threats, and Incidents**

The Threat Assessment, Incident Management and Prevention Services (TIPS) reporting system allows for reports to be made by students, parents, faculty, staff, neighbors and anyone in the community concerned about the safety of students and schools. Reports can be made confidentially and anonymously any time someone knows of a concerning or threatening situation by completing an online form which is linked to the school's Sycamore homepage or at [www.visitationschoolkc.org](http://www.visitationschoolkc.org). The butterfly image pictured here is a link to the reporting website.



School and diocesan personnel are notified immediately when the report is submitted, and the case will be investigated and appropriate action taken. Examples of concerns and incidents that could be reported through TIPS include instances of assault, bullying, cyber-bullying, drugs/alcohol, parent complaint, possession of weapons, school vandalism, self-harm or suicidal ideation, student assistance referral, suspected abuse/safety concern, threats of violence and truancy.

**a. Search and Seizure**

A school official may search individual students and individual student storage areas such as backpacks, desks, lockers, and motor vehicles under the following circumstances:

1. The official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will produce evidence that a student has violated or is violating either the law or a school rule or regulation.
2. The search is conducted on school premises or at a school event

School officials may conduct periodic inspections of all, or a randomly selected number of, school lockers, desks, and other facilities or spaces owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if there is a separate lock on the locker or other space. Such an inspection may occur whether or not the student is present.

**b. Network Rules for Students**

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive immoral messages or images of any nature, especially of a sexual nature, e.g. sexting, pornographic images, images from a cell phone of a sexually explicit nature, etc.
2. Using school computers, iPads or devices for non-approved purpose, e.g., playing computer games, sending inappropriate messages, etc.

**c. Substance Abuse**

Visitation Catholic School is committed to the prevention of substance abuse through the implementation of educational programs on drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse. The school will work with parents to provide assistance in referral of afflicted students to appropriate rehabilitation agencies or professional personnel. School administration may require a student to have a drug test for continued enrollment if substance abuse is suspected/confirmed.

A student will not be allowed to continue in Visitation Catholic School if the student or the student's parent(s) refuse to cooperate with either the school administration or the appropriate rehabilitation agency. Visitation Catholic School will strictly adhere to existing laws and assist law enforcement agencies where violations of civil laws are present or suspected.

**d. Academic Honesty**

It is expected that all Visitation Catholic School students will adhere to basic guidelines of academic honesty including, but not limited to:

- All work intended for individual effort should be individually produced.
- Loaning work for the purpose of “assisting” or “completing the last few problems” is cheating and is unacceptable.
- Obtaining information from another’s paper in a non-group project situation is cheating and is unacceptable.
- Failing to observe the established rules of a testing situation, in such a manner that would compromise the test results, is cheating and is unacceptable.
- Copying information from a text and/or an internet source, without indicating such, is plagiarizing and is unacceptable.

Any violation of this policy will be reported to the administration and will result in an automatic grade of zero on the assignment/test. Further consequences may be imposed depending on the circumstances.

**5. Retention of Students in a Grade**

Normally, students will progress successfully from one grade to the next. In certain circumstances, however, such progression is neither possible nor desirable. In those situations, a decision must be made whether the student should repeat a grade. There are a number of factors to consider when making the decision to retain a child. If the student appears to be failing to make normal progress, the parents are notified as early as possible in the school year so that parents and teachers may cooperate in helping the student achieve greater success.

Most retentions are considered at the early elementary levels. Older students may be considered for retention if it is strongly felt retention will help the student. Usually, no student is retained more than one year. Under normal circumstances, the following procedures will be employed with respect to retention decisions, the final responsibility of which will be the principal's:

- a. The student's teacher will discuss the possibility of retention with the principal as early in the school year as possible.
- b. Parents will be asked to attend a conference with the teacher and principal to discuss the situation. A specialized plan for that student will be developed at that time.
- c. Parents will be notified of a recommendation to retain their child by no later than the end of the third grading period.
- d. After final consultation with parents, teachers, and other academic staff, the principal will be responsible for the final decision regarding retention.

If a student is not progressing at a rate necessary for promotion to the following grade level, as determined by the principal, teacher and other academic staff, he/she may be required, as a condition of being promoted to the next grade level, to attend summer school. It is the

responsibility of the parents to register, assure completion of the summer school program and provide a certificate of completion to the principal by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **6. Counselor**

Visitation Catholic School offers the services of two part-time professional counselors whose schedules cover the full week. The primary role of a school counselor is to be available to any student for supportive counseling should a need arise during the school year. A referral may be made by a teacher, a parent, or the student if he/she feels the need to talk to someone. When a teacher refers a student to the counselor and ongoing counseling is recommended, the teacher will communicate with the parent about the need for the referral. If the counselor has questions or concerns, the counselor will contact the parents directly, otherwise the counselor and student will make arrangements for further sessions through the teacher. The counselor may meet with a student up to three times before notifying the parents. The counselor will consult with the principal and/or teachers as needed to provide the most effective treatment for the student; however, all information will be treated as confidential in accordance with the highest professional ethics. The counselor is available for consultation with teachers and parents as well. In some circumstances, the school may require professional counseling outside of Visitation Catholic School as a requirement for continued attendance.

All aspects of the school counseling program are based on Christian values and focus on encouraging good self-esteem, respect for oneself and others and a positive academic and social experience. Life skills to communicate and resolve conflicts in a positive way are a key focus. The counselor works with the students individually, in small groups or in the classroom as appropriate.

## **7. Extracurricular Activities**

The Visitation Catholic School offers students a variety of group and sports activities throughout the year.

### **a. Sports**

Because of the generosity of the Visitation Parish Community, students may participate in various athletic activities. (For a full list of school-sponsored sports, please see Appendix C.) Participation is encouraged by the school as long as it does not have an adverse effect on academic progress. Participation is subject to the guidelines stipulated in the school's Academic Extracurricular Eligibility Policy (See Appendix E). Coaches and teachers are aware and will follow the policy.

### **b. FIRE Ambassadors**

FIRE Ambassadors are students who work to promote inclusion. Ambassadors work with the FIRE Liaisons to plan FIRE activities and fundraising efforts for the FIRE Foundation.

### **c. After-School Clubs and Activities**

Visitation allows outside programs to host a variety of after-school activities including but not limited to Chess Club, Tippi Toes Dance, Bricks for Kidz, and Drama. Other groups are welcome to contact the school about bringing their program to Visitation.

## **9. After-Care and Before School Care**

After-Care is offered at Visitation Catholic School Monday through Friday immediately following dismissal at 3:25 pm and lasts until 6:00 pm. After-Care is not available on NO SCHOOL days or half days leading up to holidays. Participating children are cared for by trained and qualified staff. The

children are offered a place to do homework and enjoy a variety of games, crafts and activities, as well as wholesome snacks. Weather permitting; students are taken outside to play. Registration is required for the After-Care program.

Before-Care is offered at Visitation Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 7:50 am, at which time the students are dismissed to their homerooms. Participating children are cared for by trained and qualified staff. The children are offered a place to work on homework, a choice of a variety of activities and a breakfast snack. Registration is required for the Before-Care program.

