

# Saint Benedict Catholic School Parent and Student Handbook

## *Pursuing the Highest Things: Catholic & Classical*



“Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth.”

-Saint John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*

Dear Parents,

Saint Benedict Catholic School is answering the call of our late Pope John Paul II for a “new springtime” in the Church. With a spirit of joy and welcoming, we strive to better the whole human person spiritually, intellectually, physically, and morally. The threefold mission of Saint Benedict Catholic School is fidelity, virtue, and truth. We strive to do this in the spirit of our patron, Saint Benedict.

“Let them put Christ before all else; and may he lead us all to everlasting life.”

*Rule of Saint Benedict*

As the oldest Catholic school in Richmond, we have continually upheld a long tradition of academic achievement and Catholic formation. This is a source of great pride for our community. Many who were educated here have returned seeking an education for their children, and in some cases, grandchildren. Additionally, several of our teachers are alumni, which speaks well of the reputation the school continues to sustain and their dedication to their alma mater.

This handbook is intended to serve as an example of what we value as a community. It communicates dates, procedures, and our expectations for students and parents. Parents are called to be the primary educators of their children, and the school works to assist in that mission. As parents I encourage each of you to collaborate with the school and church on spiritual matters, especially by setting an example of sincere Christian virtue at home and in relationships with members of the school community. Additionally, as a means of modeling how we practice our faith, I invite each of you to attend as many of our school Masses as you can.

Working closely together, I pray that we will all have a joy-filled, successful, and blessed school year!

In Christ,

Sean M. Cruess  
Principal

# SAINT BENEDICT PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

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SAINT BENEDICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**Mission Statement**

(Revised Spring 2017)

Faithfully Catholic, we educate children in the Classical tradition.

**Vision Statement**

(Revised Spring 2017)

Our graduates will be elevated morally, intellectually, and spiritually following the example and teaching of Jesus Christ.

**Philosophy**

(Revised Spring 2017)

At Saint Benedict Catholic School, our mission is to guide our students toward full communion in the Body of Christ. Faithful to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, we participate as an extension of the family and provide a welcoming, Christ-centered community that nurtures our children in achieving their God-given potential. Through challenging academics and Catholic formation, we help our students approach learning with joy and virtue, integrating faith and reason, and cherishing the pursuit of wisdom and Truth.

**School Motto**

Ut in Omnibus Glorificetur Deus  
“That in all things God may be glorified!”

**History**

Saint Benedict School was an outgrowth of the old St. Mary School, which was formerly located in downtown Richmond and was staffed by the Notre Dame Sisters. In 1868, the Benedictine Sisters replaced these sisters. By 1884, there were approximately 217 children in Saint Mary Parochial School.

In 1919, on the corner of Grove and Belmont Avenues, Saint Benedict School opened, with classes being held temporarily in the convent. Sister Edward Galloway, O.S.B. was the first principal of the school, which replaced the old Saint Mary School.

The convent was moved in 1923 to make room for the proposed school building. Excavation for the new building was begun immediately and was completed in 1924. By the late 1940's the school was no longer large enough to accommodate the increasing number of students, so an addition was built in 1949.

Today, Saint Benedict Catholic School is recognized by the State Department of Education, approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education, and accredited by AdvancED.

## SCHOOL PROCEDURES

### **Tuition**

Saint Benedict School offers a tuition discount for Catholic families. In order to receive the Catholic discount, a family must have a *Catholic Verification Form* signed each year by their pastor and submit the form School Business Office at least 30 days before the first tuition installment is due. The Diocese has proscribed the use of the FACTS Tuition payment system for all student accounts. The use of one centralized and easily accessible system makes billing more straight-forward for both families and the schools. **Everyone** will use FACTS to make almost all required student account payments to the school (e.g. Tuition, ASE, Morning Care, Field Trips and other fees). Families who choose to pay tuition monthly are **required** to sign-up for ACH, so that money is automatically withdrawn from their bank account or debit card on the specified date. Families who pay tuition in a lump-sum may set up either an ACH or an invoice account. It is **preferred** that all payments be made to FACTS; however, payments are accepted at school. When a payment is made at school it should be handed directly to the front office or submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to the business office. Payments made at school should be submitted at least three business days before the next scheduled automatic FACTS payment. When the payment is received by the Business Office it will be recorded in FACTS and you will receive an automatically generated email. For specific help with FACTS call 866-441-4637. For help with billing, flex letters, or to make change to the payment schedule contact the business office at 804-254-8810 x103 or ehanson@saintbenedictschool.org. Please note that changes to payment schedules must be made at least two business days in advance. Families who are having difficulties with the payment schedule are encouraged to reach out to the business office directly.

### **Tuition Assistance**

If possible, no Catholic child will be denied a Catholic education because of parental inability to pay. Parents who need financial aid must supply documentation via FACTS. Applying through FACTS allows eligibility for both diocesan and local school aid. The information needed to apply for assistance can be obtained from the school office or on the school web site.

### **Outstanding Balances**

To begin the academic year, a student's account from the prior year must be paid in full and at least one tuition installment for the new academic year must have been paid. The Business Office works with families who fall behind to develop payment plans. Families who fall behind and who fail to communicate with the Business Office may be sent to collections.

### **Withdrawals**

Families withdrawing students from the school are expected to notify the principal in writing as soon as possible. Records will be forwarded to the new school upon request. If a family withdraws a child from school anytime during the year, full tuition is still expected to be paid as stated in the enrollment contract.

### **Extended Day**

The After School Enrichment program (ASE) is operated according to state regulations by religious exemption. This program is open only to students enrolled in Saint Benedict Catholic School. ASE operates when school is in session from dismissal time until 6:00 PM. This program offers students snack, time to do homework, and a chance to participate in indoor and outdoor activities. Saint Benedict also offers a Morning Care program opening at 7:30am. Parents may sign an annual agreement or use

this service on an as needed basis. To use the service as needed, contact the Director of Extended Day to sign-up for a particular day. This helps assure adequate staffing.

