The Official Guide to being a New Parent at Blessed Sacrament School

AKA….

Keep calm and trust the process!!

Address: 5841 Chevy Chase Parkway, NW  Washington DC  20015
Website:  www.bsstoday.org
School main office number:  202-966-6682
Fax:  202-966-4938
Health Room:  202-449-4613 (healthroom@blessedsacramentdc.org)
Email addresses: first initial, last name @blessedsacramentdc.org
Example:  Jane Doe  jdoe@blessedsacramentdc.org
Dear New Parents,

Welcome to Blessed Sacrament School! We are so happy that you and your family have chosen us, and we look forward to a long relationship with you.

This guide has been specifically designed for you as a new parent! Blessed Sacrament School has a parent handbook on our website www.bsstoday.org. We have learned that new parents, especially K parents, need a quick reference to topics that have drawn many of questions in the past. So, with the help of some new and some experienced parents, this guide was created.

Our methods and traditions are devised by professional educators, with the input of the parent community. Suggestions are welcome, and when change is necessary, it is made carefully and deliberately with our Catholic mission in mind.

The first weeks at a new school can be a bit intimidating, so let us help you make the smoothest transition possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns. Best wishes for a great year!!

Chris Kelly, Principal                     Nancy Ryan, Admissions Director
Topics

1. First Day of School, School Start and End Time, Morning Drop Off and Dismissal Procedures
2. Why it’s important to read the Weekly every week!
3. Attendance/Sick Days/Late To School/Sign Out Procedures for Leaving Early
4. Uniforms
5. Snacks
6. Lunch/Lunch Room procedures, Lunch Parents/Milk
7. Aftercare
8. Virtus Training/Child Protection Policy (if you want to be a volunteer)
9. School Liturgies/Half Days
10. Snow Policy
12. Discipline/Bullying
13. Home and School Association/School Advisory Board
14. Security
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16. Best Practices for Positive Interactions
First Day of School:

The first day of school for grades 1-8 is August 29, 2016 and it is a half day; dismissal will be at 12:30pm. Tuesday, August 30 will be the first full day of school. Friday, September 2 is a half day; dismissal at 12:30pm. There is no school on Monday, September 5 for the Labor Day holiday.

Individual K students (with parents) will have a brief meeting with their teacher on either August 29 or 30, and will receive notice of when their individual meeting is scheduled. K students will have their first day of school on Wednesday, August 31. Please note that the first three days of K are half days; dismissal is at 12:30pm. The first full day of Kindergarten is Tuesday, September 8. There is no school on Monday, September 7 for the Labor Day holiday.

After Care for the first week of school is discussed in the After Care section of this handbook.

School start and end times:

Students in grades 6-8 start at 8:10am and report directly to the gym where they are met by their advisors. (A bell rings at 8:10am.)

Students in grades K-5 start at 8:15am and report directly to the gym for morning prayer with their teachers. (A bell rings at 8:15am.)

Students may not be dropped off before 7:45am. The gym doors open at 7:45am; the Chevy Chase Parkway doors open at 7:50am.

All students are dismissed at 3:10pm. On half days, all students are dismissed at 12:30pm.

Morning drop off:

Choice A-Blacktop/Gym Doors Drop Off: Doors open at 7:45am. Cars enter the parking lot via Western Avenue entrance (at the apartment building parking lot) and drive into a cordoned off lane. Students exit from the right side of cars into the gym. School personnel are there each morning to greet and assist if necessary. Exit by turning left into the alley onto Quesada Street.
Choice B-Chevy Chase Parkway Drop Off: Doors open at 7:50am. Students walk up steps and enter through the door marked “Boys” on the Blessed Sacrament School side of Chevy Chase Parkway and proceed toward the gym. School personnel are there each morning to greet and assist if necessary.

Parents are invited to come in with their children for the morning prayer. If you do so, please do not park close to where students are entering the “Boys” door. Park on Patterson Street before the alley or much further up the block toward the apartment building at Chevy Chase Circle (near the ‘Girls’ entrance). Do not drop off on the opposite side of the street from the school; students are not safe crossing over Chevy Chase Parkway.

**Parent tip:**

- It’s risky to ignore posted signs on both sides of Chevy Chase Parkway-do so at your peril.

