



Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

Parent-Student Handbook

**The school reserves the right to amend the Parent-Student Handbook at any time.
Parents will be given notice of any amendment.
(2020 Revision)**



Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

Dear Parents and Friends of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy,

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment.

Our goal is to make your child's educational experience both meaningful and productive. To accomplish that goal, every family must be informed of school policies and procedures. This handbook serves as the primary reference source for questions about the operation of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy.

We ask that you read the handbook thoroughly and keep it accessible. Of course, should you still have questions after referring to this handbook, the staff and I are available to assist you.

Yours in Christ,

Mark Grgurich
Principal

INTRODUCTION

Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statement / North Hills Regional Catholic Elementary Schools

In partnership with parents, NHRCES will help students reach their full potential through academic excellence, spiritual development and acts of service in preparation to live productive faith-filled lives for God, their families and their communities.

Mission Statement / North Hills Regional Catholic Elementary Schools

To teach the Word of God through academic and religious education, and to live the Catholic faith through service to each other and our community.

School Philosophy / Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy's philosophy of education is built on the conviction that the students of this school are to be educated to attain divine union with their Creator through Jesus Christ, building on the strengths, talents and resources of students, educators and community, as well as to achieve their full potential as responsible Christian members of a democratic society.

Therefore, Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy endeavors to have each pupil recognize, understand, and develop his/her spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical attributes and to respect those of others.

This community believes that the individuality of each child must be recognized and provided for in the classroom. In so doing, it is hoped that the students recognize the need to use their talents and gifts for the benefit and service of the community.

"To teach as Jesus taught," is the ultimate goal of the Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy's faculty. To accomplish these goals, students are encouraged to maintain a sense of self-esteem, habits of good living, a respect for others, and an awareness of their religious and cultural heritage. Through integration of Gospel values, these goals, in conjunction with the provision of basic knowledge and skills, will make life meaningful.

Each child is acknowledged and taught as an integrated person, recognized as a child of God and continually being formed in his image and likeness. Every child is encouraged to be a responsible member of family and is empowered to meet the demands of an ever-changing and morally complex world. With this in mind, our Catholic education encourages our students to develop into intellectually mature and morally responsible people of faith, vision, and action.

Mission Statement / Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

The Mission of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy is to instill the Gospel values in each child, foster academic excellence, and develop a strong commitment to service in the community and beyond.

Belief Statements / Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

We Believe...

- Children have the right to learn their Catholic faith and the responsibility to do their part to build the Kingdom of God as they live that faith in action.
- A Catholic educated student lives the Gospel by participating in service projects that benefit those in need.
- Christian values and ethical conduct are an intrinsic part of a child's development.
- Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy serves the community at large through a safe and healthy environment that promotes acceptance of one another's differences in a diverse and changing world.
- Each child must be taught to be respectful and compassionate of all. Children are the community's most valuable asset because each child possesses inherent worth.
- Catholic Education is a shared responsibility of the school, the student, the family, and the church community.
- Parents, the first educators of their children, recognize and support the teacher as the professional leader.
- Today's teaching must incorporate knowledge of current textbooks and personal experiences supported by grade level appropriate technology.

Middle States Accreditation

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredits Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy. Middle States accreditation is an expression of confidence in Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy's mission, goals and objectives, performance and resources and validates publicly the excellence in education.

The Middle States Evaluation is an ongoing process requiring the submission of updated plans every three years. After seven years the school is re-evaluated for continued accreditation.

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy was re-accredited in May 2012.

CATECHETICS (Religious Formation)

Catechetics is the center of the Catholic school. A conscious effort is made to create a Christ-centered atmosphere by stressing Christian values and morality in the classroom as well as throughout the school. A conscious effort is made to integrate catechetics into every aspect of the school curriculum.

Our belief in Jesus has drawn us to this school community. Our beliefs are expressed in and strengthened by daily communal prayer. Students develop skills and a love for the Church's daily worship. Prayer includes a prayer each morning with simple prayers for before and after lunch and at the end of the day. Attention is also given to the seasons of the year, to the anniversaries of historical figures and peacemakers of our time, and to the civil holidays that have significance for our children.

Faith experiences are an integral part of catechetics. Opportunities for Eucharistic Liturgies, Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, and other Catholic prayers, classroom prayer and service to others are to be included. Community is at the heart of Catholic education, not simply as a concept to be learned, but as a reality to be lived.

The conferring of the sacraments is the responsibility of a family's home parish. However, the principal in conjunction with the local Pastors and the Catechetical Administrator work with the teachers in the religious development and sacramental preparation of the students. The actual receipt of sacraments is determined by the policies of the parish where the family is registered. Children wishing to receive sacraments outside of their home parish must obtain written approval from their local Pastor.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

CONTINUOUS GROWTH APPROACH TO INSTRUCTION

The Catholic Schools located within the Diocese of Pittsburgh are committed to a program of education that seeks knowledge and practice of the Catholic faith, academic excellence, moral courage and the learning of the faith in the light of social teachings of the Church.

The Catholic School offers a strong traditional curriculum. In the "Continuous Growth Program" of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, students advance through a defined curriculum according to their individual needs and abilities. In addition to meeting all the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the curriculum gives special attention to the integration of Gospel values.

Research indicates that children will achieve according to the expectancies placed upon them by their teachers and parents. Catholic school teachers place high expectation on all children so that all children are encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability.

This is particularly true in the skill areas of Reading and Math. The curricula for these subjects are so designed that students can advance through defined levels of competency according to their needs and abilities. Student achievement is evaluated at the students' grade level.

The goals of the Continuous Growth Program in Language Arts and Math are:

- to recognize and provide for differences in each student's growth patterns
- to provide an environment in reading and math classes that permits and encourages continuous progress
- to adapt the math and reading curriculum to each child so as to challenge maximum individual development
- to encourage students to exert effort so that they may experience success in their encounter with each school situation

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

We strive to be as inclusive as possible in welcoming all students for whom we can provide an appropriate education. Therefore, we implement the Diocesan Academic Support Model to assist students who are struggling academically and/or have been identified as a person with a special need. Parents may request more information about this program from the principal or the child's teacher.

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

In the Catholic schools, quality academic education is dependent on an organized plan of basic content with special attention given to the integration of Gospel values.

Curriculum Guidelines for all subject areas are utilized by all Catholic elementary schools and are aligned to the State and National Standards. The guidelines endeavor to give continuity to the teaching/learning process, and are geared to meet the individual needs of students and to guide the teaching/learning process.

Flexible pacing is an important component of the continuous growth concept. This provision places students at an appropriate instructional level and then allows them to move forward in the curriculum as

they achieve mastery of content and skills. Teachers will assess the instructional needs of students and provide differentiation through the use of small flexible groups.

Teachers, recognizing different learning styles, vary their presentation and assignments so as to provide for the individual needs of each child. Critical thinking skills, problem solving and research techniques are a part of instruction. Enrichment activities are provided for all students, to broaden lessons presented.

SUBJECT AREAS

Catechetics/Religious Education

The Catholic Church recognizes parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children. The role of the school is to supplement and complement the role of the parent. In the school, a formal catechetical program is taught daily. The Diocesan Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines, “Growing in God’s Covenant” contain a balance of doctrinal content, scriptural understanding, faith formation, prayer and worship experiences.

The goals and objectives of the Catechetical program consistently enhance the spiritual formation and moral development of all students. A genuine, personal relationship with God is cultivated through worship and service. Liturgical and personal prayer are essential in the development of a strong spiritual foundation. Careful planning and programming ensures a broad and deep understanding of authentic Church Doctrine. A variety of materials and resources are used to foster both spiritual growth and moral development.

Parents are encouraged to communicate in words and actions the Church’s teaching concerning human sexuality. When adults respond to their sexuality in a love-giving manner they enable their children to integrate the Church’s teaching concerning human sexuality into their own lives. The Catholic Vision of Love is the Diocesan mandated Sexuality Program.

Language Arts

The language arts curriculum presents numerous opportunities for the integration of faith, culture and life by developing an awareness of the Gospel values. The philosophy inherent in the language arts curriculum is one of continuous growth, which recognizes and nurtures the God-given potential and learning style of the individual.

Language, as communication, enables one to become more perceptive through listening, observing and feeling. Language, as a skill, provides one with the important tools to speak fluently, to read and comprehend, to compose, to write legibly and to spell correctly. An awareness of the history of language and the continuous development of vocabulary also are important phases of skill development. An appreciation of literature enriches the student through the experience of skillful authors who vicariously open new worlds to the student.