### **School Records**

The school maintains a full and accurate record of each student's attendance and academic progress. This cumulative record includes health records, birth certificates, standardized test scores, and permanent record card.

### **Release of Student Records**

It is necessary for the school to have written permission from the parent or legal guardian before a student's records can be released to another school. This school abides by the provisions of the *Buckley Amendment* in respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, this school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding his/her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of such court order.

### **Clinic and Health Records**

All students must meet the requirements established by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Health upon entry into the school. **Prior** to enrollment a certificate signed by a licensed physician must be presented to the school stating that the child has been adequately immunized with the prescribed number of doses of vaccine required by the state Department of Health. Specific vaccine requirements can be found at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/>.

### **Physical Examination**

All students entering Kindergarten, Sixth Grade and new students must submit a current Virginia School Physical Form signed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.

IF RECORDS ARE INCOMPLETE OR NOT PRESENTED BY THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, THE STUDENT MAY BE EXCLUDED FROM CLASSES.

### **Clinic Form**

The **clinic form** includes valuable information on each child and is to be completed and submitted by Book Day and signed by parent or guardian. If any changes occur during the school year, it is very important that you notify the school nurse as soon as possible so this information is up to date.

### **Dispensing Medication at School**

The administration of medication is a serious matter. It is our intent and responsibility to do this in an accurate and safe manner. Medication use should be kept to a minimum during school hours. If at all possible, medications should be given before or after school! When this is not possible, the following guidelines must be met in order for medication to be dispensed by the school:

- ⤴ The first doses of any new medication must be given at home so that parents may respond to any negative reactions.
- ⤴ The Medication Administration and Authorization Form must accompany all medication to be given at school, which includes both over the counter (OTC) and prescription medicines, giving the school permission to administer the medication. In addition, all prescription medications require a signature from a Licensed Health Care Provider (LHCP). Exceptions to this include Acetaminophen, cough drops, and Sepasooth throat lozenges which are included on our school

clinic form filled out at the beginning of each school year. The forms can be obtained in the school office or clinic. All prescription medications must be sent in the original container and properly labeled.

- ⤴ All OTC medications must be in the original, sealed container with the name of the medication and its expiration date clearly visible.
- ⤴ NO MEDICATION WILL BE GIVEN UNTIL THE APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION IS IN PLACE.
- ⤴ All medication must be transported and given to the school nurse or school secretary by the parent/guardian and will be kept in a locked cabinet until time for dispensing. Students are NOT allowed to carry medications in their backpacks or pockets (including cough drops).
- ⤴ Students are not permitted to self-medicate, and the school does not assume responsibility for medication taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made for life-saving medications (*i.e.* inhalers, EpiPens, etc.) at the discretion of the school nurse.

### **Illness**

If a child becomes sick during the day, the school nurse will notify the parent if it is serious enough to send the child home. If a child has a contagious condition, a note from the doctor must accompany the child returning to school.

Students must be free of fever and should not have had any vomiting or diarrhea for **24 hours** before returning to school. This will help keep contagious conditions in check. If a child is too sick to go outside for recess, he/she is too sick to come to school.

### **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

Saint Benedict has a legal obligation to report suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. Our policy is commensurate with “Called to Work in Harmony: Personnel Policies for Lay and Religious Employees” (Section X, I, Pp. 23) and diocesan Safe Environment guidelines.

### **Attendance**

Virginia State law requires that all students between the ages of 5 and 17 attend school. Students should not leave school before dismissal, except in cases of illness or emergencies. Students will be marked absent if they are in school for less than 3 hours. Parents should make every attempt to schedule doctor, dental and all other appointments after school hours. If a student must leave before regular dismissal, a note must be sent to the child’s teacher in the morning.

Please call the school office (254-8850) by 9:00 am if your child is absent. Upon returning to school, please send a note explaining the reason he/she was absent. You must request homework to be picked up or sent home with another student. The request should be received by 9:00am to allow time for the teacher(s) to prepare the missed assignments. Students have as many days as they were absent to make up work (e.g., absent one day – one day to make it up).

It is important to a child’s education that they are present in school on time and as often as possible. The following policy is in place to address absences and tardies: Parents will be required to attend a conference for any student who misses 10 days of school in a school year. Missing 20 days of school in a single school year will result in failure of that course. If a child needs to miss a significant amount of school time for medical reasons, parents should inform the principal immediately and have a doctor’s note on file in the clinic.

### **Tardiness**

Students are expected to be on the large playground by 8:10am. Students who are late to school disrupt the morning classroom routine. If a student does arrive late (8:11am) he/she **must be accompanied to the office by a parent.** It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their

child(ren) arrive on time. A second bell will ring at 8:15 at which time any student will be marked tardy. Parents will be required to attend a conference for any student who is tardy 10 days of school in a school year. All tardies are unexcused unless required by a school approved/sponsored activity. Students arriving to school after 10:30 am or leaving before 11:30am will be counted absent for that day.

### **School Accident Insurance**

Diocesan policy makes school accident insurance mandatory for all students. Information from the company is sent home at the beginning of the school year. The school pays the insurance premium.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are educational experiences that reinforce what is taught in class. There is no specific number of field trips per grade. The students involved must have written parental permission in order to participate; verbal permission is not acceptable. **Any child who does not return his/her permission slip by the due date will not be allowed to go on the trip, but is expected to attend school the day of the field trip.** Students can be denied field trips because of inappropriate behavior. The students are to dress in uniform for field trips unless special permission has been given by the principal. As part of the enrollment contract parents give permission for all walking field trips. We will notify parents in advance of these outings. Parents who accompany their child on a field trip and bring younger siblings, should not chaperone other students in the class.

