

Parent & Student Handbook
The History and Philosophy of St. Patrick Catholic School

A Bit of History

St. Patrick Catholic School has operated at this site since the early 1930's when the main portion of our building was built. We were called O'Donoghue School up until the mid-1960's when the name was changed to reflect the Parish name. The original O'Donoghue School, organized in the late 1800's, was located downtown and was affiliated with St. Peter's Parish. The upstairs of our main building at one time was used to house Our Lady of Mercy High School for Girls when Charlotte Catholic was an all-boys' school. The original building has been expanded twice, first the section from the staircase to the door nearest the Cathedral was added and, later, in the 1960's, the gym and cafeteria were added.

Philosophy

A true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end of the good of the societies of which, as man, he is a member, an in whose obligation, as an adult he will share. (Declaration of Christian Education 1)

Christian education is intended to make faith become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction. (The Bishop's Pastoral Office in the Church, 14) The Catholic School is the unique setting within which this ideal can be realized in the lives of Catholic children and young people. (To Teach as Jesus Did #10)

The Administration, Faculty and Staff of Mecklenburg Area Catholic Schools are committed to the total Christian development of each student through religious and academic instruction within a faith community. They are striving to meet the intellectual, spiritual, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student by providing such learning experiences.

The Administration and Faculty are continuously evaluating and seeking new ways to prepare students to handle the demands and changes in society, while utilizing the resources within the local community. The three-fold purpose of Christian education, to teach the message of Jesus, to build community, and to serve, is incorporated into the total educational program.

Children and young people must be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral, and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly, and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy. (Declaration of Christian Education 1)

St. Patrick Catholic School Mission Statement

The St. Patrick Catholic School Community, through the teachings of Jesus Christ, is committed to sharing the Good News of the Gospel and to encouraging the growth of each individual student by meeting their spiritual, academic, emotional, social, and physical needs.

Diocese of Charlotte
Mission Statement for Catholic Schools

In communion with our families and parishes, and rooted in Scripture, Tradition, and the defined teachings of the Catholic Church, we form students to be virtuous disciples of Jesus Christ, who pursue excellence of intellect, body, heart, and soul with salvation as the ultimate goal.

Five Essential Marks of a Catholic School:

(The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools Archbishop J. Michael Miller, C.S.B., 2005)

- Inspired by a supernatural vision
- Founded on Christian anthropology
- Animated by communion and community
- Imbued with a Catholic worldview throughout its curriculum
- Sustained by Gospel witness

Uniqueness Statement

St. Patrick Catholic School is one of six excellent elementary schools in the Mecklenburg Area Catholic School (MACS) system. St. Patrick Catholic School enjoys the distinction of being the first Catholic school established in Mecklenburg County. It has the longest history of commitment to the academic and spiritual development of children, the strongest partnership with parents and the surrounding community, the most experienced teaching staff, and class sizes that are very supportive of learning. Taken together, these features create a unique Christ centered educational atmosphere drawing families, faculty, and the faith community together. Parents are comfortable at St. Patrick Catholic School and say they have "found a home" here. Teachers have high expectations for children and are committed to each other and the St. Patrick Catholic School community- at- large. St. Patrick Catholic School's long history with the community has attracted a socially and economically diverse student body reflecting the world in which the children will participate as adults. The active and collaborative participation of all these groups in the school has created an atmosphere of dedication, advocacy, fairness, and openness at St. Patrick Catholic School.

Our Beliefs

- Modeling, practicing, and sharing our Catholic faith on a daily basis will help to instill Christ-like responses in the children throughout life.
- Our school's primary function is to be a religion-based learning community with a constant focus on academic excellence and skills for problem solving and life-long learning.
- Teaching should be responsive to different learning styles and reflect current educational theory.

- Teachers, administrators, parents, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission and are committed to the process of continuous improvement.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

Mecklenburg Area Catholic Schools

Beginning with the 1992-93 school year a regional school system was formed. There are nine schools in MACS and as follows:

Charlotte Catholic High School
7702 Pineville-Matthews Road
Charlotte, NC 28266
(704) 543-1127

Christ the King Catholic High School
2011 Crusader Way
Huntersville, NC 28078
(704) 799-4400

Holy Trinity Middle School
3100 Park Road
Charlotte, NC 28209
(704) 527-7822

Our Lady of Assumption
4223 Shamrock Drive
Charlotte, NC 28215
(704) 531-0067

St. Ann Catholic School
600 Hillside Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28209
(704) 525-4938

St. Gabriel Catholic School
3028 Providence Road
Charlotte, NC 28211
(704) 366-2409

St. Mark Catholic School
14750 Stumptown Road
Huntersville, NC 28078
(704) 766-5000

St. Matthew Catholic School
11525 Elm Lane
Charlotte, NC 28277
(704) 544-2070

St. Patrick Catholic School
1125 Buchanan Street
Charlotte, NC 28203
(704) 333-3174

New Student Admissions

Acceptance Classifications

Priority is given to students according to the following classifications:

- Current MACS Students
- Siblings of current MACS Students
- Students of current faculty/staff of a MACS school
- Participating Catholics of a parish in Mecklenburg County and surroundings areas
- Participating Catholics of a parish outside of Mecklenburg County and surrounding areas
- Non-participating Catholics and Community Members

In all cases involving Catholic students, their pastor must certify that they are participating Catholics to have priority placement and be eligible for participating parishioner tuition rate. To be eligible for the participating parishioner tuition rate, Catholic families transferring into the Charlotte area may provide a letter from the pastor of their former parish stating that they were participating parishioners.

Telephone Numbers

Please do not call the office during prayer times 8:00am-8:05am and from 2:30pm-3:00 pm.

St. Patrick-School Office: (704) 333-3174

School Fax: (704) 333-3178

Website: www.saintpatricksschool.org

Cafeteria: (704) 333-9176

After School Care Center: After 3:00pm, (704) 333-9176

MACS Business Office: (704) 370-3265

MACS Transportation Office: (704) 370-3299

Church Office: (704) 334-2283

Charlotte Pastoral Center: (704) 370-6299

School Board

A broad-based school board oversees the operation of the regional school system. The Board meets on a regular schedule. The public is encouraged to attend the open meetings.