A schedule of fees and program options are available by calling the Main School Office.

## **C. STANDARD RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **1. Attendance, Interruptions to the School Day and Tardiness**

These guidelines have been adopted for the students' protection, security and safety.

The doors to the school will open every morning at 7:50 a.m. The security and safety of students arriving before 7:50 a.m. is the responsibility of each parent. Dismissal at the end of each regular school day is at 3:25 p.m. It is the responsibility of each school parent to ensure that arrangements are made to have their children picked up at the school at the time of dismissal. After 3:35 p.m., any unsupervised students will be sent to after care and a fee will be charged. Only students who are enrolled in after care or are present for a school-sanctioned activity with proper adult supervision may be on the school premises after 3:35 p.m. Students are not allowed in classrooms or hallways to get forgotten books, backpacks, etc., after 3:45 p.m. The teacher must be in the classroom for the student to access his/her belongings.

#### **a. Absenteeism**

Although absences are unavoidable and understandable at times, it is important to be at school every day in order to allow for optimum learning. Daily attendance at school is an integral part of a student's academic and social growth and success. Excessive absenteeism (more than 10 days per semester or 20 days per year) will result in a conference with the Principal, parents and appropriate authorities to create an action plan for the student. Failure to complete/comply with the action plan may result in a family being asked to leave. Absences in excess of 10 days per semester are reportable to the Division of Family Services.

Parents should email their children's teachers or contact the school office at 816-531-6200 no later than 9:00 a.m. to report a student's absence from school. Parents should be aware of the need for their children to make up assignments not completed due to absences and ensure that the work is completed and turned in. As a normal rule, students will have the same number of days as they missed to make up their work. An assignment that was given prior to an absence and for which multiple days are given to complete must be handed in on the day the student returns to school. Due to the experiential and hands-on nature of the instruction in our classrooms, many learning activities cannot be made up. For this reason, families are discouraged from scheduling vacations during regular school days. Additionally, teachers should not be expected to provide students with assignments prior to an absence. Requests of this nature should not be made. Please check the school calendar and plan family vacations accordingly.

No child may leave the school premises without permission from the office. Parents must sign students out in the school office whenever they pick up their child before regular dismissal.

A parent, guardian or other authorized person who signs out a child assumes responsibility for the supervision of the child from that point forward, even while the child remains on the premises of the school. Once the child has been signed out, the school is not responsible for supervising the child.

**b. Interruptions**

Telephone messages will only be delivered to students in case of an emergency. The office phone is for school business and students may only use it in case of an emergency.

Any items (lunches, homework, backpacks, etc.) delivered to students are to be left in the front foyer on the "I forgot" shelf. These items must be marked with both the child's name and the homeroom teacher. Students are responsible to check the shelf. They will NOT be called to the office.

**c. Invitations/Classroom Parties/Personal Correspondence**

Children's birthdays are celebrated in different ways, depending on the grade level. If you wish to recognize your child's birthday at school, please send food in individual portions ready for distribution; please do not send drinks as part of the celebration.

Invitations for parties outside of school cannot be distributed in the classroom. It is difficult to invite an entire grade level to a celebration. The mailing of invitations ensures that no child feels excluded in our school environment. Personal correspondence, including party invitations and thank you notes to classmates, cannot be sent home via backpack mail.

**d. Tardy Policy**

Because of the disruptive nature of tardies, we ask that parents and students make a concerted effort to be on time. Any student who arrives after 8:00 a.m. must get a tardy slip from the office before proceeding to the classroom. These students will be counted as tardy. Students are expected to be in the classroom and prepared for instruction at 8:00 a.m. Students lingering in the hallways or stairwells will be counted as tardy after 8:00 a.m. Any parent of a student accumulating three tardies in a quarter will receive notification from the homeroom teacher.

After five tardies in a quarter, a letter will be sent home from the school administration requesting a plan of action. This plan must be reviewed by the principal for final approval. Failure to follow the plan will require a conference with the principal to discuss continued attendance at Visitation Catholic School.

**e. Classroom Instruction Time**

Research has shown that there is an important relationship between successful scholastic achievement and time devoted to instruction in the classroom. It is important that students be in the classroom in order to succeed. It with this understanding that Visitation Catholic School strongly recommends that when a sibling has a special event at the school (such as a play), the other siblings at Visitation Catholic School remain in their classrooms

for instruction during that special event.

## **2. School Closing**

### **a. Inclement Weather**

In the event of severe weather conditions during the school day, such as a thunderstorm or tornado warning, children will be kept in the school building since adequate protections and precautions are best afforded them there.

Information regarding school closings due to weather (snow days, ice storms, etc.) will be posted on the school website, recorded on the school answering machine, and will be communicated through our School Messenger. Additionally, closing information will be communicated to local TV stations. Visitation Catholic School is part of the Southwest pod (SWPOD) Catholic Schools. School closings due to inclement weather are decided collaboratively by the SWPOD principals and are made considering the safety of our students, faculty and staff.

When extremely cold temperatures are in the forecast, specific guidelines will be used to determine whether or not school will be in session. The school administration will check the Accuweather forecast at 7:00 p.m. for the following day. If the forecast for the following morning at 7:00 a.m. is predicted to be negative 10 (-10°F) or colder (regular air temperature not including the wind chill), school will be cancelled.

At times, it may be necessary to delay the start of school due to inclement weather. This option would be utilized if a delayed start would allow us to be in session and maintain instructional consistency while, at the same time, allowing a bad weather system to pass or streets to be cleared for safe travel. Normally, such a late start would have the school day beginning at 10:00 a.m. and ending at the regular time of 3:25.

Visitation School will not close for weather related reasons once classes have begun for the day, but parents/guardians are always welcome to pick up students if they so choose. Exceptions to this procedure will be handled by telephone calls to parents/ guardians rather than over the radio or television.

### **b. Emergency Closing**

In the event of an emergency that warrants an early dismissal, each student should know where to go if no one is at home. The school office should have this person's address on the Emergency Information Form, which all parents must fill out as part of the enrollment packet.

The School Messenger program allows the school to communicate quickly and efficiently with all school families at home, work or on a cell phone. This program will be used in the event of an emergency school closing and to communicate other pertinent information.

## **3. School Crisis Plan**

Visitation Catholic School has established a Crisis Response Team to plan strategies to handle various emergencies. A crisis plan is established to respond to multiple types of emergency situations. The plan is updated and filed annually with the Diocesan School office. A copy of the Crisis Response Plan is available in the school office for your information.

**4. Recess Policy**

Students will go outside for recess except in the event of extreme weather. Students are not allowed to play in the snow on school property at any time. These policies are to ensure the safety of all children at Visitation Catholic School. Please send your child prepared for outdoor recess (heavy coat, gloves, pants, leggings, or tights, hat or earmuffs) every day.

