

# Blessed Sacrament School Parent Handbook

## 2021-2022

**Blessed Sacrament School  
5841 Chevy Chase Parkway NW  
Washington, DC 20015  
202-966-6682  
Fax 202-966-4938  
[www.bsstoday.org](http://www.bsstoday.org)**

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Blessed Sacrament School family! Fr. Foley, Ms. Cogswell, the faculty, the staff and I feel truly blessed to be part of such a strong, faith-filled community. Here at Blessed Sacrament we are completely dedicated to providing our students with a quality Catholic education.

This handbook explains the philosophy and policies of our school and describes our day-to-day routine. Please read the handbook carefully and adhere to our school's policies.

The faculty and staff are eager and excited to spend the year working with one another to promote academic excellence, grow in our faith, and provide loving service to others. May you and your family find this year to be a fruitful one and full of many blessings.

Faithfully,

Mr. Christopher Kelly  
Principal

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Blessed Sacrament School is dedicated to providing a quality Catholic education based on the message of Christ and the values of the Catholic Church within a caring community that promotes academic excellence and a life of service.

## **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

Blessed Sacrament is a parish, neighborhood school dedicated to excellence within an atmosphere of Christian love and concern. This goal of excellence is rooted in the teaching mission of the Catholic Church; a mission to assist parents in the development of the whole child. This means giving attention to the child's spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional and physical growth. We believe that this can best be accomplished within a community of people who share a family-like love for each member of the community, along with a determination to work together to accomplish our common goals.

Our primary goal is to direct the child toward a mature Christian life. The achievement of growth into a life of full participation within the Christian community should be nurtured within the school setting. The Eucharistic celebration, communal prayer, and participation in sacramental liturgical celebrations are all ways in which the children are guided toward a mature relationship with their Savior, Jesus Christ.

Parents/Guardians and students understand and acknowledge the Roman Catholic religious nature of Blessed Sacrament School. Parents/ guardians and students agree not to publicly repudiate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and will respect and support the unique identity that Blessed Sacrament derives from its Catholic faith. As the primary educators of their children, parents /guardians will not act in ways that contradict the Catholic nature of Blessed Sacrament. Parents/Guardians shall cooperate fully with the school and the students shall participate in all required school programming, including instruction in the Catholic faith and attendance at Mass. As the primary educators of the students, parents/guardians agree to act in ways that promote the best interests of the church and school and will comply with the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington and Blessed Sacrament School.

Because Blessed Sacrament School believes so firmly in the concept of education for the future, we are determined to strive for excellence in all aspects of the curriculum. The administration and faculty direct their efforts toward continuous program evaluation, quality program development, and professional growth and development. These efforts enable the faculty to enrich the lives of those they teach.

Among many educational ideals, the concept of individual needs stands out as basic to our philosophy. Therefore, we are determined to do as much as we can to identify individual needs, research available alternatives, and select for each student the best course of action we are able to provide. Such a concept assumes the investment of time, personnel, money, and effort. Given the assets we have, we are determined to do as much as possible to ensure that each student achieves his/her potential, thus developing the talent bestowed by God.

Perhaps the strongest tool we have toward the achievement of these goals/ideals is our experience of community, unity, and dedication within the faculty and staff. Believing in the basic premise that a child's welfare is central to a successful education, the faculty shares its concerns. By working together, we can solve problems and arrive at solutions for the good of all. We believe that a strong spirit of dedication and unity among the faculty will promote a student body which is more apt to care for every member as if it were truly a family.

Maintaining ourselves as a parish, neighborhood school is another advantage which we strive to continue. The success of the students, faculty, and entire school is the result of a close working relationship within the community. The school is an integral part of the parish, sharing in its liturgies, social outreach and its blessings. Students are aware of the needs among families, sharing themselves through prayer, or offering whatever assistance they can. This close working relationship is life-giving to the school community.

Because we believe in the necessity of nurturing each individual, we try to provide an atmosphere of kindness throughout the school. A sense of family characterizes our classrooms; a spirit of caring motivates our actions toward each other; and an attitude of Christian love is evident in the respect which we accord to each other. Parental support and caring are also evident in the areas of the Home and School Association and fundraising. Even more important,

parental support is present in the daily life of the school as parent volunteers help with lunch duty, serve as room parents, assist with field trips, work with children on extracurricular activities, and generally lend support where it is needed. This close working relationship adds to the family spirit of the school, leaving us free to be ourselves with the knowledge that we will be accepted by our classmates and teachers as brother or sister in the family of God.

Finally, because we are a Christian educational facility, we see ourselves as journeying together to the future, a future ripe with hope because we walk with each other as we all walk with Christ.

## **SCHOOL HISTORY**

Blessed Sacrament School opened its doors in 1923 to 90 children in grades one through six. Initially located in a house adjacent to the parish. The current school building was constructed in 1928, at a cost of \$250,000. During the 1930's, with enrollment growing, the school added grades seven and eight.

By the late 1940's, Blessed Sacrament School's enrollment grew to 800 children in grades K-8, prompting the school's first expansion. The additional classrooms were completed in 1951. Throughout the 1950's, enrollment increased by an average of 4% per year and reached over 1,000 students in the early 1960's.

A second major expansion of the school was completed in 1965 and included construction of the current gymnasium, stage and religious center (the Roche Building). However, by the late 1960's parish demographics followed broader population trends and enrollment declined. By 1980, school enrollment reached 500 students, a number considered optimum for the facilities.

In 1993, another renovation was undertaken to bring the facilities into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Complete access for the disabled was provided through installation of an elevator, a new entrance, and rest room facilities.

In 1998, on the school's 75th anniversary, more than 1500 alumni and spouses attended the celebration, demonstrating the powerful influence the school has had upon its graduates and their families.

In 2000/2001 a final restoration was completed, incorporating the convent to the main school building.

Begun as a parish school, Blessed Sacrament School continues to serve primarily students who live in the parish.

Generally, 90% or more of the students attending the school belong to the parish. As space permits, the school offers enrollment to non-parishioners and to non-Catholics.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Blessed Sacrament School is accredited by AdvancED Standards for Schools. We are also recognized as a Blue Ribbon school by the United States Department of Education.

## **ADMISSION POLICIES**

The Archdiocese Admissions Non-Discrimination Policy can be found on the website of the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Washington: [www.adwcatholicschools.org](http://www.adwcatholicschools.org)

Entering kindergarteners must turn five prior to September 30.

Applicants are admitted in the following order:

- Siblings of current Blessed Sacrament School students
- Active, registered, and contributing parishioners of Blessed Sacrament
- Other Catholics
- Others

Transfers from other schools are accepted as space is available and if students meet all requirements. Testing of students may be a requirement for admission.

## **TUITION INFORMATION**

Tuition is set annually by the pastor and principal with guidance from the Blessed Sacrament School Advisory Board. This information is emailed home in the spring for the following year. There are two tuition plans used at the school.