Nondiscrimination Policy

St. Patrick Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, physical condition or national and ethnic origin in employment of personnel.

Accreditation

St. Patrick Catholic School is accredited by Cognia (AdvancEd). The school is also a member of NCEA, the National Catholic Education Association.

Students

School Hours: The school day begins at 7:50 am. At 8:00 am, the second bell rings for prayers, announcements, and the beginning of instructional time. Dismissal begins at 2:40 pm. All students are to be picked up from carpool by 3:00 pm.

Ordering Lunch: Lunch orders are to be placed online in advance according to ordering procedures. You will be notified of the open ordering period. There are no exceptions to the deadlines. Side items can be pre-ordered and paid online or are available daily. If you are unable to meet this schedule, you must pack a lunch for your child.

Withdrawals: If you need to withdraw your student from the MACS school system you must send a letter in writing to the school Principal. In addition, you must contact the MACS business office at 704-370-3265 to begin the withdrawal process. The school will forward student records upon completion of withdrawal process.

Change of Address: The school is required to have up to date contact information on file for all parents. If you move or change jobs, please contact the school office with the new information as soon as possible. You will also need to contact the MACS business office at 704-370-3265 with any change of address.

Attendance Regulations

Absences: The importance of being in school cannot be stressed enough. If an absence is planned, the parent is required to notify the school by note or by phone prior to the absence. If a child is sick, please call the office by 9:00 am. Repeated absences may require a note. Students missing any days of school or who are repeatedly tardy to school are not eligible for Perfect Attendance. Please note that a student who is absent from school may not return to school property during school hours for sports or after school activities.

Tardiness: Arriving at school on time to begin class is critical for a child's successful, productive day. Students who arrive at school after the 8:00 am bell are marked tardy. Parents will be notified when tardies for their children become excessive. The Diocesan policy recognizes the importance of prompt and regular school attendance. We will do our best to support this policy here at St. Patrick Catholic School.

Partial Absences: When a student must leave school before dismissal, a written note or phone call from the parents or guardian stating the reason must be communicated to the teacher and to the office. No verbal requests from students will be honored. Students who arrive after 11 am, or who leave school before 11 am and do not return will be marked absent for the day.

Parents or guardians must come to the office to sign in students who are late. They must also come to the office and sign a release for their child's early dismissal.

Diocesan Regulations

Unexcused Absences: Unexcused absences are defined as any absence other than for sickness or the death of a family member. Excessive absences may require a conference with administration and parents to determine make-up work or continuation of the student in that grade.

Tardies: Excessive tardies may require a conference with administration and parents to determine make-up work or continuation of the student in that grade.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Parking: Please do not park directly in front of school on Buchanan Street in the spaces designated by signage and orange cones. This is reserved for bus parking. Parking is available in the side lot; during special programs the back lot is open and available for parking.

Arrival Procedures: Cars should not enter the parking lot from Waverly Street or Buchanan Street. Cars should enter the parking lot off of Pierce Street, around to the trailer. The drop off for students will be at the end of the trailer by the gym stairs. Students will enter the building through the outer, open gym doors. Safety patrol and teachers will be on duty to open doors after 7:30am. Students should be ready to exit their car in order to keep the carpool line moving. There is no need for parents to get out of the car. If anyone else brings your children to school, please make sure that they are aware of our carpool procedures. There is no parking in the 10 spaces next to the sidewalk area during morning and afternoon carpool.

From the drop off area, proceed up through the top parking lot onto Buchanan and turn right. From 7:00 to 9:00am each day Buchanan Street is a one-way street. No student is to be dropped off in front of school between 7:00 and 7:50 am. Morning supervision is provided from 7:00 to 7:50 am each school day in the school gym. After 7:50 am, if there is not an adult on duty outside, please proceed to the front. After 8:00 am, a student is tardy and must be escorted into the building by a parent and signed in. Students are not to enter the building after 8:00 am unescorted. If arriving at 8:00 am or after, park and walk your student into the school office and sign them in. Your student will receive a tardy slip and must present the slip to their teacher for admission into class. Students arriving late will remain downstairs in the foyer area until prayers are completed.

If anyone else brings your child/ren to school, please make sure that they are aware of our carpool procedures.

Early Dismissal: Please send a note to your child's teacher if you need an early dismissal. If you are picking up your child any time during the school day other than a normal dismissal time, you must come to the office and sign out your child. The school secretary will call the child

down to the office. At no time should a parent go directly to the child's classroom. Parents doing so will be asked to return to the office. Please schedule to pick up your child by 2:15 pm.

Afternoon Dismissal: Dismissal begins after afternoon prayers. Children are dismissed directly from their classrooms. Afternoon carpool will follow the same directions as the morning carpool. Cars will not enter the parking lot from Waverly Street or Buchanan Street. Enter on Pierce and pull all the way up to the top of the parking lot. Safety patrol and teachers will help direct traffic flow. The afternoon carpool line frequently gets long, drivers will be directed to loop through the blacktop in 2 rows. Cars should move forward as far as possible to allow as many cars as possible to load at the same time. Placards must be visible, or you will be asked to come to the office to get your student. Placards will be distributed at Open House to be completed by the parent. Please be sure that anyone who is picking up your children has a sign – this includes babysitters and nannies. Please follow the directions of the staff.

Teachers with walkie-talkies will call your student(s) down to the loading area directly from their classroom. Following this procedure will speed up carpool. Please do not ask the office staff to watch your child because you are running late.

MACS Bus Transportation: All bus riders are dropped off on Buchanan in the morning by the gym door/steps. Bus riders in the afternoon are dismissed first to the foyer where they are checked in for their bus by a faculty member. Any changes in bus routine for your student must be submitted to the office in writing or via phone call. In case of an emergency if a change needs to be made, please contact the school office. Bus transportation is for registered bus riders only.