**Dismissal:**

Choice A-Cars/Carpools: Cars enter the parking lot at 3:05pm via the Western Avenue entrance (at the apartment building parking lot) and drive into rows on the school’s blacktop until the rows are full. At that time, the blacktop is blocked off until those cars are dismissed and the next group of cars will be allowed on the blacktop. Students are dismissed to parents/caregivers once the cars are all stopped and engines are turned off. Cars exit the parking lot to the left onto Quesada Street. This takes approximately 10-15 minutes.

Choice B-Gym Pick up: Parents may choose to park their cars in the neighborhood and wait outside on the sidewalk near the K doors for their children to be dismissed. They will exit from the gym through the “Boys” door on the Patterson Street side of the school.

Choice C-Walkers: Grades K-3. Students in these grades who walk must be assisted by an older student. They are escorted to the gym by their teachers, and picked up in the gym by an older sibling or older friend in Grade 4-8. Those students not responsible for a younger child are dismissed immediately from the classroom.

Choice D: Aftercare: Students attending Aftercare are escorted (K-3) or report (4-6) to the Aftercare room at dismissal. For your convenience and peace of mind, any child not picked up by 3:30 pm. will be escorted to the Aftercare program, where they will be appropriately supervised. Parents will be responsible for the Aftercare fee.

**Parent tip:**
• You are asked in the beginning of the school year where you would prefer to pick your child up at the end of the school day (carpool line or gym/walkers line). Make sure you also tell your child where you are picking them up. It gets VERY noisy in the gym when they call out "walkers" and your child might be taken to the carpool line or Aftercare if they do not walk out with the walkers. As the year goes on, you may choose a different option that may work better for you.

The Importance of Reading the Weekly:

Please read the Weekly every week!! (This might be the most important sentence in the new parent guide.)

Parent tips:

• As a new parent to the school, it can be very easy to miss important pieces of information. Principal Kelly’s weekly newsletter is a comprehensive source of all the school info you need to know. It is critical to read this every week in order to stay informed and make sure you and/or your children don’t miss anything!! Sent out every Friday afternoon, anything and everything of value to you is covered in the Weekly. Aside from the letter from Principal Kelly addressing current school topics, it is a key point of communication for the Home and School Association (HSA) - everything from school uniform exchange dates to spirit wear sales to meeting schedules are covered in the Weekly. Out of uniform days (dress down days), deadlines for charity drives, yearbook sales, school wide announcements and schedules are all listed in the Weekly. For some of the bigger school events, there may be reminder emails sent, but this is not necessarily the case, so it is up to you to read the Weekly. The newsletter is really the only thing that consistently tells you all you need to know.

• If you miss reading the Weekly, old editions are on the website under “Quicklinks”.

• If you don’t read the Weekly and miss something, and your child comes to school in uniform on a dress down day (a day where you can wear play clothes instead of uniform) or doesn’t bring the money for a bake sale because you didn’t know about it, or forgot about it….please, don’t stress. Teachers will generally remind students/parents about stuff like this and there are more reminders to young students than there are to older students. However, it is inevitably going to happen that sometimes info is missed, but this is not a crisis in your life or your child’s life, nor do you need to run back with a change of clothes, etc. Nothing will happen; no blame will be assessed. They won’t get in trouble, they won’t go hungry, this won’t impact college admission. If you treat this as a minor blip, so will they. Read this paragraph a few times.

Attendance/Sick Days/Late or Leaving Early Procedures:

If your child is going to miss a scheduled after school activity:
**Absence:** If your child will be absent from school for illness or any other reason, please email both your child’s teacher and the health room (healthroom@blessedsacramentdc.org) by 8:30AM. If an absence is not properly documented by the student’s parent/guardian, it is considered an unexcused absence, and the health room will contact the parent/guardian by phone.

**Leaving Early:** Parents must walk in and **legibly** sign a child or children out at the sign out logs at the front desk if he/she needs to leave early. Students are not allowed to sign themselves out. Parents are not allowed to go directly to their child’s class to get them if they are leaving early. Notify the teacher by email with as much as advance notice as possible that a child will need early dismissal. In the lower grades, teachers will make sure the child leaving will have his/her necessary materials for homework (if the child will not be returning later in the day), and the child will be sent to wait for his/her parent in the lobby.

**Arriving Late:** The late bell rings at 8:20am, (which signifies the beginning of advisories in Grades 6-8) and classes begin at 8:30am. Students arriving after the late bell must go to the front desk and get a pink tardy slip to be admitted to class. Students in grades 6-8 who have three tardies will get a lunch detention. Excessive tardiness or absences can negatively impact a child’s performance at all grade levels. It may also negatively impact high school admission.