### **Plan A: Catholics**

Parishioners in this context are understood as those who attend Sunday Mass regularly at the parish church, are active in parish activities and contribute equitably through the envelope system to support the Parish. (Contributions must be identifiable.) Parishioners must be registered at Blessed Sacrament or another Archdiocese of Washington parish and be active in that parish for at least one year before application to qualify for Plan A.

### **Plan B: Non-Catholics**

This is for families who do not satisfy the requirements for Plan A.

### **Tuition Management**

Tuition is collected by FACTS, an independent contractor. FACTS allows each family to choose a payment plan that best suits them.

Delinquent tuition payments will result in holding the quarterly report card and/or jeopardizing second semester enrollment.

Parents are reminded that it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to make arrangement for payment of tuition and it is also their responsibility to advise either the principal or the pastor of any compelling reason for delay in tuition payments.

Blessed Sacrament is a parish school and no parishioner would ever be denied entry because of financial reasons. If you are in need of financial assistance, please email the principal.

**Registration Fee:** This is an annual non-refundable fee that is collected in January for the following fall. Payment of this fee assures that space will be reserved for your child in the upcoming year. This fee is in addition to tuition.

## **C.A.R.E. THEME**

Courtesy, Acceptance and Respect for Everyone is an acronym used as our community symbol which strives to reinforce our mission on a daily basis. This school-wide focus is celebrated in our liturgies and everyday classroom environment.

Blessed Sacrament School strives to create a nurturing setting for learning and to encourage relationships that are supportive and inspire confidence. All members of the Blessed Sacrament School community, including teachers, priests, administrators, staff, students, and parents/guardians, desire to do their part to ensure that all member of the Blessed Sacrament School community are treated with CARE - Courtesy, Acceptance and Respect. Our goal is to create an environment in which all community members exemplify the call to model love for one another as Jesus did.

By choosing to become a member of the Blessed Sacrament School community, each of us agrees that we will make a conscious effort always to treat one another kindly, charitably, civilly and thoughtfully. All members of the Blessed Sacrament School community are expected to abide at all times by this covenant. Members of our school community who use actions or words that are demeaning, disrespectful, intimidating, malicious, exclusionary, or bullying are behaving in violation of this covenant.

### **Parent-Teacher Covenant**

Because Blessed Sacrament strives to be a faith community, parental cooperation and good parent-teacher relations are essential. As a faith community, our first instinct is to assure that each of us – teachers, administrators, parents,

guardians and other caregivers - has the child's best interest at heart.

While we are a school excellent in many ways, no one within our community is perfect and problems and misunderstandings will occur. When a problem or disagreement arises, we at Blessed Sacrament School will make every effort to contact the parents to clarify the situation. Parents, guardians and family members who experience problems or are confused with some matter regarding their child's educational experience, are asked to show similar respect by striving first to learn the reasons behind a policy or inquire about the teacher's or school's understanding or decision before judging or forming an opinion. Those who are not satisfied with what they have learned are asked to approach the administration to investigate the matter. In this way, positive resolutions can be reached.

**Parents and guardians are asked to follow the following guidelines for expressing concern over a school matter:**

If the problem involves routine procedures such as homework, class assignments, classroom or playground behavior, or student to student problems, then the parent is asked to contact the teacher first. The best way to do this is via email. For a variety of reasons, parents should not attempt to bring up a difficult or serious matter in front of other students while the teacher is on duty during the regular school day.

If the problem is more serious, the parent or guardian should inform the principal in writing, with a phone call or email. Only signed notes or callers who identify themselves will be taken seriously. Since concern for your child is uppermost in all our minds, we will make every effort to accommodate you and your concerns.

All staff members of Blessed Sacrament School promise prompt attention to problems, privacy in discussing matters, professional courtesy and respect when problems are presented and a sincere effort to resolve matters in a Christian manner. That is, we promise to approach problems and misunderstandings in a manner that expresses genuine concern for the welfare of your child spiritually, psychologically, academically and physically, and his or her fellow classmates.

With this in mind, parents and guardians are expected to show the same concern and respect for the staff of Blessed Sacrament School as well as the other children and families in our community. Respect, courtesy and Christian concern for all, as promulgated through our CARE theme, should be our primary response. All Blessed School community members should communicate with one another with directness, honesty, transparency and responsiveness.

The following behaviors are considered unacceptable within a Christian community:

1. assault or harassment of a staff member, student or parent
2. intimidation or verbal abuse of any kind to any member of the community – in person or in writing

**Consequences of Violating the CARE Covenant**

Blessed Sacrament School wishes to encourage behavior that is consistent with our duties as Christians. In the event that Blessed Sacrament School community members violate the CARE covenant, the following steps will be taken:

**Process for Responding to Behavior Involving Students:**

- First Step: Warning to the child to correct behavior that includes a discussion of expectations and how to meet these expectations
- Second Step: Warning communicated to parent and to child; appropriate behaviors and responses to be suggested and discussed
- Third Step: Administrative conference with parents, child, teachers
- Fourth Step: (conduct indicative of a choice to ignore the School's CARE theme and guidelines): Consequences may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from participation in school activities, suspension or expulsion. Particularly serious infractions may warrant a combination of the listed steps.

**Process for Responding to Behavior Involving Adult Members of the School Community:**

- Behavior will be reported to the pastor, principal, or assistant principal. A conference will be scheduled with the adult to address the behavior.
- For parents/guardians, consequences may include, but not be limited to, limited access to school property, exclusion from participation in school activities, and non-renewal of registration.

- Reports regarding administration, faculty, staff or priests will be addressed as personnel issues according to the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington.

#### **Our Community Commitment:**

- All members of the Blessed Sacrament School community must act as role models for each other, demonstrating in all their interactions the values of courtesy, acceptance and respect.
- All members of the Blessed Sacrament School community are encouraged to intervene when bullying or other unacceptable behaviors are observed.

The Blessed Sacrament School faculty and staff devote time and attention throughout the school year to encourage behavior that is consistent with our CARE theme and to identify and eliminate behaviors that are harmful to our Christian environment.

### **BULLYING**

Blessed Sacrament School defines bullying as behavior that involves focused and repeated effort to cause physical or emotional discomfort or fear in the target individual, takes advantage of an imbalance (perceived or actual) in power between the aggressor or target, and is intended to isolate, exclude or ridicule the target.

#### **Bullying behaviors include but are not limited to:**

- Repeated teasing
- Efforts to embarrass or humiliate
- Deliberate exclusion from group activities
- Acts of aggression
- Spreading of gossip (orally, in written form or through technology)
- Harassment (including sexual harassment)
- Intimidation
- Damage to an individual's property

Blessed Sacrament School will not tolerate bullying in any of its forms. Incidents of bullying and unacceptable behavior should be reported as soon as possible to a teacher, administration or the pastor. Reports will be taken seriously and will be treated confidentially.