Mathematics

It is our mission to enable all students to learn the skills, acquire the knowledge, and develop the attitudes in mathematics and technology necessary for them to reach their full potential as morally and socially responsible citizens who can meet the demands of a changing global society. The challenge is not only to meet and exceed grade level expectations but to excite students to explore topics on their own, to develop proof for answers and to learn from one another.

Educational goals for all students are based upon the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards:

- Develop the value of mathematics
- Do and apply mathematics competently
- Find and solve problems
- Communicate mathematically
- Reason mathematically
- Apply problem-solving and decision-making skills to real life situations
- Become self-directed life-long learners
- Use appropriate communication and group interaction skills
- Demonstrate concern, tolerance, and respect for others

Social Studies

In the Catholic School, Social Studies provides many opportunities for teachers to help students understand, appreciate, and learn how to live Christian social values.

The scope of the social studies curriculum includes elements of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and sociology, with emphasis on global awareness and values. An integrated interdisciplinary approach helps students develop a sense of relationship among the various social studies disciplines. A clear understanding of current events helps students to integrate the past with the present and prepares them for the future.

The Social Studies curriculum begins in kindergarten with an introduction to community helpers. It progresses in the primary grades to the study of family and friends, and later encompasses a more in-depth study of the community. Beginning in fourth grade, the curriculum focuses on the study of the United States land regions and Pennsylvania history. At the fifth grade level, both United States history through the Civil War and a study of the United States geographical regions are studied. Sixth grade students study World Cultures and World Geography with an emphasis on the countries of the Eastern Hemisphere. Seventh grade studies United States history to the Reconstruction and eighth grade studies United States history beginning with the Reconstruction to the modern day. Map and geography skills are taught at all levels. Social Studies prepares students for the future by instilling the importance of a value-oriented life perspective.

Science

The primary goals of the teaching of science in the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh are to develop a respect for the sacredness of all life, the pursuit of peace and order in the world, and an awareness of the responsibility to be co-creators of life-giving designs and protectors of the environment.

In kindergarten through fifth grade, the science program covers general science topics. In grades six through eight, the students focus on specific areas including: life, chemistry/physical, earth and space. Across all grades, the science curriculum focuses on an inquiry-based process and fosters collaborative learning. Science education strengthens life skills, such as creative problem solving, critical thinking, team cooperation, use of technology, and the value of life-long learning.

World Languages

Because the Church is universal and embraces all people, regardless of race, nationality and financial status, the Catholic school encourages the study of world languages and other cultures. World language students learn the sounds and syntax of the language and work toward proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. A variety of materials and methods are used for instruction. Spanish is offered in grades kindergarten through eighth.

Physical Education

The Elementary Physical Education Program addresses the needs of the individual child through a holistic approach. Spiritual, physical, psychological, social, and emotional needs are given prime consideration. The development of a positive self-image through skill development and success is an important factor. An acquired skill enhances the carry-over potential of an activity to daily life. The Physical Education Curriculum Standards are progressive, building on the skills of the previous year.

Components for Physical Education are:

- Presence of God
- Balance
- Coordination/Agility
- Endurance/Fitness
- Flexibility
- Respect/Tolerance
- Skill Building
- Speed/Reaction Time
- Sportsmanship
- Strength/Power
- Teamwork

Health

The Health curriculum provides information at each level of development to help students make wise, moral decisions with respect for the God given Gift of life. The health curriculum places holistic emphasis on wellness, fitness, behaviors, and skills for healthy, active living. Topics include: disease prevention, emotional/social/mental health, environmental and community health, family life and sexuality, nutrition, personal health and related fitness, personal safety and first aid, and substance use and abuse. Education and health for children are inextricably intertwined.

Fine Arts

In the Fine Arts program, students have the opportunity to deepen their awareness of God's gift of creation and to respond creatively to the beauty and goodness of the world through music, art and drama. Instruction in the Arts contributes to the development of the whole person, promotes individual expression, allows experimentation with diverse materials and elements, enables exploration and appreciation of the works of other students and major artists and musicians, develops an awareness and sensitivity toward the environment, and finally promotes a deeper understanding of heritage and culture.

The Fine Arts curriculum provides a holistic approach to education that incorporates many aspects of the core curriculum and can be integrated into the total educational experience.

Libraries / Media Centers

The school libraries and media centers exist primarily to support and enrich the curriculum. It is a service and teaching agency as well as a place of purposeful learning where the use of all resources correlate with the school curriculum to intensify and individualize a child's educational experience. The Library and Media Centers are an integrated part of the total curriculum and is an essential element in the development of lifelong learning skills for students.

The integrated approach permits students to develop library and technology skills as the need for these skills naturally emerge from the curriculum. The librarian plans and implements activities so that the goals of both the content area and the library program are achieved.

The School Library and Media Centers are open daily. Lost or damaged books must be paid for.

Technology

Technology instruction is essential in today's educational process. This instruction includes computer awareness, literacy and internet safety. When this instruction and awareness are mastered, the computer becomes a basic tool for teaching logical thinking and problem-solving, creative writing, communication, the handling of information, and many other aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers of computer literacy look beyond hardware and develop an awareness of values such as relationships, collaboration, ethical conduct, responsibility and creative expression. As in all other areas of the curriculum, the integration of the Gospel values is a part of the teaching/learning process in the computer lab and classroom.

Students utilize various applications to master the following:

- Word Processing
- Slide Show presentations
- Basic Programming
- Spreadsheets
- Internet safety

ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Standardized tests, textbook tests, and teacher-made tests are administered to students throughout the year. These assessments require students to synthesize information, apply what they have learned and demonstrate their understanding of what has been taught.

Acadience Reading Test

Acadience Reading is an assessment used to measure the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. This diagnostic test is administered three times a year to monitor growth and progress.

Placement Test

Transferring students, after a review of academic records, may be administered an assessment to determine a child's strengths and areas of needed support.

Achievement Tests

Students in grades 2-8 are administered a standardized test to measure progress from one year to another. A component of the standardized testing program for grades 2, 4 & 6 is a cognitive abilities section, which helps compare a student's achievement with other students of the same age, grade, and ability. If a child is absent due to illness, every attempt will be made to enable the child to make-up the tests. However, since the tests must be returned within a two-week period, make-up testing often necessitates taking more tests daily than is ideal. To prevent this, we ask parents not to schedule trips or appointments during the time of standardized testing.

Writing Assessment

Each child in grades K-8 participates in a Writing Assessment. This allows students to respond to a writing prompt and to select and organize content, develop a style and follow standard conventions.

Math Benchmark Assessment

Math Benchmark Tests are administered quarterly to students in Grades K-8. These tests determine if the student is making progress towards grade-level expectation.

AUXILIARY SERVICES

The following services are sometime offered through the Intermediate Unit or Step by Step Learning:

Remedial Reading and Math (Title I)

The federally-funded Title I program is designed to provide additional assistance to students who are not demonstrating grade level proficiency in reading and/or math. Referrals for the program are based on teacher referrals, standardized test results, and parent approval. Alternate strategies are planned for students in accordance with individual instructional goals and in support of the classroom curriculum to help students develop mastery of basic skills.

Act 89 Services

Intermediate Unit personnel work with and provide support to students in remedial math and reading. These teachers, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, identify educational needs and design educational interventions and strategies to help a child succeed.

Educational Psychological Testing

Educational Psychological testing is available through the student's school district by parent request or at the recommendation of the teacher in consultation with the principal. Results are formally reported to parents, principal and teachers along with a list of recommendations made by the psychologist. **This information is kept confidential** and is not shared with anyone without parent permission.

Student Assistance Program

The Student Assistance Program (E-SAP) was established by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by Act 211 of 1990. It is a program of prevention, intervention, and support for students in grades K - 12. The members of the team are the principal and faculty members of the school who have received special training through approved agencies.

The program exists in order to promote the growth and development of the child. The team members work with students who are experiencing behavior difficulties which impact their social, emotional, and educational progress.

Referrals for the program are made by faculty and/or parents. Once a referral has been received by the team, classroom teachers are asked to complete a form which helps identify the behaviors. The team then makes informed assumptions as to what is needed to help the student, conveys this information to classroom teachers, parents/guardians and evaluates the results. If necessary, after consultation with parents, appropriate referrals are made to outside agencies.

Team members maintain all information regarding students and their families under **safeguard of privacy and confidentiality**. Access is limited to those who have a legitimate educational interest.

CURRICULAR RELATED

Assemblies

Assemblies are held throughout the school year. The assemblies are planned in conjunction with the principal, faculty, and the PTG with a focus on education.