### **Field Trip Drivers**

If a private vehicle with a volunteer driver is used, a Volunteer Driver Sheet, proof that you have viewed safety video, and the required VIRTUS and Screening One must be on file before the field trip occurs. All field trip volunteers must have VIRTUS Training. If driving a School Activity Bus, the DMV driving record check is required in addition to viewing the required safety video.

### **Parent Involvement Program (PIP)**

In an effort to improve our fundraising efforts and the educational enrichment programs offered to the children of Saint Benedict Catholic School, the PIP Policy was designed to evenly share volunteering responsibilities throughout all registered families. The program will allow for adequate staffing of PTO sponsored events and other scholastic programs that help benefit our school, thus helping to keep our tuition costs lower. It also helps us maintain our “family atmosphere” that makes our school so special. As a result, mandatory service hours are required of all registered families.

All school families are required to perform 20 hours of service per year, at least 8 of which must be performed in the first semester. Any parent, legal guardian, grandparent, or immediate family member over 18 years of age may volunteer in fulfillment of this obligation. Families may choose to opt out of 15 of the 20 hours on book day, by paying \$500. There is a fee of \$40/hour for unfulfilled hours. The fee is assessed January 1 for the first semester (8 hours) and June 15 for the balance.

All volunteers who will be working with or near children in the school must meet three requirements:

Have current background screening (every 5 years)

Have attended a VIRTUS training session, and consistently complete the monthly training bulletin, as evidenced by answering a short multiple-choice question at the end of the reading. (Bulletin is sent monthly via e-mail)

Have a Diocesan Safe Environment Policy acknowledgement from on file

### **Communication and Visitation**

Communication between school and home is of prime importance. We make every effort to keep parents informed. Publications include:



- ^ A Weekly Newsletter from the school sent home via email
- ^ A Tuesday Communication Envelope sent home as needed with paper communication
- ^ Teacher communication via email, phone, or scheduled conference
- ^ Regular grade updates via RenWeb

If you wish to see a teacher, an appointment must be made by sending a note to the teacher, calling the school office, or e-mailing the teacher with your request. We expect teachers to respond to calls within 24-48 hours. **Please refrain from discussing your concerns during arrival and dismissal times, since teachers are busy supervising students and cannot give you their full attention.**

All persons entering the school must sign in at the reception desk and put on a visitor's pass. This is for the protection and safety of our students. In addition, parents are NOT to escort students to classrooms. If a student is in need of assistance, please bring them to the office. Forgotten lunches and other articles should be labeled with the student's name and grade and left at the reception desk. These items will be delivered to the student in a timely fashion.

### **School Logo**

Saint Benedict Catholic School reserves the right to maintain control over the school crest, the school façade etching, and the school name. All requests for use of the school insignia on publications must be approved with the expressed written consent by school officials.

### **Use of School Grounds**

Requests to use the school grounds for meetings and functions must be coordinated with the school secretary and approved by the Principal. The request will be placed on the school calendar. The school reserves the right to charge a fee if the room used is damaged, not adequately cleaned or keys are lost. All keys should be returned promptly.

## **SCHOOL LIFE**

### **School Hours**

School hours are 8:10AM-3:00PM on Monday through Friday. The school building is unlocked at 7:55AM. No student is to be dropped off before this time due to the lack of supervision, unless he/she is enrolled in our morning care program. Students enrolled in the morning care program may be dropped off at 7:30AM using the ramp door on Belmont Avenue. At 7:55 students may arrive and report to the large playground, except in inclement weather or days when we have Mass or an assembly. In inclement weather students report to the cafeteria (Grades 6-8) or the multi-purpose room (Grades K-5). Any student not picked up fifteen minutes after dismissal will be sent to our after school enrichment program (ASE). Students are not allowed to wait outside for parents to arrive without supervision.

### **Early Dismissal Days**

Please consult the school calendar regarding early dismissal days, typically the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month at 1:30PM. **Lunch is not served on a 12:30 dismissal day (twice per year).**

### **Lockers**

Lockers are the property of Saint Benedict Catholic School and should be treated with respect, kept orderly, and be unlocked. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. Name placards should remain on the lockers throughout the year.

## **Bell Schedule**

	<b>Regular schedule</b>	<b>Early Dismissal 12:30pm</b>
<b>Morning assembly</b>	8:10-8:15	8:10-8:15
<b>Homeroom</b>	8:15-8:25	8:15-8:25
<b>1st Period</b>	8:25-9:15	8:25-9:00
<b>2nd Period</b>	9:15-10:05	9:00-9:30
<b>3rd Period</b>	10:05-10:55	9:30-10:00
<b>4th Period</b>	10:55-11:45	10:00-10:30
<b>5th Period Lunch/Recess</b>	11:45-12:20	10:30-10:45 (Recess)
<b>6th Period</b>	12:20-1:10	10:45-11:15
<b>7th Period</b>	1:10-2:00	11:15-11:45
<b>8th Period</b>	2:00-2:50	11:45-12:15
<b>Homeroom</b>	2:50-2:58	12:15-12:28
<b>Announcements/ Walkers &amp; Van Riders</b>	2:58	12:28
<b>Carpool line</b>	3:00	12:30

## **Emergency Information**

### **Fire Drills and Crisis Management**

Fire drills are conducted once a week during the first month of school and once a month during the remainder of the school year. Any person who is in the school during a fire drill must exit the building. Directions for leaving the building are posted in each classroom. As soon as the fire alarm sounds, students walk single file in silence to the nearest exit and go outside to the designated place. Teachers take roll and report any absences to the principal. The bell ringing will signal the return to the school building.