**5. Procedures for Drop-off and Pick-up**

To ensure the safety of the children during drop-off and pick-up, there are specific guidelines in place for the school and church parking lots. Please do not drop your child off in front of the school unless they have an injury or arrive at school after 8:15 am; additional traffic on Baltimore presents a safety concern for all children. (Please review the procedures located in Appendix G.)

**6. Vehicle Idling**

Vehicles parked in school parking lots or on streets adjacent to the Visitation Campus are expected to comply with the Kansas City Resolution No. 1000245 that declares Kansas City, Missouri a “No Idling Zone.” As per city resolution, vehicles should not remain idling for more than two minutes.

**7. Health Policy**

**a. Illness**

If there is evidence of illness, parents are requested to keep their child home. Children should return to school after an illness, prepared to meet classroom expectations, including outdoor recess. Children who have been sent home from school due to fever or an episode of vomiting must wait 24 hours before returning to school and should be free of any symptoms at that time. Children who have been absent due to whooping cough, measles, mumps, diphtheria, hepatitis or polio-myelitis are required to obtain a written release from their physician before readmission. For readmission guidelines concerning other communicable diseases, please contact the school nurse. (See Appendix H for more information.)

**Since March 2020, there have been special guidelines in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Procedures for students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be communicated separately since the guidelines may continue to change over time.**

**b. Injuries and Medication**

No school employee or parent volunteer may assume the responsibility for any emergency treatment beyond first aid. Neither the redressing of injuries nor the giving of any prescription drugs can be done by a school employee or parent volunteer unless ordered in writing for a specific child by a licensed physician or dentist. Non-prescription drugs such as Tylenol or cough drops may be dispensed to the student with written authorization by the parent, describing time and dosage. Prescription medication may only be given by school personnel on a written order from a licensed physician or dentist for the specific child. All medicines must be brought to the school Health Room with the referenced order. Students prescribed a “Gum Note” by their dentist or orthodontist may only chew gum in the Health Room during recess or lunch. Parents may, if they wish, come to school and administer medicine to their children in the Health Room.

**c. Parental Responsibilities**

Parents have the following basic responsibilities with respect to the health of their children:

- i. Children should have a medical examination both upon entrance to kindergarten and prior to sixth grade.
- ii. Children should have a dental examination when entering school for the first time.
- iii. Children should have a tuberculin test at approximately one year of age and again when entering first grade.
- iv. Students with certain communicable diseases (impetigo, ringworm, pink eye, head lice) must adhere to readmission policies set forth by the Missouri Department of Health. Please refer to Appendix H.
- v. Parents are to provide the school with up-to-date health records for their children, including the dates of vaccinations and immunizations, the presence of any physical problems, and the type and dosage of any medications taken on or during the school day.

**d. School Responsibilities**

The school has the following basic responsibilities with respect to the health of its students:

- i. Provide a Health Room.
- ii. Maintain an up-to-date health record on each child in the school office.
- iii. Notify parents when health records are not up-to-date.
- iv. Notify parents of serious injury.
- v. Provide visual screening for all students.
- vi. Refer students with suspected health problems to their parents for professional diagnosis and treatment.

**e. Suicide Training**

Since suicide is a leading cause of death in children and young people, many states, including Missouri, have enacted legislation requiring schools to provide training to educators and students about depression and suicide prevention. Visitation staff will provide information to 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Parents/ Guardians will be included in communication and follow up when the training is scheduled.

**8. School Uniforms**

Visitation Catholic School uniform regulations are consistently enforced throughout the school year. All students must be in complete uniform from the first day of school through the last day of school unless directed otherwise by a school official. Special non-uniform days will be announced. It is the responsibility of parents to see to it that their children are in compliance. Continued non-compliance with uniform policy will result in consequences. (See Appendix I)

If a student needs a modification of his/her uniform for a medical reason, he/she must receive approval from the school administration. A doctor's note may be required.

**9. Out-of-Uniform Days**

On the days that are designated "Out of Uniform," students may wear the following to school:

**Pants/shorts/skirts:**

- jeans and jean skirts
- khaki pants

- other dress pants or skirts
- yoga pants and leggings are allowed if the shirt is long enough to cover the student's behind.

Pants must be worn around the waist, not sagging.

Skirt length: Skirts must be no shorter than 3-4 inches above the knee.

**Short length: Shorts can only be worn if the out of uniform/dress down day, is between March 1 and October 31. Shorts must be no shorter than the bottom of the fingertips when arms are extended down full-length.**

**Shirts:**

- sweatshirts
- tee shirts
- blouses
- rugby shirts
- sweaters
- polos

**Shoes:**

- Shoes that meet the daily uniform dress code should be worn.
- Flats are allowed on out-of-uniform days only.
- Students must wear socks at all times with the exception of picture day.

All clothes worn on these days must be free of holes, tears, stains, or inappropriate wording. If in doubt about an article of clothing, please check beforehand with the school administration. These are special days, and we encourage students not to abuse this privilege.

**Spirit Dress-Down Days**

These days are scheduled and noted on the calendar. Uniforms do not need to be worn. Students may wear designated spirit attire, such as sweatshirts, sports jerseys or tee shirts with the Visitation Catholic School logo or name. Jeans, sweatpants or basketball shorts may also be worn. Shorts may be worn only during the time of year designated for uniform shorts. Lengths for shorts must follow the out-of-uniform guidelines stated above.

**10. Textbooks and Technology**

The textbooks and tech devices are the property of the school, and their use is included in the textbook/ instructional material fee. Children are expected to handle all books and devices with care and respect. Parents will be charged the full replacement value of books or technology that has been lost or damaged. Generally, technology devices do not go home. Use of backpacks or book bags is encouraged in transporting books to and from school. Rolling backpacks are not allowed in grades K-3.

**11. Lunch**

- Hot lunch is available on a pre-order basis. Orders are paid electronically or must arrive at school in a sealed envelope marked "Hot lunch".
- Milk can be purchased for the entire school year (only at the beginning of the year). Water bottles and/or refillable water containers may be brought from home.
- **Fast food lunches should not be provided for students. If parents need to send restaurant or fast food, please send it in brown paper or grocery bag or lunchbox.**

- **Bringing special lunches for small groups to eat in the cafeteria is not permitted.**
- Only the parent/guardian may visit during lunch and eat with their child. An exception will be made for younger non-school age siblings to join their Vis student for lunch.
- Caffeinated beverages (soda, pop, energy drinks, etc.) are not allowed during school lunch or snack periods.

## **12. Food Allergy Policy**

**In order to** create a safe environment for all children, we must recognize that some students have limitations in their diets and lifestyles due to allergies or other health-related concerns. In accordance with the Center for Disease Control guidelines, Visitation manages and maintains individual written accommodation plans for those students with special dietary and environmental needs. As needed, Visitation implements accommodations for children with these needs, such as an allergen-safe classrooms and protected areas in the cafeteria.

At the parent's request, a child at risk for anaphylaxis may have an individual written accommodation plan. This accommodation plan has two parts: 1) the accommodations or services needed for the child to be safely included in activities; and 2) the emergency care plan that explains how to treat allergic reactions for that child. If you have such a concern for your child, you should contact the nurse.

