

Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School

Student and Parent Handbook
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Mission Statement

Holy Family - St. Mary's School is committed to teach the gospel message and prepare students to be active Christians, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens in an ever-changing world.

*Adopted May 2018

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Introduction

Welcome to the Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School community. We are happy that you have chosen to invest in your child's academic and moral education by joining our school. As the Bible says, "Certainly our children are a gift from the Lord!" Psalm 127:3.

Here at Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School we are charged with teaching your children and nurturing them as they grow and develop into active Christians, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens.

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint parents and students with the rules and procedures of Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School. Our hope is that this handbook will help new families adjust to our school community and will serve as a guide as students journey through their school career at Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School.

Our Catholic school is a learning community built upon the cooperation of committed educators, staff members, clergy, and parents to provide a quality Catholic education.

Being a part of this school community comes with expectations and demands of all members: students, parents, educators, staff, and clergy. As a member of the Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School community, students and parents are expected to follow the rules and guidelines outlined in this handbook. These rules have been established to help ensure that students are provided with a warm and safe learning environment that fosters academic, spiritual, and social growth.

We expect students to share in creating a healthy, moral atmosphere by living by those Christian values they have been taught at home, at church, and in school.

Our 3 basic rules are:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe

See Code of Conduct on page 6 for further information.

Philosophy

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School strives to educate the whole child in mind, body, and spirit as we incorporate the gospel message into all aspects of the school environment. We recognize that parents are our educational partners. They are very much a part of our school community and we work together to create a positive, supportive and respectful home and school relationship. We strive to provide a loving and caring atmosphere where students develop confidence, self-respect, and responsibility for their actions.

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School works to meet the individual needs of students as we pursue academic excellence, an appreciation of global concerns, and moral development according to Catholic tradition.

Mission Statement

Holy Family-St. Mary's School is committed to teach the gospel message and prepare students to be active Christians, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens in an ever-changing world.

Vision

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School will prepare the heart, soul and mind of future generations to radiate the light of Christ. We will be a high performing school that provides the skills, knowledge, and readiness necessary for lifelong learning. Our students will be known as leaders and contributors to local and global challenges.

History of Holy Family- St. Mary's School

Holy Family Catholic School was established in 1961 as an extension of Holy Family Catholic Church. The school opened in September 1962. Two hundred seventy-five students in second through eighth grades were taught by the Sisters of Saint Francis from Hankinson, ND and two laywomen, who ran and lived at the school. As the years passed, Kindergarten and first grade classes were added and sixth through eighth grades were moved to middle schools.

St. Mary's Catholic School opened in February 1929 as an extension of St. Mary's Catholic Church and served the Grand Forks community for 75 years. The Saint Joseph nuns served St. Mary's School when the school opened. Over the years there were 70 nuns who taught and 16 Saint Joseph's principals.

In 2005, Holy Family Catholic School and St. Mary's Catholic School merged to become Holy Family - St. Mary's School. When the former St. Mary's Saints joined the Holy Family Cardinals,

the halo was added to the cardinal mascot to represent the joining of the two schools. The former St. Mary's School building now houses St. Mary's Early Childhood Center.

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic school continues to operate as an active extension of Holy Family and St. Mary's Catholic Churches.

Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School works hard to foster and promote our student's Christian faith. Values and moral principles are taught throughout the day by compassionate teachers who are committed to high academic standards.

School Traditions

- School Wide Morning Prayer
- Student Led Weekly Masses on Wednesdays
- All School Rosary
- All School Adoration
- Reconciliation Services
- Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent
- Lenten Retreat Day
- Catholic Schools Week
- Christmas Music Program
- Spring Music Program
- Advent Service Projects

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct Philosophy

In the spirit of the Catholic Faith, Holy Family - St. Mary's School Code of Conduct informs students and parents of the basic expectations of a student.

Preface

The intention of this code of conduct is to assist the students to be "Disciples of Christ" by conforming their thoughts, words, and action to the mind and by following His example. It is meant to ensure a safe, healthy, and moral environment for our youth in our school setting. This code is a reminder that we are all created with dignity in the image and likeness of God. This code reminds us to be active Christians, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens.

Respect for God, others, property, and myself

- I will speak with a calm voice
- I will speak kind words
- I will follow expectations throughout the school and church
- I will follow the example of Jesus: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34
- I will show respect for God with my words and actions during prayerful times

Responsibility toward God, others, property, and myself

- I will be accountable for my actions
- I will complete assigned tasks and participate in class
- I will take action to fix situations when needed
- I will take care of my materials and our school

Safety for all in our community

- I will walk in the school
- I will keep my hands and feet to myself
- I will do no harm to others
- I will use materials as they are intended to be used

The school will work cooperatively with parents/guardians and students to assist students in meeting the academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school on or off campus. There may be action taken when this code of conduct is not followed. The possible actions are stated in our school behavior expectations and discipline policy, which can be found in our student handbook.

Parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school's operations and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, rumor-driven, threatening, or contrary to Catholic principles. In the event that parents/guardians have concerns about the school operation and its personnel, it is important that the appropriate chain of command be recognized and followed. The appropriate steps should include:

- Start by visiting with the appropriate classroom teacher or staff member.
- Visit the Principal if the situation is not resolved.
- Visit the Pastor if the situation is not resolved.

The code of conduct above is for your reference. When you enroll your child for school, you agree to this policy by checking the agreement box.

Administrative Interpretation of Policies

The administration of Holy Family - St. Mary's School reserves the right to interpret rules and policies of this handbook as individual situations and needs arise. Such interpretations will be made on the basis of the following principles: all questionable and enabling behavior must be addressed and confronted for the good of the individual; when there is a conflict of interests, the

common good shall prevail. Additionally, from time to time, circumstances arise in which current policies and practices need modification or in which no policy or practice exists. In these cases, the spirit of a Catholic school guides us to ensure the dignity of each student.

Admissions

Admission Policy

Admission to Holy Family - St. Mary's School is available to all students in preschool through fifth grade, regardless of race, sex, or religion. All students are subject to a 3-month probationary period beginning the first day of the school year prior to full acceptance. If, in that time, a student is prevented from joining fully in the community of faith and learning due to intellectual, behavioral, or attitudinal characteristics, HFSM will open a dialogue with the family for a plan of action to move forward.

Admission Criteria

When classrooms are at full capacity, a waitlist is created. If an opening becomes available, new students are admitted based on the following criteria:

1. Date of completion of registration;
2. Children of Holy Family - St. Mary's school/parish staff;
3. Siblings of parishioners of Holy Family or St. Mary's already enrolled in our school;
4. Siblings of non-parishioners already enrolled in our school;
5. Parishioners of Holy Family or St. Mary's not already enrolled;
6. Children of Holy Family - St. Mary's School graduates;
7. Non-parishioners not already enrolled

Students who have been expelled, suspended, or are on probation from another school may be admitted upon careful review of the individual case. Children with special needs may be admitted on consideration that they may benefit from a Catholic school environment and that there will be no detriment to the other students' progress. We collaborate with the Grand Forks Public School Special Education Department. The services they provide to our school are limited. We may not be able to provide all the resources needed for students with special needs. If there are questions or concerns about the ability of Holy Family - St. Mary's School to meet the needs of any student, additional information and/or a trial period may be established. Holy Family - St. Mary's School administration reserves the right to suggest alternate placement, to deny admittance, or expel a student admitted for a trial period.

All children between their 7th and 16th birthdays are required by North Dakota state law to attend school every day their school is in session. Illness and certain other physical incapacities are

exceptions to these requirements. *Minimum attendance for promotion is 160 days.* Children should be encouraged to attend school every day. **Children who have reached their fifth birthday on or before July 31 are eligible to enter kindergarten.** Kindergarten is a full day. The following information is required from kindergarten families at the time of registration: child's birth certificate, baptismal certificate, and required immunization records.

Eligibility

Students must be four years old before August first to be eligible for our preschool program. Students must be five years old before August first to be eligible for our kindergarten program. HFSM School and Kids Clubhouse accept children enrolled in our preschool through fifth grade, ages four through twelve. We do not deny enrollment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. Exceptions can be made for the age deadline in preschool, if spots are available.

Pre-admission visits must be provided to parents to discuss and view facilities, programs and policies. Parents are provided written notice of any significant changes in program services or policies.

The following forms are required to be completed prior to attendance. The forms will be updated annually.