Walkers/Bike Riders: All students who live in the neighborhood and walk or ride their bike to school must be registered with the school office by completing the walker permission form. Students who are dismissed as walkers need to live within walking radius. This is not an alternative to carpool. Walkers and bike riders are dismissed out the main level doors facing the Cathedral/Family Life Center. Parents must meet their children at this location in the afternoon. There is no supervision of students by school staff once they are dismissed.

Late Opening Due to Weather: If school operates on a delayed schedule, you will hear it either on the TV or radio. The school will be listed as Mecklenburg Area Catholic Schools. Closings are shown on WBT-TV and radio, WSOC-AM/FM WSOC-TV, WCCB-18, NBC 6 TV, and 102.9/WTDR. If school operates on a delayed schedule, there will be no before school care and you must send your child to school that day with their lunch. No lunches will be ordered when school opening is delayed, and your account will be credited for that day. Emergency notification will also be made through our text and email blast systems.

Early Closing Due to Weather: If school closes early due to weather or any other emergency you will be notified by TV or radio. Listen for Mecklenburg Area Catholic Schools. Closings are on WBT-TV and radio, WSOC-AM/FM, WSOC-TV and WCCB-I8. Also, we will send out an email blast and text with important information. Please make sure that you give all current phone contact

numbers and email addresses to the school. School personnel will stay with children until they are picked up from school.

Before and After School Care

Before School Care Program: St. Patrick Catholic School offers before school care from 7:00 am until school starts. There is no charge for this service.

After School Enrichment Program: St. Patrick Catholic School offers after school care. The program operates on all school days from the time school is dismissed until 6:00 pm. Parents whose children remain past 6:00 pm must pay a late pick-up fee. Late fees will be billed to the parents. The fee for full-time After School Care (3-5 days per week) is \$240.00 per month for the first child in a family, and \$170.00 per month for each additional child. Children attending different schools do not receive the additional child discount.

The fee for part-time care is \$25.00 per day for the first child in a family and \$16.00 per day for each additional child. Full-time fees will be billed monthly in advance of the month for which they are incurred. A late fee of \$10.00 will be added to bills not paid on time. A fee of \$25.00 will be added for any returned checks. Late payments may result in loss of space in After School Program.

MACS Transportation

Bus procedures are in place for the safety of every child riding the bus to and from school. You should receive the procedure guide from MACS. The school Principal along with the Bus Supervisor will ensure that procedures and safety guidelines are followed by every student on the bus. Disciplinary action will be taken if safety guidelines are not followed by a student. Any concerns or issues with transportation should be reported directly to the MACS Transportation Director at 704-370-3263.

Our bus drivers are well trained professionals with years of experience. The students are expected to follow all instructions from the bus driver and are to be respectful. Please make sure that your child knows the bus number they are to ride home on each day. Experience tells us that the fewer bus changes you make in your child's schedule the better it is for him or her. Uncertainty about what to do is a frightening event for a small child and causes delays at bus departure time.

Please make sure that you send a note or call the school office if you must make a change in your bus schedule for the day. If the office does not receive any notification of a change, the student will be put on the bus. Emergency changes at the last minute need to be phoned into the Principal.

Grievances

In the event that a grievance arises between a parent and St. Patrick Catholic School the following chain of command should be followed until a satisfactory resolution to the grievance is met.

- Classroom Teacher or Staff member with whom the grievance arose
- The Principal
- Diocesan Superintendent
- The Vicar of Education
- The Chancery

All communication should be in writing asking for a response within ten (10) business days and followed up by documented verbal communication.

Parent Concerns – Escalation Process

Any concerns regarding personnel, educational programs or facilities should be directed to their lowest possible level for an equitable solution according to the following sequence:

- Student/Parent
- Teacher
- Principal
- Superintendent of Schools
- Vicar of Education/Chancery
- Bishop

Social media in any form, including mass snail mail, ‘chat room’ forums (e.g. Facebook), Twitter, email, or texting is not an appropriate means to discuss concerns about St. Patrick Catholic School. Parents are reminded to use the existing escalation process structures when raising any concern about the school’s educational programs, facilities, or personnel. We also strongly encourage all parents to refrain from using social media to discuss sensitive issues about the school, the administration, staff, parents, and students. As a Catholic school, we ask everyone to be judicious and charitable before they post or write anything.

Discipline

SCHOOL RULES: HOW TO “BE JESUS TO ONE ANOTHER”

- Respect God’s house and God’s name by showing reverence.
- Respect teachers and adult volunteers by listening, obeying, and participating.
- Respect classes in progress by walking quietly in the halls.
- Respect others by speaking and acting with kindness and using manners.
- Respect others’ property by treating items with care.
- Respect yourself by keeping your uniform neat and clean.

- Respect our school by keeping it clean.

As the parent is the primary educator of the child, so, too, is the parent the primary person responsible for discipline. St. Patrick Catholic School has set forth policies and guidelines for the safety of the students and for the security of the learning environment. It is the expectation of the administration that parents will cooperate with the school staff by supporting the school policies and guidelines. Students are subject to the authority of the Principal and the entire staff of St. Patrick Catholic School.

Minor disciplinary problems are handled by each classroom teacher. If behavior does not improve, a student will be referred to the office to speak to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Parents will be notified if a student has been sent to the office. Conferences including administration, parents, Student Assistance Team members and the student may follow. The following list gives some examples of behavior that may result in referral to the office.

- Repeated failure to obey school policies and regulations
- Continual insubordination and disrespect
- Damaging or destroying school property
- Stealing or damaging another person's personal property
- Fighting
- Deliberate Cheating (The paper will be taken away and no credit given.)
- Use of inappropriate language – oral or written
- Bullying

Disciplinary Action

Time may be spent in the office as a disciplinary consequence determined by the administration. An out of school suspension may be warranted for the following reasons:

- Possession of an object that is dangerous or perceived to be dangerous
- Leaving the school grounds without permission
- Intentional physical harm
- Possession or use of tobacco products
- Other serious infractions including repeated minor infractions

Expulsion may occur for the following reasons:

- Possessing a weapon on school property
- Continual violation of school rules

Immoral words or actions may also be cause for expulsion, as is conduct considered detrimental to the reputation of St. Patrick Catholic School, no matter where or when this action occurs.