## **13. Checks/Cash Sent to School**

Whenever money is brought to school for payment of a fee, a specific activity, or for milk, please place it in a sealed envelope clearly marked with:

- student's name;
- homeroom number/teacher name;
- activity; and
- amount enclosed.

This envelope should be given to the homeroom teacher. Checks are the preferred method of payment. All checks should be made payable to "Visitation Catholic School."

## **D. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **1. Safety**

All visitors, including parents, volunteers, salespersons, etc. must check in at the office when entering the school and get an identification badge to wear while in the school building.

### **2. Visitors**

School parents and prospective parents are welcome to visit a classroom for a short period of time. Advance notice and approval by the individual teacher and principal are required. Prospective students may visit for a 1/2 day with the same stipulations. No drop-ins are permitted.

Other visitors under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or under the supervision of a teacher for the duration of their visit.

### 3. **Electronic Devices and Games**

Electronic games and toys may not be brought to school unless authorized by the administration in advance. Cell phones are permitted if needed for after school communication, but those must be left in backpacks and turned off for the entirety of the school day (8:00 am – 3:25 pm). **Smart watches are not allowed.** Any distracting or inappropriate items brought to school without authorization will be confiscated. All confiscated devices must be picked up by a parent. Additional consequences may be assigned depending on the frequency of the non-compliant behavior.

### 4. **Lost and Found**

The school is not responsible for lost articles. Please mark all items of clothing. A lost and found is kept in the school lobby, and any items not claimed in thirty days are given to a local charity.

### 5. **Asbestos**

Visitation Catholic School complies with federal and state regulations governing asbestos, asbestos removal, asbestos files, and public notification of the presence of asbestos in the building. Visitation School has been designated as “asbestos free.” Parents may arrange with the principal for a time to review the asbestos safety record.

### 6. **Alcohol Policy for Events**

Visitation Catholic School will follow the Alcohol Policy established by the Visitation Parish Council regarding the serving and/or consumption of alcohol at parish functions and at private functions hosted on parish property.

Alcoholic beverages may be served and consumed at functions and events conducted by adult organizations and intended for adults. **Alcoholic beverages may not be served or consumed at school functions and events with children present.** (Father/Daughter Dance, Trunk or Treat, TOPS, etc.) No alcoholic beverages will be served or consumed by persons under the age of 21. Everyone involved is expected to act responsibly in serving and/or consuming alcohol, and should take appropriate measures in the event of excessive use (e.g., using a designated driver).

### 7. **No Smoking Policy**

Visitation Catholic School is a smoke-free environment. Smoking or vaping is not allowed at any time.

### 8. **Visitation Catholic School Policy on Sexual Misconduct**

This policy is intended to state in general terms the concerns of Visitation Catholic School about sexual misconduct and to give guidance concerning the responsibility of parents, teachers and others to whose care students are entrusted.

The general rule is that any sexual misconduct or suspected misconduct must be reported to the school principal or to the pastor. "Sexual Misconduct" means any contact between an adult and child, or between two or more children, that has any sexual overtones or might be interpreted to have sexual overtones. It includes any touching or physical contact that is prohibited by law, but it may also include conduct such as obscene or pornographic behavior.

The law requires that every person report to law enforcement officials any suspected sexual abuse of a child whose care, custody or control is entrusted to that person. Diocesan policy provides:

"All persons associated with the diocese are expected to cooperate with the civil

authorities, comply with legally established reporting requirements and other-wise conduct themselves as good citizens. In addition, all diocesan clergy and all religious, employees and volunteers working for the diocese shall comply fully with the letter and spirit of this process. These personnel are expected promptly to report allegations of sexual misconduct by any diocesan personnel to the administrator of the response team."

This policy applies to all adults who interact in any way with Visitation Catholic School students, whether at school or during events/functions related to the school. This includes, but is not limited to, after school programs, study trips, sporting events, and dances.

If someone is reported to the principal or pastor as outlined above, the accusation shall remain absolutely confidential, except that the principal and pastor shall discuss the matter with the parents of the child affected. It shall be the duty of the principal and the pastor to help investigate the accusation.

It shall be the duty of the principal and pastor to report the incident to the law enforcement department if in their judgment such a report is required. It shall be the duty of the principal/pastor to comply fully with the diocesan rules.

Visitation Catholic School will report all misconduct to the Diocesan Ombudsman: Joe Crayon, 816-812-2500.

#### **9. Child Abuse and Neglect (Including Sexual Abuse)**

School officials including principals, teachers, and other personnel are required by Missouri law to report, or cause to be reported, any actual and/or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to the Division of Family Services.

Under Missouri law, child abuse is defined as any physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse inflicted on a child (a person under eighteen (18) years of age) other than by accidental means by those responsible for his/her care, custody and control (including a teacher), except that discipline, including spanking, administered in a reasonable manner is not considered to be child abuse under state law. Corporal punishment of any student by a diocesan or parish school teacher or administrative official, however, is strictly forbidden by DSB 340.5.

Under Missouri law, child neglect is defined as any failure to provide the proper and necessary support, education to the extent required by law, nutrition, medical, surgical or any other care necessary for a child's well-being.

School administrators will cooperate with investigations conducted by law enforcement personnel and/or the Children's Division of the Missouri Department of Social Services. If the Children's Division or law enforcement personnel seeks to interview a student on school premises, the school will attempt to contact a parent or guardian prior to the interview, except in situations where the parent or guardian is the subject of the investigation.

#### **10. Grievance Procedure**

In ordinary circumstances, the subject of the grievance should meet first, in person, with the aggrieved person or group. If this meeting fails to resolve the conflict, the next higher level of authority (i.e., teacher, principal, pastor) should meet personally with the aggrieved person or

group. If the local process fails to achieve agreement or satisfaction, the grievance should be referred to the Superintendent of Schools or the appropriate Associate Superintendent.

Local school advisory board members should not attempt to resolve grievances, but rather should refer the aggrieved person to the local process.

**11. Right to Amend**

The principal of Visitation Catholic School retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause at any time. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made. The school administration has the final say in policy issues. Any issues not addressed directly in this handbook will be decided upon by the school administration.

## **APPENDIX A: Enrichment Program**

The goal of the Enrichment Program is to provide high-quality, intellectually stimulating or just plain fun after-school options for the children of Visitation Catholic School. Students will have the opportunity to engage in challenging, collaborative activities which will serve as a natural extension of the powerful, differentiated learning they engage in during the school day. This program will evolve with the interests of students, teachers, parents and parishioners.

Registration is required for the enrichment program. Please contact the school office for a current enrichment brochure or for additional information.

## **APPENDIX B: Cultural Arts Program**

The Cultural Arts Program gives students the opportunity to attend or participate in a broad variety of cultural experiences during their years at Visitation Catholic School. Every effort is made to expose students to all the various arts and to avoid repetition from grade to grade. It is possible, however, that more than one grade will attend a certain program, if a unique opportunity presents itself in a given year. This program is completely underwritten through the PTO budget and does not require any additional funds from parents.

