



**School Handbook**  
*Revised 2020*

*faith, family & education*

## **Mission Statement**

Notre Dame Catholic School, a ministry of the Notre Dame Catholic Community, fosters learning through an unsurpassed faith-based education that prepares young people for extraordinary lives.

## **Our Educational Philosophy**

Jesus said, “I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). By connecting the art and the science of teaching within a faith-based environment, the needs of every child can be met, developing in each student the many gifts that God has given in every class every day. Educating the whole child – spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically – every child learns to live by the Notre Dame Code: We will see Christ in ourselves and in others and will be Christ for one another.

## **Parent/Student Handbook Purpose**

The Policies and Guidelines section of this Parent/Student handbook provides information about school policies and guidelines the daily operations of our school. It is important that each student and his/her parents read and become familiar with the handbook. When parents, students and teachers work together toward a common goal, a more enjoyable school experience will happen.

## **Parents Role in Education**

Notre Dame Catholic School and Parish consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children. Parents are the primary educators of their children. Here at Notre Dame, we believe that it is a parent’s right and duty to become the primary role model for the development of your child’s life. Helping to develop them physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally and psychologically. Making a dedication to recognizing God as the greatest good in his/her own life. Ideals taught in school and church are not well rooted unless nurtured at home. Let us begin with a commitment to a partnership as we support one another in helping your child grow.

## **School Wide Expectations and Vision of Students**

To be an active faith-filled person who:

- Prays
- Exhibits knowledge of the Catholic Church
- Participates with respect in the sacramental life of the Church
- Demonstrates compassion through service

An active life-long learner who:

- Understands, integrates and applies knowledge in academic areas
- Reads, researches, problem solves and thinks critically
- Balances spiritual, intellectual and physical growth
- Self-motivated to learn
- Works towards a common goal of a team

- Works to obtain personal goals

An effective communicator who:

- Exhibits self-confidence and awareness
- Actively listens
- Articulates ideas
- Resolves conflict

A person of integrity:

- Accepts responsibility for personal behavior
- Makes moral choices and supports the common good
- Demonstrates a high level of social and ethical standard
- Approaches conflict and challenging situations with grace, dignity, self-respect and confidence

An active global citizen:

- Practices stewardship for all of God's creation
- Respects all races, cultures, faith traditions and individuals
- Works socially, environmentally, and politically for a common good

### **Reports to Parents/Guardians**

Academic progress may be accessed by using our Student Management System. Passwords are issued to each parent at the start of the school year. Students receive report cards at the end of each semester via parent's web. Hard copies are also sent home after each quarter and available for pick up at the end of the year. It is expected parents, teachers, and students share the responsibility of communicating student progress.

### **Academic Honor Code**

The administration and faculty of Notre Dame Catholic School are dedicated not only to teaching academic skills, but also to fostering integrity among our students. Recognizing that today's students are tomorrow's leaders, students must be encouraged to recognize, understand and practice ethical behavior. In an effort to accomplish this goal, the following policy is presented to help students avoid what is considered unethical behavior and to help guide them toward more acceptable conduct.

For assignments, papers, books reports, tests, quizzes:

Infractions are cumulative during the student's entire enrollment at NDCS and are to be graduated in severity. (i.e., if a student cheats in a Math class and is reported and sometime later in the same year or during another year cheats in History class that will count as two violations.)

Consequences:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: a zero (0) for the assignment, parents notified by the teacher and a copy of the letter is to be put in the student's disciplinary file.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: consequence as in #1
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: consequence as in #1 and #2, and The principal teacher, parent and student will

- meet for a final warning.
- 4<sup>th</sup> offense: Student may be withdrawn from school

Some examples of cheating are, but not limited to, copying another person's work to be submitted as one's own work; plagiarism (see below); having, using, or attempting to use unauthorized aids books, notes, electronic aids on tests, quizzes, papers, or projects; writing formulas, notes, or anything on desks, paper, hands or clothing to be used or actually used on the assignment, test, or quiz; talking during a testing session; having a copy of the test or answers to the test; providing specific information about a test to someone who has not yet taken the test; giving unauthorized assistance to a fellow student, (i.e., giving student homework to copy, allowing another student to look on test papers, doing another student's assignment for them); forgery in connection with academic endeavors or school processes or procedures.

Plagiarism results from the unacknowledged use of material found in print sources, oral presentations, or visual, electronic or other media sources. Plagiarism does not require an intention to deceive, and can result when a student submits as his or her own work ideas, language, data or other material contained in a source not acknowledged by the student (if the student knew or should have known that such acknowledgement was required).

### **Honor Roll Criteria - Grades 1 – 8**

The purpose of the honor roll program is to recognize and honor students who have attained outstanding academic success and to inspire all students to strive to work even harder to perform at their highest level in all subjects.

Students will qualify for each level of honor roll using the following criteria:

***Pastor's Honor Roll** - 4.0 gpa or higher in all subjects including specials*

***Principal's Honor Roll** - 3.7 – 3.99 gpa in all subjects including specials*

***Honor Roll** - 3.5 – 3.69 gpa in all subjects including specials*

Students will not be eligible for honor roll if they have an effort/conduct grade below a 3.