Any potential or unforeseen issue not specifically listed above will fall under the prevue of the principal. The principal reserves the right to apply appropriate consequences.

School-Wide Rules and Consequences

Students will be expected to abide by school wide rules. Any faculty or staff member who observes infractions to the rules may discipline according to school policy.

In addition to school wide rules, grade level teachers will have established discipline procedures that are age appropriate and reinforce personal accountability for disruptive behavior while maintaining the dignity of all involved. If a student continues to engage in actions that interfere with the learning process the teacher or staff member will notify the parents.

School Behavior Pledge:

- We, the students at St. Patrick Catholic School, agree to work together to be Jesus to one another.
- We believe that everybody should enjoy our school and feel safe, secure, and accepted. It does not matter what color, race, gender, or nationality we are. We are all equal in God's eyes.
- Pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, name calling, teasing, or making fun of others will not be tolerated at our school. Defacing, destroying, or damaging school property will not be tolerated at our school.
- We understand our school rules and how to be Jesus to one another. We agree to help our school by reporting unkind and inappropriate behavior to an adult at school. We also agree to be the best students we can be by respecting our teachers, ourselves, and other students' comments, opinions, and ideas.

We will remember to be Jesus to one another!

Consequences for incomplete homework/classwork that are not related to inappropriate behaviors within the classroom will be addressed in the section of the handbook entitled "Curriculum."

Major Infractions: Major infractions of the school wide rules will be handled by the Principal.

Bullying

St. Patrick Catholic School has established an anti-bullying policy. We believe that everyone should enjoy our school and feel safe, secure, and accepted. It does not matter what color, race, gender, or nationality we are. It also does not matter how popular, how much athletic ability, or how smart, we are all equal in God's eyes.

What is Bullying?

Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens OVER AND OVER.

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically

- Spreading rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a “group”
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to “gang up” on others

Bullying also can happen online or electronically. Cyberbullying is when children or teens bully each other using the internet, mobile phones, or other cyber technology. This can include:

- Sending mean text, email, or instant messages
- Posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs or on websites
- Using someone else’s username to spread rumors or lies about someone else

Bullying is NOT...

Normal conflict can occur any time or place and is generally accidental and resolved by the parties in conflict. Bullying behaviors occur where the person bullying feels safe engaging in power seeking behavior which is intentionally harmful and directed at someone who is considered weak or vulnerable and generally is resolved by third party intervention.

A certain level of conflict between kids is normal, even healthy, and teaching your child how to handle everyday difficulties will prepare him or her for life. The problem begins when it surpasses normal childhood conflict and meets the three common markers for bullying: an imbalance of power, intent to harm, and threat of future harm.

Once a conflict between one or more kids has escalated into a cycle of bullying, employing conflict resolution to solve the problem is no longer appropriate. The word “conflict” assumes that both kids are in part responsible for the current problem and need to work it out. In the process of working it out, both kids make compromises and the conflict is resolved.

Tattling Versus Reporting/Telling

Tattling is when someone is trying to get someone else in trouble. Reporting or Telling is when someone is trying to get help so as to resolve a problem.

- “Are you telling me to be harmful (tattling) or helpful (reporting)?”
- “Are you trying to get someone in trouble?” (tattling)
- “Are you trying to help discipline my students?” (tattling)
- “Are you having a problem with bullying?” (reporting)
- “Are you helping a friend who is hurt?” (reporting)

Students at St. Patrick Catholic School are instructed by Administration, Counselors, and Teachers to report bullying immediately to ensure appropriate responses. The teachers, staff, and administration of St. Patrick Catholic School have a “No Tolerance” policy for bullying. If it is determined that a child is bullying other students, the following action will take place:

First Offense: When an incident is reported to a teacher, the situation will be handled by the child's classroom teacher with a note sent home explaining the incident and the actions taken.

Second Offense: A referral will be made to the school counselor with a note sent home.

Third Offense: A referral will be made to the administration.

Dress Code

Students at St. Patrick Catholic School are expected to dress according to the following dress code:

On Mass days, full dress uniform is required. Girls in grades K-3 must wear the jumper. Fourth grade girls may wear the jumper or the plaid kilt. Fifth grade girls must wear the plaid kilt. For boys, K-5, long pants must be worn.

GIRLS: Grades K-5 may wear the uniform jumper, plaid skort, navy pants or navy shorts. Any of these may be worn with a hunter green or white long or short sleeved blouse or knit shirt. The blouse or shirt must have a collar and only school logos are acceptable. Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in at all times. A belt is optional. During cold weather, girls have the option of wearing a navy, white, or green cardigan sweater, the green fleece available from PTO or the warm-up suit jacket. The uniform plaid kilt may be worn by 4th and 5th grade girls. Sweatshirts not sold by the uniform company are not permitted. Solid white turtleneck shirts may be worn. If shorts are worn under the jumper, they must be a solid color and not hang below the jumper. No hats, scarves or bandanas are to be worn inside the school building. Kilts and shorts must be of appropriate lengths. The green fleece with the St. Patrick logo is permitted to be worn in school all year round, no other fleece vests, coats, or outerwear may be worn in the classroom.

Girls are not permitted to use any make-up. No tattoos of any type or hair dyes. Jewelry and hair accessories must be simple and not out of character with the uniform (i.e. multi-colored bracelets, earrings etc.). Hair is to be clean and neatly styled. Students may not wear smart watches with calling/texting capabilities.

BOYS: Grades K-5 may wear navy uniform pants or navy shorts. A belt is optional. Shirts may be either a hunter green or white dress shirt or knit shirt, with long or short sleeves and only school logos are acceptable. Shirts must be worn tucked in. During cold weather, boys have the option of wearing a green fleece available from PTO or the warm- up suit jacket. Sweatshirts not sold by the uniform company are not permitted. A solid white turtleneck shirt may be worn. A solid white t-shirt may be worn under the shirt. The green fleece with the St. Patrick logo is permitted to be worn in school all year round, no other fleece vests, coats, or outerwear may be worn in the classroom.