Field Trips

Every class is permitted field trips during the year. Each student must have a signed permission slip before he/she is permitted to participate. Transportation, in accordance with Diocesan directives, is provided by bus, and a fee is charged to cover costs.

Guidelines for both students and chaperones are in effect for each field trip. A copy of the student guidelines will be sent home by the teacher so that the parent may help reinforce the guidelines presented.

Homework

A reasonable amount of homework, according to grade level, is of great educational value and so is assigned every day. Assignments are not always written. Study and memory work are frequently given. Homework is assigned on a regular basis for the following reasons:

- enrich school experiences
- provide practice and review
- develop good study habits
- teach responsibility, and
- foster originality

Parents can assist students with home assignments in the following ways:

- Provide a quiet spot away from the television, telephone, computer or other distracting elements;
- Check to see what was accomplished during the designated study time regarding completeness, neatness, and correctness;
- Be willing to listen to reading, spelling, and math facts and to explain procedures, but never do the assignment;
- If the child says there is no homework too often, the parent/s should consult the on-line grading system.

If, for some reason, the child cannot complete an assignment, the parent should inform the teacher by written note stating the reason. Arrangements should be made as soon as possible to make up incomplete assignments. The following time schedule for home study is a guideline:

Primary (Grades K-2)	10-30 minutes
Intermediate (Grades 3-5)	40-60 minutes
Upper Elementary (Grades 6-8)	70-90 minutes

DAILY PRACTICES AND POLICIES

ADMISSIONS/REGISTRATION POLICIES

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy admits students of any race, gender, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to all students formally accepted into the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies, athletic or other school administered programs. Students can be admitted with a disability, if with reasonable accommodation, the student can meet program requirements. Children who are not Catholic are expected to participate in religion classes and to attend all religious functions of the school/church.

Official certificates of birth and baptism are required at the time of registration. Students entering Kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1. Those registering for grades 1 - 8 must fulfill the age requirement for the desired grade and present letters of recommendation from the previous school. Grade level and academic group determinations are made on the basis of school records.

Immunization records must be complete before any child may enter school. The requirements are as follows:

- 4 doses of diphtheria and tetanus
- 3 doses of polio vaccine
- 3 properly spaced doses of hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine after the first birthday or proof by blood test of having had the illness
- 2 doses of varicella
- 7th Grade - 1 dose of meningococcal for entry into seventh grade
- 7th Grade - 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis for entry into seventh grade

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is a major factor in determining academic success. Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences may be required to provide documentation from a physician indicating that the absences are related to an existing medical condition. Students absent for more than thirty days during the academic year may be denied academic promotion.

Absences from school are defined as either Excused or Unexcused according to guidelines from the Pennsylvania School Code. Excused absences include illness, quarantine, impassable roads, recognized religious holidays, and urgent reasons, such as a death in the family or a court appearance.

The state guidelines also permit an excused absence for educational trips if a request is sent to the school prior to the dates of the trip. If no prior notice is received, the absence is classified as Unexcused.

A student is responsible for making up work when absent from school and for completing satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by the State and the Department for Catholic Schools.

***Parents should call the school office on the first day and every day after that when your child is absent from school, giving the child's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for absence. Please make arrangements with the school office to pick-up your child's work or to have it sent home with another student.**

According to the Pennsylvania School Code, Section 1332, "The absence of any pupil who remains out of school with or without his parent's permission, and is not absent because of illness or for other urgent reasons, as defined in the School Code, shall be unexcused. Such absence will be recorded as 'unlawful-unexcused' for a pupil who is under the compulsory attendance age." Section 1333, "Any such child who has been absent three days, or their equivalent, during the term of compulsory attendance, without lawful excuse...shall be given written notice. If, after such notice is given..., attendance is again violated by the person, such person shall be liable... for referral to the magistrate."

***Upon returning to school from an absence, a student must submit a written excuse to his/her homeroom teacher as required by state law. If this excuse is not submitted within three days following the absence, the absence will be classified as Unexcused.**

A written note should be given to the teacher/school office for the following reasons:

- Following an absence
- Excuse from gym class
- Permission for out of school appointments (Child is expected to return as soon as possible.)
- Attending funerals
- Vacation
- Change of plans in leaving school (bus, ride or walk)
- Early Dismissal

Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences may be required to provide documentation from a physician indicating that the absences are relating to an existing medical condition.

The parent/guardian or person in a parental relationship, such as a foster parent, is responsible for ensuring that a child attends school regularly and for providing a written excuse in the event of absence.

The following definitions are helpful in clearly understanding the Attendance Policy:

Compulsory attendance (for Catholic Schools): attendance at a school operated by a bona fide Church or other religious body which provides a minimum of 180 days of instruction and 900 hours of instruction per year at the elementary level (K-6) or 990 hours of instruction per year at the secondary level (7-12).

Compulsory school age: the period of a child's life from the time he/she enters school as a beginner, which may be no later than six years of age, until the age of eighteen or graduation from high school, whichever comes first.

Cumulative lawful absences: a maximum of ten days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification are permitted during a school year. **Absences beyond ten cumulative days require an excuse from a physician.**

Lawful absence: absences for which the school has received a written excuse from the parent/guardian. This excuse should be received within three days of the absence. Absences may be excused when a student is prevented from attendance for mental, physical, or other urgent reasons, which include but are not limited to illness, family emergency, death of a family member, medical or dental appointment, authorized school activities, and educational travel of five (5) or fewer days with prior approval. In addition, lawful absences include student attendance at court hearings related to the student's involvement with the agencies that deal with welfare of children.

Truancy: a student is considered truant when absent for three or more days without a valid excuse.

Unlawful absences: absences for which the school has not received a written excuse from parent/guardian.

Early Dismissals/Late Pick-up

Parents should make every effort to schedule appointments at a time that school is not in session. However, if a child must have an early dismissal, he/she must submit a written note for the principal's approval. For these dismissals, parents or an authorized adult must come to the office and sign the child out at the authorized time. Children who arrive later than **10a.m.** will be marked absent in the morning. Children who leave school before **12p.m.** will be marked absent in the afternoon.

Students remaining after the time normal supervision ends, will be placed in extended care and their parents will be billed at the standard rate.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30	School doors open. All students enter via the front door of building #1.
7:30	Students report to Media Center #1.
7:50	Students are dismissed to homeroom
8:10	Students must be in their classrooms for attendance, lunch count, etc.
8:10	Late Bell
8:15	Morning prayer / announcements
8:25	Period 1
9:05	Period 2
9:45	Period 3

10:25	Period 4
11:10	Lunch: Grades K – 4
11:10	Period 5 Grades 5 – 8
11:55	Lunch: Grades 5 – 8
11:55	Period 5: Grades K – 4
12:40	Period 6
1:20	Period 7
2:00	Period 8
2:40	End of last class (K – 8)
2:45	Afternoon prayer / announcements
2:50	Dismissal

CAFETERIA

Lunch

All students must bring or buy a lunch. Those bringing lunch may purchase a drink i.e. milk, water, iced tea, lemonade or juice.

Rules

The use of good manners is encouraged and, therefore, the following cafeteria rules are to be observed:

- Remain seated until finished eating and dismissed for recess.
- Discard all papers, scraps of food, etc. at your place and dispose of them properly.
- Obey cafeteria monitors at all times.
- Speak in a conversational tone.
- Walk at all times.

The cafeteria is operated in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin.

DRESS CODE

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy is a Catholic elementary school which maintains the right to establish a uniform dress code for its students. It is recognized that proper school attire and good grooming are conducive to a student's educational and social development. This Dress Code was developed for the following reasons:

- promote a Christian atmosphere;
- free children for academic concentration;
- de-emphasize competition among children regarding clothing;
- allow more economical dress for school, and
- provide some choice to accommodate individual differences.

Parents are strongly urged to mark their children's personal belongings with their names. Since children do not readily claim lost items, proper identification helps us to find the owner and save parents the cost of replacement. The lost-and-found area is located by the school office. Parents and children are encouraged to look for lost clothing items there. More valuable lost items, such as glasses, watches and purses, are to be turned in to the office. "Lost and found" articles will be available just outside of the school office. Items that are not claimed by the end of 1st semester and 2nd semester each school year are donated to charity.

This dress code policy is intended to maintain a standard of dress that is neat, economical, modest and attractive. All students in grades K – 8 must follow the school dress code:

Uniform Policy

Following is the uniform code for the 2020 – 2021 school year. You will note that the majority of the uniform guidelines remain unchanged. You are strongly encouraged; however, to read this policy carefully to effectively plan your back-to-school shopping and to ensure that your child(ren) meets all uniform standards. Failure to comply with the uniform code will result in consequences.