The School has developed a crisis management plan (CMP) and is led by a crisis management team (CMT), consisting of key faculty, staff and administrators. A “crisis” shall include, but is not limited to, situations involving the threat of harm to students, personnel or facilities. Critical incidents include natural disasters, fire, use of weapons, or explosives or other life-threatening situations involving a student or staff member. Such incidents require an interagency response involving law enforcement and/or emergency services.

### **School Closing/Snow days**

WWBT Channel 12, WTVR Channel 6, or our website ([www.saintbenedictschool.org](http://www.saintbenedictschool.org)) will provide information on closings and delays. Parents will also be directly informed through the school's Parent Alert system. If there is no specific announcement for Saint Benedict Catholic School (NOT Benedictine), then the school will be open. Please do not call the school or church office for information. As always, parents must do what they think is best for the safety of their child.

If we must close school because of inclement weather, an official notice will be made via the school's Parent Alert system. As parents/carpools arrive, students will be called by intercom to come to the front hall. ASE will be closed on full snow days and close early if school dismisses because of snow.

## **Emergency Notification**

If an emergency is declared and we need to inform the school community, parents will be notified via Parent Alert. **Please notify the school office immediately when you have a change of contact information.**

## **Uniforms**

The uniform, which is a tradition of Saint Benedict Catholic School, may be purchased from Flynn & O'Hara, 9722 Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, VA 23235, by way of [www.flynnohara.com](http://www.flynnohara.com), or from another company that provides the same items. It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure that all children wear the proper uniform. If a child comes to school with an improper uniform, they will be asked to correct the uniform, and they will receive disciplinary consequences. If an item is missing or cannot be removed, the parent may be called and the student's uniform must be corrected before they may return to class. Any work missed must be made up after school.

### **K-8th Grade Boys' Uniform**

- ⤴ Slacks: Navy dress slacks (no "cargo" pockets) with a solid brown or black belt.
- ⤴ Shirt: White knit shirt with school name or oxford style shirt (short or long sleeved) that should be long enough to be tucked in at all times with buttons buttoned (except the top button). A plain white tee shirt with no writing must be worn underneath the oxford shirt.
- ⤴ Solid color navy, black, or brown loafer or oxford style shoes. No tennis shoes.
- ⤴ Navy or black crew (calf) length socks.
- ⤴ For "Dress" days Middle School boys must wear the oxford shirt all buttons fastened with the school tie.

### **K-5th Grade Boys' Summer Uniform (may be worn before Thanksgiving and after Easter)**

- ⤴ White knit shirt with school monogram, tucked in at all times.
- ⤴ Only a plain white t-shirt with no writing should be worn under the uniform shirt.
- ⤴ Navy shorts: Bermuda length dress shorts (no "cargo" pockets), worn with a solid black/brown belt.
- ⤴ Plain white tennis shoes, tied properly at all times.
- ⤴ White crew (calf) length socks.

### **K-4th Grade Girls' Uniform**

- ⤴ White Peter Pan collar blouse.
- ⤴ Navy, gray & white plaid jumper, with shirts tucked in at all times.
- ⤴ White or navy crew (calf) length socks, knee socks, or navy tights.
- ⤴ Solid color navy, black or brown loafer, oxford style shoe or saddle shoe

### **5-8th Grade Girls' Uniform**

- ⤴ White oxford style blouse (short or long sleeved) or white knit shirt with school monogram. No undergarments should be visible under the oxford shirt.
- ⤴ Navy, gray & white plaid skirt or kilt with shirts tucked in at all times. **Skirts must reach to the top of the kneecap.**
- ⤴ White or navy crew (calf) length socks, knee socks, navy tights, or navy leggings that must be worn with crew socks.
- ⤴ Solid color navy, black or brown loafer, oxford style shoe or saddle shoe
- ⤴ For "Dress" days the oxford shirt must be worn by Middle School girls. The knit sweater with school monogram is optional.

### **K-5th Grade Girls' Summer Uniform (may be worn before Thanksgiving and after Easter)**

- ⤴ White knit shirt with school name, tucked in at all times.
- ⤴ Navy uniform skort that is no more than 2 in. above the knee.
- ⤴ Plain white tennis shoes, tied properly at all times.
- ⤴ White crew (calf) length socks.

### **FOR ALL STUDENTS**

- ⤴ **Note:** Platform shoes, hi-tops, boots, clogs, and cover-the-ankle shoes are NOT permitted as school shoes. Heels on shoes may not be higher than 1 inch. Tennis shoes and hi-tops may be worn for PE class only. Boots may be worn to school in inclement weather only and should be removed upon entering the school and be replaced with proper footwear.
- ⤴ **Sweater:** Optional, navy pullover or cardigan sweater with the Saint Benedict School monogram
- ⤴ **Fleece Jacket:** The fleece jacket, pullover or zip-front, with the school monogram may be worn as part of the school uniform on any school day.
- ⤴ **Sweatshirt:** The navy sweatshirt with school monogram may be worn **ONLY** with the PE uniform.
- ⤴ **Hair:** Must be neat with boys' hair above the collar, above the ears, and not covering the eyebrows. Fad hairstyles and dyes are not permitted. Girls' hair should be kept out of the eyes. Girls must only wear black, white, navy or school plaid hair accessories with hair bands less than 1 ½ in. wide. Hair bows should follow the school color scheme and be moderate in size.
- ⤴ **Jewelry:** Should be kept appropriate to a Catholic environment with no bracelets or rings. A religious necklace which may have a cross or religious medal, one single pair (no multiple piercings) of stud earrings no larger than 10mm, and a small watch may be worn. No elastic bands, FitBits or "smart" watches are permitted.
- ⤴ **Make-up:** Make-up or nail polish may not be worn at any time.