**After school activities:** If your child will not be attending an after-school activity for which he or she is registered, please contact the activity director and your child’s teacher via email before 2:00PM.

**Faculty tip:**

- Please do not call or email the school after 2:00pm and ask that Johnny/Susie go home with Mrs. Smith instead of Mr. Jones, or skip choir, etc. The school tries to help you with this kind of arrangement, and we understand that sometimes things come up at the last minute, but after 2:00pm is one of the school’s busiest times, and sometimes we cannot get word to your child in a timely fashion, which causes problems.

**Sick Days/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-child’s head will be checked by health room before child will be allowed to return to class
*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.

**Parent tips:**

- Young children get head lice because they touch heads often. There is nothing harmful about head lice or anything that indicates that you/your house are unclean. You may have a visceral negative reaction to the thought of lice. If you do get a lice infestation, the health room is very helpful in answering questions. Pre-checks of all K-5 students for lice will take place at the beginning of the school year and after Christmas break.
- Don’t send your child to school when you know they are sick and are hoping they will feel better when they get to school. It’s risky, because if they come in and are still sick, not only are you exposing the other students and teachers to the illness but the school is going to call you and have you come and get them, even if it’s just after you have dropped them off. Plus, they often blurt out that they were sick at home but you sent them anyway, and then the school isn’t happy either.

**School uniforms:**

The school uniform section of the handbook is long, so it is not all printed here. You can access it at [www.bsstoday.org](http://www.bsstoday.org) under the Parents Tab, under Uniform Code.

**Parent tips:**

- K-5 students wear gym uniforms 2x per week, and regular uniforms 3x per week. Teachers will inform parents which days are gym days on the first day of school.
- Even though the uniform policy says that boys must wear belts, Kindergarten boys do **NOT** have to wear a belt.
- We have a fairly decent supply of used uniforms in the Uniform Exchange, which is run by Home and School volunteers. There is a scheduled Uniform Exchange on August 23 at 2pm in the school auditorium, plus our Home and School organization schedules Uniform Exchanges on a regular basis. Uniform pieces are $5, and we have lots of the jumpers and navy pants; somewhat lesser quantities of the other pieces, and for some undetermined reason, hardly ever any upper school skirts.
- You do not have to drive to Flynn and O'Hara in Rockville for their wares-you can now order from them online at [www.fando.net](http://www.fando.net). Even though it is unadvertised in the handbook, you can get the uniform skirt and jumper for girls at Beyda's Lads and Lassies in Westbard Shopping Center in Bethesda.
• You may prefer to buy the pieces that do not require a logo (navy/khaki pants and shorts for example) at less expensive stores than Lands’ End, like Sears or Target.
• The logo pieces from Lands’ End can take a few weeks, so don't wait until the last minute to order!!! Lands’ End also offers some coupons and sales (sometimes a free logo), so if you sign up with them, you will get alerts.
• All students in all grades wear either all white or all black tennis shoes, or a combo of black and white. NO color allowed (not even on logos, shoe bottoms, or laces). Some brands which have the all black/all white or combination black and white models are K-Swiss, Nike, and New Balance.
• The wise parent will put a name on every garment (and backpack, pencil case and any other piece of property that belongs to you.)

**Snacks**

**Kindergarten parents**- Your students eat a snack daily at mid-morning, which you are to provide. Snacks can include; crackers, fruits, yogurt, cheese, or any item your child prefers but nothing too heavy so that they still can eat /enjoy lunch at 11:50am. Make sure to include an extra drink/water for snack time. There is no need to pack the snack separately; you can put it in the lunch bag. On days that there is a half day, there is no lunch, but still pack a snack. In K, you may pack an individual snack for your child which contains nuts, but any snack or treat sent in for the whole group to share, must be nut free.

**1-8 parents** - All students have a daily snack time. The time snack is eaten depends on individual class schedules. The teachers will provide more information about this.

In all grades, if there is a severe nut allergy, parents in that grade or class will be informed.

**Lunch/Milk/Lunch volunteering**

Lunch for K-5 students takes place between 11:30 and 12:30 on each full school day. (The exact time for each grade will be on the website when school begins; and/or your child’s individual teacher will alert you as to the time.) Lunch for 6-8th grades takes place from 12:30-12:50pm. Recess for grades K-5 is before or after lunch and takes place on either the blacktop, the K-1 playground, or the field.