### **PREVENTION PROGRAMMING**

As a Catholic school, Blessed Sacrament believes and teaches that each of us is called to love our neighbor and to treat them with respect. Blessed Sacrament is committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation in any form, including cyberbullying. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation of any member of the school community is prohibited. All reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

The reprisal or retaliation against anyone who report acts of bullying, harassment, and intimidation is strictly prohibited. All reports of reprisal or retaliation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Bullying, harassment, and intimidation mean any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including electronic communication (telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, iPod, etc.), that:

1. Physically harms an individual, damages an individual's property, substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment, or places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property.

- Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, on a school transportation vehicle or bus, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

**THREATS**

In the event of any actual or perceived threat of violence or other inappropriate/illegal behavior Blessed Sacrament School, reserves its right to take any and all actions it deems necessary for the health and safety of its school community, including the individual(s) making the threat. These actions may include contacting law enforcement offices, mental health professionals and /or any other outside experts as the school official(s) deem necessary. A student who makes a threat of violence may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

**ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

In the event of an emergency or crisis, the Archdiocese of Washington may send a team of school counseling professionals to Blessed Sacrament. One-time, initial counseling services may be rendered to students by school or archdiocesan counseling staff.

**HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)**

**Executive Committee**

President	Liz Vorassi	ebvorrasi@gmail.com
Vice President	Erin Sowanick	erin.sowanick@gmail.com
Secretary	Samantha Burman	samantha.staffier@gmail.com
Treasurer	Elizabeth Kramer Dugan	kramere99@yahoo.com
Faculty Rep.	Meghan Matthews	mmatthews@blessedsacramentdc.org
Principal	Chris Kelly	ckelly@blessedsacramentdc.org
Past President	Renee Redpath	rjredpath@gmail.com
Room Parent	Amanda Reisig	aareisig@gmail.com

All families become members of the Home and School Association (HSA) upon the enrollment of their children in Blessed Sacrament. Members of the faculty and administration are also members of the association. The mission of the Home and School Association is:

- To promote open communication and cooperation among the parents, teachers and administrators in support of the mission of Blessed Sacrament School.
- To provide opportunities for parents to be of service to the school and to coordinate these services.
- To enhance the quality of the school through a program of fundraising activities directed toward specific objectives.

School-wide meetings of the HSA are held in the fall (Back to School Night), and spring (budget presentation). All parents are urged to attend these meetings. The HSA Executive Committee, made up of elected and ex-officio members, meets monthly. Parents wishing to attend these meetings or place items on the agenda should contact the HSA Presidents. Copies of the HSA By-Laws can be obtained by contacting the Secretary.

An extensive “Call for Volunteers” is issued by the HSA during the summer. Additional need for volunteers is announced in the school’s Friday *Weekly* newsletter. Parents may always call HSA officers to volunteer their services.

The HSA sponsors many activities during the year which include:

- Book Fair
- Box Tops
- Directory
- Faculty/Staff Luncheons
- Grandparent's Day
- Spirit Wear
- Spring Benefit
- Uniform Exchange

### **SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD**

President: Nikole Flax - nikoleflax@gmail.com

The pastor appoints nine representatives from the parish community to the School Advisory Board. Members are school parents or interested parishioners. The president of the Home and School Association as well as a teacher representative are also voting members. The pastor and principal are non-voting members.

The School Advisory Board, in collaboration with the principal, is responsible for developing and recommending an annual budget to the pastor. The Advisory Board further develops and reviews significant policies for recommendation to the pastor and principal with regard to curriculum, tuition, enrollment, admissions, salaries, personnel, technology, facilities, public relations and development. The Advisory Board is a liaison with the Pastoral Council and Monsignor Smyth Fund.

### **OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT/ CONSTITUENT RELATIONS**

In 1999, the Office of Development/Constituent Relations was formed to enhance the school's relationship with our current and past school parents, grandparents, alumni, parishioners, and the surrounding business community.

Communication is fostered through the Bulldog Bark.

The office of Development/ Constituent Relations also runs the school's annual giving campaign, Annual Fund. Annual Fund helps alumni organize reunions, seeks grants and scholarship monies, and pursues all other opportunities to serve constituents and advance the school's goals.

The office is open 20 hours per week, staffed by a director of development and constituent relations, Amanda Loveland. The office can be reached by calling 202-966-6682 Ext. 3973 or by emailing [aloveland@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:aloveland@blessedsacramentdc.org).

### **MONSIGNOR SMYTH ENDOWMENT FUND**

By resolution, the pastor has established the fund to receive contributions, including subscriptions, grants, donations, gifts, bequests and derrises to be used for the support and aid of the school and its faculty and students primarily tuition relief and teacher enrichment. The mission of the board is to act as an advisor to the pastor in administering the fund in seeking to assure the continuation of quality Catholic education at the school. This fund has been in existence since 1988. Contributions to the Smyth Fund can be sent to the attention of Rick Perry in the Monsignor Duffy Parish Center. Each year the Smyth Fund organizes the Msgr. Smyth Golf Tournament to support the fund's mission.

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

Blessed Sacrament School utilizes the Archdiocese Standards of Learning as a means to set the framework for learning in our school.

### **Grades K-2**

The K-2 community prides itself on extending the faith through community prayer, building character by teaching to the whole student, and providing a developmentally appropriate academic programs that meets the needs of all students. As a parochial Catholic school, we incorporate our faith into our daily routines. We build the K-2 students' character by challenging our students to show Courtesy, Acceptance, and Respect for Everyone each and every day through programs such as our anti-bullying policies and community service. With the para-educator in each classroom we are able to better meet the needs of all students in small group settings. We also use the Responsive Classroom model in the classroom.

Our curriculum guides our students through a comprehensive math program and a balanced literacy program. After our informal comprehensive literacy assessments we are able to develop appropriate reading instruction. We use a literature and phonetic based reading program in conjunction with Lucy Calkin's Writer's Workshop. We use the Handwriting Without Tears program. This is an occupational therapy based handwriting program that enables the child to develop small motor skills while learning to write through all facets of learning. Our math program is developmentally appropriate focusing on the key math concepts.

Blessed Sacrament School develops the whole child through creative arts and physical education. Our school offers Music, Art, Library, Science, and Physical Education. These programs provide students with the opportunity to develop into well rounded individuals.

### **Grades: 3-5**

Blessed Sacrament students in grades third, fourth and fifth work to both solidify basic skills and, at the same time, expand and apply these skills in increasingly complex ways.

### **Science/Social Studies**

Science and Social Studies become central during these years, and research and study skills are a major focus. Students become immersed in many topics. At any one time, one may see various examples of the rich curriculum. Third grade "pioneers" study and work their way west on the Oregon Trail. Fourth graders design projects on biomes and experience a day of hands on science at the Chesapeake Bay. The fifth grade students study United States History from the Age of Exploration to Reconstruction.

### **Language Arts/Math**

Language arts and math instruction are core to the development of the strong skills needed for success at all levels of our school. A basal series in reading (with its continued focus on specific skills for comprehension and vocabulary) is supplemented with the reading of novels at all three grade levels. Our excellent school library provides opportunities to expand students' exposure to literature of all genres. The STEP UP TO WRITING program helps build strong writing skills beginning with simple paragraphs and letter writing and moving to more sophisticated multi-paragraph papers. The Houghton Mifflin math series guides our development of basic and more complex math, and Saxon Math is used to transition students from the primary Saxon Math program (K-2) to the full Saxon Math program. Both the math and language arts programs meet individual needs by flexible grouping.

