

Mission Statement

"The mission of Visitation Catholic School is to produce graduates who are models of Catholic and Christian values, the embodiment of the skills necessary to succeed in everyday life and masters of a basic academic curriculum. Visitation students are prepared for the demands of secondary education and adult life by a school philosophy that moves beyond the memorization and repetition of information. Students receive teaching, training, and coaching to enable them to find, process, and provide insights into facts. The school community exists to develop well-rounded citizens, not just of our students but also of our staff, parents, and other invested individuals. Therefore, students will learn not only in groups among their classmates, but also in collaborative working relationships with teachers, parents, and community members."

Philosophy

Catholic Education is an expression of the mission entrusted to the Church by Jesus Christ. As a Catholic School, we hope to "realize the threefold purpose of Christian Education – to teach doctrine, to build community, and to serve." (Declaration on Christian Education #2)

We believe that all those involved in our school – parents, students, teachers, pastors, and administrators – are called to form a COMMUNITY OF FAITH, a CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMUNITY. This is a community that SERVES, PRAYS, LEARNS, AND RELATES WITH ONE ANOTHER.

We must realize that we are not isolated individuals, "but part of a community of persons who work together, plan together, pray together and who are honestly concerned about one another."

Children attending Visitation School will be educated and guided to develop as WHOLE PERSONS intellectually, morally, spiritually, socially, and psychologically so that they will begin to discover their own giftedness and be able to share these gifts with others.

Catholic education must encourage students to accept responsibility for their own community and for the larger society, to discover what their own contributions can be. It must awaken in students a concern and respect for life and for the rights of others.



Expectations

To implement the Philosophy of Visitation Catholic School, the following objectives have been determined:

1. To develop the intellectual growth of the students by providing:
 - a. a curriculum designed to motivate students to want to learn;
 - b. a professionally qualified and dedicated faculty.;
 - c. a respect for the uniqueness of the individual evidenced by a variety of teaching techniques.
2. To develop the spiritual and moral development of the students by providing
 - a. formal religious instructions;
 - b. participation in Church worship and prayer services;
 - c. values clarification and moral education;
 - d. a respect for life program which aims to teach:
 - i. respect for God, law and order, nation, and others;
 - ii. respect for the dignity and rights of self and others;
 - e. the daily example of the faculty and staff which model those Christian values we are attempting to impart to the student.
3. To develop the psychological and emotional growth of the student by:
 - a. school-wide efforts at building self-esteem and self-worth;
 - b. a concerted effort to develop in each student an attitude of self-awareness and self-acceptance.
4. To provide for the students' physical development and to develop good sportsmanship by:
 - a. a quality physical education program;
 - b. encouragement of extracurricular sports' activities.
5. To develop in the students a sense of responsibility and to promote a Christian impact on the local community by providing:
 - a. a positive approach to classroom discipline with emphasis on self-direction;
 - b. an active and involved youth group and/or student government.
6. To provide opportunities for parents to cooperate actively with the school by:
 - a. participation in fund-raising events and school programs;
 - b. enrollment as a volunteer in extra-curricular activities as well as service projects and board membership.



Parent / Guardian Conduct

As partners in the education of children, the parent/ guardian in the local school community is expected to demonstrate respectful behavior at all times with faculty, administration, support staff, students, and volunteers whether on or off school grounds or at school-related events. If, in the opinion of the principal, that relationship is no longer viable, the school reserves the right to require the parent/guardian to either immediately remove their child(ren) from the school or not register at the school for the next school year.

Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to: harassment, verbal abuse, assault of or threats to the faculty, administration, staff, students and volunteers of the school.

Parents/guardians who post defamatory or threatening statements about the school, its faculty, administration, staff, students or volunteers on social media can be required to remove the offensive material and/or withdraw their child(ren) from the school.

When, in the judgment of the principal, the behavior of a parent/guardian seriously interferes with teaching, learning or a positive school environment, the administrator may either temporarily or permanently suspend the parent/guardians right to be present on school grounds or dismiss the child(ren) of the parent/guardian temporarily or permanently from the school.