- Immunization records(SFN or doctor's records)
- Registration/child information form (SFN) Verification identification of children in care—birth certificate, certified school records, passport or other documentary evidence.
- Health records (SFN) must be completed annually
- Parent consent forms
- Food program form Release of information form must be available and signed prior to the release of information.
- Enrollment form

All records are confidential. If information needs to be updated at any other point, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the director in writing.

Immunization Law

The 1979 legislative amendment *Section 23-07-17.1 NDCC*, the School Immunization Law. Under the new law, no child will be admitted to kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, or senior high school in the public or non-public schools unless he/she has a Certificate of Immunization on the file at the school or one is submitted prior to admission. The law requires

that the certificate must be signed by a physician or local health department representative and be presented to the school officials by the parent/guardian.

The Certificate of Immunization states that the child has been vaccinated against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, rubella, mumps, and polio. The law does allow exemptions for medical and religious reasons.

Immunization

All students must comply with the North Dakota State requirements for immunization. At the time of the student's initial entry into school, parent/guardian must submit one of the following:

- Written proof from a licensed physician or health department stating that the child has had adequate protection against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella and hepatitis B.
- A certificate from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of the child is such that immunizations would endanger the life of the child.
- Signed statement from their parent/guardian indicating they refuse immunizations.

If there comes a time when there is danger from an epidemic of any communicable disease for which immunization is required, those children who have not been adequately immunized, including those who are exempt, will be excluded from school until the danger of the epidemic is over.

You may contact the city health nurse or your family doctor for additional consultation.

Early Entrance and Grade Acceleration

If there is a parent wishing to enroll a child that does not meet the state age requirement, they must go through the Grand Forks Public School's (GFPS) process as stated below. The interview part of this process will be done with the principal of HFSM. The principal will send the checklist and payment to GFPS and they will set up the screening. Screenings are done in August before the start of the school year. The decision will be made based on the results of the screening and following the Grand Forks Public School's guidelines.

If a parent wishes for their child to accelerate one grade level, they must follow the procedures listed below. The decision will be made by the school on an individual student basis.

Grand Forks Public Schools Early Entrance Procedure:

Entrance Age

Law sets the age at which a child may be enrolled in school. The law reads as follows:

15.1-06-01. Schools free and accessible - School ages.

1. Each public school must be free, open, and accessible at all times to any child provided:

- a. The child may not enroll in grade one unless the child reaches the age of six before August first of the year of enrollment;
 - b. The child may not enroll in kindergarten unless the child reaches the age of five before August first of the year of enrollment; and
 - c. The child has not reached the age of twenty-one before August first of the year of enrollment.
2. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a school district may not enroll in grade one a child who is not six years old before August first, unless the child will be six years old before December first and:
 - a. The child, by means of developmental and readiness screening instruments approved by the superintendent of public instruction and administered by the school district, can demonstrate academic, social, and emotional readiness; or
 - b. The child has completed an approved kindergarten program.
3. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a school district may not enroll in kindergarten a child who is not five years old before August first unless the child will be five years old before December first and the child, by means of developmental and readiness screening instruments approved by the superintendent of public instruction and administered by the school district, can demonstrate superior academic talents or abilities and social and emotional readiness.
4. The requirements of this section are not applicable to the children of military families, to the extent that the requirements conflict with enrollment provisions otherwise agreed to by the state in the compact on educational opportunity for military children.

Early Entrance

Students who meet the age requirement (NDCC 15.1-06-01) and in addition successfully pass the early entrance evaluation system described below will be entered early if a parent so chooses.

The procedure for early identification for kindergarten in the Grand Forks School District is as follows:

1. Make an appointment with the principal of your neighborhood school to discuss your request. The principal will have you fill out an application, complete a parent checklist and will explain the process to you. You will need to pay a \$25 fee at this time to cover the cost of the evaluation. If you cannot afford this fee, ask the principal about the school's policy to have the fee reduced or waived.
2. You will be notified from the Assistant Superintendent's office when and where the Early Entrance Pre-Screen will be held. At the pre-screen, a team of professionals will screen your child's ability and readiness for school. The evaluation team may consist of a school psychologist, an elementary principal, a special services coordinator, a kindergarten teacher, a first grade teacher, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a speech therapist, a vision specialist and an audiologist.

3. Your child will be screened in the areas of ability, expressive/ receptive language skills, vision, hearing, motor skills, and social/emotional development.
4. Following the pre-screening, a post evaluation conference will be held with parents, a teacher, and a special education staff member. Parents will receive a written copy of the results.
5. Children **who do not pass** the cognitive ability screener with a score of at least 128 **will not be eligible for early entrance.**
6. Children who achieve a score of at least 128 or above on the cognitive ability screener, will **then be eligible to complete a comprehensive cognitive ability test.** There will be an additional fee of \$25 for those students who take this assessment. The Assistant Superintendent's office will notify you when and where the test will be held.
7. Children who score at least 128 on the full battery assessment are then eligible for a 4-week probation enrollment in kindergarten.

Following this time period a conference will be held if necessary with the parents to determine if the early entrance decision has been made in the best interest of the student. The classroom teacher, building principal, and/or parent can request the conference.

Grade Acceleration Administrative Procedure and Criteria

Holy Family - St. Mary's Elementary School will allow grade acceleration providing that the following process and criteria is met:

1. The parent initiates the request with the principal by April 1, at which time they will receive a Grade Acceleration Application form.
2. Parents will submit the completed Grade Acceleration Application along with an initial nonrefundable fee of \$50 by April 15. Parents are also asked to attach supporting documents that will aid in the evaluation process such as IQ testing, assessments, teacher recommendation, or enrichment activities..
3. The elementary school principal will arrange a meeting with himself/herself, the parent(s), and the student's applicable teacher(s).The purpose of the meeting will be to gather data regarding the student's current achievement and abilities as stated in the acceleration criteria listed below. It may be necessary to request further testing in order to make a decision. The parent is responsible for any additional costs incurred in this process.
4. After all the necessary data has been collected the Acceleration Committee (principal, psychologist/counselor, and appointed educators) will meet to determine the collective findings and to make a decision regarding the request for grade acceleration.
5. The following will be factors involved in the determination:
 - a. A comprehensive psychological evaluation of the child's intellectual functioning,

academic skill levels, and social-emotional adjustments is given by a psychologist (appointed and/or approved by the school).

- b. The child should have an IQ of 128 or a level of mental development above the mean for the grade he or she desires to enter. The child scores in the 96% percentile or two or more years above grade level in both reading and mathematics.
 - c. The child will complete the *Iowa Accelerated Scale* assessment. . Data of previous class performance indicates high performance levels.
 - d. Maturity evidenced by ability for independent work. Commitment of parent, student, and involved stakeholders is present. Other factors would be the student's birth date, extracurricular activities, and student composition and size of the potential class.
6. The principal will provide a written statement to the parents of the committee's decision. The determination of the Acceleration Committee and principal will be final.
 7. If the student meets the criteria set by Holy Family - St. Mary's Elementary School, it will be necessary for the student to complete a six week trial enrollment period to demonstrate identified grade level competencies.
 8. This process will be considered only for families who desire a Catholic School education at Holy Family - St. Mary's Elementary School for the long term and not as a means to admission to another school after one year.

Changes in Enrollment

A written notice is required for withdrawal from HFSM School a month prior to withdrawal. You will be responsible for tuition fees and any other charges a month after the written notice is received.

A written notice is required for withdrawal from the Kids Clubhouse program if withdrawal is needed.

Waiting List

When our program reaches full capacity, we will begin a waiting list. The waiting list requires a name of child, name of parent, phone number, child's DOB, email address. The registration form is required and the registration fee is to be paid within the week of notification of an open spot for your child.

Parent cooperation

School is a partnership between school staff & parents. If in the eyes of administration that relationship is broken, a student may be asked to withdraw with consideration of reimbursement.

Financials

Financial Obligations & Agreement

In order to maintain the quality of instruction and curriculum materials at Holy Family-St. Mary's School, parents are to be actively involved in the financial commitment made to the school. A tuition program, with a minimum fee for students and families, must be met. We use FACTS Tuition Management, which you are required to set up for all payments of tuition and fees. Please use the FACTS link on our school website to access your Family Portal for information and your account. Previous tuition and fees must be made prior to enrolling students for the upcoming school year. The School Board will set an initial cost of tuition and fees prior to the first day of school. In addition, there are fees for services such as hot lunch, band, etc.