### **Religion**

Our Catholic Identity is central to all that we do. We pray together each morning and encourage a community feeling by grouping children as BUDDIES across the three grade levels. The BUDDIES participate in shared service projects, curriculum challenges (such as the 3-4-5 Geography Bee) and prayer. The C.A.R.E. Program (COURTESY, ACCEPTANCE, RESPECT for EVERYONE) helps us stay centered on the practical applications of our faith, and a life of service is encouraged by a variety of projects throughout the year. We attend Mass together and have a coordinated textbook

which ensures that the basic tenants of our faith are taught at appropriate times. Our Faith Formation Director leads us in prayer, supports our faith practices and provides resources for involving us in the life and devotions of the Church.

## **Middles School (Grades 6-8)**

### **Spirituality**

Blessed Sacrament's middle school is a place where students pray with and for one another and are encouraged in every class to grow in their relationship with Christ. We are fortunate enough to work closely with parish priests who are present both in the church and the classroom and aid the children on their spiritual journey. Throughout our curriculum, BSS provides its middle school students with a safe environment to develop as young adults in the Catholic Church.

### **Academics**

With a highly educated and motivated staff, BSS middle school students are challenged, engaged, and encouraged to be curious and diligent learners. Instruction is differentiated, honors classes are available for advanced students, and resource available for those in need of help. From art to algebra, social studies to Shakespeare, students are exploring academics and learning invaluable skills. Our graduates are very well prepared for high school and beyond.

### **Community**

As a middle school that implements the advisory model, we promote empathy and community among our older students under the school's umbrella of the CARE theme. Students not only learn in small groups, but are part of smaller advisory groups that enable students to develop close bonds with their fellow advisees and to find their own voice. The middle school CARE theme is courage, altruism, responsibility, excellence. All 8<sup>th</sup> graders both Catholic and non-Catholic are required to complete service hours as part of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade program.

### **Foreign Languages**

Students in grades 1-8 are expected to study either French or Spanish during the school day. New students are placed with regard to prior experience and current openings.

### **Homework**

Homework assignments vary with individual teachers. At the first Home and School Association meeting in September, teachers will discuss their policies regarding homework and their views on parental assistance with homework and other school projects. All homework assignments are posted online through the parent portals, PlusPortals.

Teachers cannot provide students with advance work to accommodate a vacation during the school year. Missed lessons and tests must be made up within one week of the student's return in order to receive credit. It is expected that each student make arrangements with a homework buddy to obtain missed assignments.

### **Report Cards**

There are four report card periods. Students in **5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>** grades, and their parents, have access to Rediker where they can check grades throughout the year. Teachers update Rediker at least once every two weeks.

### **Grading Scale**

A: 93%-100%

B: 85%-92%

C: 77%-84%

D: 70-76%

F: 0%-69%

### **Standardized Testing**

Twice per school year, grades 2 - 8 participate in the standardized academic achievement Scantron testing program under the direction of the Archdiocese. Every December, Grade 8 takes a Diocesan High School Placement Test. (HSPT)

## **Confidentiality of School Records**

Student records are confidential and are not released to anyone other than parents or legal guardians without written authorization from them.

## **SCHOOL LIBRARY POLICIES**

The Sheila Culligan Kearns Memorial Library is open five days a week from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The librarian can be reached at 202-966-6682, ext. 2390. Students are welcome to use the library before/after school or during school hours with the permission of the librarian. Children sometimes misplace, damage, or lose books. Our procedures are as follows:

### **Overdue Books:**

The student and the teacher will both receive overdue notices. The student should let the parent know that a book has been forgotten by giving the parent the written reminder on which will appear the name and class of the student, the book title, the author's name, and the due date. The student may not borrow another book until the forgotten book is returned. If the book has not been returned by the second week, another notice is written. At this point, a note from home letting us know that the family is aware of the situation will suffice to enable the student to resume library privileges. If we have received no notice by the third week, the family will receive notification from the library by phone, mail or email.

### **Lost Books:**

Because we prefer to have the book eventually returned, WE NEITHER EXPECT NOR WANT IMMEDIATE PAYMENT. We wait until the end of the school year before we determine that a book is truly lost. However, we do remind families at the end of the first semester to keep searching; often the book is somewhere in the home or in a school locker. And, fortunately, many books do surface in a variety of places throughout the school year. If this does not occur, we notify the family of replacement costs by the first week in June and expect the matter to be settled before the final report card is released.

### **Damaged Books:**

When a book is ruined beyond repair, we will notify the family regarding replacement costs and will expect compensation before the final report card can be released.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Hours of School**

The first class begins at 8:30am. School ends at 3:10. Students arriving after 8:15am are considered late and must request a pink slip from the front office. On half days each month, students are dismissed at 12:30 so that teachers may attend in-service sessions. Parents are encouraged to use this time to set up any necessary doctor and dental appointments for their children.

### **Office Hours: 8:00am -3:45pm**

The administrative staff cannot leave the office area to deliver personal messages to students. Please email your child's teachers with messages for your child.

### **Arrival Time**

Students may not be dropped off at school before 7:45 a.m. The school cannot accept responsibility for students brought to school before 7:45 a.m. Once students arrive, they may not leave the school grounds without a parent/guardian signing them out. Parents will be notified and appropriate consequences given for violation of this rule.

## **Tardiness**

It is important that everyone makes a resolve to be prompt each day. Tardiness negatively impacts a student's performance at all grade levels. It may also negatively impact high school admission. Students arriving late must obtain a tardy slip from the main office which allows admission to class. Students in Middle School with three tardies will receive a conduct referral. Students will begin each quarter with a blank slate.

An excuse for a late arrival due to a doctor's appointment must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

## **Attendance**

The following are valid reasons for excused absences from school.

1. Illness of the student. After three days of illness the student must provide medical documentation that indicates that he/she is able to return to school.
2. Death in the student's immediate family
3. Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding
4. Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by administrative officer
5. Temporary closing of facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions requiring closing or suspension of classes
6. Other absence(s) approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a parent or guardian. Sufficient notice should be given to the school in order to provide expected student work to be completed while absent. Failure to provide sufficient time may result in an unexcused absence.
7. Medical or dental appointments

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above categories, or is not properly documented by the student's parent/guardian, is an unexcused absence.

When a child is absent, please e-mail the teacher & health room before 8:30. For the safety of all of our children, it is important that parents carefully observe the following regulations regarding the pick-up and discharge of children.

If your child needs assistance or you need to enter the school building for any reason, you must plan to park your car on the street and escort your child to or from the school. If anyone has special needs due to physical limitations, please contact the Principal directly.

Parents are reminded that parking in front of the school on Chevy Chase Parkway is not permitted during school hours.