The Uniform Code applies to all CDTCA students in Grades K - 8. This code has been developed to promote a Christian atmosphere, to focus on academic concentration, to facilitate productivity, to demonstrate reverence at Mass and other special celebrations, as a sign of solidarity, and to de-emphasize competition among students while allowing for individuality. This policy is intended to assert a standard of dress at CDTCA that is neat, attractive, modest, and economical.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Students should come to school looking clean, well groomed, and neatly dressed.

For girls, jewelry and makeup should be kept to a minimum. Makeup is prohibited in grades K – 6 and only natural and modest makeup is permissible in grades 7 and 8 (e.g, clear lip gloss).

Unnatural hair coloring, extreme hairstyles, piercings (other than single ear piercing), and tattoos are prohibited for all students.

Hoodies and hooded sweaters are permitted to be worn to school as a jacket but **MUST** be removed and **NOT** worn during the school day.

STANDARD UNIFORM

Standard Uniform Code for Girls

- Plaid jumper, skirt or skort
- Navy blue or khaki dress pants or shorts with a navy, black or brown belt
- Red, white or NAVY blue polo style short or long sleeve top (no logos are permitted on the shirt)
- White or oxford blue blouse either with a peter pan, pointed, or button down collar
- Tights or socks in NAVY, red or white that COVER the ankle (athletic socks are prohibited)
- Leggings of NAVY, red or white can be worn under the jumper or skirt.
- Red, white or NAVY hoodless sweaters are acceptable
- Socks in **SOLID** NAVY, red or white that COVER the ankle (no logos are permitted on the socks)
- School fleeces and hoodless sweatshirts with the school emblem are also permissible
- Shoes are to be navy, brown or black and no higher than a 1 inch heel

Standard Uniform Code for Boys

- Navy blue or khaki dress pants or shorts with a navy, black or brown belt
- Red, white or NAVY blue polo style short or long sleeve top (no logos are permitted on the shirt)
- White or oxford blue dress shirt with a pointed or button down collar
- Socks in **SOLID** NAVY, red or white that COVER the ankle (no logos are permitted on the socks)
- Red, white or NAVY hoodless sweaters are acceptable
- School fleeces and hoodless sweatshirts with the school emblem are also permissible
- Shoes are to be navy, brown or black

Weather accommodations for Girls and Boys

- In the warmer months, girls and boys may wear khaki or navy dress shorts. Gym shoes can be worn when wearing the uniform shorts.
- In the winter months, UGG boots (or the equivalent) may be worn. The boots must be khaki, brown or black with no embellishments on them. **Cowboy boots are not permitted.** Boots are only permitted when there is snow on the ground.

***The Principal will determine when these accommodations are permitted.**

DRESS UNIFORM

Weekly celebration of the Mass as a school community is central to CDTCA's mission. As an outward demonstration of reverence for this celebration, CDTCA students will be required to wear a dress uniform on Mass days and other special occasions designated by the principal of CDTCA.

Dress Uniform Code for Girls

- Plaid jumper or skirt
- White collared blouse or polo shirt
- White tights or knee socks

Dress Uniform Code for Boys

- Khaki pants
- Brown, black or navy belt
- White collared dress shirt or polo shirt

PRESENTATION UNIFORM

At times throughout the school year, CDTCA students will "present" in the community to perform at events or as a demonstration of our excellence. As a symbol of our solidarity the following Presentation Uniform will be required.

Presentation Uniform Code for Girls

- Plaid jumper or skirt
- Red polo shirt – short or long sleeved
- Red tights or knee socks

Dress Uniform Code for Boys

- Khaki pants
- Brown, black or navy belt
- Red polo shirt – short or long sleeved

GYM UNIFORM – GRADES 5 – 8

- Gray T-shirt or Field Trip T-Shirt – free of logos
- Navy Athletic Shorts – free of logos
- Gym Shoes

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child(ren) complies with the CDTCA Uniform Code. When the student does not conform to the code, the parent will be contacted to bring the appropriate clothing to the school. If the parent cannot bring clothing to school, the student will be given appropriate attire from the uniform closet to bring them into compliance with the uniform code.

EMERGENCIES

Emergency Forms

At the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete a Student Emergency form. It is imperative that the school be able to reach a parent in case of illness or an emergency. It is also important to list the names of others who can be contacted should a parent be unavailable. Please keep the card updated by notifying the office of changes.

Emergency Closings and Delays

If inclement weather or some other emergency requires that school be delayed or closed, this information will be announced via the **Option C Parent Alert system, radio, internet and/or television**. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL FOR THIS INFORMATION.**

In the event the school has a two-hour delay, all children should report to school no later than 10:10am. If a district does not have a delay, the children from that district will follow their normal bussing schedule. If a public school has a delay when the school does not, those children may follow the delayed bussing schedule unless the parent/s can bring them.

PLEASE NOTE: Because our attendance registers are legal indicators of a child's presence at the times we are in session, children who arrive late or are absent because of bussing when school is in session will be marked as Excused Tardy or Excused Absence.

Emergency Dismissals

In the event that we would be required to dismiss school early, that information will be announced via the **Option C Parent Alert system, radio, internet and/or television**. Children will be dismissed as parents are notified and transportation is arranged.

EXTENDED CARE

For an additional fee, Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy offers an after school program for parents who need childcare. Afternoon extended day is available from 2:50p.m. to 6p.m.. This service is available on a daily, weekly or yearly basis. Parents should contact the school office for the fee schedule and contact person if they plan to use the service.

TEXTBOOKS/SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy participates in Pennsylvania's Act 195/90 whereby the state purchases textbooks and instructional materials of non-religious nature. A form requesting permission to have a child use these books must be signed by a parent and kept on file in the school office. Students are responsible for the condition of the books given to them. Students will be required to pay for a book if it is damaged or lost. Books taken to and from school are to be placed in a book bag. **All books are to be covered at all times.**

For the convenience of families, supply lists are available each June for the following year. Students provide their own school supplies but are expected to comply with individual teacher requirements. Items not easily available elsewhere, such as primary tablets, will be sold at school. A small number of basic items will be available for sale during morning homeroom period.

TRANSPORTATION

It is important that the school knows the ordinary means by which each child arrives and departs daily. A note is to be sent when a change is necessary. For reasons of safety and insurance, each child is to ride his/her assigned bus.

Bus

Students who live more than a 1.5 mile radius from Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy are eligible to be bused to the school. Those who live along a route that has been declared "hazardous" are also eligible for busing. The Board of Education Transportation Division determines "hazardous route" claims. The student transportation policies and procedures of the local educational agencies responsible for busing students are applicable to all students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior while in route on the bus. Every bus follows the guidelines that are within our own discipline code. Students are expected to remain in their seats at all times. This ensures their safety and the safety of others.

If improper conduct occurs, the driver prepares a report which is sent home to alert the parents to the problem. If the behavior persists, the bus company has the right to ask the school district to suspend the student's privilege of riding the bus, temporarily or permanently. This will result in the student's losing bus privileges. The parent will be responsible to make other arrangements for transportation.

Bus Expectations

The following bus rules are to be obeyed:

- Use only the bus and bus stop assigned. Only the Department of Transportation can authorize changes.
- Remain seated at all times until the correct stop has been reached. If the driver has assigned seats, these seat assignments are to be honored
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus. Do not put anything out the window of the bus.
- In vehicles where seat belts are available, use them properly.
- Observe the same conduct as in the classroom. Quiet, respectful talking is permitted. Loud talking, etc. may distract the driver, prevent students from hearing instructions, or prevent the driver from hearing signals from emergency vehicles.
- Keep the bus clean; do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.
- Cooperate with the driver. Any directives of the bus driver in addition to the above are to be followed.

Car/Walkers

At dismissal students walking or riding cars are dismissed shortly after the bus riders. Walkers are to go to the corner or a crosswalk before crossing. Those picking children up by car should not leave their car unattended as this creates an unsafe condition. Wait for your child(ren) to secure their seatbelt or car seat before leaving.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Altar Servers & Children's Choir

Students in grades 4 through 8 have the privilege of serving on the altar. Students who choose this privilege are expected to fulfill assigned responsibilities and be on time. Servers are expected to be in the sacristy 10 minutes before the liturgical service. Also students in Grades 4 – 8 have the privilege of singing in the Children's Choir during school Masses. Students are expected to be on the Altar and in their 10 minutes before Mass begins.