A hot lunch is cooked in the school cafeteria every full day of school (there are some exceptions which are noted on the lunch calendar on the website.) Approximately half of the students buy lunch; the other half brings lunch from home. This is strictly a matter of personal preference.
Lunch may be ordered by the week, six week period, semester, or by the year. **Lunch may not be purchased for individual days.** The six week menu/order form is sent home with the Weekly and will be posted on the school website. Additional forms are always available in the school office.

In addition to the daily entrée, the children will be able to make their own selections from the salad bar. The salad bar includes mixed garden greens, carrots, celery, cucumbers, fresh fruits, beans and various other salad ingredients and dressings. A bagel and cream cheese is offered each day as an alternative to the entrée. If you have any questions, please feel free to email koneil@blessedsacramentdc.org.

Milk is ordered for a flat fee at the beginning of every school year. The three choices available are skim, 1% white, or 1% chocolate milk.

Parents of K – 5th graders are encouraged to sign up for lunch/recess duty. This involves volunteering 40 minutes once every two weeks to help monitor students in the lunchroom and on the playground.

The archdiocese mandates that anyone who is going to have “substantial contact” (i.e., things like lunch duty) with children must take Virtus training (Virtus details are covered in another section of this handbook) before starting to volunteer. The lunch duty sign up takes place during the first week of school and volunteering for lunch duty takes place by email. The procedures for what you are supposed to do as a parent volunteer are explained in a lunch duty meeting which is held shortly after school begins in the fall.

**Parent tips:**

- Lunch duty/recess may seem loud and chaotic to you. Try to accept this. Lunch and recess offer opportunities for the students who have been mainly sitting at desks working for long periods of time to blow off steam, move around, and talk. As long as children are playing safely and kindly at recess/lunch, a little loudness and lots of movement are good things!!
- Sometimes parents are reluctant to intervene at recess if they see a situation that makes them uncomfortable. Do what you would do at home if kids are scuffling, break it up, or say something, or if you are reluctant to intervene, get the Recess Supervisor. It also is a real responsibility to monitor at lunch/recess. Grouping to chat with the other parents who are there is fun, but if all the adults are chatting, no one is monitoring. As un-fun as it might be, the point of lunch and recess is to watch the kids!
• Lunch duty is a great way to see your child interacting with his/her friends, and the children love having their parents come to lunch duty. You can alternate with another parent so that you only are here once a month.
• Sign up as quickly as possible after you get the sign up email for volunteering because the good shifts go fast!

Aftercare: Changes possible - sign up procedures

The school’s Aftercare program and its calendar are described in full on our website at www.bsstoday.org under the Parents tab. Aftercare will begin this year on Monday, August 29 for grades 1-8; K Aftercare will begin on Wednesday, August 31. Aftercare is available on all full school days, and most half days, except where it is noted on the After Care calendar. The Aftercare coordinator is 3rd grade teacher Susan Albertson, who can be reached at salbertson@blessedsacramentdc.org. Aftercare is staffed by teachers, substitute teachers, and school aides. Aftercare begins at 3:15pm and ends at 6:15pm, except on half days when it begins at 12:30pm. Its cost is $20 per day for regular after care days, and $34 for half days.

Parent tips:

• Parents sign up with an Aftercare calendar at the beginning of the month for days they will use Aftercare and note any activities. Snow days paid for will get credited.
• If your child does after school activities, like Scouts, fitness programs, choir, art, etc., you note it on your Aftercare calendar, and notify whoever is coordinating the after school activity, and that person will make sure your child gets from the activity to Aftercare.

Virtus Training/Child Protection Policy:

The Archdiocese of Washington mandates that anyone who has “substantial contact” with children at school MUST get an electronic background check and take Virtus Training, which is the three hour, Protecting God’s Children class. This means lunch parents, people who want to go on lots of field trips, coaches, Scout leaders, etc. Here is how you take Virtus training:

1. Email cmolloy@blessedsacramentdc.org to schedule an appointment with Colleen Molloy for an electronic background check. Please bring a check for $13.50 made payable to Blessed Sacrament to your appointment and two forms of ID. At the appointment for the electronic background check, get the “Volunteer Application” from Colleen Molloy, or access it on our website at www.bsstoday.org at the Parent Tab under Volunteering.
2. Once you have completed the background check, you must register for a one time, 3 hour Protecting God's Children class. To do so, please follow these steps:

- Go to www.virtus.org
- Click "Registration" from the list on the left of the screen
- Click "Begin the Registration Process"
- From the drop down menu, select "Washington, DC (Archdiocese)"
- Once you have decided which class to attend, click "Start Registration"
- Follow the prompts to register.