### **Academic Probation – Grades 6-8**

Any student with a GPA that falls under a 2.0 at the end of the grading quarter due to a lack of effort will be placed on Academic Probation. Lack of effort is defined as excessively missing assignments and failure to take ownership of education by not upholding high expectations of active participation in education. Missing assignments are defined as assignments that are not turned in on the day expected. As a grace, students are able to turn in assignments a day late with a penalty of a 10% reduction in grade. Any work turned in past the designated grace period will result in a zero given for the assignment.

Students placed on probation will be reviewed every three weeks with the principal, parents, student, and teachers. During the review, the student's grades, academic standing and academic plan for successful improvement will be discussed.

Students are also offered extra help sessions to promote academic success. Students and parents seeking extra help may make arrangements with the student's teacher(s) to attend such sessions.

Students placed on academic probation may not participate in extracurricular activities including athletics or attend athletic activities, field trips, dress down days and other activities at the principal's discretion. Students placed on Academic Probation for 3 consecutive grading quarters will be reviewed by the principal, teachers and RTI team to determine if promotion to the next grade or enrollment at Notre Dame Catholic School is allowed to continue the following school year.

Students who have missing work due to absences are given a day with no penalty for each day absent. Work not completed past the days given will fall under this policy.

## **Attendance Policy**

Notre Dame Catholic School believes strongly that regular attendance and punctuality are essential to good performance in school. Through the combined efforts of students, parents, and school personnel, the goals of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility can be developed as we prepare students for the adult world. Regular attendance is a necessary component of this preparation.

### **Absences Defined:**

#### **Excused Absences**

Excused absences are defined as absences that the school corporation regards as legitimate reasons for being out of school, as included in the school policy. These could include:

- Illness verified by note from parent/guardian (no more than three per semester)
- Illness verified by note from Physician (after three parent excused calls)
- Family funeral
- Military Connected Families (e.g. absences related to deployment/return)
- Excused by Principal
- High School Visits

#### **Unexcused Absences**

An unexcused absence is any absence not covered under the definition of excused or exempt.

## **Attendance Procedure**

### **Absences**

If a student is going to be absent the parent/guardian must call the school office at (219-872-6216) prior to 8:45 A.M., each day the student will be absent from school. If the student is absent due to illness, he/she is not permitted to practice, compete, perform, and attend any athletic contest or activity that day.

When you call the school about your student's absence, you may request homework to be picked up or sent home with a sibling. Homework for absences will not be available for pick up during school hours.

Students accumulating 10 or more unexcused absences may risk being retained in the present grade.

### **General Guidelines Concerning Attendance**

If a student is to be absent for reasons other than illness, a note detailing the absence is requested at least two days in advance.

If at all possible, parents should not schedule doctor appointments, and other personal business during the school day. Requests for early dismissal may be made to the office before 8:45 to avoid disruption of instruction during the day. Special unforeseen circumstances are an exception. Warnings and detentions may apply for excessive requests for early dismissal and is made at the discretion of the principal.

The school calendar allows for families to schedule vacation times without the interruption of the normal school day. Families are asked to use these time slots as much as possible. A student's academic performance may suffer if he/she misses school for an extended period of time. Parents requesting advanced assignments prior to a vacation should fill out a Vacation Request Form from the office. Please note that it is not always possible to give advanced assignments. Students/parents should communicate with their teacher to discuss assignments/ tests that have missed.

If a student becomes ill during the day, he/she must call his/her parents from the main office to receive permission before leaving.

### **For information on COVID-19 related absences please refer to Appendix A (COVID-19 Return to School)**

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Daily attendance at school is expected. Students involved in any extracurricular activity (including sports) must have attended class ALL DAY on the day of the activity in order to be able to participate in that activity. Approved field trips or school activities constitute attending school. Any exemptions (funeral, dental, doctor, for example) must be approved by the Office. "Sleeping in" with parental approval is not an allowable exemption.

Upon the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) UNEXCUSED absence, the student places him or herself in jeopardy of losing all credits for the semester. The administration will advise on all situations. Students are not considered absent when attending field trips, high school visits, masses, school directed activities, traveling abroad, etc.

### **Tardiness**

Notre Dame Catholic School is responsible for students developing a sense of self-management. Demanding punctuality is directed toward that goal. Punctuality is the duty and responsibility of each student. Students are expected to be on time for the school day and scheduled activities during the school day.

### **Tardiness Defined**

Tardiness is defined as a student not being in an assigned area or classroom when the allowed

passing time has expired (Junior High). A student is tardy if not in the classroom and prepared for the day at 8:00 am, unless he/she has an admit pass from school personnel.

### **Tardiness Procedure:**

When students arrive late at school, the parent/guardian must sign them in at the school's office. All tardies are recorded. Excused tardies are given for medical and dental appointments. For attendance purposes, 3 tardies is equal to one absence.