Scholarships/Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available for elementary students, if needed. Holy Family - St. Mary's School will not provide tuition assistance for children in grades K-5 from families who are registered parishioners of St. Michael's Church in Grand Forks or Sacred Heart Church in East Grand Forks. If a unique situation arises, the pastors of each parish reserve the right to collaborate and make special arrangements for a family at any time as long as they work collaboratively with one another and with agreement on the special arrangement. FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment will be conducting the financial need analysis for Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School. Families applying for financial aid will need to complete an application and submit the necessary supporting documentation to FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment. Applicants can apply online by clicking the FACTS link on our school website. You will be notified by the business office with the amount of assistance you will receive. Each family will sign an agreement stating the amount they will pay for tuition and fees each year.

Elementary school is charged at a yearly rate. There are separate rates for parishioners and non parishioners. Preschool is billed at a yearly rate. There are different payment options available to choose from when setting up your payment plan.

Insufficient Funds

Insufficient payments are subject to all FACTS fees

If a Clubhouse payment is not made, your children will not be able to attend the Clubhouse program until it is paid in full or a payment plan is worked out with the business manager.

WeCARE

WeCARE (Christians Advancing Religious Education) was established in 1973 by a group of individuals committed to ensuring the growth and ongoing success of Holy Family Catholic School. When WeCARE was incorporated, the purpose was educational in nature – to aid in the furtherance of educational studies, work, living, and extracurricular activities.

At inception, all gifts made to WeCARE were allocated between funds available for disbursement the following year and an endowment from which interest could be directed back to the school for identified needs each year.

On December 31, 2016 WeCARE was merged into the Catholic Development Foundation with the Diocese of Fargo. Distributions are made from the fund quarterly. Use of the distributed funds is overseen by a WeCARE Advisory Board in conjunction with school staff. A prioritized needs and wish list is requested from school staff. The WeCARE Advisory Board is strongly committed to honoring the original intentions of WeCARE when administering fund disbursement.

Today as at inception, donations are at the heart of the success of the endowment fund and are always welcomed and appreciated. Many donations now come from parents and grandparents of former students. Some were HFCSM students themselves! We ask you to keep WeCARE in mind for future donations and memorials. Anyone interested in learning more or becoming an active member of the advisory board is encouraged to contact the school principal who can provide contact information for current board members.

FUTURE

St. Mary's Friends United Toward Urban Religious Education (FUTURE) was incorporated in 1977 as a non-profit organization dedicated to providing extra support to St. Mary's Parish in order to educate the children of the Parish in our Catholic Faith. The mission of FUTURE to support our children's education in their Faith is reflected in its Vision: "St. Mary's knows children are the world's most valuable resource and best hope for the FUTURE".

Anyone may become a lifetime member of FUTURE by making a total donation of \$500.00. This donation may be made in full, or through \$100 payments over a 5-year period. Once the initial donation is made, the individual or family will have full membership in FUTURE and this membership will continue as long as the annual payments are made until the \$500 goal is attained.

FUTURE invests the funds derived from membership fees and other donations. Earnings from these investments provide for an annual donation to St. Mary's Parish for use in supporting Holy Family-St. Mary's School and the parish religious education program. Currently, FUTURE also provides an annual tuition scholarship for St. Mary's Parish children attending an area Catholic school and whose parents are also members of FUTURE and request the scholarship.

FUTURE is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. It is governed by a Board of Directors who are selected by the membership and whose role and powers are established through approved Bylaws. For more information, contact the St. Mary's Parish office at 701-775-9318.

Attendance

Hours of Operation

Our preschool calendar and hours follow our elementary school calendar. School starts at 8:15 am and ends at 3:00 pm. The Kids Clubhouse child care program will be closed when there is no school scheduled or canceled due to weather.

The school office is open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 pm.

Arrival and Dismissal

The school day runs from 8:15 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

The tardy bell rings at 8:20 a.m. Students who arrive after the **8:20 a.m. bell are considered tardy and need to sign in at the school office with a parent** before going to their classrooms.

Upon 3:00 p.m. dismissal, due to safety issues, it is important that your **child is picked up from school promptly or is enrolled into Kids Clubhouse.**

If a child has not arrived at school by 8:45 or been picked up by 3:10, the school office will contact parents.

Supervision Before and After School

The school does not provide supervision in the school hallways, classrooms, or on the playground prior to 8:00 a.m. or after 3:10 p.m., unless students are enrolled in Kids Clubhouse.

Students who are not enrolled in Kids Clubhouse should not arrive before 8:00 a.m. unless arrangements have been made through the school office or Kids Clubhouse.

All students that arrive between 8:00-8:15 must go to the Clubhouse room for supervision (free of charge) until the bell rings at 8:15 to enter their classroom.

Students who have not been picked up by 3:10 will be sent to clubhouse and parents will be contacted.

If a child is not in Kids Clubhouse, and wants to play on the school grounds they must be supervised by their parent/babysitter. Students may not play in the school hallways before or after school.

Before and After School Care

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School offers an on-site before and after school childcare program called Kids Clubhouse. Supervision will be provided for all children free of charge from 8:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. each morning before school in the Clubhouse room.

Kids Clubhouse provides before school care from 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. and after school care from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Failure to pick up students by 5:30 will result in additional charges. Students must be signed in and out of Clubhouse by the adult with them, when being dropped off and picked up. If students are not signed out in the system at the end of the day, staff members will sign them out at 5:30 and charges will be applied accordingly.

Kids Clubhouse is open when school is in session. Kids Clubhouse is not open during Christmas or summer vacations. If school is closed due to inclement weather, Kids Clubhouse is also closed. There will be no morning Kids Clubhouse if school begins late due to weather, and no after school Kids Clubhouse if school is dismissed early due to weather.

Please contact the office for current fees and the link to register your child.

Absences and Tardies

Absence and tardiness hinder the progress of your child. Children need to be in school on time every day. **In the event your child is unable to attend school due to illness or because of an appointment, please contact the school before 8:15 a.m. of that school day. If a child will be**

absent due to a sporting event or vacation, contact the school office and teacher 1 week in advance. The school office will contact families who have not called when their child/children is not/are not in attendance. **The number to the school is 701-775-9886.**

Attendance FACTS

Attendance will be taken each morning in FACTS. Students will be marked:

- **Present** - Student is in the classroom and ready to learn by 8:20
- **Tardy Excused** - Student is late due to an appointment and a parent notified the office prior to 8:15
- **Tardy Unexcused** - Student arrives in the classroom after 8:20 or a parent did not notify the office that the student was going to be late
- **Absent Excused** - Student is not in school due to illness, appointment, or bereavement and a parent notified the office prior to 8:15
- **Absent Unexcused** - Student is not in school due to a sporting event or vacation; or is not in attendance and a parent did not notify the office that the student was going to be absent
- **Half Day Excused:** Student arrives after 10:30 a.m. or leaves before 1 p.m. due to illness, appointment, or bereavement and a parent notified the office prior to 8:15
- **Half Day Unexcused:** Student arrives after 10:30 a.m. or leaves before 1 p.m. due to a sporting event or vacation; or is not in attendance and a parent did not notify the office that the student was going to be absent

Illness

In the event that your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please contact the school office by 8:15 a.m. on that school day.

In the event of a long-term illness, students should see their family doctor prior to returning to school.

Children who have been diagnosed with a contagious illness (COVID-19, strep throat, impetigo, pink eye, etc.) should be on prescribed treatments for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school and follow all up to date protocol.

Children who have had a fever (a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher) must be fever free for **24 hours without fever reducing medication** prior to returning to school.

If your child is exhibiting symptoms of illness, please keep them home and notify the school office. If your child is being tested for any contagious illness, they must remain home until the results are back. If the test is positive, they will remain home until cleared by a doctor to return to school.

Children who have been vomiting must be able to keep food and liquids down for **24 hours** prior to returning to school without medication.

These guidelines ensure that our school population can keep well and healthy and stop these illnesses from spreading rapidly.

If your child becomes ill at school and it becomes necessary for them to go home for the duration of the day (a fever over 100.4 degrees, vomiting, etc.), the office will contact parents via home, business, or emergency contact numbers on file in order for arrangements to be made.

Homework for absent students may be requested and can be picked up after 3 p.m. or at a time coordinated with the classroom teacher.

Planned Absences/Vacations

If a student will be absent due to a planned vacation or sporting event, the school office and classroom teacher must be informed one week in advance. This allows the teacher adequate time to prepare make-up work for the student.