Boys may not wear their hair touching the collar of their shirt. Bangs **must** be above the eyes; **hair must not cover the ears.** Hair is to be clean and neatly styled. **Alternative hairstyles such as faux hawks are not permitted.** Excessive jewelry or nail color may not be worn. Tattoos and

hair dyes are not permitted. No hats, scarves, or bandanas are to be worn inside the school building. Students may not wear smart watches with calling/texting capabilities.

P.E. Uniform: 4th and 5th graders are expected to wear a P.E. t-shirt for each P.E. class. A warm-up suit and P.E. shorts are optional for all grades on P.E. days other than Friday (Mass day). Students wearing the warm-up suit, or the P.E. shorts may wear the gray or white St. Patrick's logo t-shirt, or the Faith in Learning t-shirt.

Socks: Boys and girls are expected to wear socks that are visible. Solid white, forest green, black, St. Patrick logo green socks, or navy knee socks or crew socks are to be worn. Girls may wear white, black, or navy tights in colder weather. **Footless tights are not allowed. Socks must be worn at all times and be visible. Bright, neon colors are not acceptable.**

Shoes: Athletic shoes are permitted. Black or brown loafers are acceptable for boys and Mary-Janes or ballet style shoes are acceptable for girls, but athletic shoes should be worn on P.E. days. **No flashing lights** on shoes or excessive colors or designs. No sandals, boots, Tevas, Keens, sandals, flip-flops or open back shoes or slides of any kind. This also applies to dress down days. **Rain or snow boots may only be worn during inclement weather when appropriate. Boots may not be worn as a part of the daily uniform.**

Student's name should be on every part of the uniform in case it is misplaced. The school does not assume responsibility for any clothing that is lost or stolen.

Our uniforms are purchased from Flynn & O'Hara located at 1730 Abbey Place, Charlotte, NC 28209 (the store has limited hours) Or through their website: <https://flynnohara.com>

No Uniform Passes: During the year, we have some no uniform/dress down days. These may be fundraiser days or reward days. On these days, children should dress neatly. These passes may not be used on days we attend Mass. Tank tops, short shorts, and shirts with inappropriate graphics are never permitted. If girls wear leggings, their shirts should be fingertip length. Skirts should also be fingertip length.

If students have P.E. on Mass day, they are expected to wear their Mass uniform and change into their P.E. uniform after Mass.

St. Patrick Catholic School administration reserves the right to make rulings involving clothing/hair fads and/or accessories.

Policies and Procedures

Protecting God's Children: We welcome volunteers at St. Patrick Catholic School; however, all volunteers must complete a background check (\$8 for each parent) and Volunteer Profile as well as take the Protecting God's Children workshop. The workshop may be completed online or an in-person schedule is available on the Diocesan website,

www.charlottediocese.org. After the workshop, you will receive monthly bulletins through the VIRTUS email. It is extremely important to remain current on these bulletins. If you fail to keep current on monthly bulletins, your completed status will be put on hold and you will not be allowed to volunteer in the school. Diocesan requirements for reporting ministry-related sexual abuse of a minor can be found on the Diocesan website at www.charlottediocese.net/safe-environment/reporting-abuse.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy: All students, faculty, and staff are expected to use all hardware and software with the utmost care, respect, and regard for the work of others. The use of technology and, in particular, the Internet, in education has grown by leaps and bounds. Technology is now as common a tool as a textbook. St. Patrick Catholic School offers Internet access for students, teachers, and staff. The Internet offers information and resources otherwise unavailable to our school. Because the Internet is a necessity in supporting our curriculum goals, it has become an integral part of our instructional program for all teachers and students.

The goals of the Internet access are:

- To support curriculum standards
- To enhance learning opportunities and instructional resources
- To promote life-long learning

Students will be monitored when the Internet is used during class. Under the direction of the Diocesan IT Department, St. Patrick Catholic School will continue to utilize filtering software to block student access to inappropriate websites.

Acceptable Use of the Internet: It is the expectation of St. Patrick Catholic School that the Internet is used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner by all members of the St. Patrick community and is used in support of the educational objectives and the student behavior guidelines of St. Patrick. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to, the following: violating copyright laws, reposting (forwarding) a person's communication without the author's prior consent and using threatening or inappropriate language. Additionally, communication on behalf of the school must have administrative approval prior to being sent. Inappropriate use of technology may result in loss of privileges and disciplinary action.

Netiquette Rules: Users must abide by network etiquette rules. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite; rudeness is never acceptable.
- Use appropriate language.
- Do not reveal your personal address or telephone number or those of anyone else.

Privileges: The use of the internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in limitation or cancellation of user privileges and may result in other disciplinary action. Personal devices are not permitted, including cellphones.

Animals: Pets are not allowed on the St. Patrick Catholic School campus during school operating hours. Pets may not be brought to the playground during the recess period. This policy is for the safety of all children.

Safety: As required by law, each month a fire drill is conducted. Tornado drills are conducted each semester and lock-down drills are conducted each quarter. All drills are demonstrated for students at the beginning of the school year.

Security Cameras: Security cameras are located at the outside doors to the school and throughout the building. All doors are locked during school hours with the exception of the main front door entrance. Once inside the building, please push the buzzer on the wall and wait to be buzzed into the building. All doors are monitored during the day. Please do not try to enter the school through the cafeteria door especially at lunch time.

Entry to the school is only through the main front door. Follow the sign-in procedures.

Visitors: All parents and guests coming to school must first sign in with the office and receive a visitor badge. The badge must be worn at all times while at school. Parents are not to go to the classrooms during the day to deliver forgotten items. Please drop off any forgotten items to the office, and they will be delivered to the classroom. Please make sure that your child's name and classroom number are clearly marked. If a parent needs to meet with a teacher, an appointment must be scheduled in advance. Please do not go directly to a classroom prior to the school secretary contacting the classroom teacher.

Fines: If furniture, equipment, or school text books are marred or destroyed by a student, there will be a charge according to the expense involved in replacement. A fine applies if a textbook is lost by the student and cannot be located. In addition, an appropriate consequence/punishment will result if the damage is intentional.