## **Morning Drop-Off**

Parents must drop off their children in the morning by entering the parking lot from Western Avenue through the apartment building parking lot to the blacktop by the gym doors. Assistants are available to help your children out of the car and expedite the flow of traffic. All traffic must exit down the alley to Quesada Street. Drivers should proceed through the drop off line in single file. Drivers should never pass on either side of the drop off line. Children should exit cars on the school side of the car. This ensures the safety of the children and minimizes congestion.

### **If students are walking**

All children should approach the Chevy Chase Parkway entrances to the school from Chevy Chase Parkway. **All entrances open at 7:45am.**

## **Afternoon Pick-Up**

- Choice A – Carpool. Cars enter the school parking lot from Western Avenue. Cars proceed in rows to the entrance of the gym. The children are dismissed to parents/caregivers once the cars are all stopped and engines turned off. Cars leave the parking lot going left to Quesada Street.
- Choice B – Gym Pick-up. Parents may choose to park their cars in the neighborhood and wait in the gym to pick up their children. **Grades K-2 are in the Gym**
- Choice C – Walkers. Grades K-3. Students in these grades who walk must be assisted by an older student. They are picked up in the gym by an older sibling or older friend in Grade 4-8. Those not responsible for a younger child are dismissed immediately from the classroom.

- Choice D – Aftercare. Children attending Aftercare report to the Aftercare room at dismissal. For your convenience and peace of mind, children not picked up by 3:25 p.m. will be escorted to the Aftercare program, where they will be appropriately supervised. Parents will be charged the Aftercare program fee.

### **Early Dismissal for Appointments**

Students may not leave the school premises under any condition without signing out in the school office. No student may be taken from school by anyone except his or her parent or legal guardian unless previous arrangements have been made with the office in writing. If a student is leaving early, parents must email the teacher before 8am. When picking up a student before the usual dismissal time because of illness, doctor's appointment, etc; you must come to the front office where the child will be waiting and sign out. Parents are not allowed to go directly to their child's classroom.

### **School Cancellation for Inclement Weather**

In the event of bad weather, Blessed Sacrament follows the decision of the Montgomery County Public Schools with regard to a delayed opening OR cancellation.

If Montgomery County schools are closed for a scheduled holiday, the Archdiocese of Washington will announce closings. Please listen to your radio for cancellation or delayed opening information. Blessed Sacrament does not close if Montgomery County schools close early.

### **Parent Notices**

Every Friday, the Blessed Sacrament School Weekly is sent via email to every family. This is an important source of school information for parents, faculty, and students.

Parents coordinating school or HSA activities can submit announcements to be published in the Weekly. Submissions must be email to [office@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:office@blessedsacramentdc.org) by Wednesday at 3pm.

Personal notices, advertisements, or any information non-Blessed Sacrament related will not be accepted in The BSS Weekly.

### **Staff In-Service Training**

Several Fridays during the year are designated as faculty in-service days. Please check your calendar. Classes are dismissed at 12:30 p.m. in order to give the teachers time to work individually and in groups towards developing their own skills and refining the goals of the school - wide curriculum. The faculty also participates in occasional Archdiocesan educational conferences.

### **Forgotten Lunches/Assignments**

It is the student's responsibility to see that lunches, homework, and all assignments are brought to school. Parents are asked NOT to bring forgotten items to school. If parents choose to bring forgotten items to school, items will be placed on the "Forgetful Table" and it is the responsibility of the students to check the table for any forgotten items. The office staff will not hand deliver forgotten items.

### **Transfers and Withdrawals**

Requests for transfer applications should be made to the school office well in advance of the last attendance date. Transcripts of records and faculty recommendations will be mailed directly to the new school upon request from the parent or new receiving school. For families transferring overseas, the office will provide the transcript to the parents on the child's last school day. No records are forwarded until all financial obligations to Blessed Sacrament School have been satisfied.

For 8th grade students applying to private high schools, in addition to the Archdiocesan high schools, the following procedure is required:

- Complete a transcript request and provide individual teachers recommendation forms.

- **Withdrawals:** Please advise the office in writing of any plans to withdraw your child from school as soon as possible.

No records will be forthcoming until all unpaid tuition and fees are satisfied.

### **Email**

Email is the best way to communicate with teachers and staff.

1. Please be sure that the content of your message is such that you would feel comfortable having it read, repeated or overheard by someone other than the addressee.
2. Remember that the faculty may not have an opportunity to retrieve their emails during the day and may not receive your message until the end of the day or the following day. It is our goal to return emails within 48 hours.
3. Email is an ideal way to keep in touch with your child's teacher about academic and behavioral issues, not necessarily daily arrangements. Please limit your emails to appropriate topics.

### **Grievances**

Grievances at Blessed Sacrament School are taken care of as they are in any Christian community. Parents with a grievance toward the administration should see the administrator. If a teacher is involved, the parent is advised to approach the individual teacher and, whenever possible, settle the grievance among teacher, student and parent. The principal may be invited to these settlements.

### **Change of Address/ Email Address**

Please notify the school office at once if your address, telephone number or email changes. It is extremely important for the security of your children that records be kept up-to-date so that school authorities are able to notify parents immediately if an emergency arises.

**Emergency Form** Every child MUST have a completed Emergency Form on file by the first day of school.

### **Child Abuse Laws**

Blessed Sacrament School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services

### **Legal Custody**

In cases of separation or divorce, the school must be informed, in writing, of the parent or individual who has been given legal custody of the child. Please submit a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree. Every effort is made to accommodate the non-custodial parent so that both parents can be kept apprised of the child's progress.

### **AFTERCARE PROGRAM**

The Aftercare Program is designed to care for BSS students whose parents have a need for this service. Children are encouraged to do their homework and are provided with a light snack. Activities vary but may include games, films, arts and crafts, and outdoor sports, depending on the weather.

The program runs from the close of school until 6:15 p.m. including most half day sessions. Aftercare is available from 12:30-6:15 p.m. on early dismissal Fridays. When parents arrive after 6:15 p.m., a charge of \$1 per minute is assessed. A monthly fee, determined by expected days of attendance, is paid in advance. Hot lunch is not served on half days so a bag lunch should be brought from home. Please contact Mrs. Albertson at [salbertson@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:salbertson@blessedsacramentdc.org) to enroll your child.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

### **Visitors**

For security reasons, all visitors and parents must report to the office and receive a visitor sticker when coming to school for an activity other than a scheduled special program.

### **Volunteer Program**

Blessed Sacrament School has an active volunteer program that is crucial to the smooth functioning of the day to day routine. Parents and friends work along side the faculty and staff in many capacities, ranging from room parents, fundraisers, lunch presiders, chaperones, library assistants and more. There is a place and a need for the time and talents of everyone. Volunteer sign-up sheets are distributed in the Summer E-Mailing and again in September at Back to School Night, and all parents are encouraged to pledge some of their energies to the continuance of the volunteer tradition at Blessed Sacrament. All visitors are required to wear a badge. Volunteers who meet the criteria of regular and substantial contact with children are required to be VIRTUS trained as per the Archdiocese Child Protection Policy. Please contact Colleen Molloy, our Child Protection Policy coordinator for information.