Interventions for Accumulated Absences and Tardies

Excessive absences/tardies, even with parent/caregiver approval, that interfere with a student's education may be interpreted as educational neglect under North Dakota Century Code Chapter (NDCC) 15.1-20-01: "Compulsory attendance" directs that the caregiver(s) for a child "between the ages of seven and 16 years shall ensure that the child is in attendance at a public school for the duration of each school year".

The following will be used as a guide for compliance with NDCC 15.1-20-01:

- **5 days:** If a student has 5 days of unexcused absences or has unexcused tardies on 5 days of school an email will be sent to the student's parent/guardian expressing the attendance concern.
- **10 days:** If a student has 10 days of unexcused absences or 10 days of unexcused tardies, an email will be sent to the student's parent/guardian informing them that school administration will be contacting them for an in-person meeting to discuss a plan to improve attendance
- **20 days or more:** If a student has 20 days of unexcused absences or more, an email will be sent to the student's parent/guardian informing them that school administration will be contacting them for an in-person meeting to revise the attendance plan. Outside agencies may be called if deemed necessary.
- **Exceptions:** If a student has a chronic illness or other extenuating circumstances, attendance concerns will be addressed and monitored accordingly. Exceptions will be documented in a school-based plan (504 Plan, ISP, or other individualized plan).

Dental and Medical Appointments

Parents are urged to make their child's dental and/or medical appointments outside of the school day to avoid undue disruptions and conflicts with classroom learning.

If medical and/or dental appointments are unavoidable, parents must sign students out at the office before leaving and sign them back in upon return to school. Parents should notify the school office and classroom teacher of said appointments in advance.

Weather Related Closing/Delays

In the event of inclement weather, we will consult with the other area schools to make decisions about weather related delays or closings. The pastor and principal will make the final decision. Parent Alert via FACTS through text and email and Facebook will be used to notify staff and families of delays or closings.

Lice

Head lice is an infestation, not an infection and therefore does not pose a significant health hazard or spread disease. If a child is found to be infested with lice, the parent will be notified so they can begin treatment. Staff will protect the privacy of affected students in accordance with HIPAA regulations. All families will be notified via email if a case of lice is found in the school (the affected student will not be identified by name or grade level to protect their privacy). Upon receipt of an email, parents are encouraged to check their children for evidence of lice and treat them accordingly. Please notify the school if lice is found on anyone in the home. Informing others that it is in the environment is important to stop the spread of lice in our school.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that no healthy child should be excluded from, or allowed to miss school because of head lice. A child with a lice infestation has likely had the infestation for a month or more by the time it is discovered. The child poses little risk to others and he or she should remain in class. However, they should be discouraged from close direct head contact with others. The AAP recommends treatment with Permethrin 1% as it has low toxicity for humans and does not cause allergic reactions to individuals with plant allergies. A second application of Permethrin is recommended 7 to 10 days after the first treatment.

Administering Medication to Students

Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication

Any medication that is to be administered at school may be given using the following procedures:

1. The medication sent or brought to the school must be accompanied by a **signed**

- request** from the parent(s)/guardian(s).
2. The following information must be included in the written request and on the label of the prescription container:
 - a. The student's name
 - b. Amount of dosage
 - c. Time of administration
 - d. Name and strength of medication
 - e. Amount of medication in prescription
 - f. Instructions for administration
 - g. Length of time student will be on medication
 - h. Special care such as refrigeration
 3. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s)' consent must authorize administration of a specific medication and must grant permission for school personnel to administer the medication.
 4. Diabetic students must have orders signed by a physician for a current insulin/diabetic plan of care prior to starting school.
 5. All medications will be returned to parent(s)/guardian(s) at the end of the school year.
 6. See below for guidelines concerning asthma and anaphylaxis.

Personnel Responsible for Administering the Medication

1. All personnel should be familiar with the policy and procedures for administering medication in the school.
2. All personnel having responsibility for supervising students shall be given information on the health portion of the students' school records, including related medical problems, suspected allergies, emergency contact persons, and shall be informed of anticipated circumstances for which the school personnel may need to be in touch with out of school personnel (e.g. medical personnel, other agencies, etc.)

Holy Family-St. Mary's School and employees of the school, shall not be held liable for civil damages incurred by a student who administers emergency medication to himself or herself in accordance with the guidelines outlined above OR an individual because the student was permitted to possess emergency medication in accordance with the guidelines outlined above.

Procedures from Administering Medication in School

1. All medication shall be stored in a secure storage area. The epinephrine auto injectable pens will be kept in the first aid box on the wall in the **school office**.
2. The medication needs to be checked into the school office with the appropriate paperwork so any questions can be addressed at the time of check in.
3. Medication must be kept in the original container PROPERLY LABELED with the

student's name, specific time to be administered, amount of dosage, and physician's name.

4. School personnel will be instructed on an "at need basis" on medication administration should specific instructions be needed.
5. A record of medication will be kept for each medication given and will be maintained in the health records of the students.
6. Over the counter medications can be given with the consent of a parent/guardian. The student's name and directions should be clearly marked on the bottle. Medication must be in its original packaging.
7. Students with asthma will be allowed to carry their inhalers with them with a permission form signed by a Health Care person and parent.

Asthma/Anaphylaxis

A student who has been diagnosed with asthma or anaphylaxis may possess and self-administer emergency medications for the treatment of such conditions provided the student's parent files with the school a document that is signed by the student's health care provider and parent/guardian and which:

- a. Indicates that the student has been instructed in the self-administration of emergency medication for the treatment of asthma or anaphylaxis;
- b. Lists the name, dosage, and frequency of all medication prescribed to the student for use in the treatment of the student's asthma or anaphylaxis;
- c. Includes guidelines for the treatment of the student in the case of an asthmatic episode or anaphylaxis.

Epinephrine Auto-Injectable Pen (Epi-Pen)

In the event that the epinephrine auto-injectable pen is used, emergency services and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.

Academics

Curriculum

At Holy Family - St. Mary's School, we believe that each student is capable of learning, through their unique abilities, talents, and learning styles. Our teachers are mindful of these differences and work to provide differentiated instruction in all curricular areas to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to experience academic success.

- Reading & Language Arts
- Math

- Science
- Social Studies
- Religion
- Art
- Spelling
- Library
- Physical Education
- Music
- Optional elective and extracurriculars, communicated throughout the year

Religious Instruction & Spiritual Events

As a Catholic school, religious activities are an important part of the school curriculum and are therefore incorporated into all aspects of the school day. Religious activities include:

- School wide daily morning prayer
- Daily Rosary prayed in October & May
- Daily religion class
- Student-led weekly masses (Wednesdays)
- Special observances/retreats during Advent and Lent
- Weekly Stations of the Cross during Lent (Fridays)
- Communal penance services
- Sacramental Preparation programs
 - First Reconciliation in second grade
 - First Eucharist and Confirmation in third grade
- Communal rosary services and adoration services throughout the year
- Regular classroom visits by parish pastors

Report Cards

Report cards are sent out to parents and students at the end of each trimester (three times per year) to make families aware of their child's progress in school. Parents are encouraged to carefully review report cards with their children and contact teachers with any concerns.

Grades kindergarten through third are graded on a rubric scale. Grades four and five are graded with a combination rubric, percentages, and letter grades according to properly completed work. Please see the school calendar for report card dates.

Goal Setting Conferences

Goal setting conferences for parents, teachers, and students take place two times each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Please see the school calendar for specific dates.

The purpose of goal-setting conferences is to help students set academic, social, behavior

and/or personal goals to help ensure their success in school. Goals are a collaborative effort between teachers, parents, and students.

Additional conferences are encouraged whenever the parents or teachers believe they are necessary. Please feel free to contact teachers or the principal to set up an additional conference.

Promotion/Retention

Whenever possible, children progress through grades yearly with their peers.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to retain a child in the same grade for another year. This recommendation is made only after a careful study of the child's needs has been made. This decision is not based entirely on the child's ability to meet grade level subject matter. Physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs are all taken into consideration. Parents are always consulted and included in the decision making process.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;

- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

Homework

Homework is assigned at the discretion of individual teachers. Homework expectations will increase gradually in amount, variety, and frequency as students progress from grade to grade.

Homework assignments may include:

- Unfinished classwork
- Reading practice
- Spelling words
- Math practice
- Test preparation
- Research projects
- Makeup work due to absence
- Etc.