Library Fines: All books withdrawn from the library must be returned on the specified date. Overdue library book charges will be determined by the Librarian. A lost book must be replaced. Any student who has not returned books or paid the replacement cost at the end of each quarter will not receive his/her report card. The Librarian will contact the parent to handle lost books on an individual basis.

Lunch: Students eat lunch in the cafeteria between 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. each day. They may purchase their lunch or bring it from home. Lunches from home must be ready to eat. We do not have microwaves for student use. Parents are always welcome to eat lunch with their children after completing Protecting God's Children and a background check. Lunch ordering is available online. Parents are welcome to order lunch for themselves. Students who forget to bring a lunch will be offered a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Parents may be notified if a

child has no lunch. All side items, such as, milk, chips, ice cream etc., can be ordered online or purchased on a daily basis. Please plan ahead and follow all lunch procedures.

Birthdays: Recognition of a student's birthday is seen as an important aspect of a student's development. Students' names will be announced in the morning announcements on their birthday or the Friday before a weekend birthday. Students are permitted to bring store-bought treats to celebrate, or parents may contact Elizabeth Loeber (ejloeber@stpatrickschool.net) in the cafeteria to purchase an ice cream treat for their child's class to celebrate a birthday. The store-bought treats must be eaten in the cafeteria. Students may not pass out any extra treats in the building. There are no class parties for birthdays. Invitations to private parties may not be given out at school unless there is an invitation for every child in the class. Parents can also donate a birthday book with a label inside the front cover with the student's name to honor his/her birthday. Please see librarian for more information.

Personal Property: The school does not accept responsibility for lost or misplaced items. ALL ARTICLES SHOULD BE MARKED WITH THE STUDENT'S NAME; unclaimed items with no identification will be given to a charitable organization.

Electronic Devices: Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices, including but not limited to iPods, handheld computer games, cell phones, and integrative watches to school. Student watches may not have texting or calling capabilities, may not play games or access apps, even if those features are disabled during the school day.

Lost and Found: Lost and Found is located in the cabinet under the stairway adjacent to the Art Room. It is the child's responsibility to check for lost items at this location. Several times a year, after a few days' notice, all unclaimed items are gathered and donated to Catholic Charities.

Student Council: The purpose of the Student Council is to give the students an opportunity to learn responsible governmental procedures, encourage school spirit, and to foster a faith community with an emphasis on outreach through service.

Students in Fifth Grade are encouraged to participate. Members are selected based on criteria set by the Student Council Advisors.

Telephone: Students are not permitted to use any telephone in the school except in the case of an emergency and must be supervised by a staff member. Student cell phones are not permitted.

Thursday Folders: Each week you will receive important communications from the school via email. Any information that you would like included in the weekly Principal's Newsletter or flyers included in the packet needs to be submitted to the principal for approval no later than 5pm on Tuesday for inclusion in Thursday's packet.

We want to recognize all of our students and any accomplishments they have achieved outside of school. This will be done during morning announcements and will not be included in the

Principal's Newsletter. Send a note to the Principal with the necessary information and the achievement will be recognized during morning announcements.

Health Room

The health room is staffed by a full-time or part-time registered nurse. In addition to the school nurse, there is a trained first-responder team that can assist with emergencies.

Policy for the Administration of Medications: The purpose of this medication policy is to ensure that students safely receive all medications administered by school personnel. This policy will be followed during school hours, on school sponsored field trips, and in the afterschool program.

Medications given during school hours by school personnel should be kept to a minimum. Every effort should be made so that medications can be given at home before and/or after school. Medications will be given in school to students who need medications to sustain attendance, students who have chronic health problems, or students with a special need.

If your child must receive any type of medication during school hours, including over-the-counter medications, **the following regulations must be followed:**

- Both prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications require a completed Medication Authorization Form, detailing the medication, reason, dosage, and administration times. This form must be completed in full by the physician and signed by the parent/guardian.
- All prescription medications must be brought to school in a properly labeled pharmacy container with identifying information (child's name, medication name, dosage, and times to be given).
- All over-the-counter medications must be brought to school in the original container, with the manufacturer's label intact.

Inhalers for asthma treatment require the Asthma Treatment Authorization Form to be completed and signed by the physician and parent or guardian. It is preferred that asthma medication be administered in the health room, especially for students in grades K -5. If optimal asthma control requires self-administration, an agreement for self-administration must be completed with the student, physician, and the parent/guardian.

Field trip permission forms include a section for authorizing administration of medications that must be administered to a student while off campus on a school sponsored field trip. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to complete the Field Trip Form in full, including the medication section, and return it to the school on the date indicated on the form. The school health personnel require advance notice to prepare medications for the field trips; thus, no forms will be accepted, and no medications will be prepared on the day of the field trip. In

addition to the Field Trip Form, medication administered by school personnel must have the Medication Authorization Form on file in the health room.

The above regulations are for the safety of the students; thus, there are no exceptions to this policy. If you do not wish to follow the above regulations, you may come to school and administer the medication to your child at the appropriate times. School personnel will not administer any medication to students unless the proper forms are completed, and the medications are in properly labeled containers. All forms can be found on our school website under Quicklinks.

Illness/injury: Should illness or injury occur during the school day, parents or guardians may be notified after the student has been assessed by the nurse or other designated personnel. Please make sure that the school has up-to-date emergency information on your child. This information is vital when the school must contact you or the person you have designated to take your place when you cannot be reached.

Guidelines for sick students:

We will ask you to take your child home from school and/or to keep them home if he/she experiences any of the following in the past 24 hours:

- Temperature of 99.5 or above
- Requires Tylenol or ibuprofen to maintain temperature below 99.5
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Drainage from eyes, ears, or nose at nurses' discretion
- Other symptoms that interfere with your child's or other students' learning

If your child has been diagnosed with an infectious illness, please keep them at home until they are no longer infectious as directed by your physician. Students should not return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours without medication and have not vomited for 24 hours.