### **Physical Education Uniforms**

- ⤴ Kindergarten and 1st grade do not wear PE uniforms. Year round, they are to wear their athletic shoes to school on PE day. Girls should wear shorts underneath their jumpers.
- ⤴ **Grades 2-8 PE** – Students in grades 2-8 come to school dressed in their PE uniforms on their designated day. In cold weather, the school warm up pants (sold by Flynn & O'Hara Uniform) or navy sweat pants may be worn and a navy school sweatshirt. The PE uniform is a Saint Benedict gym shirt with the school name, navy mesh gym shorts, crew (calf) length socks and athletic shoes appropriate for physical activity. **Grades K-5 MUST wear plain white athletic shoes.**
- ⤴ Each student should have his/her uniform on upon arrival at school in the morning. Students are not allowed to call home for a forgotten PE uniform, exchange or share uniforms (even among siblings).

**PLEASE WRITE CHILD'S NAME INSIDE ALL CLOTHING TO FACILITATE THE RETURN OF ALL LOST ITEMS.**

### **Tag Days**

Tag Days are designated days when students may come to school out of uniform, typically for a fee of \$2. In whatever they wear, students should practice the virtue of modesty. Shorts may only be worn when students are in summer uniform and are expected to resemble the style of uniform shorts. No sweat pants, leggings, yoga pants, wind suits, sports uniforms, etc., are allowed. T-shirts with inappropriate messages may not be worn. Sandals, open toed shoes, heels and PE uniforms are not Tag Day attire. Jeans should be pulled up and neat (without holes or tears). No midriffs or chest should be

showing and shoulders should be fully covered (no spaghetti straps or tank tops). All skirts and dresses must reach the kneecap. The school uniform is not to be worn in a sloppy manner (shirts out, etc.) on Tag Day.

## **Transportation**

### **Car**

- ⤴ Students who travel to school by car may be dropped off at the gate to the playground by coming down the alley (Saint Benedict Lane) from Cleveland toward Belmont. Students may also enter through the front doors after 8:00am.
- ⤴ Cars should depart immediately so that the traffic will not become congested. Please adhere to the traffic signs, especially on Belmont Avenue and Cleveland Street.
- ⤴ We request that you to follow the direction of faculty and staff that assist with the drop-off and pick-up procedures.

**There is no longer a crossing guard directing traffic at the intersection of Grove and Belmont Avenues. Students and all persons associated with the school are expected to cross at the corner. Please do not ask your youngsters to cross in the middle of the street even if it seems to be more convenient. This regulation is for your child's protection and safety.**

### **Bus**

- ⤴ Saint Benedict Catholic School does not provide bus service. If students ride the city bus, it is expected that they remain on the sidewalk until the bus arrives.

### **Walkers**

- ⤴ All walkers should walk in groups and travel on main streets as much as possible.

### **Van Riders for other after school care programs**

- ⤴ Van riders are dismissed at the front door on Grove Avenue. Students are loaded onto the vans upon their arrival. No other vehicles should be parked in front of the school at dismissal time.

## **Dismissal Procedures**

1. Walkers and van riders will be dismissed at 2:58 and are expected to proceed home.
2. After-school students will be dismissed at 3:00.
3. Car riders-All students, K-8, will be dismissed at 3:00 from the playground (no exceptions).
4. After-school vans will pick up in front of the school on Grove Avenue. There should be no parents in cars, picking up on Grove Avenue.
5. There should be **NO car riders picked up from the Belmont side of the school during dismissal**.
6. Parents who have a scheduled conference may park on Belmont.
7. General pick up by cars will take place in the alley from West to East entering from Hanover to Cleveland.
8. When exiting from the alley, **ONLY RIGHT TURNS** on Belmont will be permitted. It is expected that your child(ren) will be ready when you arrive at the gate.

**In the car line, please follow all directions given by faculty members.**

## **Lunch Procedures**

Lunch is offered twice a week and is purchased in advance through ParentsWeb. Ordering windows are published through the Weekly Newsletter.

## **Lunch Rules**

1. Good table manners are expected of all students. Students are to speak quietly and be respectful to all those around them. All eating is to be done while seated in the cafeteria.
2. Each student is expected to scrape his/her own dishes and stack the dishes and trays in the designated place.
3. Students are expected to clean their lunch area which includes the table, floor, and seat where they sat for lunch. No papers, cups, bags, etc. are to be left on the table.
4. Lunch boxes are not to be taken back to the classroom until the end of recess.
5. In cold weather students are expected to bring their coats, etc., with them to lunch since they are not permitted to return to the classroom to get them.
6. Parents should make arrangements for birthday parties w/the classroom teacher prior to sending items in.

**No glass bottled drinks are permitted at school. Students should not bring soda or microwaveable lunch items. Be sure to pack a fork or spoon if it is needed for the student's lunch.**

## **Playground Procedures**

Saint Benedict Catholic School believes that all students have the responsibility to show respect to one another at all times. The following rules serve as an outline for expected behavior while at recess:

1. Students must not leave the playground at any time without permission.
2. Pushing, hitting, or shoving are unacceptable.
3. Appropriate language is expected.
4. In cold weather students must bring their coats, etc. with them to lunch since they are not permitted to return to their homerooms unaccompanied.
5. The playground supervisor or an appointed student will retrieve any balls which go outside the playground area.
6. All accidents or other problems occurring on the playground must be reported to the playground supervisor immediately.
7. Students may go to the health room only with permission from the supervisor.
8. The Comet Shop may be visited during recess on days it is open.

## **Parties**

No parties are permitted during school hours without special permission from the principal. Invitations to private parties outside of school are not permitted to be distributed on school property. At Christmas time we ask that students not exchange personal gifts with each other at school. The purpose of the above is to safeguard the feelings of students who may not be the recipients of invitations or gifts.