Student Homework Responsibilities

- Complete homework independently and to the best of their ability.
- Ensure understanding of homework assignments by listening to directions, asking questions when something is unclear, and carefully reading instructions.
- Gather all necessary materials to complete assignments *before* leaving the classroom.
- Return homework assignments on time.

Parent Homework Responsibilities

- Provide a consistent routine and environment that is conducive to completing homework
- Provide limits and **guidelines on screen time** (including access to TV, computers, phones, tablets, and video games).

- Support students by encouraging independence, while offering assistance/answering questions without directly providing answers.
- Notify the teacher if homework is creating a problem at home.

Teacher Homework Responsibilities

- Provide meaningful homework assignments that can be completed independently.
- Clearly communicate homework directions and expectations.
- Monitor the amount of homework assigned.

Student Records Policy

A cumulative record will be maintained for each student from entrance through grade five.

All materials within the cumulative file are considered confidential. These records will be located in a locked file. Records will be accessible only to professional staff of the school and to the students' parent/guardian, except as provided by law.

Information contained in cumulative records will be made available to persons or agencies outside of Holy Family - St. Mary's School only by written approval of the principal and parent/guardian and in full compliance with the disclosure provisions outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Should a child transfer to another school system, parents will be asked to sign a release of the file to the new school.

Cumulative Records

Cumulative Records may include the following:

- Personal and family data including certification of name and date of birth
- Standardized Test data
- Medical and Psychological reports (pertaining to conditions impacting educational needs)
- Discipline records
- ISP or behavior plans
- Achievement records determined by test scores and teacher evaluation
- Anecdotal reports
- Copies of correspondence with parents/guardians (and others involving the child's care) concerning the child.
- Records of conferences
- Other records which may contribute to the understanding of the child

Health Records

Health records of students are gathered and brought up-to-date with yearly enrollment forms filled out by parents at registration and kept by the school.

Communication

Phone Calls

Classrooms are equipped with telephones for use in case of emergencies or at the discretion of the classroom teacher. In the event that students need to contact their parents, they are permitted to use the phone in the office, with the secretary's permission. Parents contacting the school will automatically be relayed to the office. The secretary will communicate messages to students/teachers during class breaks to minimize disruptions to classroom learning. Emergency messages will be relayed immediately. Students are not permitted to use school phones to make social arrangements.

Email

Parent email communication

Parents may contact the school office or teachers via email. Additionally, weekly electronic bulletins will be sent out via FACTS Family Portal. Parents are encouraged to read these bulletins weekly as events, updates, and additions to the school calendar will be communicated in this way.

Student email

All students are assigned a school owned email address upon admission to HFMS. However, only students in grades 3-5 will have access to the email for educational purposes only. This allows students to communicate with teachers, turn in electronic assignments, place holds on school library books and more. Emails from these accounts may be monitored.

Social Sharing

Classroom via FACTS Family Portal

All teachers at Holy Family - St. Mary's School will use FACTS Family Portal as means of communicating with parents and posting information. These services are available via computer or as a paid phone app. This will keep parents up to date with classroom announcements, educational goals, and other informal progress reports.

Social Media

Students are not permitted to use social media on school grounds or using a school issued device (such as Facebook, TikTok, SnapChat, etc). Most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement of 13 for users. We encourage parents to educate themselves and monitor their child's internet/device usage outside of school.

The school has an administrator-moderated Facebook and Instagram accounts as an additional way to communicate with parents.

Paper Newsletters

Occasionally, the school may send home paper newsletters with the oldest or only student in the family. Paper newsletters are generally sent home when some response is required from families (forms for signing up for school Masses, information on field trips, etc.)

Directory Information

A school directory is available on the FACTS Family Portal. Each family can designate what information they want displayed.

Holy Family - St. Mary's School has designated the following information as directory information.

Student Name
Grade Level
Parent Name(s)
Telephone number
Email Address

Change of address/phone

It is important that our records are up to date and accurate. Please notify the school office promptly with any changes of address, phone number, and/or email address. Families can update information in the FACTS Family Portal.

General Information

Emergency Procedures

Holy Family - St. Mary's School has developed emergency plans for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of every student and staff member. Fire, lockdown, and tornado drills are conducted throughout the school year.

Field Trips

All school-sponsored activities must have the approval of the administration. All school rules apply at any and all school-sponsored events, whether it is held at the school or another location.

Permission for students attending field trips is given at the beginning of each year. Prior to a field trip, an information sheet will be sent home with any additional details.

Students whose classroom work is incomplete or whose behavior is disruptive may be excluded from a field trip at the discretion of the teacher and the principal.

Transportation

Transportation for field trips may be by bus, parent volunteers, or walking. All volunteer drivers must submit to a background check and fill out a driver information sheet that will be kept on file in the school office. Notification will be sent out prior to any student transportation.

Holiday Parties

- **Halloween**
 - Halloween parties and costumes are reserved for after-school hours.
 - The Student Council traditionally hosts a pumpkin carving contest the week of Halloween. Additionally, The Home & School Association (HSA) typically hosts a

school dance the same day as the pumpkin carving contest. See school calendar/weekly electronic newsletter for more details.

- **Christmas**
 - As a school, we celebrate Christ's birth with an all school mass on the last day of school before Christmas break. In the afternoon, students might attend a school Christmas celebration. See weekly electronic newsletter for information.
- **Valentine's Day**
 - Individual classrooms may host Valentine's Day parties. Students bringing cards or treats are required to bring something for every student in the class. A class list will be provided by teachers.
- **Birthdays**
 - Students are welcome to bring store-bought treats to celebrate their birthdays. All treats must be peanut and tree nut free. Please check with your child's teacher to find out if there are any allergies that need to be considered when bringing birthday treats. Consider sending a healthy treat for students.
 - Students are not permitted to pass out party invitations in school. A list of classmates can be requested from the office to assist in mailing out invitations. Kindly provide a 24 hours notice. This prevents the loss of instruction time, hurt feelings, and confusion. If you are inviting the entire class, please contact administration and an exception may be made.

Lunch Program

Lunch is provided for \$3.50 each day. Funds can be deposited in an account using our FACTS Family Portal. All lunch accounts must stay current. Families may also apply for free or reduced priced lunches. Please contact the office for the appropriate forms.

- HFSM provides two daily lunch options. Students will choose an option in the morning. Students may **not** switch choices after lunch count has been submitted.
 - Option 1: A nutritious hot lunch, with fresh fruits and vegetables (as seasonal availability permits).
 - Option 2: Sunbutter/Soy butter sandwiches, Sub Sandwich, or Homemade Lunchable (see menu for schedule), with fresh fruits and vegetables (as seasonal availability permits).
- Daily drink options include:
 - 1% milk
 - Skim milk
 - Water
 - Low Fat chocolate milk (Fridays only)
- To meet USDA requirements, students must select foods from at least three different food groups before leaving the line. Food groups:
 - Protein (main entree, sunbutter, milk, etc)
 - Grains

- Fruit
- Vegetable
- Alternatively, students bring lunch from home.
 - Lunch from home must follow MyPlate guidelines (www.myplate.gov) providing a balanced meal including fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy, and whole grains.

Please limit sugary items and adhere to the Peanut Tree Nut Awareness Policy.
- See more information in the [School Meal Guidelines](#) (page 47)

Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their children. **Please contact the school office by 9:30 a.m.** on the day you are planning to eat lunch with your child. A payment of \$5.00 is due to the office prior to eating lunch or can be charged to FACTS at lunch.

Parent Involvement

Parents are an integral part of a high functioning school community. Parents are considered partners in the education of the students at Holy Family - St. Mary's School. As such, we rely on your support! Below are a few of the ways to get involved!

Volunteer/Fundraising Commitment Hours

The Parent Volunteer/Fundraising Commitment Program is a way that HFSM families support the school community, whether through service to the school or through direct financial support, or a combination of both. The participation in this program keeps tuition increases to a minimum and raises funds for the school's operating budget to offset parish subsidy.

If our fundraisers did not exist, our tuition would need to be over \$11,000 per school year. **Each elementary family is expected to fulfill a volunteer/fundraising commitment of \$250 per school year or a volunteer commitment of 12.5 hours per school year, or a combination of both. Families with preschool only are expected to fulfill \$200 or 10 hours of service. If this commitment is not fulfilled at the end of the school year, the remaining balance will need to be paid.**

Attending events does not count towards family volunteer commitment. Families *must assist* at an event in order for it to count. There are many ways to help! Information and sign up sheets will be available at the back to school meeting. Additional opportunities throughout the year will be shared via FACTS. The logging of your hours will be done through the FACTS Family Portal<Web Forms<Parent Volunteer Commitment Hours Form. Once approved by the office, your service hours will display under the Family Portal<Family Home and choose your eldest child's name from the drop down list. Once a Web Form is submitted, you must wait until the form is approved before you will be able to submit a new form.