Admission Policy

Visitation Catholic School accepts students of any race, color, sex, or national / ethnic origin as space is available.

Registration Process

Information regarding registration can be obtained from the school office. Registration takes place in the spring of the year for both currently enrolled students and new students. The stipulated nonrefundable registration fee and book fee must be paid at the time of registration, otherwise it constitutes an incomplete registration. An incomplete registration will not hold a place in a class for a child.

Tuition

Tuition is due within the first ten days of each month, September through May. Students may be excluded from school each month for non-payment of tuition.

Fundraising

Tuition alone does not provide the revenue needed to operate Visitation School. Therefore, fundraising is vitally important. Each family is required to do a



stipulated minimum of nondeductible fundraising per year. The minimum amount per year is found on the annual Financial Agreement.

Age of Admission

A child entering Kindergarten should be 5 years of age on or before September 1st. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis after a local assessment. Children under 3 years of age will not be accepted.

Health History

Every family will be given a Medical Information and Emergency Notification Form at the beginning of the school year. Parents must complete this packet and return it to the school office.

Parents are expected to let the school personnel know IN WRITING if their child has any illness, disease, physical injury, or any disorder needing special attention or medication.

Physical Examinations and Immunizations

Illinois State Law requires physical, vision, and dental examinations for students upon entrance into Pre-school and a current updated physical for all new students. State law also requires that ALL STUDENTS have a yearly up-to-date record of their immunizations, physical exams, vision test, and dental exams on file in the school office. According to Illinois State Law, if any student or their health records are not in compliance by October 15th, then that child will be excluded from all schools. Please contact the school office if you have any health and immunization compliance questions.

Medication

According to law, school personnel may not dispense any medication to students. Students may store medication and/or equipment in the school office and administer as directed by a physician or parent/guardian. Please submit written instructions.

Custody Issues

The school presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right of custody of the child.

Transfer to Another School

A transfer may not be issued to an unnamed school. Parents must furnish the name and address of the new school and a new home address if they are moving. The reason for the transfer must be put on the child's record. In order that records be processed without delay, all outstanding financial obligations must be met. Records (except for health) are not given directly to parents; they are sent to the new school.



School Records

School records contain confidential data and are not to be issued or released to unauthorized persons. As a parent or legal guardian you have the right to review your child's records. You have the right to prevent disclosure of your child's records to third parties, unless you give written consent prior to disclosure. You have the right to request correction if you present the school with the evidence that an inaccurate or misleading item needs correction. The school reserves the right not to amend. A parent who wishes to inspect the educational records should submit a written request to the Principal one week in advance of the inspection date. According to the Final Regulations – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act dated June 16, 1976, it is no longer necessary to obtain written consent to release records between schools.

Attendance

Frequent absenteeism constitutes a handicap to the child's progress, therefore, absences must be kept to a minimum. If a child is to be absent for the day, the school office should be notified before 8:30 a.m. For the child's own welfare, and that of his/her classmates, and in order to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, children should not return to school if they show symptoms of acute communicable diseases. Serious illnesses, accidents or other circumstances that might necessitate prolonged absence should be reported at once. Upon return, if they have been absent more than three days, students must present a doctor's statement of release.

Habitual tardiness is unacceptable. Parents of students who continue to be tardy will be phoned and, if necessary, conferences will be arranged.

Curriculum

Visitation Catholic School follows and incorporates the following learning standards set forth by- the Archdiocese of Chicago, the Illinois State Learning Standards, the Common Core Curriculum, the College Readiness Standards, and the NCTM's recommendations. For more information, please go to the website of the Archdiocese of Chicago at <http://schools.archdiocese-chgo.org/academics/curriculum> .

Pupil Progress

A. Grading system

The grading system differs for Primary, Intermediate and Junior High. The method of grading and evaluation is explained on the report card and/or by the teacher(s) involved. Report cards are issued three times a year and must be signed.



B. Progress Reports

Progress reports are given mid-way through the trimester. This is the teacher's indication to the parents of the child's progress. These reports must be signed and returned.

C. Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences

A minimum of two Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences are required during the school year. It is vital that Parent and Child be present for the conference. This interview is set up individually with the parent and child for the purpose of relating information and discussing the progress of the child. Parents will also be given the opportunity to meet with all of the teachers who are currently teaching their child.

D. Retention Policy

Students will be regularly evaluated. However, if a student fails to meet grade requirements, the school maintains the right of retention after consultation with parents.

Homework and Study

Homework is given as a strengthening device and as an extension of the learning experiences that take place in school. Students should make every effort to acquire good study habits. They should study in a place that is free of distracting noises and objects.

Discipline

INTRODUCTION

Registration in Visitation Catholic School implies agreement by the parents and guardians to foster in the children willingness to "obey the rules" and conduct themselves in a Christian manner. Corporal punishment is not allowed in our school. Discipline is maintained in an intelligent and Christian manner.

DAILY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The school's annual calendar contains the holidays and in-service days as well as the daily schedule for the children. Students should come to and leave school grounds promptly at the arrival and dismissal times unless they are registered for Before Care or After Care. It is very dangerous for students to go into stores before and after school.

For the safety of our children, Visitation School has a closed campus policy regarding lunch. No student is allowed to leave the building during the day without permission and explanation from a parent.



Dress Code

A. Policy

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of the dress code. She reserves the right to prohibit any hair style, attire, or type of grooming that is deemed incompatible with the educational environment the school wishes to maintain.

Adherence to the dress code for all grades is extremely important for the safety and well-being of each child. Constant violation will result in suspension and finally expulsion.

It is imperative that parents and students be aware that “symbols” that signify “gangs” are opposed to the basic philosophy of Catholic Schools and will not be tolerated. Students who exhibit gang affiliation by signs, clothing, gesture or attitude will be permanently excluded from Visitation School.

B. Uniforms

All students in grades K – 8 will be required to wear school uniforms. **There are no deviations for attire.**

Girls: Level K-3

Red/plaid jumper

White blouse, short or long sleeves; white or red polo shirt

Red cardigan sweater

Red, white, black or gray solid color knee-high socks or tights (no leggings, jeggings, footless tights, crew socks, ankle socks, shoe liners, low-cut socks, novelty or printed socks or tights)

Dark, solid color dress or athletic shoes without a logo, etc.
(no boots, boot shoes, or “UGG” type boots)

Girls: Level 4-5

Red/plaid pleated skirt

White blouse, short or long sleeves, white or red polo shirt

Red V-neck pullover sweater

Red, white, black or gray solid color knee-high socks or

Red, white, black or gray solid color knee-high socks or tights (no leggings, jeggings, footless tights, crew socks, ankle socks, shoe liners, low-cut socks, novelty or printed socks or tights)

Dark, solid color dress or athletic shoes without a logo, etc.
(no boots, boot shoes, or “UGG” type boots)

Girls: Level 6-8

Solid gray pleated skirt or red plaid skirt

White blouse, short or long sleeves, red or white polo shirt



Red V-neck pullover sweater

Red, white, black or gray solid color knee-high socks or tights (no leggings, jeggings, footless tights, crew socks, ankle socks, shoe liners, low-cut socks, novelty or printed socks or tights)

Dark, solid color dress or athletic shoes without a logo, etc. (no boots, boot shoes, or "UGG" type boots)

Boys: Level K-5

Grey dress twill or gray cotton trousers (no cargo or carpenter pants or jeans) worn with a solid color black, brown, or navy plain, leather, dress belt

Dress corduroy trousers (no cargo or carpenter pants or jeans) worn with a solid color black, brown, or navy plain, leather, dress belt are allowed for winter months

White knit shirt (long or short sleeves) or red knit polo shirt

Red sweater (V-neck, sleeveless or cardigan)

Dark, solid color dress or athletic shoes without a logo, etc. (no boots or boot shoes)

Boys: Level 6-8

Grey dress twill or gray cotton trousers (no cargo or carpenter pants or jeans) worn with a solid color black, brown, or navy plain, leather, dress belt

Dress corduroy trousers (no cargo or carpenter pants or jeans) worn with a solid color black, brown, or navy plain, leather, dress belt are allowed for winter months

White or red polo knit shirt (short or long sleeves)

Red sweater (v-neck, sleeveless or cardigan)

Black dress shoes or solid black athletic shoes without a logo, etc. (no boots or boot shoes)

All sweaters for boys and girls should be purchased through the Schoolbelles Uniform Shop.