### **Room Parents**

Each classroom has at least one Room Parent. These parent volunteers work closely with the teachers to organize classroom parties and events. In addition, they operate an email network for relaying important information to all parents.

### **Communication**

Parents may contact teachers via: written notes or email. All faculty, staff and parents are urged to communicate with one another with directness, honesty, transparency and responsiveness.

### **Conferences**

Effective communication between parents and teachers is a key factor in a successful school year. Teachers and parents are encouraged to contact each other when a problem arises. When problems get to a crisis point, they are much more difficult to address. Teachers are conscientious about making time available for scheduled appointments or phone conversations. **TEACHERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR UNSCHEDULED CONFERENCES BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL.** Parents are asked to call the school voice mail or use email to make an appointment with a teacher.

## **HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

There is a nurse on staff between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. The nurse is not available to offer any specialized medical care in the event of an illness.

**Medications** – both prescription and over-the-counter - can only be administered with written physician and parent authorization. Only oral medications are administered, except in emergency situations. If your child needs to receive medication at school, please contact the school nurse to make the necessary arrangements.

### **When To Keep Your Child Home**

To avoid spreading contagious diseases, please keep your child home if he/she has:

- a fever of 99.5° F, diarrhea, or vomiting
- been diagnosed with a strep infection\*
- symptoms of conjunctivitis (pink eye)\*\*
- head lice or nits present in the hair.

\*If your child has been diagnosed with a strep infection, he/she must remain at home for 48 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and must not have had a fever in the 24 hours preceding his/her return to school.

\*\*Symptoms of conjunctivitis may include red or pink eye, discharge, dried discharge, swelling or tearing. Your child must remain at home until a full 24 hours of antibiotic has been administered and the eyes are clear.

### **When A Child Becomes Ill at School**

If your child becomes sick at school, you will be contacted by the office or the school nurse. In the event that we cannot reach you, we will contact the next person listed on your child's emergency card. Please be available to pick up your child within 30 minutes. Your child will be sent home if he or she has signs of infectious illness or head lice.

### **Physical Exams and Medical Records**

In compliance with the regulations of the District of Columbia, health records on each child are maintained in the Health Room. A complete physical, including a dental exam, is required for all new students and students entering Grades Kindergarten, 1, 3, 5, and 7. The school office will supply you with the required health forms. By D.C. law, children may not attend school and will be sent home if these records are incomplete. The Archdiocese of Washington also requires an immunization form.

### **Food Allergies**

Our school has numerous students with allergies to certain food ingredients. It is crucial that we be sensitive to dietary restrictions to the youngsters under our supervision. Please alert the health room if your child has allergies. Allergic reactions to nuts or products containing nuts can be severe and rapid. Please keep this in mind when baking for parties or other school events and do not use nuts or peanut butter in your baked goods.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The primary objective of a school disciplinary policy is to foster a sense of self-discipline and character formation. Reasonable rules of behavior, based on respect for the individual, whether the individual is a student or faculty member, create an atmosphere in which good behavior arises naturally.

### **Grades Kindergarten- 5**

Class regulations are formulated by the teachers and students on a class by class basis.

### **Grades 6- 8**

#### **Conduct Referrals**

At the beginning of the year, Grades 6-8 students and parents are provided with clear written expectations for school behavior. Parents are asked to sign an acknowledgment of these conduct expectations. Classroom misbehavior and student choices that do not honor these expectations result in a Conduct Referral, which must be signed by the parent and the student. As a consequence, the student will be required to report to the next weekly Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. detention. Each quarter a student begins with a clean slate.

### **Procedures for Serious Disruptive Actions**

Procedures for dealing with serious disruptive actions, e.g. unacceptable internet use, threatening other students or adults, blatant disrespect, cheating, destruction of school property, theft, etc. are as follows:

- The principal or assistant principal will investigate the matter.
- The principal or assistant principal will interview the student.
- The parent will be notified.
- The student will be denied access to the school until a satisfactory parent conference has been held.
- The Principal will make specific recommendations at the parent conference.

The Administration reserves the right to discipline students for off campus conduct that is detrimental to the school's reputation or is not consistent with Christian values and our CARE theme.

### **Lockers/Desks**

Every child in grades 1-8 is assigned a locker. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers and desks at any time.

### **Chromebooks/Cell Phones/Smart Watches**

• Cell phones and smart watches should be turned off and stored in the locker. The use of these devices is not permitted from 7:45 am – 3:10 pm. They may be used with permission from a teacher for a class assignment.

- Unsupervised use of a cell phone or smart watch will result in the item being confiscated and held until the end of the day. Upon a second infraction, the phone or smart watch will be held until a parent picks it up from the office.
- Chromebook use is only permitted with teacher direction and for the intended purpose. Violations of the Chromebook policy will result in a conduct referral.

Students may only use school telephones for emergencies.

### **Electronic Devices other than Chrome Books**

All other electronic devices must be kept in a student's book bag or locker. Use of these devices during the school day will result in confiscation on the student's first offense and returned to the student at the end of the day. Subsequent offenses will result in confiscation and require a parent/guardian to meet with the principal/assistant principal in order for the device to be returned.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

In compliance with Archdiocesan policy, the possession, use, sale or distribution of illegal drugs, alcohol or weapons by students is strictly prohibited on school grounds, or at any school activity.

Any student found using or in possession of illegal drugs, alcohol or weapons may be subject to immediate suspension or expulsion.

### **DRESS CODE**

All students at Blessed Sacrament School must adhere to a specific dress code.

#### **Girls K-5**

- Regulation jumper, of modest length.
- Optional: navy blue slacks, allowed November 1 – April 1. NO JEANS – NO CARGO PANTS
- Optional: navy blue shorts from the beginning of the school year through October and after April 1.
- White, long or short sleeves, button front blouse with round "Peter Pan" collar.
- White crew socks that cover the entire ankle.
- Navy blue, white or black opaque tights or knee socks may be worn November through April 1.
- Athletic shoes of all black, all white or a combination of black and white. No boots of any kind are acceptable.

#### **Girls 6-8**

- Regulation skirt. The length is five (5) inches from the floor while kneeling.
- Optional: khaki dress slacks, allowed November 1 – April 1. Khaki walking shorts allowed as part of the summer uniform.
- NAVY GOLF SHIRT with a BSS logo appropriately sized will be worn everyday by grades 6 & 7.
- White crew socks that cover the entire ankle.  
Navy blue, white or black opaque tights may be worn November through April 1.
- Evergreen polo shirt (with BSS logo) for 8th grade only. Shirts must be purchased from Land's End.
- Solid black or solid white or a combination of black and white athletic shoes are worn everyday.

#### **Boys K-5**

- Navy blue slacks (not cargo pants) will be worn by all boys.
- NO JEANS. BELTS are to be worn with all pants/slacks that have belt loops.
- Light blue knit golf-style shirt, long or short sleeves.
- Optional: navy blue shorts (not gym shorts), allowed from the beginning of the school year through October and after April 1 to the end of school year.
- Solid white crew socks only that cover the entire ankle.
- Athletic shoes in all black, all white or a combination of black and white.