### **Discipline for unexcused tardies (each semester):**

Warnings will be issued for the first three tardies a student receives. A detention will be issued when the student reaches six unexcused tardies. After School Detention will be held on the following Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Allowances will be made for COVID-19 related absences and tardies.**

### **Code of Conduct & Discipline**

Notre Dame Catholic School seeks to create a healthy moral environment and to build a school community reflecting gospel values and the spirit of Jesus' love. We wish to develop an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, protect members of our school family from injury or malicious harm, and safeguard both private and school property. Our goal is to aid our students in growing into mature responsible Christian leaders. Firm and sound discipline of the individual is basic to this development. Respectful behavior must be taught, learned, and practiced.

As a Catholic school community, opportunities to gather in prayer are especially important. Student behavior during liturgies and prayer should be exemplary. Students should always remain silent during Mass and prayer experiences except to pray aloud or sing as appropriate. Students who are not of the Catholic faith are expected to participate as fully as possible and to remain in respectful silence when not participating.

We expect everyone at Notre Dame Catholic School (students, parents, teachers, administrators, and staff) to treat all others with respect. Courteous behavior and respect for the rights of others are expected of all students in classrooms, on campus, within the vicinity of school, and at all school functions both on and off campus. Off-campus conduct that reflects negatively on Notre Dame Catholic School **MAY** be grounds for school disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, expulsion in the School's sole discretion. All conduct and disciplinary decisions are decided upon by school personnel.

The faculty, staff, students and parents of Notre Dame Catholic School strive to create a learning environment that fosters an appreciation of values, education, and a positive attitude towards others and their property.

The following explains Notre Dame Catholic Schools' Behavioral Expectations. At the beginning of the year, students will be explicitly taught these expectations. Expectations are reinforced throughout the year. Our expectations help to foster a positive learning atmosphere throughout the school.

### **Arrival/ Dismissal**

- Stop, listen and follow the directions when an adult speaks to you
- Quiet stairways and hallways
- Walk quietly to your destination
- Listen and follow the directions of the safety patrol leader
- Stay in your designated area
- Keep hands and feet to yourself at all times
- Walk appropriately to and from the cars

### **Hallway**

- Stop, listen and follow the directions when an adult speaks to you
- Quiet stairways and hallways
- Walk quietly to your destination
- Be aware of your surroundings, pay attention and keep moving
- Proceed directly to your destination
- Keep hands and feet to yourself at all times

### **Bathrooms**

- Stop, listen and follow the directions when an adult speaks to you
- Report any inappropriate behavior
- Use quiet voices
- Use restroom time wisely
- Clean up after yourself by flushing the toilet and placing paper in the trash
- Wash your hands with soap and water
- Give others privacy
- Wait patiently for your turn
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself at all times
- Be considerate of others in the restroom

### **Cafeteria**

- Stop, listen and follow the directions when an adult speaks to you
- Enter and exit quietly
- Remain at your assigned table
- Refrain from playing with food and other items
- Clean around your sitting area and on the floor
- Use good manners while eating
- Eat only your food, do not share your food
- Respect others and their space at the table

### **Playground**

- Stop, listen and follow the directions when an adult speaks to you
- STOP and walk to line when the teacher rings the bell
- Play only in designated areas
- Be polite, honest and use appropriate language
- Report bullying and inappropriate behavior to an adult
- Keep hands and feet to yourself at all times
- Play kindly and appropriately with others



## **Mass**

- Stop, listen and follow the directions when an adult speaks to you
- Enter and exit quietly
- Remain in your designated area
- Participate with respect
- Ask appropriate questions

## **Classrooms**

Each teacher has a classroom management plan that is consistent with school wide expectations. Each teacher and class will set rules and consequences that are age level appropriate. All classroom management will not be the same.

## **Discipline Procedure:**

The Behavior Expectations stated above set a framework to help enforce a positive learning environment. Within the school and classroom, positive choices will be modeled and used. The teacher reserves the right to administer consequences for minor offenses. Such consequences may include loss of a privilege, a time-out period, loss of recess, etc. Parents will be notified by the teacher if the misbehavior persists. Good communication is essential for understanding the problem and shaping behavior changes.

## **Infractions of the Discipline Policy**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Oral warning issued to the student  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Written warning to the parents of the student's misconduct  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: The student is referred to the Principal and the Parent is notified that an after school 30 minute detention will be served by the student. After School Detention will be held on the following Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The supervising teacher may issue a discipline referral for the following infractions:

- Disruption of classroom learning
- Disregard of classroom or school rules
- Inappropriate physical conduct
- Disrespect of staff or peers

Referral slips are to be signed by the parent and returned to school the next school day. If the student fails to return the slip, the parent will be notified with a call home and the slip will be sent home again. It is important that the parents support this process and that they take time to discuss the infraction that occurred and plan with their child how to prevent such behavior from happening again.