SCRIP

SCRIP is a gift card fundraiser for our school. We keep a variety of gift cards on hand for you to purchase at the full face value, but we have purchased at a discounted rate. You can also use

the RaiseRight app to purchase a larger variety of gift cards and a percentage will be donated to our school. Order forms are sent home often and available in the school office and the parish office. There are options for online ordering and submitting payment via Venmo. Mrs. Mohr and Mrs. Dahl organize this program to help financially support our school.

Circle of Grace

For the safety of our children, the Diocese of Fargo requires that all employees and any volunteers that will be unsupervised with students must submit to a background check, complete the Circle of Care training video, and agree to the Fargo Diocese Code of Conduct. Please contact the school office or visit our school website or the Diocese of Fargo Website for more information.

Home and School Association (HSA)

The Holy Family-St. Mary's Home and School Association (HSA) is an active parent-teacher group that meets several times throughout the school year. The Home and School Association plans a variety of events and fundraisers to provide financial support and to benefit our school programs and philosophy. Parents and teachers are encouraged to attend the monthly HSA meetings regularly. Being actively involved in the ongoing discussion and planning brought forth by this organization advances our school community. Volunteering to help with HSA events and activities goes towards your required volunteer hours.

School Board

Holy Family-St. Mary's School Board is made up of parents or parish members, the head pastors from Holy Family and St. Mary's, and the school principal. They meet each month during the school year to determine school policy and to discuss current needs of the school. Board members are elected in the spring to serve a three-year term. A list of all school board members is published on our website and in our school directory.

Personal Items

As Christians, we are taught to respect the property of others. However, despite our best efforts, personal items can get lost, misplaced, or broken when brought to school. Students are encouraged to label all personal items brought to school with their name and phone number.

The school will not be held responsible for any personal items that may be lost, damaged, or misplaced on school or church property. **We strongly advise leaving irreplaceable personal items at home.**

Bicycles/Rollerblades

Bicycles and rollerblades are for transportation to and from school; they are not to be used during the school day (including recess).

The school is not responsible for bikes parked on school grounds. For your security, each bicycle should be locked and kept on the provided bike racks on the south side of the school.

The use of roller blades and bicycles is not allowed within the school building.

Money Sent to School

For smaller amounts of money (i.e. field trips, class projects, etc.) enclose it in a small envelope with the pupil's name, telephone number, amount enclosed, and teacher's name on the outside. If using cash for fees, the parent needs to bring this money to the business office or school office. All cash payments must be receipted. **The school is not responsible for cash that is not receipted.** Under no circumstances are pupils to leave money in the classrooms overnight. The school cannot be held responsible for any loss.

Personal Electronics

Personal electronics including but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, and tablets are not allowed in school or Kids Clubhouse. Parents may contact the principal in order to grant special permission. Requests will be considered on an individual basis. If the principal grants permission, these items must remain in the student's backpack during school hours.

Toys, Trading Cards, Collectibles

Toys, trading cards, and collectibles should not be brought to school, unless it is brought for a teacher approved activity or event. If these items are brought to school, they must remain zipped in backpacks throughout the school day (including recess and Kids Clubhouse).

Students who bring and play with these items during the school day may have them taken away by the teacher. In this case, parents will need to contact the teacher to retrieve the personal items.

Lost and Found

Please write your child's name on all personal items. Articles found around the school will be placed in the lost and found area in the school office. Please check for items in the lost and found area frequently. Any lost and found items that are not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated to St. Joseph's.

Pets

Pets (such as dogs and cats) are not permitted on school grounds. This ensures that we can keep both students and pets safe and our playground and school clean. We ask you to please refrain from bringing pets to school.

Playground Rules and Expectations

The purpose of the following playground rules is to provide a safe and enjoyable play area for all students. As always, a Christian attitude is the guiding force to create an atmosphere where students can cooperate and treat one another respectfully.

- Students will enter and exit the school building in a quiet and orderly manner, following all hallway rules.
- Students will show respect for others and follow all instructions given by supervisors quickly. Students will line up immediately when the bell rings signaling the end of recess.
- Students are not allowed to cross the street or leave the playground (including going back into the school building) unless they have first reported to a supervisor on duty and gained permission to do so.
- Students will stay off all non-playground equipment including, but not limited to drainpipes, fencing, poles, bike racks, and the Mary Garden.
- All rocks, sticks, and other dangerous items must be left alone. Snow and rocks are never to be thrown.
- Real or pretend fighting and rough play (including tackle football and pushing) are not allowed.
- Equipment is to be used safely, sensibly, and appropriately. Students may only slide down slides and may not sit on top of the monkey bars.
- Toys and sports equipment brought from home must have teacher approval to be used during school hours.
- Students will display good sportsmanship and follow all game rules.

After School Playground Use

Students using the playground after school must be enrolled in Kids Clubhouse or be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

Services

Counseling Services

A school counselor is available one day each week for individual, small group, or whole group lessons. The counselor can provide counseling if a student is having academic difficulties, provide personal counseling (and possibly referral) if the need arises, interpret test scores, etc.

If you would like your child to visit with our counselor, a permission slip must be signed in advance. Our counselor will gladly answer any questions you might have or help to guide you in the direction needed if she is not able to assist you.

Special Education Services

Special education services are available through the Grand Forks Public School District. Per an agreed upon contract, GFPS will assess our students, as needed for special education needs. The following special education services are provided by the Grand Forks Public Schools at Holy Family - St. Mary's School:

- Speech & Language Pathology
- Title I Reading Support
- Learning Disability Program

Technology

Holy Family-St. Mary's School provides technology resources for staff and students to support the educational mission of the school. Families are required to read and agree to a technology contract at the beginning of each school year and agree to an Internet and Technology Safety Contract. (see policies)

Visitors

For the safety of our students, all visitors (including parents) must enter the school building through **Door #6** on the south side (playground side) of the building. Visitors must proceed immediately to the school office to sign in.

Students are not allowed to bring friends or older or younger siblings, etc. to school.

Parents are invited to visit classrooms at any time. For safety reasons, you must sign in at the school office.

Policies

Dress Code Policy

As a Catholic institution, Holy Family - St. Mary's School strives to abide by Catholic teaching concerning modesty of dress and reverence. This dress code policy strives to strike a balance between Catholic modesty and students' comfort and self expression through clothing. Students are not permitted to dress in a manner that would distract from or disrupt the education process.

The purpose of this dress code is to enhance school safety, provide a proper learning environment, and promote good behavior. Students are expected to wear clothing that is modest and reflective of the values upheld by Holy Family - St. Mary's School.

Clothing and footwear must be suitable for an academic atmosphere, appropriate for the weather, clean, and free from rips and tears. Students' clothing, shoes, and accessories must enable students to safely perform all regular school activities, including gym classes and daily recess.

The dress code assists students to be conscious of good grooming and appropriateness of dress. Parents are essential in helping the school enforce the dress code.

Determination of the appropriateness of dress lies solely at the discretion of the building administration.

Shoes

- Tennis shoes are recommended every day and required on all gym days (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays)
- Winter boots are required outdoors when snow is on the ground
- Winter or water boots are required in the spring when the playground is wet/muddy
- In the winter, students must have closed-toe shoes to change into after being outdoors.

Pants, shorts, and skirts

- All pants must be made of opaque material that completely conceals undergarments.
- Pants and shorts must fit snugly at the waist and provide coverage when sitting, standing, running, etc.
- Skirts and shorts should be of modest length. Please consider that students may visit the church on any given school day.
- In the winter months, shorts, dresses, and skirts must be paired with tights or leggings for warmth and safety.
- Tights may not be worn as pants.
- Pajama pants are not permitted.

Shirts

- Shirts with sleeves are recommended.
- In the winter, sleeveless shirts and dresses must be layered with a sweater for warmth and safety.
- Shirts must overlap the top of pants, even when arms are raised.
- Strapless or one shoulder tops or dresses are not acceptable without a sweater or jacket layered on top.