Diocesan Instrumental Band Program

Band instruction is available for a fee for interested students from grades 4-8. The Diocesan Program sets the monthly fee annually. The instruments may be rented with the option to buy. Small group lessons are provided one period a week and practice is held once a week. The periods are rotated so the same classes are not missed too often. However, it remains the responsibility of the student to make up missed work. A meeting is held at the beginning of each school year to provide more information for interested parents.

Student Council

The Student Council consists of officers from grades 7 – 8 and includes a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Representatives are selected from each homeroom in grades 5 – 8. Candidates then prepare a speech for the office they are seeking. An assembly is held and the speeches are presented. Ballots are handed out and students in grades 4 – 7 vote. After the ballots are counted and the winners are announced, each homeroom selects a class representative. The officers are given charge of planning and running the meetings with the help of the faculty advisor.

The organizational goal is to foster *esprit de corps* through student planning and implementation of school activities. The Student Council sponsors events, such as dances, buddy partners, bake sales, and field day. They raise money for various charitable causes, such as Chimbote, Children's Hospital, and the Holy Childhood Association. They sponsor an annual food drive and plan various service projects.

Science Extravaganza!

Students in grades 4 through 6 participate in CDTCA's Science Extravaganza! In May each year fourth and fifth grade students present their science fair projects. Our seventh and eighth grade students mentor their underclassmen during this process. As mentors they assist the students in working through the scientific method. Students in the sixth grade present their inventions. Following a field trip to Inventionland in February, students begin working through the engineering design process to produce a prototype of an invention that will solve a real world problem. This is an exciting event that showcases the work of our budding scientists and engineers!

PJAS (Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science)

All students in grades 7 and 8 work through the scientific method to ask a question, formulate a hypothesis, design an experiment, collect data and then draw conclusions based on their data. Students present their projects to their classmates, parents and a panel of judges that are invited to our school in January. Students in the 7th and 8th grade classes have a choice to compete in the regional Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) competition held at Duquesne University in February each year. Students that earn a first place award at the regional competition at Duquesne University are invited to

the state competition at Penn State University, Main Campus, in May to compete against other students from across the state.

Future City Competition

Students in grade 6 work collaboratively and participate in the Future City Competition. The students work through the engineering design process and the project plan cycle to solve a real world problem. Students begin by designing a virtual city in SIM City. While developing their virtual city, students begin to research the scope of the problem that they are trying to solve. Their research culminates in a 1500 word essay that describes their solution to the problem. Next students work to build a three dimensional model of their city of the future that showcases the solution to the problem. Students prepare a presentation and compete against other schools in our region at Carnegie Music Hall in January. The entire project is overseen by a mentor engineer that we partner with in the community.

Forensics Speech Program

The Forensics Speech Program at CDTCA belongs to the Southwestern PA Forensics League where students in grades 5 – 8 compete with other schools within the Pittsburgh Diocese in six areas of public speaking. The students practice and prepare their pieces from various categories, such as drama and poetry, and deliver their speeches to trained judges on designated competition dates throughout the school year.

Battle of the Books

Students in grades 5-8 celebrate reading in a Battle of the Books program at CDTCA. In this program, books are carefully selected so that genre, grade level, and ethnic groups are represented. Books from authors in a series are also selected to encourage students to read after the competition. Teams are formed and students begin reading in the Fall. Then, in May, the students come together to meet for a few hours of competition and fun to answer questions about the books.

Basketball

Basketball is offered at all levels, beginning with instructional teams in the primary grades and continuing with separate boys' and girls' developmental, junior varsity and varsity teams at upper levels. Fund raising for all teams is provided almost entirely through refreshments sold at games and during the summer programs and tournaments. A general organizational meeting is held in the fall to acquaint parents and students with the basketball program.

Cross Country / Track

In the fall students in Grades 1 – 8 can participate in Cross Country and in the spring students can participate in Track. A few times a week students will practice. Meets are set up with area schools and at the end of the season with a diocesan competition ending the season. As well as improving fitness, this also gives the students the opportunity to interact socially.

Soccer

The Diocesan Soccer League offers two coed levels. The varsity team is composed of students in grades 7 and 8, and the junior varsity students from grades 5 and 6. The developmental team is composed of students in grades 3 and 4 and in grades 1 and 2. If possible, the teams participate in both the fall and the spring.

Girls Volleyball

The Girls Volleyball Program is open to students in Grades 4 – 8. Junior varsity and varsity teams participate in the Pittsburgh Diocesan Volleyball League. The goal of the program is to develop volleyball skills and teamwork.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEALTH ISSUES

School Nurse/Nurse Practitioner

A part-time school nurse is assigned to Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy each year. She is available in any emergency situations. The nurse has the following responsibilities:

- Maintain updated health records
- Make sure all immunizations are current
- Conduct vision and hearing screening
- Conduct scoliosis screening
- Work in conjunction with the speech therapist for hearing and speech screening
- Assist the school in appropriate health education
- Contact parents/guardians if any health problems arise
- Make arrangements for physical exams for Kindergarten & 6th graders

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to secure proper medical treatment, as it is needed.

Dentist

The Dentist makes visits when necessary to our school and is responsible for maintaining all dental records. The **Pennsylvania School Health Law requires dental examinations** for students entering grades K, 3rd and 7th. These grades were selected because they represent critical periods of growth and development in a child's life.

We recommend that your family dentist do these examinations. School dental health evaluations will be provided for students who do not furnish proof of a private dental examination within the previous six months. These forms are given out to the students before school ends so that appointments can be scheduled over the summer.

Illness

It is often difficult to decide if a child should stay home from school when complaining of illness. An objective sign is an elevated temperature. It is recommended that a child be kept home from school until the temperature has remained normal (below 100°) for 24 hours.

If a child has a temperature of 100° or more, skin rash, diarrhea/vomiting, strep throat, or evidence of lice, the child will be sent home. Parents are asked to use discretion in sending their children to school if they display any of these symptoms. Please inform the school office if your child becomes sick with a contagious illness. Notes will be sent home with the other children to warn parents of contact and incubation of communicable diseases. **Please see the School Re-Opening Plan on the School Website for COVID-19 symptoms.**

Accident and Injury

In the case of accident or illness at school, parents are contacted to take the child home, to the doctor, or hospital. It is important for your child's safety and comfort, as well as the effective operation of the school office that emergency information needed to locate parents is available for each child and that this information is kept up-to-date by parents.

Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the principal, school nurse, or teachers to make them aware of the problem. All cases of head lice should be reported immediately.

Medication

***All medicine is to be given at home, and parents are to request the physician to adjust the schedule for administration so that it can be given before and after school hours.**

***Please make note that all school personnel other than a RN or LPN are prohibited from administering medication to a student.**

If medicine which includes over the counter medicine must be self-administered at school by the student, the following guidelines apply:

- The medication must be delivered to the school by a responsible adult along with a physician's written request for distribution by the student. The parent may come to the school to administer the medication to their child if they want.
- Medication for self-administration by the student, brought to school must be in a container labeled by a pharmacist or doctor. The label must include the student's name, the name of the physician, date of prescription, dosage, and frequency of administration.
- Reminder all medications **must** be administered by a registered nurse, a licensed practical nurse, or by the parent or their designee (excluding non-medical school personnel). The only exception would be emergency medication which can be self-administered, such as an epi-pen or asthma inhaler.

SAFETY ISSUES:

Asbestos Notice

Pursuant to the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act (AHERA), our school was inspected by a certified AHERA Inspector. A Management Plan was developed and submitted to the PA Department of Education. A copy of our Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan is on file in the school office.

The school is re-inspected by a certified AHERA Inspector every three (3) years. The maintenance and custodial staff have received two (2) hours of Awareness Training and conduct a periodic surveillance twice a year, in December and June.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are held monthly. Exit directions, which are posted in prominent places in each room, are to be followed. No one—teacher, student or other personnel—may remain in the building during fire drills.

When the students hear the bell, they are to leave the room quickly and quietly in single file. Students remain outside until summoned back to class.

Students are to remain in absolute silence during all fire drills. Misconduct of any nature is to be reported to the principal. Misbehavior during fire drills is a very serious offense and will be dealt with immediately.

Weather Emergency Drills

Weather emergency drills are practiced yearly. Teachers follow the policy governing weather emergencies for student safety. Students must maintain silence at all times during a weather emergency drill. Staff assists handicapped students.

Lockdown Drills

Lockdown drills are practiced throughout the year. Teachers and students follow the protocols and procedures that have been put in place.