Immediate consequences may be issued for the following infractions:

- Fighting, harassment, bullying and any forms of intimidation
- Defacing of school property
- Abusive, profane, indecent language or gestures
- Stealing

### **Immediate Suspension and/or Withdrawal May be issued for the following Infractions:**

- Repeated infractions of the above discipline policy
- The use or possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind
- Fighting that causes or has the potential to cause serious injury
- Leaving the school grounds during school hours without permission
- Flagrant violation of the technology policy
- Flagrant inappropriate physical contact

The School Administration reserves the right to determine consequences according to the seriousness of the infraction.

### **Consequences may include, but are not limited to:**

- **Detention** - will be held on the following Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- **Probation** – A student may be placed on probation if a number of disciplinary incidents occur. Probation is effective for a period of time determined by the school determined. During this time all extracurricular activities will be forfeited. If the student's behavior does not improve during this period, the school administration will decide if withdrawal is appropriate.
- **Suspension** – Suspensions may be “in-school suspensions or “out of school suspensions” depending on the seriousness of the offense. The suspended student will not receive credit for missed work. Prior to the suspension, the Principal will conduct a conference with the student, the parents of the student and the student's teacher. If the student's behavior does not improve after the suspension, the school administration will decide if withdrawal is appropriate.

### **Dress Code**

#### **Uniform Philosophy:**

As a Notre Dame Catholic student you represent all members of the school community: administration, faculty, staff, the current student body, your family, and all of Notre Dame's alumni and friends. The school and team sport uniforms that you wear identify you as a member of our Catholic community. Uniforms are to be worn daily unless specified by the administration: ND Wear days, severe weather (pants/shorts/jackets), school sponsored jean days, and special events. All sweaters, ties, and girls' skorts must be purchased through the school selected vendor (Dennis Uniform). All items will also be made available to students at used uniform sales throughout the year. Wearing your uniform properly and with pride reflects positively on yourself and all of the Notre Dame Catholic Community.

At Notre Dame Catholic School we seek to maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to the highest quality of academic pursuit. Since the appearance of students contributes greatly to their attitude in school and the respect they earn in public, all students are expected to adhere to the following uniform expectations.

#### **General Expectations:**

It is expected all students wear closed-toe shoes for their safety as well as shoes with backs (No flip-flops, Crocs, moccasins, Birkenstocks, and/or slippers). Socks/hosiery must be worn with shoes (blue, white, grey), and **MUST** be above the ankle. Button-down oxford shirt tails must be tucked in appropriately. Plain-style belts are to be worn at all times. Academic and athletic uniforms are to be sized correctly, clean, and worn appropriately. T-shirts and additional under garments must be solid white. Only approved sweaters and sweatshirts are permitted. **Approved hooded sweatshirts should not be worn at Mass.**

Jackets are not allowed to be worn during academic time. Athletic apparel, hoodies, and sweatshirts are only permitted on regulated dress down days unless otherwise noted. Exceptions will take place upon the Principal's discretion.

### **Uniform Violations**

Parents are primarily responsible for students wearing the proper uniform. At the principal's discretion, a student may be sent home, given after school detention or will forfeit their right to a non-uniform day for a uniform violation.

### **Detailed Dress Code**

#### **Boys and Girls:**

Attire is expected to be clean and must be worn appropriately at all times. Clothing must fit appropriately.

Appropriate personal hygiene is expected of all students. If clothing is purchased anywhere other than with Dennis Uniform Company, clothing must be as close as possible to that which is offered by the company (for example, no cargo pants or cargo shorts; dress shirts must be the company style).

#### **Pants/Shorts**

Plain or pleated navy twill pants purchased from the uniform company or locally.

#### **Polos**

Solid color white or light blue - short or long sleeves - may be purchased locally. Polos should be free of visible logos. Polos must be tucked in.

#### **Shirts/Blouse**

Solid color white or blue oxford cloth button down – short or long sleeves – may be purchased from the uniform company or locally, but blue oxford shirts from the uniform company only. Shirts must be tucked in.

#### **Undershirts**

Undershirts are encouraged and must be solid white (no colored shirts; no writing or logos; etc.)

## **Sweater**

Sweaters are optional. If worn, it shall be a navy blue sweater purchased from the uniform company only.

## **Socks**

Must be worn and must be above the ankle in length – only navy, black, white, grey socks (no logos); may be purchased from our uniform company or locally.

## **Ties**

Navy blue or NDCS plaid ties must be worn and may be purchased from the uniform company only. Navy blue bowties are also acceptable.

## **Belt**

Simple black, dark brown or navy blue – must be worn with slacks and shorts.

## **Sweatshirts**

A school uniform sweatshirt, purchased through the school, may be worn at any time. **Approved hooded sweatshirts should not be worn on Mass days.**

## **Shoes**

Simple black, brown, grey, white, or navy shoes/dress boots (no rain/snow boots, no slippers/moccasins, no sandals, etc.) Athletic shoes are acceptable as long as they are in referenced colors. White soles are allowed. No neon colors, sparkles, or glitter allowed.

## **Girls:**

### **Jumpers**

Jumpers are worn from grades K-4 and are purchased from the uniform company only; length must be no more than 2 inches above the knee.