Hair

- Hairstyles should be neat, well groomed, and not distracting to other students.
- Costume-like accessories are not acceptable.
- No hats (baseball caps, winter hats, etc) are to be worn inside the school building, unless students are walking to or from outside.

Mass Days

On Mass days, students at Holy Family - St. Mary's School practice reverence to God. In doing so, students are expected to dress their best on mass days.

- Mass Day Dress - Preschool through grade 5 students are required to wear the designated Holy Family - St. Mary's Catholic School Mass polo when attending Mass.
- Bottoms need to be either black or khaki colored on Mass days.
- Acceptable clothing for girls include dress pants, chino pants, dress shorts, or skirts no shorter than 2" from the knee with the HFSM Mass polo. Black, khaki, or white colored leggings or tights can be worn under the skirt in colder months.
- Acceptable clothing for boys includes dress pants, chino pants, or dress shorts with the HFSM Mass polo.
- White or black long sleeve shirts can be worn under the Mass polo in the colder months. Sweatshirts and cardigans cannot be worn at Mass, but can be worn AFTER Mass in the school.
- Denim pants, sports pants, or leggings without the skirt are not acceptable on Mass days.
- 5th grade graduates will "Dress Your Best" for graduation and not adhere to the Mass dress code.

Winter Weather

Students are required to **bring and wear** the following during the winter months, especially when there is snow on the ground (all items should be labeled with the students' name):

- Waterproof winter boots
- Snow pants
- Warm winter jacket
- Winter gloves or mittens, water resistant preferred
- Hat, earmuffs, or face mask

Students are required to wear winter items for recess, Clubhouse, field trip transportation, or any other time students are outside under the care of HFSM staff. Students will go outside for recess as long as the temperature is -5 degrees or above (windchill and sun will be taken into account). Due to licensing regulations, preschool students and Clubhouse will go outside if it is 0 degrees or higher (windchill and sun will be taken into account).

Enforcement

Students who fail to dress according to the policy, especially on mass days, will be required to call parents for a change of clothing. Repeated violations may require a conference with teachers and/or administration.

Child Care and Preschool Staff

All staff in our preschool and child care program are required to go through a criminal background check prior to working. A staff member with current CPR and First Aid is on duty whenever children are present.

Both the preschool program and Kids Clubhouse programs are required to follow the staff/child ratios. Our preschool can have up to 10 children present with 1 staff member present or up to 20 children present with 2 staff members present. The Kids Clubhouse program will follow the ratio calculation for staffing mixed age groups.

Policy Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policy

We are called to be disciples of Christ in all we do and say. We are called to love one another. We do so by treating others, ourselves, and God with respect with our actions and words. We do so by taking responsibility for our actions and materials. We do so by ensuring the safety of ourselves and those around us. With this in mind, HFSM has behavior expectations of staff, students, and visitors in the school building, grounds, and events.

HFSM is a community that succeeds when we work together. Parents are crucial in supporting these expectations by discussing these expectations at home, modeling acceptable behavior, supporting consequences given when expectations are not met, and following through with discussions and consequences at home.

The following is a general description of the behaviors which will not be tolerated:

1. All forms of discrimination: racial, sexual, religious, psychological, or physical differences, etc.
2. Fighting, physical striking of anyone or causing a fight to occur either on school grounds or at school sponsored activities.
3. Vandalism of school property or an individual's property.
4. Theft of school property or an individual's property.
5. Prohibitive substances, including the use, sale, or possession of any dangerous and/or illegal substances or items such as drugs, alcohol, weapons, etc.
6. Academic cheating of any kind, passing off another's work as one's own, or obtaining credit for work not done.

7. Truancy, skipping school, or any single class, liturgies or assemblies.
8. Verbal abuse or any behavior that results in an injury to the good reputation of another or falls short of the basic respect that each person should be given. This includes name calling and bullying.
9. Insubordination, a disruptive or flagrant failure to follow appropriate directions given by any staff member, or showing disrespect by language or behavior.
10. Littering or improper disposal of waste within the school or on school grounds.

If the behavior expectations are not met, the following is a list of actions that might be taken, not necessarily in this order. Consequences will be given at the discretion of teachers, staff, and administration.

1. Verbal feedback and redirection
2. Think sheet/Fix it sheet
3. Loss of privilege
4. Parental notification
5. Parental conference
6. Detention (at lunch, after school)
7. In school suspension
8. Out of school suspension
9. Referral to outside agency
10. Expulsion

Preschool Behavior and Discipline Policy

Discipline used in preschool will be constructive or educational in nature, such as positive reinforcement, redirection, or a time away from the group. No inappropriate types of discipline will be tolerated at any time. The inappropriate types of discipline include using any physical punishment, withholding things such as food, using physical restraints, etc. If an unacceptable form of discipline is used, the staff person may be terminated.

Prohibition of Mean Behavior, Bully/Cyberbully, and Retaliation Policy

Each child is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore shares a fundamental human dignity. Holy Family - St. Mary's School provides an environment dedicated to protecting and fostering the development of that dignity. The school helps children develop behaviors to become active Christians in all they do and say.

"Here is my commandment," says Jesus, "that you love one another as I have loved you." As bearers of the divine image, members of the school community deserve care and respect for all. Mean behaviors, bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are not to be tolerated. HFSM has zero

tolerance for bullying behaviors. Accusations of bullying behaviors will be taken seriously by staff.

Mean behaviors, bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation or behavior to commit an act that materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school are prohibited at these locations:

- On school grounds owned, leased, or used by a school
- At any school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds
- On any vehicle used by the school
- At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related that materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, used by a school

Definitions:

Rude Behaviors = Inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else.

Mean = Purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice).

Bullying = Intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of power.

Cyberbullying = the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

Retaliation = any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Aggressor = any student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation

Target = any student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Response and Investigation:

Mean Behavior

- Incidents of mean behavior will be addressed according to the school's disciplinary policy

Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Retaliation

- The school and staff take all reports of bullying, cyberbullying, and/or retaliation very seriously.
- Upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, the response of the school will be to conduct an investigation. The principal or the principal's designee will lead the investigation. When possible, the investigation will begin within three school days of the report.
- The school reserves the sole discretion to determine the scope, nature, and adequacy of the investigation.

Anyone with questions about the investigation should direct those questions to the principal.

Disciplinary Actions

- Any student who violates this policy shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy
- The school retains the sole discretion to determine whether bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has occurred and what disciplinary actions should be given depending on the outcome of the investigation, the following could occur:
 - Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken
 - The parents or guardians of the aggressor will be notified
 - The parents or guardians of the target will be notified
 - The parents or guardians of any other affected individual will be notified
 - Information regarding available community resources will be provided

Weapons Policy

A weapon is considered any object which may be used to intimidate or inflict bodily harm and which has no school-related purpose. Students who bring these items to school or any school related function will have the item confiscated and will face disciplinary action as outlined in the discipline policy. Those items considered under this policy include but are not limited to guns, knives, chains, and explosives.

Peanut/Tree Nut Policy

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School is a peanut and tree nut aware school. Though we strive to provide a safe environment for all students and visitors, we cannot guarantee that our facility is totally peanut and tree nut free, as the building facilities of Holy Family Parish and Holy Family-St. Mary's School are used by multiple organizations that may bring these items into the building outside school hours.

We offer peanut and tree nut free meals through our hot lunch program. Items containing peanuts or tree nuts (such as almonds, brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, filberts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pignolias, pistachios, walnuts, etc) are not permitted in cold lunches or snacks brought from home. See snack policy for further information on snacks.

Photography Policy

Schools need and welcome positive publicity. Children's photographs add color, life, and interest to photographs of school activities and initiatives. Making use of photographs in school publicity materials helps parents and the school community identify and celebrate the school's achievements.

Photographs will be used in a responsible way with respect to childrens and parents' right to privacy.

Appropriate use of images:

Holy Family-St. Mary's School is dedicated to keeping students safe when using photography and adopts the following guidelines when using photographs of students in school publicity materials, including the school website, newsletters, displays, and social media outlets:

1. Students will not be identified by name
2. Two or more students will be visible in each photograph

Parents Filming/Taking Photographs:

Parents are welcome to take photographs at most school events.

Holy Family-St. Mary's School reserves the right to ask parents/visitors not to take photographs/videos of children if it is disruptive to an event or the school feels the images may be used inappropriately. Parents are asked to respect the views of others.