Safe Environment Program

The purpose of the Safe Environment Program (SEP) of the Diocese of Pittsburgh is to take reasonable measures to assure that adults who have contact with minors (1) are committed to providing a safe environment for children and youth and (2) are capable of identifying and preventing abuse of children and (3) have no personal history of behavior that would be a threat to children.

Adults (18 or older) volunteering with children at Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy must be compliant in the requirements of the safe environment policy:

- Complete application at www.diopitt.org, which processes the PA State Police Criminal Record Clearance;
- Read and sign the Code of Pastoral Conduct
- Read and sign the Child Protective services Law of Pennsylvania;
- Receive the Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance;
- FBI Clearances (fingerprinting)
- Attend the Protecting God's Children Program.
- Mandate Reporter Training

Security/Visitors

All doors to the school will be closed and locked during school hours. Parents and visitors should use the buzzer on the main school door to gain entrance to the building. For security reasons, anyone entering Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy is to report to the school office or secretary immediately regardless of the purpose of the visit. For the safety of all students, a visitor's badge must be worn. Communication with teachers and students will be handled by the school office and will be done in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process in the school.

Any articles or items to be left for a student will be left in the school office or with the secretary. This will eliminate any unnecessary interruptions to classes and instruction.

Playground

Every school day, weather permitting, the students enjoy an outside break supervised by a staff member and volunteer monitors. Organized play is encouraged. Rough games are not permitted. **This will be left to the discretion of the adult(s) on duty.**

Students are never to leave the playground area without the permission of the principal and the knowledge of the playground monitor. In case of illness or accident, the student is to report to the school office.

Lunch monitors have the responsibility of enforcing rules. They are to be obeyed and treated respectfully.

When the bell rings to end the playground session, the students will be met by teachers and taken to their classrooms or lockers in order to prepare for their afternoon classes.

The following rules are to be observed on the playground:

- Not to re-enter the building unless for an emergency
- Display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control
- Play in assigned areas.
- Stay on school grounds (This includes not retrieving a ball that has gone off school grounds.)
- Obey the directives of the playground monitors, courteously and promptly.
- Stop playing at once when the first bell rings and walk quietly to line up when the second bell rings.

If inclement weather makes it necessary to stay indoors at lunchtime, classroom rules are to be observed:

- Sit at your desk or sit on the floor.
- Engage in activities and include everyone.

DISCIPLINE

Introduction

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment based on the Social Teachings of the Church. Discipline is considered an element of moral guidance, not a form of punishment.

Every teacher and staff member shares the responsibility to model appropriate behavior and to support the structure necessary for learning self-discipline. Students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their actions, develop self-control, and accept responsibility and consequences for inappropriate behavior. A copy of the Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Discipline Policy is also available in the school office, posted in every classroom and can be found in the Parent-Student Handbook.

A Christ-centered school environment fosters the following behaviors:

- Recognizing and fostering the uniqueness and dignity of each individual
- Nurturing respect in all relationships involving school and parish community
- Developing a sense of rights and responsibilities and commitment to the entire school and parish community.

Social skills, both interpersonal and intrapersonal, are taught, modeled, practiced, and infused into the daily life and experience of the school family.

Guiding Principles

The following seven principles are the basis of Catholic Social Teachings and are the principles that guide us in all of our interactions.

- We believe in the life and dignity of the human person. Each person is sacred.
- We believe we are called to family, community, and participation. It is our duty to support each other by our actions.
- We believe that we have rights and responsibilities. Every person has the fundamental right to life and responsibility to and for one another.
- We believe that we have an obligation to the poor and vulnerable. We are called to put the rights of others before our own.
- We believe that we are called to care for God's creation. We are all stewards of the earth..
- We believe that solidarity is our call. We are one family regardless of our differences.
- We believe that workers have rights and that work has dignity. Work is a form of participating in God's creation.

Expectations

As a matter of safety, students are expected to behave in the following manner:

Before school

- dress according to the school dress code
- early arrival are to report to Media Center #1 in Bldg. #1 no earlier than 7:30a.m.
- gather in the designated area
- engage in quiet conversation
- line up quietly for dismissal to your homeroom

In school

- walk through the halls in an orderly manner
- use proper language at all times
- follow the dress code for school days and dress up/down days
- respect school property and the property of other students
- have a note from their parent/guardian if they change their mode of school transportation

In the classroom

- follow the classroom rules of each teacher
- be responsible for submitting homework on time and making up assignments missed within a reasonable amount of time
- have a respectful attitude toward teachers and one another
- be responsible for appropriate supplies
- be honest in all communications
- use computers and school equipment appropriately
- refrain from chewing gum
- do not leave or enter a classroom at any time without a teacher or designated adult giving permission

During lunch

- remain seated until finished eating and wait for dismissal to the playground area or classroom
- clean up, pick up all scraps of food, etc., and dispose of them properly
- obey cafeteria monitors at all times
- speak in a conversational tone
- walk at all times

During recess

- refrain from reentering the building unless for an emergency if so seek an adult before entering
- display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control
- include all classmates in play activities
- play in assigned areas only
- stay on school grounds at all times (This includes not retrieving a ball that has gone off school grounds.)
- use equipment properly
- avoid throwing harmful objects
- obey the directives of playground monitors, courteously and promptly.
- stop playing at the first bell and walk quietly to the designated area when the second bell rings
- students participate in prayer before re-entering the building or before the next period begins

After school

- follow dismissal procedures
- walk to assigned place to wait until bus arrives or car riders are dismissed
- avoid running or playing games on the school grounds
- leave the school grounds immediately
- sign in at the extended care program if not picked up by 3 p.m.

At athletic events and assemblies

- practice good sportsmanship as spectators and participants
- show respect towards coaches, referees, and visiting teams
- maintain an appropriate silence during special performances

Outside school

- to behave responsibly off school property
- (If the principal is made aware of misconduct off school property of a child recognized to be a student in Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy parents may be contacted; however, it is important to note that the school is not responsible for student's actions that occur off school property.)
- Principals will forward disciplinary notices given by public school bus drivers to parents to support the disciplinary report of the bus driver. (See page 19-20 for Bus Expectations.)

Bus/Van*

- use only the bus and bus stop assigned
- remain seated while the bus in motion
- talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise
- refrain from talking to the driver unless it is necessary
- refrain from placing objects or body parts outside the windows
- refrain from littering inside the bus or from throwing anything out the window

***Principals will forward disciplinary notices given by public school bus drivers to parents to support the disciplinary report of the bus driver. Continual infraction of rules could result in loss of bus transportation privileges.**

Fire Drill

- walk quickly in a single file
- keep arms at sides
- observe silence!

Any staff member will correct students who do not follow expectations.

Consequences

Please be aware that inappropriate behavior will be addressed. The severity or repetition of non-compliance will determine the appropriate consequences. To remediate unacceptable behavior, the following actions may be taken:

- Teacher/student conference to develop a plan for remediation
- Loss of recess
- Notification to parents
- Detention
- Administrative referral
- Referral to the E-SAP Team
- Denial of participation in school activities, including sports
- School probation
- In-School or Out-of-School Suspension.

Should the student receive a detention, the parent/guardian will receive a written or verbal notice with at least a 24-hour notice. It is in the best interest of the student that home and school work together for the child's academic and social development.

In the event of a serious act of misbehavior or repeated acts of misbehavior, a student may serve either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. If misconduct continues, a student may be asked to leave the school. These decisions rest with the administration and may be necessary for the benefit of the total program.

The following behaviors will result in immediate administrative referrals and can result in referrals to law enforcement or other government agencies:

- Violations of weapons policy
- Violations of the drug/alcohol policy
- Any purposeful action that results in bodily harm to another or any purposeful action that threatens or may cause harm to the school community or a student

School Lockers

School lockers are the property of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy. The use of lockers is a privilege, not a right. Students shall have no expectation of privacy therein as the school retains the right to conduct both announced and unannounced locker searches. Discovery of illegal materials in a school locker may result in discipline up to and including expulsion and/or referral to appropriate authorities.

Elastic Clause

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, this clause empowers the administration and faculty to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of the school even though it is not specified in the Discipline Policy.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any regulation for just cause, at his or her discretion.

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy **No Bullying Policy**

In keeping with the teachings of Christ, Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy will provide a safe, caring and supportive school environment, free of bullying, for all members of the school community.

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Defines Bullying as:

Someone repeatedly and on purpose saying or doing mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending himself or herself

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Bullying Prevention Rules:

Rule 1: We will not bully others.