## **APPENDIX C: Visitation Catholic School-Sponsored Sports**

The following sports are sponsored by Visitation Catholic School, with participation in the Parochial League of Kansas City. Registration deadlines are typically communicated via email or newsletter to parents of students in the applicable grade levels. Please refer to the league website ([www.plkc.org](http://www.plkc.org)) for information regarding rules, eligibility, registration, and coaches' resources.

### ***Fall***

Volleyball- Girls 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
Cross Country – Boys/Girls 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
Flag Football- Boys 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> grade  
Intramural Tackle Football- Boys 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> grade  
Tackle Football- Boys 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

### ***Winter***

Basketball- Boys and Girls 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade

### ***Spring***

Track- Boys/Girls 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
Volleyball- Boys 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
Girls Flag Football is coming!

Though not sponsored or administered by Visitation Catholic School or VAC, many Visitation Catholic School students also participate as a group in organized team sports including baseball, basketball (in years prior to 4<sup>th</sup> grade), soccer, softball and others. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their peers and organize teams to register directly with the applicable league (e.g., Brookside Soccer, YMCA, etc.).

## **APPENDIX D: Visitation Catholic School-Sponsored Fundraisers**

Trash Bag Sale: August-September, pick up bags September-October

Book Fair: October

School Auction: November

Flower Sale: April

## **APPENDIX E: Extracurricular Academic Eligibility Policy**

Students of Visitation Catholic School must perform to their academic ability as determined by the teacher and administration. Academic eligibility is used to ensure that every student is working to his/her capability. Eligibility determination is a weekly check of academic performance and not an arbitrary disciplinary action. When poor academic performance is a result of extracurricular activities, the student's ineligibility will be considered.

Students in grades 5 – 8 are subject to specific eligibility guidelines that affect interscholastic competitions; the detailed rules are below. Here are the three main points of eligibility for everyone to remember:

- 1. Attendance**
- 2. Academics**
- 3. Christian Behavior**

### **Attendance**

A student must attend school on the day of the athletic or other contest or competition in order to be eligible to participate in any event, other than exceptional circumstances approved by an administrator. (PLKC Rules and Regulations, Article II, Section 8, p. 4)

This policy means that in order to participate in events/competitions on Saturdays, students must be in school on Friday.

### **Academics**

Academic eligibility guidelines ensure that every child is working to his/her ability during competitive sport/program seasons. The intent is to help students balance their time and talent in the classroom as well as on the court/field. Eligibility should be a tool that helps students learn to budget and use their time and talent constructively.

Eligibility determination is a weekly check of academic performance and not a cumulative record. The previous week's grades are not carried over for purposes of eligibility consideration. The determination is made one week at a time.

The minimum grade average in each class, for academic eligibility, should be a **C- (74%) or above** each week. If the weekly grade average for any class is **below a C-**, the student and his/her parents/guardians will be warned, but the student will not be deemed ineligible. **If the weekly average is below a C- in the same class for the second consecutive week, then the student is ineligible for that week.**

### **Christian Behavior**

Students must be good and respectful citizens, and good Christian behavior is expected at all times. An administrator will make this determination based on input from the faculty/staff. Unsportsmanlike conduct

may be grounds for deeming a student ineligible without prior warning. Coaches/Leaders normally will make this determination.

### **Procedures**

Weekly eligibility status affects games/events from Tuesday to Tuesday. An administrator will notify students and parents when there is a warning or a determination of ineligibility. The athletic director will notify the coaches of ineligibilities. Notification on Mondays will give coaches/leaders sufficient time to plan for the week's competitions/events.

An ineligible student may not attend/participate in practices or suit up for games.

### **Eligibility Process**

1. Extracurricular eligibility pertains to grades 5, 6, 7 and 8.
2. Teachers assign grades.
  - a. The first time a student earns below a C- (74%), he/she is warned and the parent is notified.
  - b. The second week in a row, the student is declared ineligible.
4. Teachers will turn in grades for the past week every Monday before 3:30 p.m.
5. The school office will process and notify the moderator/athletic director by Tuesday morning. Written notification is sent via backpack mail and by email to the parents on Tuesday. Eligibility runs from Tuesday to Tuesday.
6. Suspension from practices/games/events will begin at the time of notification and will be for a minimum of one week with further eligibility to be determined on a weekly basis.
7. An ineligible student may **attend** games/rehearsals/performances but may not play/participate. (In sporting events, the score table should be notified if a team player on the bench is ineligible before the game or match starts.)
8. If a student ineligible three times during the first semester, he/she is no longer eligible to participate in extracurricular activities for that semester. If a student is ineligible three times in the second semester, he/she is no longer eligible to participate in extracurricular activities for that semester.
9. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, approved by the principal, a student must attend a full day of school on the day of an extracurricular activity in order to participate in that activity.

Final authority and decisions regarding academic eligibility rest with the principal.

### **Consequences**

A Visitation Catholic School club/team will forfeit a contest/competition in which an ineligible student has participated. Each school moderator, athletic director, coach, or adult supervisor is responsible for reviewing/monitoring the eligibility of his/her own participants. All ineligible students and all adults who allow them to participate will be liable to suspension from involvement in extracurricular activities for one year. Consequences will be determined by the principal, subject to confirmation by the pastor.

## **APPENDIX F: Volunteer Policies**

### Volunteering as a Chaperone for Field/Study Trips

A minimum ratio of one (1) adult to ten (10) students is usually recommended at the elementary level for study trips, community service programs and other school-sponsored activities during the school day. Parents may be invited to assist in supervision or act as chaperones for such activities. All volunteers will be trained as to their proper role as volunteers or supervisors, and must be in compliance with the Policy of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry and the Critical Employment Policies of the diocese.

Adult chaperones may be used to supervise student activities. These adult volunteers should be reasonably prudent people who have been trained in the duties of their position. All volunteers must be in compliance with the Policy of Ethics and Integrity in Ministry and the Critical Employment Policies of the diocese.

Volunteer chaperones will be given a written description of their duties, school rules, and consequences for students breaking the rules. Chaperones must agree to enforce the rules. If for some reason a chaperone ignores the rules, that person would not be allowed to chaperone again.

### Using Volunteers or School Employees to Drive Personally-Owned Vehicles

Whenever possible, Visitation Catholic School will use bus or other commercial transportation by an insured carrier for off-campus school-sanctioned events. However, there may be circumstances for which the principal may determine that transportation in private passenger vehicles is appropriate. These circumstances could include the number of students involved in an activity, and/or the cost of commercial transportation.