Vision Screening: All elementary and middle school nurses perform a vision screening in November for all students in grades 1, 3, 5, and 7. Other students may be screened at the Nurses discretion, or if referred by a teacher or parent. Anyone who does not pass or struggles with the exam is retested and if they do not pass a second time, they are referred for a complete eye exam by a physician. The student must return the referral form to the Nurse following the test with the results of the exam and recommendations for the student.

Teaching Programs: The school nurse assists the teachers in presenting age-appropriate health lessons for your child. Topics include (but are not limited to) are the following:

- Nutrition
- Exercise and rest
- Proper hand washing

- Water and bike safety
- First Aid for Children
- Dental hygiene
- Alcohol and other drugs

Lice: Although not a health hazard, head lice is a nuisance. Lice are not life-threatening, do not spread diseases, and do not indicate a lack of personal cleanliness. Few conditions cause so much concern and anxiety as head lice. At school we take precautions to reduce the likelihood of contact transfer.

If you find lice or nits in your child's head, please notify the school promptly so that we can help you. Please use one of the over-the-counter head lice products and follow all of the directions on the box.

The MACS School Health Program follows the guidelines outlined by the National Association of School Nurses, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Centers for Disease Control for the management of head lice in a school setting. These organizations stress that lice should not disrupt the educational process. Therefore, students do not have to be "nit-free" to return to school.

Academic Standards

It is the expectation of the faculty that the students will not neglect their classroom responsibilities for the sake of sports. Participating in sports is a time commitment which is in addition to the time already set aside for academics, not in place of. To maintain the proper balance between academics and sports it will be necessary for parents to help their children develop time management skills.

The standards are:

- To follow the school and classroom rules for behavior
- To complete all homework assignments, reports, and projects
- To maintain consistent progress in academic growth

Parents and coaches will be notified if it is necessary to remove a student for a definite number of games, or from the team.

St. Patrick Sports and Athletic Association

St. Patrick Catholic School offers participation in basketball. Requirements for participation are as follows:

- A student must be registered and pay appropriate fees to the Athletic Association.
- A student must make his/her own arrangements to attend practice sessions and games. The school does not provide transportation.

Student Athletes must be supervised at all times by either a coach or a designated adult. Coaches cannot be expected to supervise siblings of athletes.

The Athletic Program is designed to provide students the opportunity to participate in well-supervised interscholastic sports. Our philosophy is to stress the development of Christian character through healthy athletic competition, which focuses on sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership, and cooperation. The objective of our program is to provide an opportunity for every student in our school to be a member of an organized sport.

Athletic Association: This is an association of parents who, with the principal, manage the athletic program, set fees, and raise funds to off-set the cost of the athletic program. The Athletic Association sponsors basketball for grades 3-5.

Students who participate in sports must represent St. Patrick in a positive manner at sporting events. They must also exhibit appropriate conduct and behavior at school. Students must also maintain a satisfactory academic status. Students who are performing at an unsatisfactory academic status will be subject to probation or suspension from the team.

All of our school teams are coached by parents and volunteers. Parents are expected to be role models for their children and respect the decisions made by both the coaches and referees. The aim of teams is to teach Christian sportsmanship at all events.

Curriculum

Accreditation: St. Patrick Catholic School is accredited by the Cognia (AdvancEd) and is recognized by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Sacramental Preparation: All information concerning Sacramental preparation will come from the Religious Formation Program of the parish where the student is a member. Parents are expected to follow all regulations from the Diocesan Faith Formation office, including attendance at Sacramental parent conferences.

Homework: Homework is assigned as an extension of classroom learning. Teachers make every attempt to ensure that this work is not homework for the sake of giving homework, but that it provides an authentic opportunity to enrich the learning process and to instill academic competence, confidence, and ownership within each student. Chronic incomplete or missing homework will be brought to the attention of the parents.

Missed Assignments: From time-to-time parents take their children out of school for personal reasons. This should be avoided if possible. As you make your decisions to do so, please keep in mind that this can interfere with your child's schoolwork. We ask that you be diligent in communicating with your child's teacher upon your return and help your child complete all missed assignments. Missed assignments due to vacation/unexpected travel are to be made up after returning to school. Teachers are not expected to provide assignments ahead of time.

Procedures for Missed Homework: For missed assignments due to illness only please follow this procedure: Call the school office and request the missed assignments. A note will be given to the teacher and the missed assignments will be available after 2:15 p.m. the following day for pick up in the school office. If the student is out of school due to vacation, personal reasons, or other travel, assignments will be made up when the student returns to school.

Progress Reports: The purpose of a progress report is to inform parents of their child's progress in school. Parents are notified during each grading period if their child is failing in a subject area or in conduct. Similarly, a parent is informed if a student has earned recognition for achievement, cooperation, hard work and such. The initial progress report is issued midway into the quarter. Please refer to the school calendar for additional report dates.

Report Cards: Report Cards are issued four (4) times a year for students. Students are to return their signed report card envelope to school on the following day. The envelope must be signed by a parent or guardian. Report cards and transference of records will be withheld for students whose tuition and fees are not current, as determined by the MACS business office.

Non-custodial Parent Policy: It is the responsibility of divorced parents to furnish the school with a notarized copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. Schools voluntarily comply by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the 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 the court order.

Standardized Testing: The Terra Nova standardized testing are given during scheduled dates for grades 2-5. If a student is absent, based upon the date of return and the nature of the testing, a decision for make-up testing will be made. Testing dates will be published in the weekly Principal's Newsletter.

Retention: Students must pass all subjects before progressing to the next level. The decision to retain a child is made only after serious consideration. When a teacher has reason to believe that a student is in danger of retention, he/she will make a referral through the Principal and the Student Assistance Team. Parents are made aware of the situation. Members of the professional staff will meet to determine the best course of action.

Parent Teacher Conferences: Conferences are held in the fall of each school year. It is a time to meet with the teacher to discuss the academic progress of your child. Report cards are sent home with students prior to the conference dates. Each family is responsible for signing up for a ten (10) minute time slot that fits their schedule. Sign-ups will be available online the week prior to conferences. If you need to schedule a conference with a teacher any time other than the scheduled conference times, please call or send a written note to the teacher. Our faculty is available to meet with you with a scheduled appointment.