Please note: Girls may wear grey uniform slacks (no cargo or carpenter pants, jeans, jeggings, or skinny pants) with a solid color black, brown, or navy plain, leather, dress belt only from January 1st until March 1st.

Physical Education: Levels PreK-8

Students in levels PreK-8 must have gym shoes for gym class. They must wear the prescribed gym uniform (red Visitation T-shirts or sweatshirts and red Visitation shorts or warm-ups) which must be purchased in the school office. **Students wear their gym attire only on the days when their class has gym**



scheduled. Each class has Physical Education classes at least once a week. Gym shoes may only be worn on gym days. The purchase of expensive designer brand gym shoes is discouraged.

Grooming

Boys may not wear earrings but girls may wear one pair of small, matched earrings. Both boys and girls may wear only one small ring, on one hand, on one finger and a watch. Neither boys nor girls may wear necklaces, anklets, bracelets, wrist bands or rubber bands, tattoos, caps/hats, sweatbands, headscarves/bandanas or “do rags”, spiked or studded items (Note that coats, jackets, scarves, gloves, boots and other outdoor items may not be worn in the classroom). **In addition, boys may not wear hair more than 2 inches long and cut evenly. They may not wear braids, Mohawks, Fauxhawks, ducktails or long contoured hairstyles, twists, knots, curls, more than one straight part in their hair, designs cut into their hair, hair coloring, etc. in their hair. Girls may not wear large and/or decorative headbands, hair coloring or colored hair weave, makeup, glitter, lip-gloss/lipstick, long, painted and/or decorated fingernails, etc.**

Discipline Policies

Enrollment as a student in Visitation Catholic School implies the willingness of both parents and guardians to comply with the policies and regulations of the school. In order to realize the school’s aim, parents and students must agree with and support the philosophy of the school. Visitation Catholic School reserves the right to dismiss any family, student or parent who fails to respect these regulations or otherwise, by his/her conduct or actions, neglect of study, does not measure up to the standards of the school.

The essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline. Self-discipline is considered essential to the learning process. The children are expected to obey and cooperate, be respectful to all other persons – adults and children. The students are expected to keep their coatroom and desks in order, and in general, assist in maintaining order in their classrooms and the entire school building. Students are expected to act in a Christian manner both in school and outside of school.

Discipline Procedures

The general aim of discipline at Visitation is to enable the student to acquire self-discipline. The student is supported in the endeavor through the coordinated efforts of the classroom teacher, the discipline committee, the Principal, and the parents.



A. Behavior

Student behavior should be respectful at all times and in all places. Proper respect should be shown for all administrators, teachers, staff, adults and other students.

It is imperative that parents and students are aware that symbols (gestures, clothing, drawings, articles of clothing, etc.) that signify gangs are opposed to the basic philosophy of Visitation School and will not be tolerated.

Order is expected when in the halls, stairways and washrooms, and when entering and leaving the building.

Students may not leave their classrooms without permission of the teacher or without a hall pass.

Students are never allowed in the faculty room.

Students must play in the assigned areas on the playground.

Respect must also be shown for school property and the property of others at all times. NO ONE is to handle the property of another person without permission. Graffiti on any school property – inside walls, outside walls, bathroom stalls, desks, textbooks, etc. – will not be tolerated. Any student who participated in defacing school property will be suspended or expelled. Parents or guardians will be liable for restoration or replacement of the damaged property.

B. Cell Phones/Technology

Students are not to bring radios, trading cards, video games or cartridges, CD's, CD players, tape recorders, cassette tapes, cameras, pagers, I-Pods, I-Pads, Kindle Reader or other eReaders, MP3 players, Walkman, Nintendo DS or other audio/visual oriented devices to school as there is not time during the school day when they are allowed to be played. Neither toys nor pets are to be brought to school without the permission of the teacher.