Parent tip:

- It is preferred that you do the electronic background check with Colleen Molloy before you sign up for Virtus training, but it is not absolutely necessary. You will have to do it eventually.
- Make a copy of your Virtus materials and keep them.
- We will try to make arrangements to have a Virtus training session at BS; though it is not necessary to take Virtus training here, it’s just more convenient for most people. Sign up early, no matter where you decide to take Virtus-the sessions close in to town fill up fast. You do not want to drive to Solomon’s Island to take Virtus training.

All School Liturgies and Half Days:

We try to do two all-school liturgies per month. The liturgies are on the school calendar, and start at 9:15am. We LOVE for parents to come to school liturgies, and many do. Please feel free to attend Mass with us! The students sit with their classmates, K-2 students sit with their assigned buddies from 6-8th grade, and parents sit in the back of the church.

Parent tip:

- School liturgies sometimes take a wee bit more time than an hour because of the length of time it takes to give the entire school Communion. Even the kids who have not yet had the sacrament of Communion walk up for a blessing.

Half Days/No School Days

Half days and No School days are tied to professional development for faculty or to holidays. While we try to be sensitive to wreaking havoc with the schedules of parents, allowing the faculty to work together in teams for longer blocks of time without interruption is of real value. Allowing everyone to leave early on holiday weeks and weekends is good too! After Care is provided on almost all of the half days.
Parent Tips:

- The school calendar is distributed during the first week of school-K parents will get them at the school conferences; Grades 1-8 will bring home one per family with the oldest child. There is a link on the online calendar which allows users to sync the calendar to their phone or email calendar, and will automatically update if you use this feature.
- Even if you are not a regular user of Aftercare, a half day which doesn’t work for you is a great use of the ability to use Aftercare on the occasional basis that you need it.

Snow/Weather Policy

Blessed Sacrament School follows Montgomery County Public Schools for all weather related school closings or delays. However, if Montgomery County closes early for snow, generally most of our families come and get their kids on their own initiative, which is permissible, but not everyone can do this, so someone on the faculty or staff stays until the last child is picked up. If the weather becomes really treacherous, we will begin calling people and asking them to pick up so that we can let the faculty leave to get home safely.

We are NOT allowed by the archdiocese to make an independent decision about closing school for weather. The archdiocese allows us to follow whichever school district we like, but we must follow our chosen jurisdiction. For many reasons, mostly related to the safety of children and faculty, the pastor, principal and School Advisory Board chose to follow Montgomery County. Almost every DC Catholic school in the archdiocese follows either Montgomery County or PG County.

Parent tips:

- Before you start wondering (out loud to all of your friends, of course) why we don’t follow DC, because sometimes it seems that our school is closed even when the roads closest to us look fine, keep this in mind: DC is always reluctant to close even on terrible days. This is because a very large number of their population gets free breakfast and lunch at school, so if they close, especially on a Friday, it means a lot of children go hungry. Also, DC does not run school buses, only special ed students, so busing safety is not a concern when making decisions. Montgomery County runs a vast network of buses and must take bus safety into account.
- Surveys of parents about which jurisdiction to follow show a slight preference for Montgomery County. In winter 2011, the School Advisory Board recommended a new policy to the pastor and principal, which was accepted, that the SAB will survey the parents once every five years. Based on survey results, data from previous years and consultation with the pastor, the principal will make a decision that takes into account all other factors (i.e. transportation, facilities, etc.) and that is based on the safety of the children. Any time that a change of jurisdiction occurs, a parent survey will be taken two years later to confirm/inform the previous result.
- Snow days are probably inevitable (watch, we won’t have a single one this year.) If this is going to cause huge problems for you due to your work schedule or for any other reason, make a snow plan NOW, before winter comes.
EVEN IF YOU DON’T DO ANYTHING ELSE suggested in this entire guide, please sign up for the Montgomery County alerts about weather related delays and closings, which will send alerts to your phone and/or email address. It is the ONLY way to get instantly updated information about snow days. The school does not send out emails about delays or closings. To get the link to sign up for Montgomery County School weather emergencies, go to our website at www.bsstoday.org, and under Quick Links, click MCPS weather.

FINAL WORD ON WEATHER POLICY: While BSS weighs all factors, the safety of the children must be the top priority.

What is my child’s daily schedule?