Communication With Teachers: Teachers communicate their classroom information through PlusPortals and/or a monthly or weekly newsletter. If parents need to contact teachers through their school email, or by phone, please allow a minimum of 24 hours for the teacher to respond. The parent may also leave messages through the main office for the staff they wish to contact.

Special Area Classes: Students meet with special area teachers in the areas of Art, Music, Computer, Spanish, PE, STEM, Guidance and Library.

Learning Support: The Learning Support Program at St. Patrick Catholic School is part of the regional program within the Mecklenburg Area Catholic Schools. Goals of the Program are:

- provide assistance in identification of students requiring additional educational support
- provide direct specialized instruction to students who have been identified with a learning disability, learning concern, or attention disorder
- provide assistance to teachers in finding successful instructional methods for students
- provide support to parents who seek information and/or services for their children.

Tutoring: At times, tutoring may be recommended or needed for student success. Teachers employed by St. Patrick Catholic School may tutor after their contractual day ends. Tutors who are not employed by St. Patrick Catholic School must abide by procedures set forth by the school and need to coordinate their schedule with Administration as well as the classroom teacher. The expectation is that tutoring, while important, will remain secondary to the learning environment of the school day.

Counseling Program: Students are able to see our school counselor for many reasons. If a child needs assistance with organization, study skills, behaviors which are impacting his or her ability to focus academically in the classroom, anxiety, grief and loss, self-esteem and peer relationships, divorce/separation, self-regulation, and more, our counselor is here to help. A student may ask to see the counselor, a parent may reach out to the counselor to seek assistance, and the classroom teacher may refer the child to the counselor. The counselor meets with students individually, works with small groups of students, and also provides classroom guidance lessons. The counselor teaches lessons in each k-5 classroom for 45 minutes weekly. Some topics for these lessons include but are not limited to friendships, positive social skills, conflict resolution, safety, feelings, character traits, and Catholic virtues. Our counselor also has many parent resources available including books on various topics and referrals to outside services. Our counselor is a member of our Student Assistance Team as well.

Field Trips: Field trips are to be educational in nature and should extend an area of classroom study. Participation in a field trip requires a school issued permission form completely filled out and signed by a parent. Telephone calls will not be accepted in lieu of this signed form. Field trips are privileges afforded to students. Students can be denied participation if they fail to

meet academic or behavioral requirements. Students who fail to have their permission slip signed by a parent will not go on the field trip.

Clubs

We have several extra-curricular activities available for students including:

- Band: Students in 4th and 5th grade can play a band instrument. Students normally have one practice time during the school week. St. Patrick Catholic School students join with the other MACS schools twice a year for a concert, at Christmas time and again at the end of the school year. Practice for these concerts is scheduled after school hours. Students must rent or buy their own instrument. Notice for Band sign up is sent out to rising fourth and fifth grade students at the end of each school year.
- Choir: St. Patrick Catholic Church has sponsored a student choir in the past. For questions about choir, please call St. Patrick Cathedral.
- Song Leaders: A school sponsored opportunity for students in grades 3-5 to sing for the First Friday Masses.
- Altar Servers: Boys who are currently Altar Servers at their church may request to help serve at school Mass on Fridays.

The following clubs are sponsored by the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO):

- Chess Club
- Book Club
- Girls Running Club
- Boys Running Club
- Science Related Clubs
- Art Related Clubs and
- other clubs as warranted.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Organization is intended as a support to the total school program, as well as running fund-raising projects. The Parent Teacher Organization sponsors a variety of activities throughout the year in order to achieve the following goals:

- fund raising to pay for items or activities not covered by the tuition
- setting up mechanisms to enrich the academic experience of the children
- showing teacher and staff support and appreciation
- organizing community-building activities

A description of the activities and/or committees of the organization is available from the PTO. These activities need volunteers, and all parents are sent a questionnaire soliciting volunteers for each activity.

Notification of Asbestos Re-Inspections

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), pursuant to the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act (AHERA), requires all schools in the United States to conduct regular inspections for the presence of asbestos and report the results. It is common for schools constructed prior to 1988 to contain some asbestos, and our school does. We have some vinyl asbestos floor tile in a few areas and asbestos-containing pipe insulation locked away in maintenance areas, and all such material is in good condition. We are currently maintaining these materials in a safe condition through a program outlined by a Certified Asbestos Management Planner approved by the State of North Carolina with ongoing surveillance, required re-inspections, and a prescribed operations & maintenance program. All material has all been assessed by a Licensed Inspector to be "in good condition with low disturbance potential."

Paperwork regarding our asbestos management program is available in the school office and at the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Charlotte. You are welcome to inspect and copy these plans during regular business hours. If you have any questions about our asbestos program, you may also contact Christian Lingurariu, the Diocese's Asbestos Designated Person at 704-370-3322, or @charlottediocese.org.

Diocese of Charlotte

Discipline Problems: With the rise in text-messaging, emails, social media, cell phones and parties at individual homes, it is necessary to clarify the responsibility of the school with regard to discipline associated with any problems.

St. Patrick Catholic School is responsible for the safety of your child/ren while he/she is in school or at a school-sponsored event. If there is an incident involving a threat, danger or illegal activity involving your child outside of the school or a school-sponsored event, it is the responsibility of the parent to bring the threat, danger or illegal activity to the attention of the parents of the child involved and also report it to the proper legal authority. Should a social media posting/interchange result in disruption to the classroom setting, the administration and/or counseling may find it necessary to intervene.

The school and/or employees are not responsible or liable for any issues or problems that occur outside of the school and/or school sponsored events.

Right To Amend

The administration of St. Patrick Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook if circumstances warrant. In the event that changes are made, parents will be notified in writing through our regular communication channels.

School Policies

The following pages are policies from the Diocese of Charlotte.

The policies are as follows:

- Search and Seizure
- Disciplinary Probation, Suspension and/or Expulsion
- Weapons

Copies of the above policies are included in this handbook.