### **Skirt**

Skirts cannot be rolled up at the waist; length must be no more than 2 inches above the knee. No new skirt purchases will be allowed, only SKORTS.

### **Skorts**

May be worn by K-8 grade girls. They may be purchased from the uniform company. Length must be no more than 2 inches above the knee.

## **Tights**

Navy blue or gray dress socks or tights may be worn with a uniform jumper, skirt, or skort. Plain white crew socks are allowed throughout the entire school year with all approved uniform styles. Socks may not have any logos, lace, bows, or trim and must come above the ankle in length. Simple, unadorned navy blue leggings may be worn with matching socks during the winter.

## **Ties**

NDCS plaid cross ties must be worn and may be purchased from the uniform company only. Traditional ties and bowties are also acceptable.

## **Makeup/Nail Polish/Jewelry/Facial Hair:**

Absolutely no makeup is to be worn in grades PS through 5. Modest makeup may be worn in middle school grades 6 through 8. Modest nail polish is permitted. Girls may wear two post earrings in each ear. No dangling or hoop earrings. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings of any kind. Perfume or heavily scented lotion is not to be brought into the school. A simple crucifix, cross, or religious medal or scapular may be worn by either boys or **girls**.

## **Face Coverings**

Information regarding Face Coverings can be found in Appendix A.

## **Formal Uniform**

A formal uniform may be called to wear by the NDCS administration. Formal uniforms include solid color white or blue oxford cloth button down – short or long sleeves – may be purchased from the uniform company or locally, but blue oxford shirts from the uniform company only. Shirts must be tucked in. Standard uniform bottom and tie.

## **Non-Uniform Guidelines**

At the discretion of the principal, non-uniform days will be allowed. These non-uniform days will be announced.

- Clothing must be modest and appropriate for school
- Clothing must be in good condition
- Skirts cannot be rolled up at the waist; length must be no more than 2 inches above the knee
- Nice jeans with no holes (not too tight, baggy, too long or too low)
- No tight spandex or lycra stretch pants (leggings) unless they are under a dress or a skirt
- No pajama type clothing or slipper

## **Dress @ Field Trip, Events & Functions:**

Students representing Notre Dame Catholic School at any function such as field trips, workshops, academic competitions, trips to hear speakers, dinners, luncheons, award presentations, or when having a photo taken for the newspapers are required to be in uniform. If a need arises for a uniform deviation, the sponsoring faculty member and principal must approve.

## Harassment Policy

### Statement of Intent:

The students, faculty, parents, staff and supporters of Notre Dame Catholic School are committed to providing a compassionate, receptive and non-threatening atmosphere for each and every one of our students to learn and succeed. We have an “early response” policy against harassment meaning that harassment of any sort is deemed completely unacceptable in our school community. If harassment does occur, students should be assured of the fact that all incidents will be addressed quickly, thoroughly and effectively. We also expect that anyone – whether student, educator, family member or other school party – who witnesses or has other knowledge of an incident of harassment will report the incident to school personnel immediately and with the promise of confidentiality if desired.

### Definition of Harassment:

Harassment can be generally defined as the use of aggression, intimidation and/or cruelty with the deliberate intent of hurting another person verbally, physically, or emotionally. Harassment carries the ramification of causing pain and stress to the victim. Harassment is never justified and is not excusable as “kids being kids”, “just teasing,” or any other rationalization. The victim is never “responsible” for being a target of harassment.

Specific types of harassment may include, but are not limited to:

Emotional: Being deliberately unkind, shunning, excluding, or tormenting.

Examples: Forcing another student to be “left out” of a game or activity, passing notes making fun of a victim, or making threatening faces or gestures.

Homophobic: Any harmful speech or conduct focusing on the issue of a victim’s alleged or actual sexual orientation.

Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, tripping, punching, or using any other sort of violence against a victim.

Ethnic/Racist Intolerance: Taunts, slurs, and/or physical threats directed around a victim’s race, and/or religious practice.

Sexual: Initiating and/or executing unwanted physical contact, making sexually threatening and/or abusive comments.

Examples: Grabbing a victim’s body, using derogatory labels

Verbal: Name calling, ridiculing, using words to attack, threaten, or insult. Examples: Spreading rumors, making fun of a student’s appearance, mannerisms, or intelligence.

### Proper Harassment Report/Response Procedures:

- 1) All harassment incidents between any students will be reported immediately verbally and/or in writing to school personnel.
- 2) Staff members will make a written record of all reported incidents and share with the

- principal.
- 3) Parents of both the victim and the perpetrator will be informed about the problem. If it is deemed appropriate, a meeting will be scheduled.
  - 4) In severe cases, local police will be contacted. The victim and family will be informed of their legal options and right to press charges if applicable.
  - 5) The harassment behavior or threats will be investigated quickly and fully, with both victim and perpetrator informed that the behavior MUST stop immediately.