Cell phone use is not permitted on school property. Students may bring their cell phone to school. The homeroom teacher will collect student cell phones and lock them up during the day. In the event a child needs to call home or use their cell phone to look up a number, they may do so in the school office or with the permission of their classroom teacher. If students do not comply with this they will have their electronic device/cell phone confiscated and a parent/guardian will need to pick it up from the school office.

Parents/Guardians are primarily responsible for the student's appropriate and ethical use of technology outside of school. However, the inappropriate use of technology outside of school may subject the student to disciplinary action. Inappropriate use of technology may include, but is not limited to harassment of



others, use of the school name, remarks directed to or about teachers and staff, offensive communications including videos, photographs, and threats.

C. Discipline Committee

This ad hoc committee consists of two or more teachers and counselors who deal with serious school infractions. However, the final decision regarding any disciplinary action rests with the Principal. Disciplinary action forms are issued to each teacher. When the teacher deems it necessary, the completed forms are returned to a discipline committee member. The committee meets to determine the necessary action to be taken.

THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WILL BE USED WHEN NECESSARY:

1. Classroom discipline
2. Lunch Detention
3. After School Detention
4. Saturday Detention
5. Suspension
6. Expulsion

D. Classroom Discipline

Individual classroom teachers will set discipline policy and procedures in their rooms. Each teacher will post individual rules according to the expectations of the particular grade. Please check with your child's teacher regarding these expectations.

E. Detentions

For the following reasons, a student may be given a detention for a maximum of one hour during the lunch/recess period, two hours after dismissal or three hours on Saturday.

- Any behavior disrespecting teachers, other students or themselves
- Dishonesty and/or cheating in any form
- Infractions of class or school rules
- Any other behaviors deemed unacceptable by the administration

Parents will be notified of all after school and Saturday detentions. Students may be assigned chores around school or given writing assignments as deemed necessary by the teacher and/or Assistant Principal.

F. Suspension (*A suspension may occasionally take the form of an in-school suspension.*)

A student may be suspended from school for the following reasons:

1. Refusal to comply with basic academic requirements
2. Fighting, cursing, creating a disturbance
3. Truancy



4. Flagrant disrespect of teachers, staff members, volunteers or other students
5. Theft or vandalism including defacement of textbooks
6. Bullying
7. Sexual harassment
8. Harassing activities or language based on another person's differences
9. Verbal threats of violence or verbal intimidation of students, teachers/staff or volunteers
10. Using a cell phone on school property without permission
11. Repeated violation of school rules

G. Expulsion

A student may be expelled from school for the following reasons:

1. Committing a third serious offense after two suspensions
2. Seriously endangering the physical, mental, or moral well-being of another student, teacher or staff member
3. Possession of a weapon
4. Possession and/or use of drugs, pagers, cell phones
5. Smoking
6. Drinking or possession of alcohol
7. Visible gang affiliation including attire, hand signals, speech, etc.
8. Serious misconduct which cannot be remedied in the school program
9. Parents' threatening or using abusive language to administrators, teachers, staff, volunteers or students

H. Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct directed towards another person because of their gender.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sexually suggestive remarks, gestures and jokes
- The display of offensive sexual pictures or photos
- Offensive or negative comments about a person's gender and/or physical appearance
- Unwelcome touching
- Spreading rumors of a sexual nature

Students found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to **SUSPENSIONS**. Parents will be immediately notified and a conference will be required.

Sexual harassment impacts both boys and girls in numerous ways including not wanting to go to school, not wanting to talk in class, making a lower grade, finding it hard to study and staying home from school or cutting class.



We at Visitation want to provide an educational environment free from sexual harassment.

I. Bullying Policy

As Catholics, we believe in the dignity and respect of each individual created in the image of God. Bullying is contrary to Gospel values and has no place in the Catholic school community.