### **Boys 6-8**

- Khaki regulation dress slacks will be worn by all boys. No cargo pants. Khaki walking shorts allowed as part of the summer uniform.
- NAVY BLUE GOLF SHIRT with a BSS logo will be worn everyday for boys in the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grades. Only a plain white tee shirt may be worn under the uniform shirt.
- White crew socks that cover the entire ankle.
- Evergreen polo shirt (with BSS logo) for 8th grade only. Shirts must be purchased from Land's End.
- Solid black or solid white, or a combination of black and white athletic shoes.

### **All Students**

- Navy knit cardigan, v-neck or crew-neck sweater, or Blessed Sacrament NAVY school sweatshirt with logo may be worn interchangeably. No "hoodies" may be worn. Spirit Wear purchased through HSA may be worn.
- Shirts must be tucked in.
- Only white tee shirts may be worn under the uniform shirt.
- No hair may be dyed an unnatural color.
- No cosmetics or nail polish may be worn. Girls may wear one pair of stud earrings. Boys may not wear earrings of any type. Jewelry should be limited to one ring, a religious medal, cross or a wrist watch.

### **Boys and Girls K – 8**

Navy blue sweaters and a variety of Blessed Sacrament sweat shirts are acceptable.

All girls may wear navy blue, white, or black opaque tights or knee socks November through April 1

### **Gym Uniform**

All 4 pieces of the gym uniform ( correctly sized white golf shirt, navy shorts, navy sweatpants and NAVY sweatshirt, all with the BSS logo) must be ordered through school suppliers. Forms and catalogs are available in school office. Please purchase sufficient quantities of the gym uniform for your child. All four pieces are available from Flynn and O'Hara. The white golf shirts and navy shorts are available from Flynn and O'Hara and Lands End.

### **Gym Uniform K-5**

The regulation gym uniform (see above) is to be worn on gym days. Navy shorts (jersey or twill) may be worn in September-October and April 1 to the end of school year. Tennis shoes that are black, white or black and white may be worn. Students K-5 may wear the gym uniform on gym days only.

### **Gym Uniform 6-8**

Students may change to gym shorts for PE. Girls may wear regulation gym shorts under the uniform skirt. 6-8 students do not wear sweatpants. Gym shorts are available from Flynn and O'Hara or Lands End.

### **Uniform Suppliers**

Our regulation uniform supplier is the Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company of Philadelphia, PA. In addition, the company operates one retail outlet, in Rockville, MD and offers mail-order service.

Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company 1-800-441-4122

Loehmann's Plaza, 5210 Randolph Rd. Rockville, MD 20852 (301) 838-8958

-OR-

Lands' End 1-800 469-2222

Preferred School Account # 9000-2636-0

Logo # 9811482k

For parents who prefer all cotton clothing, gym shorts and shirts with the BSS logo, girls' white blouses, boys' blue Polo shirts, and boys' and girls' navy slacks, are available from Lands' End. For Gym Shorts and Shirts you must ask for Logo #9811482k. Also BSS will receive a commission if you mention the preferred school account number: 9000-2636-0.

When placing an order, start your conversation with the operator by saying that you are placing a school uniform order for a preferred school.

## **Uniform Exchange**

As a service to parents, the Blessed Sacrament Home and School Association sponsors a Uniform Exchange. Please contact [hsa@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:hsa@blessedsacramentdc.org) to donate or purchase gently used uniform items.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET USAGE**

Acceptable Use of Technology and Internet by Students in Catholic Schools: Students shall use all Technology Equipment, including, but not limited to computers, networking systems, Internet, mobile devices, communication devices, cell phones, email, social networking sites, calculators, DVD players, and cameras ("Technology Equipment") with care and respect, whether at school, at home, or elsewhere. Students shall not type, send or otherwise use any inappropriate or offensive words, or display, send, or otherwise use inappropriate or offensive images, sounds or messages from or on Technology Equipment. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in a manner which violates any local, state or federal laws. Students shall immediately report to a teacher or supervising staff member any inappropriate material or misuse of Technology Equipment of which the student becomes aware. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in any way to engage in cyberbullying behavior. Any student use of cell phones and mobile devices during school hours is prohibited.

When using the School's Technology Equipment, all students: shall not reconfigure any school hardware, software, or network settings; shall print, download, or otherwise transfer only that information approved by the teacher or supervisor; shall obtain the permission of a teacher or supervisor before loading a file or disk onto a school computer; shall not use any school Technology Equipment to create, store, transfer or use software or electronic content in a manner which violates the rights of the holder of copyright in the software or the content; shall not plagiarize works on the Internet; shall not load any software onto school computers without first obtaining the teacher's permission; shall only use the Internet for school-related projects and shall visit only the sites assigned by the teacher; shall not "surf" the internet or visit Facebook, or any other social networking websites while at school; shall not log-on to the Internet without permission from a teacher or supervising staff member; shall not give out, post, or otherwise distribute personal information such as photographs, home addresses, telephone numbers, parents work addresses or telephone numbers or the name and location of the school.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The Lost and Found is located in the "Lost and Found" closet in the front vestibule. Any items found will be placed there and held for 30 days. **PLEASE** put your child's name on any items of clothing or lunch boxes and we will do our best to return the item to your child.

## **LUNCH PROGRAM**

The Blessed Sacrament School sponsors a hot lunch program for all students under the direction of Liz Finnegan. Lunch orders are made by the week, monthly, or on semester or yearly basis and should be submitted online by the Friday before the purchase period. The lunch program offers a balanced, nutritious meal with a salad bar. The menu and order forms are available online at [bsstoday.org](http://bsstoday.org).

Children may also bring their lunch from home, if they prefer. We encourage healthy food choices and ask that you omit highly caffeinated beverages from your child's lunch.

1% white or chocolate milk may be ordered separately from the hot lunch program. Orders are placed in September for the entire year.

## **CLASS PARTIES**

After notifying the child's teacher, parents may send in a snack for the entire class to celebrate a child's birthday. Preferably, the food should be delivered in the morning to the school office. Check with your child's teacher to determine if there are students with special food needs in the class. Allergic reactions to nuts or products containing nuts can be severe and rapid. Please keep this in mind when baking for parties or other school events and do not include nuts or peanut butter in your baked goods.

At various times during the year, seasonal holiday parties are scheduled. These are held within the individual classrooms and are organized by the room parents under the direction of the teachers. Healthy food choices are encouraged.

Invitations to private parties should be mailed outside school, rather than distributed in class, to avoid hurt feelings among those not included.

## **ENRICHMENT**

### **Band**

Blessed Sacrament School participates in the Archdiocesan Music Program, which offers instruction on band instruments to all interested students in Grades 4-8. The lessons are given at the school during the school day. A rotating schedule is used so that the children do not miss the same class more than once every six or seven weeks. The students are taught in small classes, according to instrument and degree of advancement, by highly qualified teachers who instruct throughout the Archdiocese. The school band performs several times a year and at the Archdiocesan Music Festival in the spring.