## **Telephone**

**Use of the telephone by students is restricted to emergency calls.** The student must have the permission from their teacher prior to coming to the office. The telephones in the kitchen, library, health room, and classrooms are off limits to all students. Telephone messages will be delivered in case of emergency only. To avoid unnecessary phone calls, please make arrangements before the children leave home.

Cell phones will only be allowed at school with a note from the parent stating that there is a need for the student to bring the cell phone to school. **All cell phones must be dropped off in the office as soon as the student enters the school building.** Cell phones should not be used on school premises during the school day. Cell phones may be picked up from the office after the dismissal bell. Students who bring a cell phone without parent permission or who have a cell phone on their person

during the school day will receive a detention for each offense. The phone will be confiscated and kept in the main office until a parent is able to pick it up. Other electronic devices such as iPods, PDA's, Gameboys, Smart watches, etc. should never be brought to school.

### **Lost and Found**

The lost and found closet is located in the cafeteria. **Parents: It is of utmost important that all clothing, book bags, lunch bags, etc. be labeled.** In this way, articles that are found can be returned directly to the student. Periodically, any unclaimed items are donated to charity.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Curriculum:**

The Diocese of Richmond sets forth the standards of learning through the publication of the Diocesan Consensus Curriculum. The curriculum can be found on the Office of Catholic Schools website.

### **Standardized Tests**

Saint Benedict uses the Scantron Performance Series and tests in grades 2-8 three times during the school year. The results are sent home with the final report card.

### **Resource and Supplementary Programs**

Title I is a federally funded program that presently provides a part-time resource math and reading teacher. The students eligible for remedial help live in the city/county target areas and qualify because of standardized test results. Saint Benedict currently has the additional volunteer services of an Auditory Processing Specialist.

### **Homework**

Homework is essential to a good school program. It helps students to *practice* acquired skills, to develop organizational skills and personal responsibility, to reinforce knowledge. We encourage parents to help foster strong study habits by reviewing and monitoring homework time. However, homework is the student's work, not the parents. **Students are not permitted to call home for a forgotten assignment.** Weekend/Holiday homework may be assigned as deemed appropriate by the student's teacher. Homework missed because of family vacations is to be made up within one week of returning to school (see "Attendance"). **Teachers are NOT required to give out work ahead of time.**

The following is a general guideline according to grade that a child should devote to daily homework Monday through Thursday evening. Teachers wish to be informed if your child consistently experiences difficulty in completing homework during the target times.

Grades 1 and 2- approximately 30 minutes

Grades 3, 4, and 5- approximately 60 minutes

Middle School – approximately 1.5-2 hours

### **Honor Code**

Honesty is part of everyday living at school as well as at home. Therefore, the school is concerned with such manifestations of dishonesty as exhibited by cheating on tests, quizzes, and class work done at school. Copying another student's homework is also considered cheating. Homework should be completed individually by each student. Only by specific teacher instruction will students complete homework with fellow classmates. While we do our best to ensure that children do their own work at school, we for ask your cooperation in monitoring their homework to make sure that they do it themselves.

The faculty has designed the following policy with regard to cheating:

1. Any cheating incident will result in a zero on the assignment and an immediate report to the principal by the teacher.
2. The child(ren) involved will be sent to the office where they will have to inform their parents and explain the incident.
3. A conference will be required with the teacher.
4. Every attempt will be made to solve the problem within the school with the cooperation of the parents.

The Honor Pledge serves as a constant reminder of this value we hold in high regard. The Pledge reads:

*“On my honor as a student of Saint Benedict School, I have neither given nor received any help on this paper: nor am I aware of any breach of the Honor code.”*

For assignments considered major grades (tests, projects, essays, etc.) the pledge should be written at the end of the assignment with the student’s signature. For lesser assignments (quizzes, homework, class work, etc.) the student may write “Pledge” and then sign.

### **Report Cards/Grading System**

The school utilizes the grading scale set up by the Office of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Richmond. The report card illustrates each child’s performance and progress. The grading scale is as follows:

GRADES K-2 (and resource classes in grades 3-5)

- 3 Meeting grade level standard
- 2 Developing grade level standard
- 1 Below grade level standard

GRADES 3-8

A+ = 97-100	A = 93-96	A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62
	F = 59 & below	

- ⤴ Report cards are issued every nine weeks. Areas of weakness in subject content and general work habits are also indicated on the report card. Students are expected to return signed report cards within three days after their distribution.
- ⤴ Interim grades should be checked through RenWeb. Students and parents are expected to take the necessary steps toward improvement before the next report card is distributed.
- ⤴ Days are set aside for parent/teacher conferences in the fall. Parents may also call the school office any time during the year to request a conference with a teacher.

### **Honor Roll**

Academic achievement will be recognized each quarter for students in grades 4-8 who have achieved the following grades:

- ♦ First Honors for students attaining an A average in all subject areas.
- ♦ Second Honors for students attaining an average of A or B in all subject areas.

### **Retention**

A student may be retained on the following criteria:

JUNIOR-KINDERGARTEN / KINDERGARTEN

- ⤴ Failure to master the objectives stated in the Junior-Kindergarten/Kindergarten program;



- ⤴ Teacher's on-going evaluation during the school year;
- ⤴ Immaturity based on distractibility, attention span, and/or social development.

#### GRADES 1 –2

- ⤴ Skills one year or more below grade level in the areas of Reading and or Mathematics;
- ⤴ Yearly average of “59” or below in both areas of Reading and Mathematics.

#### GRADES 3 – 8

- ⤴ Yearly average of “59” or below in the areas of English and Mathematics;
- ⤴ Yearly average of “59” or below in the areas of English or Mathematics and failure to complete the course in summer school;
- ⤴ Yearly average of “59” or below in any three major subject areas.