**Further Options and Outcomes:**

- 1) The perpetrator will be asked to genuinely apologize to the victim and victim's parent/guardians.
- 2) Suspension, expulsion, or criminal charges will be considered in all cases with the victim fully informed of all options and actions.
- 3) If feasible and if agreeable to the victim, both victim and perpetrator will meet with the principal to discuss the problem and brainstorm ideas for reconciliation.
- 4) After the incident has been thoroughly investigated and dealt with, school staff will monitor all involved students to ensure that harassment does not resume.

**Warning Signs and Symptoms of Harassment:**

Not all victims of harassment will let on that they are suffering at school. Many feel that admitting how bad things have gotten will increase their torment at the hands of the perpetrators if they risk "snitching," are afraid no one will believe or support them, or are too embarrassed to admit what is happening. Parents and faculty should openly encourage students to report all incidents of harassment that are observed or experienced firsthand.

Even in the event that a student is not forthcoming about being harassed, there may be signs or symptoms that suggest a problem. Adults should be aware of these symptoms and what they signify and should investigate immediately.

THE PRINCIPAL IS THE FINAL RECOURSE IN ALL DISCIPLINARY SITUATIONS AND MAY WAIVE ANY AND ALL REGULATIONS FOR JUST CAUSE AT HIS OR HER DISCRETION.

**This corrective action applies to any student who is:**

- on school property
- in attendance at school
- at any school-sponsored activity
- at any other time or place involved in out-of-school behavior, including telecommunications, electronic information, and social media that has an effect on maintaining order and discipline, or protecting the safety and welfare/reputation of the students, staff, or school.

**Family Service Hour Requirement**

All Notre Dame Catholic School families are required to accumulate 20 hours of service work dedicated directly to the Church or School. These hours are not to be accumulated in conjunction

with any other service requirement not directly related to Notre Dame. Additionally, all service hours must be completed (or encumbered in certain circumstances) prior to May of each school year.

The following is a list of those activities and responsibilities that will be counted towards the 20 hours of volunteer service required by each Notre Dame School family. Please note that if it is NOT on this list, it will NOT count towards the requirement.

All hours must be recorded WITHIN 30 DAYS of the date of service or the service hours WILL NOT BE COUNTED.

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION	VERIFIED BY
HSA Board Membership	Hold a board position	HSA Board Member/Principal
HSA Board Meetings	Attend HSA meeting	HSA Board Member
HSA Committee Chair*	Organize a specific activity and its volunteers; communicate with HSA Board	HSA Board Member
HSA Sponsored Event	Set-up, work, and/or clean-up before, during, or after an event	Committee Chair/HSA Board Member
Athletics	Coaching and related activities	Athletic Director
Classroom Help	In-class help as requested by teachers	Individual Classroom Teachers
Classroom Parties	Organize and facilitate classroom parties as scheduled	Classroom Teacher or Room Parent Coordinator
Class Field Trips	Drive and/or chaperone	Classroom Teacher
Room Parent	Serve as liason between HSA and parents; organize classroom parties	Room Parent Coordinator/Classroom Teacher
General Labor	Various activities at Church or School grounds	Pastor/Principal/Maintenance

\*Specific Committee Chairs and Events will be published by the Home & School Association. The best way to stay informed of opportunities is to read the HSA Newsletter and to attend meetings. Please contact the Home & School Association directly with any questions you may have at [ndhs@notredameparish.net](mailto:ndhs@notredameparish.net).

As part of a larger Catholic community, Notre Dame Catholic School strives to instill in its students a sense of stewardship and service to others. We believe each of our members has valuable talents and time to contribute, and so to help achieve this goal, each family is required to log a minimum of 20 hours of approved volunteer service at the School or Church.



If a family does not complete the 20 hours or does not log those hours appropriately, the family will be billed \$500 per family per year.

If you commit to volunteer for an activity, event, or committee, please take this commitment seriously. If you fail to follow through with your commitment, you will receive no credit for any of the hours logged. If an event has no volunteers, the event will not take place.

## **Technology Policy**

Please note: All families are given online accounts. All of Notre Dame's communication is done via electronic mail. We remind all families to check their email & Student Management System on a daily basis.

### **I. Background**

Use of the Internet enhances the present curriculum of Notre Dame. The Internet is a tool for motivation for increasing reading and writing skills. It is a resource for information and for classroom research projects and other studies related to the curriculum. It provides communication with professionals in every field.

Use of the Internet is determined to be a privilege and not a right of Notre Dame students. As such, Internet usage will be regulated. This policy outlines and defines Acceptable Use on the Internet while at Notre Dame.

### **II. School's Responsibility**

This policy specifically sets out acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, and access privileges regarding Internet use through Notre Dame. It also covers the penalties for violations of the policy, including security violations and vandalism of the system. The school reserves the right to secure and maintain a written agreement to be signed by teachers, students, and their parents outlining the terms and conditions of Internet use to be kept on file.

All use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the purposes and Christian mission of Notre Dame. Students are responsible for good behavior on the school's computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. The network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services will only be provided to students after they agree to act in Christian, considerate, and respectable manner.

Independent student use of telecommunications and electronic information resources will be permitted upon submission of permission forms that include guidelines for the student's responsibilities. Based upon the acceptable use guidelines outlined in the policy, Diocesan policy, and the permission forms, Notre Dame's administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request the principal to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts when violations occur.