Reporting of Suspected Child Neglect and Abuse Policy

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

Child abuse or neglect may be:

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

Licensing requires that all staff members are mandated reporters and they report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by North Dakota Century Code 50-25.1-03.

Licensing

HFSM Preschool is licensed through the North Dakota Department of Human Services . If you have a child care concern that is not being resolved by our staff, please contact Kayla Ness at 701-720-2948. A parent may request a daily report for their child, if desired.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Technology resources are provided for staff and students (users) to support the educational mission of the school. The successful use of these resources requires adherence to a policy that promotes safety, efficiency, and appropriate usage.

Technology resources include but are not limited to: Macbooks, chromebooks, iPads, Promethean Boards and all related peripherals to these devices.

This policy governs issues unique to technology resources and works in accordance with school policies.

Holy Family-St. Mary's School Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

Technology resources are provided for staff and students (users) to support the educational mission of the school. The successful use of these resources requires adherence to a policy that promotes safety, efficiency, and appropriate usage.

This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the standards and expectations for responsible use of technology and internet resources at our Catholic school. All students, staff, and parents/guardians are required to adhere to these guidelines to ensure a safe and respectful digital environment that aligns with our Catholic values.

General Use

The school expects users to exhibit professional/responsible behaviors when using school technology resources. Use of school technology resources is a privilege and may be revoked if the expectations are not followed.

- **Respectful Communication:** All users must communicate respectfully and courteously. Inappropriate language, bullying, and harassment are strictly prohibited.
- **Appropriate Content:** Accessing, downloading, or sharing inappropriate, offensive, or harmful content is strictly forbidden.
- **Privacy and Safety:** Personal information (e.g., addresses, phone numbers, passwords) must not be shared online. Users should report any suspicious or uncomfortable online behavior to a trusted adult (teacher, administrator, or parent) immediately.
- **Supervision:** Technology is only to be used at school with permission and supervision from teachers.
- **Authorized Access:** Use of school technology resources is limited to educational purposes. Only websites and apps approved by teachers should be used. Recreational use during school hours or on school technology is not allowed.

- **Software and Downloads:** Only school-approved software and applications may be used. Unauthorized downloading or installation of software is forbidden. Students will not be asked to download software.
- **Device Care:** Students are responsible for the care and appropriate use of school-provided devices. Students who damage or mishandle technology beyond normal wear and tear will be financially responsible for repairs or replacement.
- **Copyright and Plagiarism:** Users must respect copyright laws. Users should cite their sources when applicable.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

- **Supervised Use:** In accordance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), users of AI tools must be 13 years or older. Students under the age of 18 may use AI only with parent/guardian consent. AI may be modeled to students for educational purposes but will not be used by students without parent consent.
- **Ethical Use of AI:** AI should be used to enhance learning and not replace genuine student effort. AI may be used as a starting point, but not an end product.
- **Acknowledge Contribution:** If AI is used with parent consent, use of AI should be cited as a source.

Consequences

Violation of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action, including loss of technology privileges, detention, suspension, or other appropriate measures as determined by the school administration.

Parent Social Media Agreement

As a parent/guardian of a student at Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School, I commit to fostering a positive and respectful online community. This agreement is to be signed prior to the start of the school year.

- **Respect Privacy:** Not share photos, videos, or personal information of others without permission.
- **Promote Positivity:** Post positive comments about the school and avoid negative or harmful remarks.
- **Use Responsibly:** Avoid online bullying or harassment.
- **Model Virtuous Behavior:** Live virtuously online and in daily interactions while encouraging my child to do the same, while following the school's online guidelines as outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy and Student Technology Agreement.
- **Address Concerns Privately:** Resolve issues through proper school channels, not social media.

- **Respect Staff Boundaries:** Please use FACTS to communicate with teachers. Allow time for teachers to respond to messages, understanding that teachers work with students during the day and have their own commitments in the evening. Respect that staff social media or other personal platforms are personal.
- **Report Issues:** Inform school administration of any inappropriate online behavior.
- **Monitor My Child:** Keep an eye on my child's social media use to ensure safe and appropriate behavior.

Wellness Policy

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School supports a school environment that promotes the health, safety, and well-being of its student and staff populations. The principal shall implement and ensure compliance with the wellness policy.

Nutrition Education Goals

The primary goal of nutrition education is to positively influence students' eating behaviors and promote good health. Nutrition Education Goals:

- Nutrition Education will be incorporated in the physical education classes.
- Nutrition Education will be offered in the cafeteria in collaboration with lunchroom monitors and the school cook.
- Nutrition Education will be communicated to parents to help provide a consistent nutrition message to students.
- Staff is encouraged to be role models of healthy behavior.

School Meal Guidelines

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School's Cardinal Cafe offers healthy, nutritious meals in compliance with applicable nutrition standards established in federal regulations.

Meals offered at Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School will:

- Be promoted to students and households. Participation is encouraged.
- Reflect student preferences based on feedback
- Be served in a clean, safe, enjoyable environment
- Meet nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations
- Provide a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School will:

- Provide students with adequate time for meal breaks

- Provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks
- Provide menus to families on the school website
- Provide free drinking water for students throughout the school day

Snacks

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School abides by a healthy snack policy in which each child may bring a healthy mid-morning snack. Please note: an after school snack is provided for students enrolled in Kids Clubhouse. You may choose to send a snack for your child after school instead of the one provided during Kids Clubhouse.

Snacks should incorporate one (or more) of the following food groups: Vegetables, Fruits, Whole Grains, Protein, or Dairy.

Smart Snack Suggestions:

- Diced fruit or fruit cups packed in 100% fruit juice
- Sliced vegetables
- Whole grain, lightly sweetened dry cereal
- Baked whole grain crackers
- Cheese Sticks
- Low fat yogurt
- Sliced turkey or ham
- Hard boiled eggs
- Low sugar, high protein granola bars
- Pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- Fruit leather
- Whole grain muffins
- Lightly buttered, lightly salted popcorn

Physical Fitness

Physical Fitness goals:

- To provide opportunities for every student to develop knowledge and skills for physical activities
- To maintain physical fitness by regularly participating in physical activity
- To understand the benefits of a healthy, physically active lifestyle.

Holy Family-St. Mary's Catholic School will:

- Provide adequate space and equipment and will conform to safety standards.
- Comply to the state standards and mandates related to physical education.

- Provide elementary students with 90 minutes of physical education instruction weekly. Preschool students will be provided with 60 minutes of physical education instruction weekly.
- All students receive at least 100 minutes of weekly recess.
- Meet state guidelines that meet the Smart Snack regulations when conducting food sales or marketing.

Aquatic Policy

Water table play may be provided during instruction. If there are field trips or activities that involve more extensive water play, such as swimming, notification will be sent out prior to the activity or event.

Nap/Rest Time Policy for preschool

We will provide a mat for rest time. Each child will need to bring a blanket from home. It is the parent's responsibility to wash the blanket each week.

If your child does not nap, a quiet activity will be provided during this time.

Grievance Policy

If any person believes the school or any one of the school's staff have discriminated against, or wrongly treated another individual while employed or enrolled at Holy Family-St. Mary's School, he/she can bring forward a grievance, through the following chain of command:

1. Involved staff member
2. School principal
3. Parish Pastor

If the grievance is not resolved after visiting the individuals listed above, the following grievance procedures are available to provide prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint:

4. A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the school administration or Pastor within ten (10) business days after bringing your complaint forward informally. The administration or Pastor shall further investigate the matters of the grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.
5. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the school administrator or Pastor, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Holy Family-St. Mary's School Board president within ten days of the administrator's or Pastor's response. The School Board, or representatives of the School Board, shall meet all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.
6. The complainant may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights at any time before or during the grievance procedures.
7. Telephone Number: 303-844-5695

- Office of Civil Rights Federal Building, Suite 310 1244 Speer Boulevard Denver, CO 80204-3582

Problems should be solved at the lowest level in this chain of command in order for us to remain a positive entity.

Liability Insurance

HFSM School/Church hold liability insurance, as required. This is considered secondary insurance. In the event that a child is injured at school, the parent/guardian's insurance will be required to cover any medical costs.

This version of the handbook is current as of August 1, 2024. An online version of the handbook is available under the “parent” tab on the school website. If any changes are made to the handbook, parents will be informed through FACTS messaging and the changes will be reflected in the online document.

Handbook Agreement

Agreement to be governed by the provisions of the Holy Family-St. Mary's School Students and Parent Handbook is provided by each family in FACT during the registration process.