If parent/adult volunteers or teachers/coaches/advisers are used as drivers of personally-owned passenger vehicles for study trips, class trips or extra-curricular activities, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Each occupant must have and use his or her own seat belt if the vehicle has seatbelts. Children must be restrained in an appropriate passenger restraint system as described.
- Drivers must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age, with no physical impairment that may affect the ability to drive safely. Drivers should be experienced and demonstrate the maturity necessary to provide for the safety of those whom they are transporting.
- Drivers must have a valid non-probationary driver's license. A copy of each driver's license should be kept on file with the principal.
- The vehicle must carry liability insurance with the minimum limits of \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per occurrence. The insurance carried on the personally-owned vehicle is the primary coverage while diocesan insurance provides or may provide secondary coverage. These coverages are stated on the declaration pages of the individual's insurance policy. A copy of the state insurance card for each driver should be kept on file with the principal.
- No one may ride in the bed of pick-up trucks.
- Drivers must be in compliance with the policy on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry and the Critical Employment Policies of the diocese.

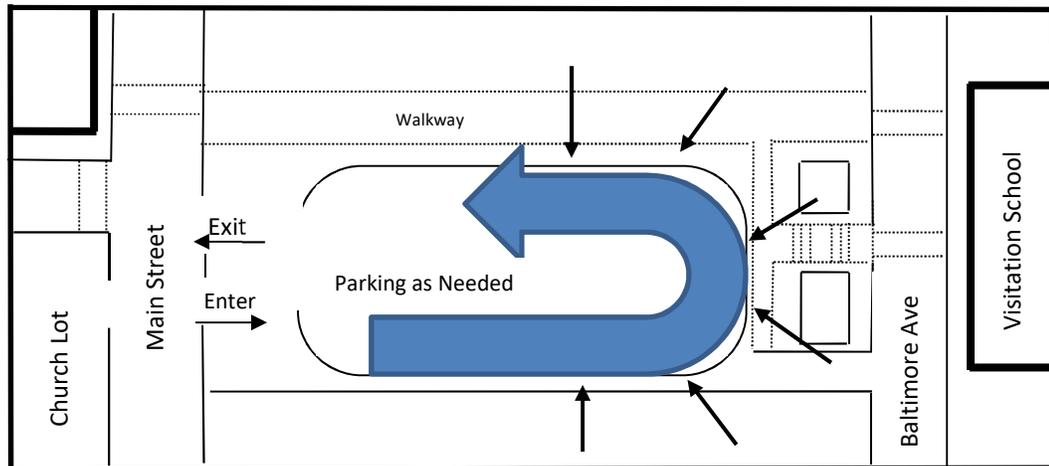
Drivers will be given a copy of these criteria. In the case of athletic events and other extracurricular activities, where the use of private passenger vehicles is likely, a general permission slip will be signed by parents/guardians in the beginning of the school year. Each driver and/or chaperone will be given a copy of the appropriate itinerary including the route(s) to be followed and a summary of his/her responsibilities.

## APPENDIX G:

### Parking Lot Procedures School Lot

#### Morning Drop-Off

Drivers should enter the School Lot from Main Street and follow a “U” shaped-pattern towards the southern exit. Please see diagram.



Let students out in the area marked by black arrows. The drop-off point begins on the south side of the lot. Please drive as far toward this point as traffic allows. (This will minimize traffic back-up on Main Street by allowing more cars to enter the lot.)

Please keep the following in mind to help our drop-off line move safely and efficiently:

- Students should exit from the passenger side only and walk directly to the sidewalk.
- Please do not drop children off until your car has reached the area next to the sidewalk.
- The drop-off lane is for students who are ready to exit the car promptly. When extra time is needed, please park in the center of the lot in order to keep the line moving efficiently.
- Parking for parents who need to enter the school building is also in the center of the lot.

Note: For the safety of crossing students, drop-off is not allowed on Baltimore.

#### Kindergarten Arrival Procedure

##### Arrival

The school doors open every morning at 7:50 a.m. and school begins at 8:00. Kindergarten students may be dropped off in the regular U-shaped drive. Mrs. Steffano and the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Safety Patrol will be stationed at the top of the playground steps to help kindergarten student(s) out of the car once your car is in 'Park'.

Hopefully, this process will make your children comfortable with being dropped-off. However, if at the beginning of the year you prefer to walk in with your child, please follow the traffic procedure into the parking lot, park your car in the center area and then walk with your child at the crosswalk.

### Afternoon Pick-Up

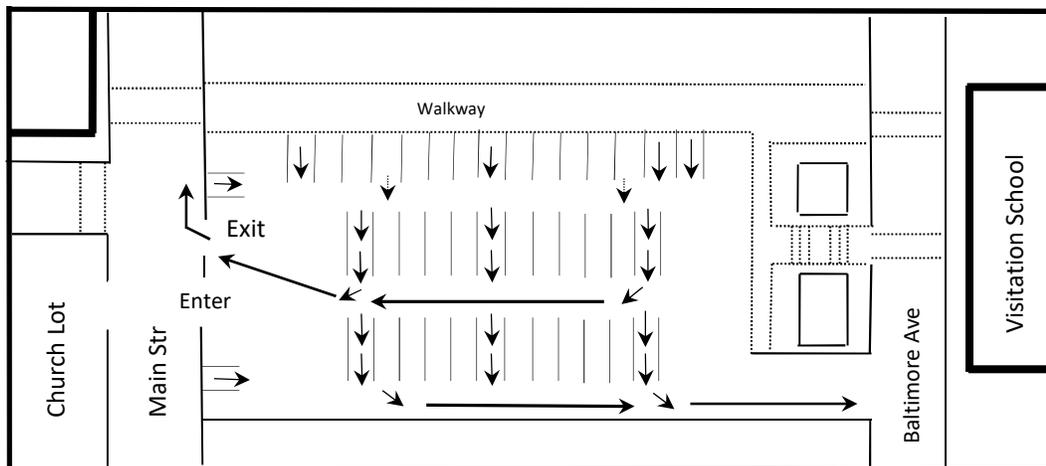
Drivers should enter the School Lot from Main Street. The parking lot will close at 3:18 before the first group of students is dismissed from school at 3:23. At this time red flags will be placed at the entrance. This signals that all cars should be in their spots so that no cars are moving while children are walking to their cars. If you are late, please find a spot on the street, but **DO NOT** block parking lot entrances.

Each car/carpool will be assigned a specific parking lot space for pick-up. The request form is online. Spaces are assigned before the start of the school year by random selection with priority given to families with children in the younger grades and carpoolers. Drivers with Kindergarteners will be assigned spaces in the School Lot. Older students' families will be assigned spaces in the Church Lot.

Please remember that the safety of our children is our primary goal. For their safety, and the safety of our drivers, remember the following procedures during pick-up:

- To ensure the safety of our students, it is imperative that cars do NOT back out of spaces when leaving the lot. Drivers parked along the perimeter must back into their spots upon arrival. Drivers assigned to the center rows (spots 28-70) "share" the spot directly north/south of their own assignment. The first driver of the pair to arrive should pull through so that all cars in the center face north.
- Turn off your car. Do not leave cars idling. Kansas City, MO is a "No Idling Zone." Vehicles parked in the Visitation Lots are expected to comply.
- PLEASE remain in your car! Students should get in the car as soon as they arrive.
- No car may move until a teacher opens the lot by removing the red flags and replacing them with green flags.