Bullying is:

- Any intentional, repeated, hurtful act or conduct (physical, verbal, emotional) including any communications made (in writing, over a telephone, on the computer, etc) to another person who has a hard time defending himself or herself.
- Occurring at school, at church, on a field trip, on the bus or anywhere on or off school property
- Directed toward another student, that has or can be reasonably predicted to
 - place the student in an unreasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property
 - cause a substantially harmful effect on the student's physical or mental health
 - interfere with the student's academic performance
 - interfere with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying can take many forms, including hitting, pushing, pinching, making threats, name-calling, theft, embarrassing a student in front of others, telling other students not to play with or talk to another student, making mean telephone calls or sending nasty text messages, sending mean messages by computer or posting them on social networking sites such as Facebook, etc.

No student shall be subjected to bullying! Bullying by any student may result in suspension and/or expulsion from the school.

All members of the Catholic school community, parents/guardians, teachers, staff, administrators and others, are expected to work together in preventing bullying and promoting Gospel values in a Christ centered environment. Students are expected to participate in age appropriate educational programs developed by the school that address bullying and teach respect for all.

We will invest more of our time and energy into the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) and PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) "proactive systems approach for creating and maintaining safe and effective learning environments in schools, and ensuring that all students have the social/emotional skills needed to ensure their success at school and beyond."



The following are the goals of OBPP:

- to reduce existing bullying problems among students
- to prevent the development of new bullying problems
- to achieve better peer relations at school

As stated earlier, in addition to OBPP we will also be reinforcing our Tiger Laws. Tiger Laws help unify our behavioral expectations across the school. This program will help all of us continue to have a safe and productive learning environment. Our staff has adopted and agreed upon a set of behavioral expectations for the entire school. The behavioral expectations are:

1. Be Safe.
2. Be Positive.
3. Be Respectful
4. Make Good Choices.

When you enter school you will see these expectations posted throughout the school. You will see that students are reminded about these expectations to help them be successful in meeting these expectations. Finally, students will be positively recognized when they meet our expectations.

To achieve the goal of positive behavior in school, our staff will:

1. Constantly teach and refer to our school-wide expectations
2. Provide students with more praise
3. Use prompting and reminding as methods to help students achieve more positive behavior.

All of our discipline policies are made with the intention of helping our students grow into mature, self-disciplined, Christian adults.

Amendments

Discipline policies are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as possible. Visitation reserves the right to establish additional policies and procedures to enhance its operation.

Cafeteria and School Lunch Program

Visitation Catholic School participates in the school lunch program of the Archdiocese of Chicago. All students must participate in this program. A student may bring a bag lunch in a properly insulated lunch bag, box or tote if there are religious or dietary restrictions. Exceptions require a written note and doctor verification. Bagged lunches must be a healthy substitute. **We are not allowed to refrigerate or heat your child's lunch.** The lunch program is federally



funded; therefore we are required to follow their regulations and guidelines. STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO BRING ANY ITEMS IN GLASS OR BREAKABLE containers. THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO BRING any soft drinks, SHAKES, candy, gum, cake, COOKIES, NUTS, SEEDS, CHIPS, OR OTHER snack foods as part of their lunch.

Emergency Weather Procedures

When the weather is inclement, you will find emergency closing information on the radio at station 720 AM (WGN) and 780 AM (WBBM), on television at Channel 9 (WGN-TV), on a touch-tone telephone at 1-312-222-SNOW, and on the Internet at [ww.EmergencyClosings.com](http://www.EmergencyClosings.com)

Miscellaneous Information

A. Activities Not Sponsored by the School

The responsibility for activities not sponsored by the school belongs to the pupil's parents.

B. Transportation

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children to and from school. Visitation Catholic School does not assume responsibility for any bus service. Parents are to make their own arrangements with bus companies.

C. Visitors

All persons entering the school building are requested to enter through the Peoria Street entrance and come to the school office, sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Business, messages, etc. will be handled there. If you wish to observe in a classroom, please inform the office in advance. At least one day's notice is expected. Do not use this observation for a conference.

D. Care of Materials

Book bags are required. Each child is responsible for the care of his/her desk, locker or coatroom space, textbooks or library books, and other instructional materials. The cost for replacement materials, etc. due to a child's deliberate damage to property and/or loss of property will all be the parent's responsibility.

Amendment

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