### **Textbooks and Workbooks**

Textbooks are the property of the school. Textbooks and workbooks are issued at the beginning of the school year. Students are expected to handle these books with care. Each textbook is numbered, and the student is responsible for that particular book. If lost or damaged, the student must pay for the book based on the current replacement cost. If a workbook is lost or mutilated, the student must purchase a new one.

### **Parental Concerns regarding Academics, Homework, Discipline, etc.**

In the best interest of the student, it is essential that there is a strong relationship between parents and teachers. Please be sure you have discussed any concerns you may have with the teacher before going to the Dean or Principal. Please remember that students are attuned to your feelings towards the school and it is very difficult for the student to maintain a positive attitude without your support.

### **Extra-curricular Activities**

Saint Benedict offers a variety of clubs and lessons after school. Students are required to have permission forms on file to participate. Parents should be on time to pick up students when the club or practice is over or students will be sent to ASE.

Students are ineligible to participate in school-sponsored extra-curricular activities if they receive a failing grade in one major subject on a report card. Ineligibility will be until the next grading term. If the student is no longer failing any subject after 4 ½ weeks that student will be reinstated to participation status on the team. Students with an overall average below a C- must meet with the Dean of Discipline and create a plan of activities that will allow time for academic improvement.

### **Library/Media Center**

The library functions as an integral part of the entire school curriculum by providing a collection that consists of circulating and reference books; magazines, videos and DVDs; professional collection for teachers; access to the internet; and a growing archive of material related to the history of the school.

### **Circulation Policy**

- ✓ All library materials should be returned **on time**.
- ✓ Books may be renewed unless they are in demand by other students or faculty.

### **Books**

**Grades K-5:** Books are checked-out for a period of one week. A student may check-out up to 2 books at a time.

**Grades 6-8:** Books are checked-out for a period of two weeks. A student may check-out up to 6 books if they are for a class research project.

**Magazines:** Magazines may not be removed from the library except by written request from a teacher and for classroom use only.

**Videos and DVDs:** These materials may be checked out by faculty for classroom use only.

**Lost or Damaged Material:** The librarian will bill parents for the cost to replace any lost or damaged library materials. **A \$5 processing fee will be added to the replacement cost of materials.**

**Overdue Materials:** If a book remains overdue for more than 2 months, it will be considered lost and the parents will be billed for its replacement.

**PLEASE NOTE:** A student's library privileges will be suspended once a book is one month overdue until the overdue account is settled.

## CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

A well ordered environment in the school allows both students and faculty to concentrate on learning without interference. The faculty and administration strive to maintain a system of discipline that is fair, consistent, respectful and firm. The classroom teacher or homeroom teacher is the first point of contact for parents regarding student behavior. Parents are expected to support the teacher's efforts in dealing with behavior issues in the classroom.

### **Virtue of the Month:**

Once a month, students nominate a person in their class who has demonstrated a specific virtuous behavior. A committee of staff and faculty then choose the winner, who is announced after a School Mass. This helps instill in our students a deeper understanding of the virtues, in addition to highlighting certain positive behaviors of their peers.

### **Courtesy Policy:**

Students of Saint Benedict will conduct themselves in a courteous manner at all times. This means that students will greet and address all adults by title and last name (e.g., "Yes, Mrs. Jones" or "No, Mrs. Jones"). If the name of the adult is not known, the student will use "sir" and "ma'am" as appropriate.

Students are expected to welcome and extend appropriate courtesy to all school visitors. If a classroom is visited by a guest, all students should rise from their desks and remain standing until otherwise directed. Students should welcome the guest by stating "Good morning" or "Good afternoon." This also means that students will greet teachers, guests, and visitors in the hallway, etc. in the same manner.

Students will also be courteous through respect for our school building and property. If trash is spotted on the floor, students will be sure to pick it up. Any part of the building used by students should be left neat and clean upon the completion of use. Students will also keep the classrooms and locker areas neat and tidy at all times.

### **The following principles serve as a guide for student conduct:**

- ♣ Students are expected to abide by school rules, regulations and policies.
- ♣ Students are expected to be truthful.
- ♣ Students are expected to show respect to all.
- ♣ Students are expected to respect the rights and property of others.
- ♣ Students are expected to accept responsibility for their own actions.
- ♣ Chewing gum is not permitted by students on school premises at any time or at school functions.
- ♣ Inappropriate language is unacceptable.
- ♣ Vandalism will not be tolerated.
- ♣ Aggressive behavior and bullying will not be tolerated.
- ♣ Students may not have palm pilots, CD players, headphones, and hand-held entertainment devices at school. All cell phones must be turned in to the school office in the morning and

picked up at dismissal time. *Students will receive an immediate detention should they keep their cell phones on their person or in their locker throughout the day.*

When the above expectations are not being met, the range of disciplinary responses may include a simple reminder to the student, loss of privileges, recess detention, suspension, contract for behavior, and expulsion. The Principal, in accordance with diocesan policy, makes all decisions on expulsion.

### **Due Process**

Students accused of wrong-doing should know why they are being disciplined and have an opportunity to offer an explanation for their actions. Saint Benedict School maintains the right to decide how to proceed with administering consequences. Students accused of wrong-doing should first talk to the teacher who issued the consequence, then proceed to the Dean of Students, then to the Principal.

### **Disciplinary Process**

Discipline is a tool that aids in the education and formation of our students to become responsible adults. Saint Benedict Catholic School is dedicated to providing a healthy environment for academic, emotional, spiritual, and moral growth. The administration must preserve a proper educational environment by ensuring a safe, secure, and orderly school and classroom. To implement this discipline code, staff and faculty at our school will use the following system:

**Demerit:** Given to students for minor infractions such as uniform violations or inappropriate behavior. Late or missing homework is not considered a behavior infraction but will affect student's grade. Each demerit will result in recess detention. A third demerit will result in after school detention. A parent conference will be called after a fifth demerit in one semester.