Once the lot is re-opened, the drivers leaving the School Lot will be divided into two groups - half will leave by Main Street (right turn only), and the other half will leave by Baltimore. Please see diagram below.



Cars should exit in single file with those closest to the exits going first. Cars in the lane on the north side of the parking lot (spaces 28 - 42 and 1 - 6) will all exit towards Baltimore. Cars in the center of the lot (spaces 56 - 70) and the south perimeter will all exit towards Main Street and turn right out of the parking lot. The center row will exit to Main Street first; cars parked on the south perimeter will wait until the center lane has emptied and then follow the same procedure to Main Street.

## **Kindergarten Pick-Up Procedure**

### **Departure**

School Dismisses at 3:25 p.m. Kindergarten teachers will walk their students out of the classrooms at 3:23. Walking families will meet teachers in front of the school building to pick up their children. Teachers will then cross Baltimore and take the rest of their students to the School Parking Lot where they will deliver each student to his or her driver.

All drivers picking up Kindergarten students should request a parking spot in the School Lot. (The request form will be available by email.) Parking spots will be assigned before the first day of school. Drivers are responsible to either be in their assigned parking spots or to meet the teachers in front of the school building to pick up their walkers.

## Parking Lot Pick-up Procedures Church Lot

The church lot will be used for overflow parking from the school lot. Since younger children will be assigned to the school lot in order to not have to cross Main Street, some families with older students will likely be assigned to the church lot.

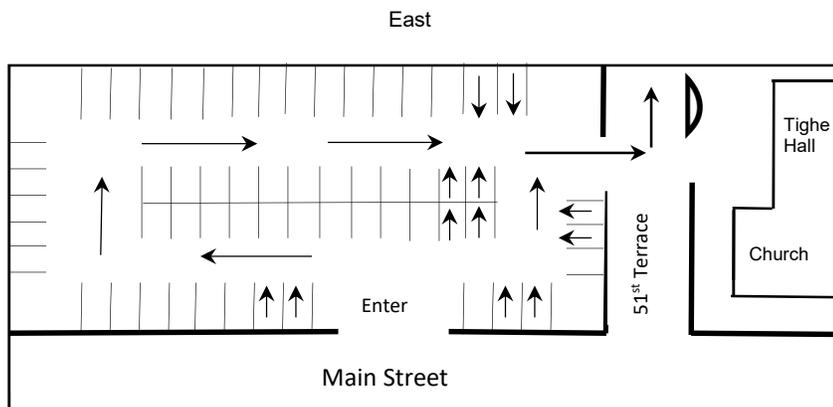
Drivers should be in their assigned parking spaces 5 - 10 minutes before school is dismissed. **At 3:18, the parking lots will be closed.** At this time, all cars should be in their spots so that no cars are moving while children are walking to their cars. All students should be dismissed by 3:25 pm.

No car should reverse from its spot to leave the lot. Drivers parked along the perimeter must back into their spots upon arrival. Drivers assigned to the center rows (spots 61-100) "share" the spot directly east/west of their own assignment. The first driver of the pair to arrive should pull through so that all cars in the center face east.

Remain next to or in your car. Please do not allow children to run around in the lot (this will delay the lot re-opening).

Turn off your car. Do not leave cars idling, especially with children inside. Children should not be left unattended in the car.

No car may move until a teacher opens the lot by removing the cones at the 51<sup>st</sup> Terrace exit.



All cars must exit onto 51st Terrace, **turning east (left) towards Brookside Blvd.** To avoid congestion and pedestrians on Main Street, cars from the Church Lot may not exit onto Main.

Cars should exit in single file, with those closest to 51st Terrace exiting first, alternating cars from the east perimeter and the center row. Cars parked along the west perimeter must first drive north (and then east and then south) around the center row, not cutting through the middle and not cutting ahead of the center row cars waiting to exit. Cars parked on the south perimeter, in the handicapped spots, will turn right and follow the procedures for the center row.

If you are short on time, please find a parking spot on the street and walk to your assigned spot to meet your child; then you are free to leave as soon as you have your child. Please do NOT park on the street blocking the parking lot entrances.

**APPENDIX H: Health Chart for School and Parents Cooperation**

<b>DISEASE</b>	<b>SIGNS/SYMPTOMS</b>	<b>HOW SPREAD</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
<b>CHICKEN POX</b>	Fever, malaise (tiredness), blister-like rash widely spread.	Contact with infected person or articles used by them.	7 days and until lesions are dried up.
<b>IMPETIGO</b>	Crusty lesions more on exposed parts of body. May drain. Often follows an insect bite or skin abrasion.	Contact with lesions or infected people and discharge from nose or throat; self-infectious.	Sores must be covered. Under doctor treatment 24 hours (doctor note requested).
<b>INFLUENZA</b>	Combination of headache, nausea, diarrhea, muscle ache, sometimes fever.	Contact with infected people or articles used by them.	Exclude for 3-5 days and fever has ceased for at least 24 hours.
<b>MEASLES "old fashioned"</b>	Resemble common cold. Runny nose and eyes, fever, cough. Rash appears in 3-4 days.	Virus found in secretion of nose & throat. Contact with infected people and articles used by them.	Exclude during cold symptoms and 8 days after rash is gone.
<b>MUMPS</b>	Slight fever, swelling at angle of jaw & front of ears.	Contact with infected people and articles used by them.	7 days and no swelling or tenderness.
<b>HEAD LICE</b>	Irritation and itching of scalp, presence of light gray insects & eggs in hair.	Contact with infected individuals: mainly head to head (close contact, sharing of head-related clothing/accessories.	Prescription applications and/or professional removal treatment. Must be free of live insects. Rechecks by school nurse will determine attendance
<b>PINK EYE</b>	Conjunctivitis of 1 or both eyes. Light sensitivity, itching, runny eyes, swollen lids, reddened rims, eventually yellow mucous drainage.	Contact with infected people or articles used by them.	24 hours after doctor-administered treatment.
<b>STREP THROAT</b>	Very red and sore throat.	Contact with nasal discharge.	24 hours after prescribed medication.
<b>RING WORM</b>	Flat red spot spread out like a circle. Seems to heal in the middle while area grows larger and flaky.	Contact with infected people or their clothing.	Under doctor treatment & note. Sores must be covered.
<b>SCABIES</b>	Itching, eruptions found in folds of skin, fronts of wrists, webs of fingers.	Contact with infected people or their clothing.	Under doctor treatment & note from doctor
<b>SCARLET FEVER</b>	Sudden onset, fever, nausea, pinpoint rash, sore throat with blisters on tonsils & back of throat.	Contact with nasal discharge, infected people & articles used by them	Exclude 7 days until fully recovered or after 72 hours doctor care.

### Visitation School Uniform Policy 2022-2023

It is the belief of Visitation school that the appearance and conduct of the students is part of the educational process. The uniform code is described below, and the students are required to follow it.