Notre Dame Catholic School and the Diocese are not liable for information stored on school hard drives or servers; for information retrieved through school computers, Networks, or on-line

resources; or unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of Diocesan and/or Notre Dame resources and accounts to access the Internet.

### **III. Acceptable Use**

The use of the Internet and related technologies must be in support of education and research, and consistent with the educational objectives, purposes, and mission of Notre Dame. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate in these networks.

Individual users of the computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over these networks. It is imperative that users comply with school standards and honor the policy.

Networks storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Designated school representatives may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using the system responsibly and are consistent with the acceptable uses outline herein. Users should expect that files stored on school servers will not be private.

### **IV. Unacceptable Use**

The use of the Internet connection in the school is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Notre Dame's administration will deem what is appropriate and inappropriate and their decision is final.

The following are not permitted:

- Accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing immoral, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials.
- Sending or displaying unchristian, immoral, offensive, violent, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit messages or pictures.
- Using violent, abusive, obscene, or sexually explicit language.
- Harassing, insulting, or attacking others.
- Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks or attempting to harm or destroy data of another user.
- Violating copyright laws.
- Use of any other person's password.
- Trespassing in other's folders, work, or files.
- Intentionally wasting resources.
- Employing the network for commercial purposes.
- Transmission of any material in violation of any federal, state or local law, regulation, rule, or ordinance.

NOTE: Malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computer system is prohibited. The students and staff should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files sent and received on the school computer network or stored in his/her directory. Notre Dame's network system operator, or other school employee, may, at any time, review the subject, content, and appropriateness of electronic communications or other computer files, and remove them if warranted, reporting any violation of rules to the school administration or law enforcement officials.

## Social Media Policy for Parents and Students

We respect the right of parents/students to use social media and networking sites, message boards and forums, as well as personal websites and blogs. It is important, however, that the use of these sites does not damage the reputation of the school, its administrators, faculty, employees, other students or their families.

If what is posted inside or outside of the school results in the disruption of normal school operations and detrimentally impacts another student, a family, a faculty or staff member, the school and/or the school's reputation, the administration will pursue disciplinary action.

The school administration has the right to pursue legal or civil avenues for on-campus and off-campus Internet use that disrupts the learning environment or is contrary to the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church.

The school does not intend to police web sites, blogs or social networking sites outside of the school. However, if sites are brought to the attention of the school administration by students, parents or other individuals, the school reserves the right to address the behavior in accordance with diocesan/school policies, as well as civil laws.

- Parents/ students should set appropriate boundaries for their online behavior; even personal communication reflects the school.
- Parents/students should carefully review the privacy settings on any social media and networking sites and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and/or information.
- Students may not access social media or networking sites through the school's network (see: *Acceptable Use Policy*).
- Parents/students must never pretend to be someone else when they post. Tracking tools enable an anonymous post to be traced back to the author.
- Parents/students shall avoid defamatory statements about the school, its administrators, employees, students or students' families.
- Parents/students shall not make statements that are discriminatory, sexually explicit or include offensive language.
- Parents/students shall not post rumors, slander or threats of violence; cyberbullying is never allowed.
- Parents/students shall not access, post or distribute obscene or pornographic materials.
- Parents/students shall not disclose any confidential information of the school or any individuals, including students and their families.

If any employee believes that a student has violated this policy, the student may lose access to the Internet, school network and/or technological equipment. Additionally, other disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken as determined appropriate by the administration. If applicable, law enforcement agencies may be notified of any violation of the letter or spirit of this policy.

Parents will be held accountable to this policy. The administration will address violations in a manner appropriate to the violation; this may include removal from the school; and, if applicable, law enforcement

agencies may be notified of any violation of the letter or spirit of this policy.

## **Email**

NDCS provides students with email accounts for the purpose of inter-school communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies. Personal email accounts should not be accessed using the school's network or school devices. Students are provided with email accounts, they should be used with care. Students should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origin; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher. Students are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage will be monitored and archived.

## **COPPA**

Our district utilizes several computer software applications and web-based services, operated not by this school, but by third parties. This would include our online gradebook FACTS and other educational programs.

In order for our students to use these programs and services, certain personal identifying information—generally the student's name and email address—must be provided to the web site operator. Students starting in Kindergarten receive a Notre Dame email account to participate in FACTS Online Student Access. Notre Dame emails are for academic purposes only. Under federal law entitled *Children's Online Privacy Protection Act* (COPPA), these websites must provide parental notification and obtain parental consent before collecting personal information from children under the age of 13. For more information on COPPA, please visit <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/complying-coppa-frequently-asked-questions>

## **Building Hours**

The main school building is open 7:50 AM to 3:30 PM on school days. Any student or group of students in the building at any other time must be supervised by a member of the faculty, or by an adult approved by the Principal or Athletic Director. Students are to be only in that part of the building where the activity is taking place.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Students are not to have cell phones on during instructional time. If there is a student emergency, students may use the office phone. Cell phones may be used to support communication at practices and/or extracurricular events. It is expected that teachers use cell phones only outside of the classroom setting.