Rule 2: We will try to help students who are bullied

Rule 3: We will try to include students who are left out

Rule 4: If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Three Major Components of Bullying:

- Bullying is an intentional, negative act
- Bullying is usually repeated behavior
- Bullying involves a power imbalance

Different Forms or Kinds of Bullying include:

- Being verbally bullied
- Being socially excluded or isolated
- Being physically bullied

- Being bullied through lies and false rumors
- Having money or other things taken or damaged
- Being threatened or forced to do things
- Racial bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Cyber-bullying (ex. via cell phone, Social Media, Instagram, the Internet etc.)

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy
2020-2021 Discipline Policy

Level 1 Consequences

<u>Level 1 Conduct</u>	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Bullying (refer to Bullying Behavior Chart)	Teacher identifies behavior Teacher states expectation Student to call parents Warning	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Student to call parents 1 lost lunch recess	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Student to call parents 1-2 lost lunch recesses
Dress Code	Teacher identifies behavior Teacher states expectation Teacher & Student complete the Incident Form Warning	Same as 1 st offense 1 lost lunch recess	Same as 2 nd offense 3 lost lunch recesses 4 th offense 1 after-school detention
Gum/Candy	Teacher identifies behavior Teacher states expectation Teacher & Student complete the Incident Form Warning	Same as 1 st offense 1 lost lunch recess	Same as 2 nd offense 3 lost lunch recesses 4 th offense 1 after-school detention
Cell phone possession or use while on campus. <i>*including morning and after-care.</i>	Same as above	Same as above	Same as 2 nd offense 3 lost lunch recesses 4 th offense 1 after-school detention
Use of electronic devices while on campus. <i>*including morning and after-care unless approved by teacher.</i>	Same as above	Same as above	Same as 2 nd offense 3 lost lunch recesses 4 th offense 1 after-school detention

Level 2 Consequences

<u>Level 2 Conduct</u>	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Bullying (refer to Bullying Behavior Chart)	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Student to call parents <u>1-3 lost lunch recesses</u>	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Student to call parents <u>1 after-school detention</u>	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Student to call parents <u>2 after-school detentions</u>
Disruption/ distracting behavior (church or school)	Teacher & Student complete the Incident Form Students is responsible for missed classroom work Students calls parent/guardian Student meets with the Principal <u>1-3 lost lunch recesses</u>	Complete Incident form Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Student to call parents (at home or work) <u>1 after-school detention</u>	Complete Incident form Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Student to call parents (at home or work) <u>2 after-school detentions</u>
Defiance/ disrespect	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
Vandalism/damage to school property	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
Cheating/copying	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above

Level 3 Consequences

<u>Level 3 Conduct</u>	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Bullying (refer to Bullying Behavior Chart)	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Student to call parents (at home or work) <u>1 after - school detention</u>	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Student to call parents (at home or work) <u>2 after - school detentions</u>	Complete Incident and “Think About It” forms Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Student to call parents (at home or work) <u>1 day in-school suspension</u>

Cursing/obscenity/ inappropriate gestures	Teacher & Student Complete the Incident Form Student meets with the Principal Student is responsible for missed classroom work Student calls parent/guardian (at home or work) 1 after-school detention	Complete Incident Form Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Phone call to parents (at home or work) 2 after-school detentions	Complete Incident Form Meet with the Principal Complete Missed Work Phone call to parents (at home or work) 1 in-school suspension
Fighting	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
Theft	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above

Level 4 Consequences

<u>Level 4 Conduct</u>	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Possession or Dissemination of Pornography	Follow Diocesan Policy	Same as 1 st offense	Same as 2 nd offense
Drugs/alcohol	Follow Diocesan Policy	Same as 1 st offense	Same as 2 nd offense
Weapons	Follow Diocesan Policy	Same as 1 st offense	Same as 2 nd offense

Additional Level 1 – 4 Consequences

<u>Level 1 Conduct</u>	4th Offense would require 1 after-school detention. 5th Offense would require 2 after-school detentions. Further problems equal additional after-school detentions.
<u>Level 1 Bullying</u>	After the third time a student demonstrates bullying behavior in one school year, the principal and the homeroom teacher will develop an individual behavior plan to be signed by the parent.
<u>Level 2 Conduct</u>	4thOffense would require a Parent Conference and 1day in-school suspension. 5th Offense would require a Parent Conference and 2 days of in-school suspension. Further problems equal additional in-school suspension days or out – of – school suspension days.
<u>Level 2 Bullying</u>	After the third time a student demonstrates bullying behavior in one school year, the principal and the homeroom teacher will develop an individual behavior plan to be signed by the parent.
<u>Level 3 Conduct</u>	4th Offense would require either an in or out-of- school suspension depending upon the severity/ circumstances.

<u>Level 3 Bullying</u>	After the third time a student demonstrates bullying behavior in one school year, the principal and the homeroom teacher will develop an individual behavior plan to be signed by the parent.
<u>Level 4 Conduct</u>	4th Offense would require either an in or out-of-school suspension or expulsion depending upon the severity/ circumstances.

**The school reserves the right to amend the CDTCA Discipline Policy at any time as well as going above and beyond the consequences set forth.
Parents will be given notice of any amendment**

PARENTS

The basic principles of the philosophy of a Catholic School flow from the obligation of parents to be the primary educators of their children. To fulfill this responsibility, the parent must become the educational partner with the school.

To help the parents' partnership in education become a reality, the school endeavors to help parents to

- have a clear understanding of the philosophy of a Catholic School
- have a working knowledge and a commitment to the philosophy of the local Catholic school
- establish mutual cooperation concerning all aspects of their child's education
- provide home experiences that will complement, reinforce, and extend the formal religious and academic instruction received in school

RIGHTS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gives full rights to each parent, unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, State's statute or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights. Such an order is to be on file in the school and those persons responsible for the child(ren) are to be informed of the circumstances. Every effort is made to keep the non-custodial parent apprised of the progress of the child(ren) through reports, report cards and parent/teacher conferences if requested by the non-custodial parent and not prohibited by the court.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

CDTCA School Advisory Council

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy has a School Advisory Council which is an advisory body to the Regional Administrator, Pastors of the Lower Allegheny Region and principal. The School Advisory Council consists of the Regional Administrator, Pastors of the Lower Allegheny Region, principal, one appointed member from each regional parish and one appointed school member from each regional parish. Reports from the Principal, Athletic Association, PTG Board, and Marketing/Admissions Director are shared at the School Advisory Board quarterly meetings. The Board can have several areas of concentration such as: Spirituality and Ministry, Finance and Development, Curriculum Enrichment, Extracurricular Programming, Cultural Connections, Grounds and Buildings, and Alumni Relations. A Parent interested in helping Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy continue its tradition of excellence are invited to ask the Principal about serving on the School Advisory Council.

Athletic Association

All sport programs are the responsibility of the Regional Administrator/Principal. The Athletic Director is accountable to the Regional Administrator/Principal. Coaches are selected by the Athletic Director and approved by Regional Administrator/Principal and serve on a volunteer basis. The Diocesan Guidelines for Elementary Catholic Schools Sports programs guide the policies. Parent interest and willingness to serve on the Athletic Association are vital to the continued success of the program, but all school associations and advisory boards are under the supervision of the Regional Administrator/Principal.

Parent Teacher Guild (PTG)

The Parent Teacher Guild (PTG), as an advisory body, is intended to provide opportunities for parents to fulfill their God given role as educators and to give mutual support through collaboration with the school.

The membership of the parent organization consists of the parents/guardians, principal, and the faculty of the school. It is not intended to replace the Regional Advisory Board.

The objectives of the guild are the following:

- offer opportunities for parents to understand the Catholic Philosophy of education and the Diocesan School Program(s);
- publicize through an on-going and effective public relations marketing campaign the contributions of the school to the parish and the broader Church and civic communities;
- maximize financial resources available to the school through well-planned fund raising activities, volunteer services, and contributions from the business community.

Social Activities

The PTG sponsors social activities for special occasions during the school year. No other instructional time should be used for these events without the principal's permission. Class treats for birthdays will be distributed under the discretion of the homeroom teacher. Consideration must be given to students with allergies. A note should be sent to the homeroom teacher the day before the treat will be sent to school.

Birthday Party Invitations

Please do not send party invitations to school to be distributed for your child's birthday. This may cause hurt feelings among the students who are not invited. The only exception to this is if every boy or every girl or all students in your child's room are invited. **Please see the COVID-19 Addendum for Birthday Celebration for the 2020-2021 school year.**

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Scholarship Monies

Scholarship monies are available for eligible families. The FACTS application is used and assessed by an independent evaluator. The same application is used for Scholastic Opportunities Scholarships, and the Bishop's Education Fund and must be filed by March. Application forms are available in the school's office or can be completed electronically.