Instruments on which instruction is offered are: trumpet, cornet, trombone, baritone horn, flute, clarinet, saxophone and snare drum. Tuition is charged by the Archdiocesan Music Program each semester. Instruments may be rented from the Washington Music Center, 11151 Viers Mill Road, Wheaton, Maryland.

### **Field Trips**

Blessed Sacrament School takes advantage of the rich and varied resources in this area. Each grade plans field trips as an extension of its class work. Field trip permission forms are sent home in advance. A sample Field Trip Permission Form is located on the BSS web site. A copy of this may be submitted if the form sent home via your child is misplaced. Permission from the parents is **REQUIRED** for participation in these trips. Adult chaperones are an absolute necessity for the safety of the children in all grades. In order to chaperone field trips, parents should complete the VIRTUS requirement per the Archdiocese of Washington Child Protection Policy. Parents are requested to make room in their schedules to act as a chaperone for at least one trip per year. The room parents and teachers try to schedule these trips as far in advance as possible. Fees to cover the cost of these trips will be determined by the teacher on an individual trip basis. All transportation will be by bus, public transit, or parent drivers. Field trips are considered part of the academic curriculum and are required.

### **Week of the Arts**

Each year, the entire student body participates in a 2-1/2 day program which is exclusively devoted to the arts. Sponsored by the Art Department, this program consists of a series of professional performances, art-related activities, field trips and an array of creative workshops. This fun and exciting enrichment week is conducted by professionals, community participants and school parent volunteers.

### **Outdoor Education**

Every fall the Middle School students spend a day at an outdoor education facility. This program is designed to encourage self-esteem and team building skills. There is a fee charged for this program.

### **Service Hours**

Every 8th grade student is required to complete **20 hours** of service as a part of their final year here at Blessed Sacrament.

**Mission Fair** - sponsored by the Room Parents and staffed by the parents and students to raise funds for the Sisters of the Holy Cross Overseas Missions. The fair is scheduled for the spring and consists of games, raffles, food sales and a flea market.

**Dress Up/Dress Down Days** - Students may “dress up” in their best or “dress down” in play clothes in exchange for a small donation to the Student Council on this day. The students must be clean, modest and presentable in their casual clothes. Specific guidelines will be posted in classrooms and emailed to parents.

## **SCHOOL AND PARISH ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Safety Patrols**

Children in Grades 6 -8 may apply to become Safety Patrols under the direction of the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department and a faculty member. Safety Patrols are stationed at all the intersections surrounding the school, and receive special training on how to assist the younger children to cross the street safely.

### **Student Council**

The Student Council members, according to their by-laws, are elected by their peers to plan and publicize community building activities, to encourage service to others and to serve as “ambassadors” at school events. These Christian leaders also communicate the requests and needs of the students to the administration.

### **Altar Servers**

Students in Grades 5-8 are given the opportunity to assist at liturgies under the direction of one of the parish priests. Call the Parish Center at 202-966-6575 for details.

### **Athletics**

The Athletic Program at Blessed Sacrament is under the direction of a paid parish athletic coordinator and a parish priest. The sports program philosophy encourages all of the youth of the parish to participate in either Catholic Youth Organization teams or in Intramural teams. Emphasis is placed on Christian values such as sportsmanship, responsibility and unity.

Please contact Mary Seidel at [maryseidel@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:maryseidel@blessedsacramentdc.org).

### **Boy Scouts**

Troop 90 has been sponsored by Blessed Sacrament for over 60 years. Scouting seeks to inculcate a spirit of service to others, to have fun, adventure and learning (with emphasis on first aid and survival skills). With adult supervision, the boys learn to run their own troop, with the experienced scouts teaching the less experienced ones.

### **Cub Scouts**

The purpose is to prepare younger boys (6-10) for scouting and to offer an atmosphere of fun and learning in a supervised setting.

### **Girl Scouts and Brownies**

Girls interested in making new friends, serving others and trying new things—from nature and camping, to arts and crafts, to making brown-bag lunches for the homeless are invited to join the Blessed Sacrament Girl Scout program. Call for more information. Scouting builds confidence, leadership and self-esteem by encouraging girls to learn to do things for themselves and master new skills. Parent participation is expected.

### **Blessed Sacrament Children’s Choir**

Boys and girls in K-2 may join the Angel Choir. Rehearsals are held on Tuesday afternoons in the school music room or Auditorium located on the ground floor of the school.

Boys and girls in Grades 3-4-5 may join the Children's Choir. Rehearsals are held Wednesday afternoons in the School Music Room or Auditorium located on the ground floor of the school. Please contact Joy Stevens at [jstevens@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:jstevens@blessedsacramentdc.org) for further info.

### **Blessed Sacrament Descant Choir**

Boys and girls in Grades 6 and 7 may audition to participate in the Descant Choir Program during the school year. Rehearsals are held once a week during lunch time in the Music Room. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Cantor Program is on Tuesday at Lunch time as usual. Please email the school music teacher Joy Stevens at [jstevens@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:jstevens@blessedsacramentdc.org) for more information.

### **SAFETY PLAN**

In accordance with Archdiocesan guidelines, Blessed Sacrament School utilizes the ALICE Safety Plan in conjunction with archdiocesan safety policies and protocols.

ALICE is an emergency response program that requires school faculty and staff to exercise sound judgment in the event of an emergency situation. ALICE stands for **A**lert, **L**ockdown, **I**nforn, **C**ounter, and **E**vacuate. Faculty and staff are routinely trained in ALICE. Students participate in various drills throughout the school year.

During drills and in the event of applicable emergency situations the codes for the Safety Plan include:

**Code Red:** Indicates there is an emergency that requires that all areas of the building should be secured. Students and staff remain in the building. If directed to do so by local authorities, parents' access may be denied until all clear is announced by local authorities.

**Code Green:** Exit classroom to nearest designated safe site. Indicates an emergency that requires that all students be under supervision and accounted for.

**Evacuation Site:** Chevy Chase Neighborhood Library  
5625 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20015

The Safety Plan addresses bombs and bomb threats, bus transportation accident, explosions, fire, firearms, hazardous materials spills, utility failures, weather related emergencies, chemical and biological threats. Copies of the Safety Plan are located in every classroom.

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN COOPERATION**

Parents/Guardians and students understand and acknowledge the Roman Catholic religious nature of Blessed Sacrament. Parents/Guardians and students agree not to publicly repudiate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and will respect and support the unique identity that Blessed Sacrament derives from its Catholic faith. As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians will not act in ways that contradict the Catholic nature of Blessed Sacrament. Parents/Guardians shall cooperate fully with the school and the students shall participate in all required school programming, including instruction in the Catholic faith and attendance at Mass. As the primary educators of the students, parents/guardians agree to act in ways that promote the best interests of the church and school and will comply with the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington and Blessed Sacrament.

### **RIGHT TO AMEND**

School administration reserves the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Amendments made to the handbook will be published on our website and in our BSS Weekly.