Three strike system:

1st Offense - Teacher warning

2nd Offense - Phone sent to the office and a parent must pick it up.

3rd offense - Phone is taken and will remain in the office for the remainder of the quarter.

### **Change of Address/Email Address and Phone Numbers**

It is important that the school office records be up-to-date. Please inform the main office of any change in address, phone number, or significant information.

### **Emergency Protection Plans**

Fire Drills, Tornado Drills, Code Red are practiced throughout the year.

In the event of a school emergency requiring a lock down or evacuation, parents are asked to not contact the school or come to the campus until the emergency or event has been cleared by the school administration in conjunction with the Michigan City Police Department.

Parents will be notified via email or text alert as to the event arising. In the event of a school evacuation, parents are asked to congregate at Al's on Karwick Drive. A representative from the school will also be at the location to assist.

### **Homework**

Homework is considered an integral part of the educational process. Success at Notre Dame requires students to be well organized, disciplined, and come to class prepared to learn each day. Students can expect homework each night.

In the event of an excused absence, students are responsible for getting work that they may have missed. The day students return from an absence they must make arrangements with their teachers for the completion of assignments. The amount of time for the completion will be at the discretion of the teachers. Homework may not be submitted if the absence is unexcused or if the student was suspended from school.

If in attendance for any portion of the school day, students are required to submit any homework that is due that day.

### **Lockers**

The lockers are the property of Notre Dame Catholic School, which reserves the right to appoint school personnel to inspect and regulate their usage. The school is not responsible for stolen items. Students who have valuables that they hesitate to keep in their lockers should consult with the school office staff for possible alternatives. Lockers are to be kept clean, and any decoration of locker interiors must be nondestructive.

## **THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEARCH LOCKERS AT ITS DISCRETION.**

### **Lunches**

The traditional “brown bag” lunch is expected for all students.

Please note that no student should ever go without lunch (for any reason). NDCS will do our best to provide a lunch option in the event that one is not provided, but should be utilized only in emergencies. Ultimately, the responsibility lies with the family.

### **Mass Day**

Students will be attending weekly Mass. Most weeks 5th-8th attend on Wednesdays and K-4th attend on Thursdays. There are certain times where the whole school attends on one day. All Masses begin at 8:30 am, and families are encouraged to attend.

### **Medications**

Students are not allowed to be in possession of any medications while in school. All meds must be brought to the office along with a parental note stating directions for administering the medication. Please keep the main office informed of any medical conditions.

### **Physical Fitness Activities**

Under Indiana law, a school is not liable for an injury to, or the death of, a participant in physical fitness activities at this location if the death or injury results from the inherent risks of the physical fitness activity. Inherent risks of physical fitness activities include risks of injury inherent in exercise, the nature of a sport, the use of exercise equipment, or the use of a facility provided by a school. Inherent risks also include the potential that you may act in a negligent manner that may contribute to your injury or death, or that other participants may act in a manner that may result in injury or death to you. You are assuming the risk of participating in this physical activity.

### **Safety Drills**

Fire and tornado drills along with code red and blue drills are held regularly by the laws of the State of Indiana to develop safety practices that will help students move quickly and in an orderly manner to designated safety areas during an emergency. Rules of safety are reviewed regularly and posted in each classroom. During a drill, personal safety will depend on the way in which students carry out regular procedures or modified instructions which the situation may face. Any disturbance, including talking during emergency drills, will result in disciplinary action.

### **School Closing**

Please note that we follow the Michigan City Area Schools for weather cancellations/ delays. If the weather is questionable, please check the Notre Dame facebook/twitter, e-mail, or signup for text alerts from RenWeb. Links to their service can be found below.

## **Smoking**

Notre Dame is a smoke-free campus. Smoking at a Notre Dame function, school-sponsored event, or on school grounds is prohibited.

## **Website**

The Notre Dame website ([www.notredameparish.net](http://www.notredameparish.net)) is the most current and powerful line of communication between the school and parents.

## **Withdrawal Procedures**

Students withdrawing from Notre Dame Catholic School must first notify the office. All financial responsibilities must be current in order for transcripts to be forwarded to a new school.



# NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

*Faith, family, Education*

## **Covid-19 Acknowledgement**

“Coronavirus and COVID-19 Warning: The risk of exposure to coronavirus exists anywhere that people (and even pets) are present, especially in larger groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus spreads easily between people and can cause severe illness and even death. The risk is higher for certain people. Risk factors include being 65 years of age or older or having serious underlying medical conditions. By attending a Diocese of Gary School, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to viruses, including the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. Enhanced health and safety measures have been recommended to protect each of us. You must follow all posted instructions while attending a Diocese of Gary School.”

Please sign and return to school – keep the above document for your records

Date \_\_\_\_\_

We have read, discussed and understand the 2020 - 2021 Notre Dame Catholic School Handbook.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Signature)