- *Uniforms will be checked daily by the faculty and the administration.*
- *Students who come to school without the appropriate uniform will be sent to the office and parents will be contacted.*
- *The Principal will be the final judge of proper attire and personal appearance.*

#### *General Guidelines*

<b>Boys</b>	<p>Hair must be neat, clean and well groomed. Hair length may not touch the shirt collar and must not be below the eyebrows. Only moderate styles are allowed. Artificial hair coloring is not acceptable.</p> <p>Boys must be clean-shaven.</p> <p>Jewelry should be limited to simple watches or necklaces. Smart watches are not permitted. Necklaces must remain under the uniform shirt.</p> <p>Earrings, gauges, or other piercings for boys are not allowed.</p> <p>Shoes for PE classes must tie or have Velcro closure – no slip-on shoes.</p>
<b>Girls</b>	<p>Only moderate hairstyles are permitted. Hair must be neat, clean and well groomed. Artificial hair coloring is not acceptable. Hair bows, headbands, and barrettes should be simple devices for securing the hair. Kerchiefs or scarves may not be worn as part of the uniform.</p> <p>Minimal makeup is permitted for Junior High girls. Makeup is not to be worn by girls in grades K – 6.</p> <p>Unpolished nails are preferred. If nails are polished, the color should be simple and not distract from the uniform.</p> <p>Jewelry should be limited to simple watches or necklaces. Smart watches are not permitted. Necklaces should remain under the uniform shirt. Earrings must be smaller than the earlobe. Dangling or hoop earrings are not permitted. Gauges or other piercings are not allowed.</p> <p>Shoes for PE classes must tie or have Velcro closure – no slip-on shoes.</p>

**Boys Uniforms**  
**Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

<b>Shirt</b>	<b>Pants</b>	<b>Socks &amp; Belts</b>	<b>Shoes</b>	<b>Sweatshirt/Sweater</b>
<p><b>White or forest green long or short sleeve polo shirt with Visitation Logo.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shirts must be tucked in</li> <li>▪ T-shirts worn under uniform shirts must be solid white</li> </ul>	<p><b>Navy blue uniform trousers or shorts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pleated and flat front trousers are allowed.</li> <li>▪ Trousers and shorts to be worn at the waistline</li> <li>▪ Shorts may be worn August – October 31 and March 1 – end of May.</li> <li>▪ Students in need of adult sizes must purchase navy school uniform trousers from Superior or Dennis Uniforms.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Solid white, navy blue, black, or gray socks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must be worn at all times</li> <li>▪ Must be visible</li> <li>▪ Vis logo socks acceptable</li> </ul> <p><b>Belts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brown or black leather or leather type</li> <li>▪ Simple buckle</li> <li>▪ Belts are optional in Kindergarten</li> </ul>	<p><b>Dress or athletic shoes</b></p> <p>Laced shoes must be tied</p> <p><b>Not Permitted</b></p> <p>Sandals, boots, open-toed or backless shoes</p> <p>Boots, necessary due to inclement weather, must be changed upon arrival at school.</p> <p>Shoes with lights or blinking devices are not permitted.</p>	<p><b>Navy or forest green crewneck sweatshirt</b> with Visitation logo.</p> <p><b>Navy or forest green V-neck sweater</b> with Visitation logo.</p> <p><b>Navy or Gray ¼ zip fleece or pullover fleece</b> with Visitation logo.</p> <p><b>Forest Green Performance ¼ zip sweatshirt</b> with Visitation logo</p> <p>Hooded sweatshirts may only be worn as outerwear and are not permitted in the classroom.</p> <p>Collared uniform shirts must be worn under sweatshirts and sweaters.</p> <p><b>Only eighth graders may wear their class Visitation sweatshirt in school.</b></p>

**Girls Uniforms**  
**Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

<b>Uniform</b>	<b>Shirt</b>	<b>Pants/Shorts</b>	<b>Socks, Belts Tights /Leggings</b>	<b>Shoes</b>	<b>Sweatshirt/Sweater</b>
<p><b>Kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Visitation plaid jumper</b> Must be hemmed no more than 3-4 inches above the knee</p> <p><b>Grades 4 to 8: Visitation plaid skirt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must be worn at waistline</li> <li>▪ Must be hemmed no more than 3-4 inches above the knee</li> <li>▪ Should not be rolled at waist</li> <li>▪ Students with two uniform demerits for skirt length will be asked to borrow or buy a regulation-length skirt from the office.</li> <li>▪ Students with three demerits will be asked to wear pants instead of a skirt until the problem can be resolved.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:</b> <b>With Jumper –</b> Short or long sleeve poplin blouse with rounded (Peter Pan) collar</p> <p><b>Kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: With Trousers and Shorts – and with skirts for Grades 4 to 8:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short or long-sleeved white blouse</li> <li>• White or forest green long or short-sleeved polo shirt with Visitation Logo</li> <li>▪ Shirts must be tucked in</li> <li>▪ T-shirts worn under uniform shirts must be solid white</li> </ul> <p><b>Navy skorts and navy skirts are not part of the Visitation uniform.</b></p>	<p><b>Navy blue uniform trousers or shorts.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shorts may be worn August – October 31 and March 1 – end of May.</li> <li>▪ Trousers and shorts to be worn at the waistline</li> </ul> <p><b>Not Permitted</b> Sweatpants or pajama pants worn under the uniform</p>	<p><b>Solid white, navy blue, black, or gray socks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Must be worn at all times</li> <li>▪ Must be visible</li> <li>▪ Vis logo socks acceptable</li> </ul> <p><b>Belts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brown or black leather or leather type</li> <li>▪ Simple buckle</li> <li>▪ Belts are optional in Kindergarten</li> </ul> <p><b>Solid white, black or navy blue tights or leggings.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No lace or ornamentation on leggings</li> <li>▪ Socks must be worn with leggings</li> <li>▪ Leggings must cover the full length of the leg, with lower edge covered by socks</li> </ul> <p><b>Tights or leggings MUST be worn from November 1<sup>st</sup> to the end of February.</b></p>	<p><b>Dress or athletic shoes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Laced shoes must be tied</li> </ul> <p><b>Not Permitted</b> Sandals, boots, open-toed or backless shoes, ballerina flats, and shoes with heels over ½ inch</p> <p>Boots, necessary due to inclement weather, must be changed upon arrival at school.</p> <p>Shoes with lights or blinking devices are not permitted.</p>	<p><b>Navy or forest green crewneck sweatshirt with Visitation logo</b></p> <p><b>Navy or forest green V-neck sweater/cardigan with Visitation logo</b></p> <p><b>Navy, Forest Green, or Gray ¼ zip fleece or pullover fleece with Visitation logo</b></p> <p><b>Forest Green ¼ zip Performance sweatshirt with Visitation logo</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collared uniform shirts must be worn under sweatshirts/sweaters.</li> <li>• Hooded sweatshirts may only be worn as outerwear and are not allowed in classrooms.</li> <li>• Visitation grey sweatshirts and hoodies may only be worn as outerwear and are not permitted in the classroom.</li> </ul> <p><b>Only members of the eighth-grade class may wear their class Visitation sweatshirt.</b></p>