**Detention:** Issued for serious infractions or an accumulation of three demerits. Detention consists of one hour of Foundations of Education after school or on Saturday. Parent will be notified of detentions at least one day prior. A second detention in a semester will result in a loss of field trip privileges. A third detention will result in suspension. Detentions will be filed with the Dean of Students.

**Suspension/Separation from the School:** Reserved for extreme misconduct or repeated offenses with no sign of self-correction. A second suspension will result in a parent conference with the principal and pastor and the possibility of separation from the school. A third suspension will result in automatic recommendation for permanent separation from school. Documentation of suspension will be signed and placed in the student's file. Appropriate notice of a suspension and warning of separation will be forwarded to the Pastor and the Office of Catholic Schools.

All students start each semester with a clean slate of demerits and detentions. Suspensions are tracked over the course of the entire school year.

### **Harassment/Bullying**

Students are expected to treat themselves, others, and their environment with respect. Title IX of the Education Amendments of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides for protection against students who are mistreated in severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive ways. When harassment or bullying occurs, the school must take action and treat claims seriously. Those accused of harassment or bullying will be investigated, documented, and disciplinary action will be taken to curb or prevent harm to members of the community.

### **Tobacco/Drugs/Alcohol**

### Tobacco

Tobacco products are not to be in a student's possession or on school property at any time. This includes backpacks and lockers. Possession will result in suspension from school and an immediate conference with parents.

### Alcohol

- ⤴ The possession or use of any alcoholic beverage on school property will result in automatic suspension from school and an immediate conference with parents.
- ⤴ A repeated offense with regard to use or possession of alcoholic beverages will result in expulsion from school.

### Drugs

- ⤴ The possession, distribution or use of any drug on school property will result in automatic suspension from school, and an immediate conference with parents. Depending on the nature of the drug, the police may be contacted and the student may be expelled.
- ⤴ A repeated offense with regard to the possession or use of any drug on school property will result in expulsion.

*If any student comes to school and is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, his/her parents will be contacted and appropriate action taken.*

### **Dangerous Objects**

Dangerous objects such as firearms, knives and chains may not be brought to school. If a student has such an object in his/her possession, it will be confiscated and result in an immediate suspension. The object will be returned to parents or police only. If the offense warrants, police will be contacted, and the student may be expelled.

*This disciplinary process can be amended at the discretion of the principal according to the severity of the violation. Saint Benedict Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook as deemed necessary. Notice of changes will be sent via electronic or written communication.*

**Technology Acceptable Use Policy**  
*Catholic Diocese of Richmond*  
**Saint Benedict Catholic School**

Technology has become an increasingly critical tool to advance learning within the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. We see great potential for its use in the learning process as we seek to meet the mission of Catholic Schools:

*To develop and nurture the spiritual, intellectual, social, and emotional growth of each student in the spirit of the Gospels and the teachings of the Catholic Church.*

In a world where technology and our society are always changing, God and His Word remain the same. Our values and priorities are based on Biblical principles that transcend the latest technological trend. We want our schools to be a place where students can learn how to use technology as a positive tool to “make disciples of all nations.” Matthew 28:19

Part I: *The school, parents/guardians, and students agree to:*

- ⤴ Use school based technology for instructional purposes only.
- ⤴ Adhere to copyright laws.
- ⤴ Model appropriate use of technology including social media accounts.
- ⤴ Engage in online communication that positively represents the school.
- ⤴ Share concerns of inappropriate technology use with parents or administration.
- ⤴ Acknowledge the fact that the school cannot control all parts of the internet or incoming email.
- ⤴ Respect the authority of the administration and the finality of decisions by the administration regarding what is inappropriate use and its consequences.

Part II: *All schools within the Catholic Diocese of Richmond agree to:*

- ⤴ Teach students about being successful digital citizens.
- ⤴ Create student learning opportunities that empower students to be effective life-long users of technology.
- ⤴ Will take reasonable precautions to protect students and the integrity of its computer network from misuse by using filtering software. This may include conducting searches of school or personal devices with or without warning. Parents will be notified of searches.
- ⤴ Report activity that may be illegal to the appropriate authority in addition to parents.
- ⤴ Empower students to use technology to reach authentic audiences in meaningful ways.

Part III: *All students within the Catholic Diocese of Richmond agree to:*

- ⤴ Model Christ-like behavior and exhibit Christian virtue in the use of technology. *(This includes moderation of time spent online, refusing to view or accept pages or files of an inappropriate sexual or violent nature, and not defacing or damaging technology loaned to a student)*
- ⤴ Treat all people and property with respect.
- ⤴ Understand that their actions reflect directly on the entire school community and on each student. Use the school-provided internet connection and filter while at school.

- ^ Login with his/her own credentials and maintain the privacy of those credentials, only sharing username and password for school accounts with parents and school staff.

Specific agreements of Saint Benedict Catholic School students:

- ^ Will not change settings of iPads to include backgrounds
- ^ Will not use photo app unless for specific class purposes
- ^ *Will not record other students on school property or post other students and school staff without express consent of parents and other adults.*
- ^ *Electronics will not be used during field trips and or other activities where students and teachers are present unless granted permission. (Ex. field trips, dances, etc.)*
- ^ *Students who are caught using electronic devices between 7:30-6:00pm without permission will result in disciplinary action.*

Part IV: *Parents/Guardians of students within the Catholic Diocese of Richmond agree to:*

- ^ Monitor student technology use.
- ^ Model appropriate use of technology.
- ^ Recognize that they may be responsible for the cost of any repairs caused by inappropriate behavior

*Based upon the policies outlined in this document, as well as any technological innovations available after the printing of this document, the school's administration will deem what is inappropriate use. In addition, the cost of any repairs caused by inappropriate behavior may be the responsibility of the student and his/her family.*