Tuition

Parents who register a student enter into a contractual obligation with the school. The first tuition payment is due in **July** of the upcoming academic year; subsequent payments are due the **10th of each month**, with the full payment due by **April** of the end of the academic year. Parents are reminded that the operational budget of the school is dependent on timely fulfillment of this obligation. Parents whose tuition is in arrears will receive a notice indicating the past due amount. **Registration for the next school year, final grades, and transfers of academic records will not be processed if there is an outstanding balance.** It is Diocesan policy that no student be readmitted to a new school year if there is an outstanding tuition from the previous year.

Fundraising

The Diocesan policy for funding elementary Catholic schools calls for each school to have fundraising activities to generate a minimum of 10% of the total operating budget. This enables tuition rates to remain at 60% of the total cost. School parents are expected to participate in these fundraising activities to the best of their ability through monetary donations, purchases and/or volunteer work.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

On-going Communication

Throughout the school year various types of school information will be emailed or sent home with your child. Make sure to check your child's bookbag. In addition, any information or fliers, etc. that a parent may want to distribute must be approved by the principal. Parents may return any necessary forms to the school office or homeroom teacher.

The school newsletter is published once a month during the school year and is posted on the school website under the Parents link. The deadline for submitting articles and information to our Newsletter is the 15th of the month prior to publication. A monthly calendar and our monthly hot lunch menu are emailed home at the end of each month and posted on our website.

The "School News" section of the parish Sunday bulletin also contains information for parents. Parents and friends are welcome to join our liturgical celebrations throughout the school year.

The Option C Parent Alert notification system is used for regular school communication, emergencies and other time-sensitive issues.

Parents are informed of the student's progress and other school information as follows:

- On-line grading
- Quarterly Report Cards
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Conferences on request
- Conduct referrals
- CDTCA Weekly Happenings
- Parent Teacher Guild meetings

Any questions concerning your child should be directed to the teacher. Please call the school office **412-781-7927** and the teacher will be notified to contact you or you can directly email the teacher as another way of communicating. Positive communication between teacher and parent is vital to our total educational

program. Parents are asked not to call teachers at their homes.

Report Cards and Conferences

Reporting student progress to parents is one of the primary responsibilities of the school. In addition to posting grades on-line, the school combines parent conferences with written reports of a student's progress. Written reports are issued four times a year, with the exception of Kindergarten which is issued three times a year. Parent-teacher conferences are formally conducted twice a year, once at the end of the first nine weeks and once at the end of the second nine weeks.

Parent teacher conferences have the following goals:

- enable home and school to meet the needs of the student more effectively;
- establish a working relationship with parents in the interest of the student;
- interpret to parents their child's academic growth and progress;
- suggest ways parents can help students succeed in school.

Efforts are made to provide every parent with an opportunity for a conference. Students will be dismissed early for the first conferences in November to facilitate meeting with parents but not the second conferences. Evening conferences may be scheduled.

Personal Cell Phone / Personal Technology Device / Social Media (i.e. Snapchat, Facebook, Email, Texting)

No child is permitted to use or possess a personal cell phone, or any personal technology device at any time throughout the day. Forgotten homework, books, or changes in plans during the school day are not sufficient cause to call home by using a personal cell phone. In an emergency, the office will call the parent. **All personal cell phones and other personal technology devices are collected at the beginning of the day and returned at the end of the day. Students found in possession of a personal cell phone or personal technology device throughout the day will be sent to the Principals Office and the parent will be notified.**

While Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy respects the right to freedom of speech we also recognize that at times freedom of speech can be used in a hurtful and negative manner. Therefore, Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy has established the following policy for the safety of all members of this school community. If you choose to use Snapchat, Facebook, Email, Texting or any type of social media as a way to negatively damage the reputation of another person, family or school community member you could be in direct violation of the Catholic Memorandum of Understanding and possibly jeopardize your membership at Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy. A Catholic education is a privilege. Each case will be handled on an individual basis by the administration.

VOLUNTEERS

The help of volunteers is always appreciated in the school and at school-sponsored events. Please consider using some of your time and talent to help enhance our quality program. The possibilities are endless. At Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy parents play an integral role in the education of their children through the Parent Teacher Guild, Regional Advisory Board, athletics, fund-raising activities, homeroom parents, playground/lunchroom monitors and field trip chaperones. This partnership is invaluable to the success of our school.

The Safe Environment Program (SEP) of the Diocese of Pittsburgh takes reasonable measures to assure that adults who have contact with minors (1) are committed to providing a safe environment for children and youth and (2) are capable of identifying and preventing abuse of children and (3) have no personal history of behavior that would be a threat to children.

Adults (18 or older) volunteering with children at Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy must be compliant in the requirements of the safe environment policy:

- Complete database application at www.diopitt.org, which processes the PA State Police Criminal Record Clearance;
- Read and sign the Code of Pastoral Conduct;
- Read and sign the Child Protective Services Law of Pennsylvania
- Apply for the Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse History Clearance;
- Apply for the FBI Clearance (fingerprinting)
- Attend or take the on-line Protecting God's Children Training.
- Attend or take the on-line Mandated Reporter Training

***Please read, sign and return the Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Internet Use Agreement which follows. This signed document will permit your child(ren) access to the school Internet system. An Internet Use Agreement must be signed annually.**

Guideline for "Internet Use Policy" Implementation and Practice

This guideline is established to ensure understanding and application of the Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Internet Use Policy. Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy reserves the right to amend these guidelines at any time. It is understood that the administration of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy will inform parents/guardians of any changes made in these Guidelines. **Students' parents and/or guardians are required to review these guidelines with their child(ren) and complete and return the attached parent/guardian consent form.**

This guideline includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Information and news from a wide variety of sources and research institutions
- Public domain and shareware software of all types
- Discussion groups
- Access to any educational institutions and libraries.

Etiquette

All Students are required to:

- Be polite when sending written messages to others
- Use appropriate language is expected in all messages
- Avoid anything pertaining to illegal activity
- Protect information, personal or otherwise
- Respect others' access to the internet
- Remember that deleted materials can be retrieved.

The following actions, which are not inclusive, are considered unacceptable actions:

- Placing unlawful information on the Internet
- Using the Internet for non-school related activities
- Sending messages that are likely to result in loss of the recipients work or systems

- Using the Internet for commercial purposes
- Using the Internet for political lobbying
- Sending or receiving copyrighted material without permission.
- Plagiarism
- Using Internet access to send or retrieve pornographic material, inappropriate file text, files dangerous to the integrity of the system, violent or threatening material or messages
- Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks
- Vandalism
- Falsifying one's identity
- Using the Internet to harass another person.



Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

CDTCA Individual Student Internet Use Agreement

Parents/Guardians:

Be advised that your child(ren) will not be permitted to access Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy’s Internet access until this agreement is signed, dated, and returned.

Student(s) Agreement

I have read the Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Policy on Internet Access and the guidelines established from that policy. I understand fully and agree to abide by the policy statement and the guideline statements expressed or implied.

Each child in the household who attends Christ the Divine Teacher catholic academy, grades 2 – 8, must sign this agreement.

Student Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I have read the Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Internet Use Agreement and the guidelines established from that policy. I understand fully the information that is contained therein. I agree to not hold school administration and faculty responsible for materials my child(ren) acquires as a result of inappropriate Internet use.

I accept full financial responsibility if and when my child(ren) access the Internet without an account on equipment provided on the school site.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

COVID-19 Addendum

Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan - Our school Phased Reopening Health and Safety Plan is posted in the CDTCA school website. Please make sure you take time to familiarize yourself with any new procedures or protocols set forth due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Birthday Celebrations for the 2020-2021 school year – As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Birthday Celebrations will be different in order to ensure the health and safety of the school community. **All pizza parties are on hold until further notice.** If you choose to bring in a treat for your students birthday, it must be prepackaged in individual portions (**no homemade treats or store bought bakery items**). All treats will be sent home and unfortunately not enjoyed at school. At this time due to the limitations of visitors parents/guardians will be unable to attend Birthday Celebrations in the classroom.



Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

It is important that parents/guardians, students and staff know the policies and procedures of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy. To ensure that the process of communication is complete, please review the revised Parent/Student Handbook with your children.

When you have reviewed the contents, please sign and return this form to the school office via your child's homeroom teacher.

Family Name: _____

Children's Name(s): _____

I have read and agree to be governed by the Parent/Student Handbook of Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____