**Grades 6-8**
8:10am arrival, meet advisor in gym, go to morning advisory
8:30am classes begin
Students in middle school take their four academic subjects daily-Math, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, on a schedule that changes around their special subjects, so they don’t always go to the same class at the same time daily. Religion class is 4x weekly and often a religious activity, like Mass or Stations of the Cross is held during the week as well. Middle school students also take two double block of language each week, except 6th grade only has one double block.
Foreign Language-3X weekly
Art and Music-once weekly
Computers-2x weekly
P.E.- 2x weekly
Outdoor time- 1x per week
Lunch Daily-12:30pm-12:50pm
Flex period 1x weekly-meet with advisors, seek out other teachers for help, advisory projects
Advisory Period- 2x weekly
3:00pm-pack up, go to lockers, go back to advisory, 3:10 dismissal
Band students miss one class per week--schedule of academics rotates on band day so that students don’t miss same subject every band day

**Grades 3-5**
8:15 arrival, meet teacher in gym, say morning prayer, accompany teacher to class
8:30am-class begins
Most 3-5 classes begin with either a Morning Meeting/and or a Responsive Classroom exercise
For example, a small welcome game, or greeting and shaking hands with each student or a student selected in advance has the floor and tells something and answers question
Students in grades 3-5 take 5 academic subjects: Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Religion; Math and Language Arts daily
Foreign Language-2x or 3x per week (3rd grade students take half a year of French/half year Spanish; after third grade, students elect to take either French or Spanish only until graduation.)
Special Science-1 hour per week for 3-5, 3rd has one extra hour Science with a lab
Art, Music, Computer, Library-1x weekly
P.E. 2x weekly
Lunch/Recess daily between 11:50am-12:30pm
Band students miss one class per week—schedule of academics rotates on band day so that students don’t miss same subject every band day

**Grades 1-2** (Teachers send newsletters and/or weekly emails to parents which talk about daily activities)
Schedule is very similar to grades 3-5, with the exception that grades 1 and 2 have the majority of academic work in the morning, because their aides are with them in the classroom until 12 noon.
Also, most grade 1 and 2 faculty keep a calendar on the wall, flip chart, smart board or chalk board because use of calendars/calendaring is a huge 1-2 skill set
Daily Morning Meeting
Art, Music, Computer, Library, Special Science-1x weekly
Foreign Language-1x or 2x weekly (half year French/half year Spanish)
P.E. 2x weekly
Lunch/Recess Daily between 11:30am-12:25pm

**Kindergarten** (Teachers send weekly newsletters/emails to parents about daily activities)
8:15 arrival, meet teacher in gym, say morning prayer, accompany teacher to class
8:30am-class begins
Morning Meeting
K students have a daily calendar written on a flip chart or the blackboard. It is specific, for example:

We will practice the letter P today
Today is our Art Day
We will have a Mystery Reader
We will practice the “ou” sound today, like in loud, sound, found
We will count to 100
Mr. Kelly will visit us today
We will have Snack
We will have a great day!!

Art, Music, Computer, Library, Special Science 1x weekly
P.E. 3x weekly
Lunch: 11:50am followed by recess
Morning snack and recess-mid morning, based around special subjects
Re-enrollment:

Every school year, it is necessary to see which current students/families are returning for the following school year, so that we can plan, plus we can also determine if we have openings in any grades. This is called our re-enrollment process. Re-enrollment of students for September 2017 will take place from January 16, 2017 through January 27, 2017. All re-enrollment takes place on TADS.com, and there is a $250 fee to re-enroll each student.

Parent tip:
- It can be tough to have to pay $250 per student right after the holidays, but after many discussions over many years, it has been decided that it is really the only time that makes sense due to the admissions process for new students.

Faculty tip:
- It is also tough to have to call families and remind them to re-enroll. It interferes with admissions, and we have turned qualified applicants away or waitlisted them, because current families keep us hanging on re-enrollment. We don’t want to start penalizing families who don’t re-enroll with higher fees, but it may become necessary.

Discipline/Bullying


Almost all discipline in grades K-5 is handled on an individual, case by case basis, and there are no discipline policies at BSS in Grades K-5 which state that an X type of behavior will always result in a Y type action. Discipline comes from the Latin word, disciplina, which means instruction or knowledge. In Grades K-5, teachers and their classes form class rules. When a teacher feels that a student is misbehaving, and/or needs discipline, often in order to re-direct a student, sometimes only a remark or even a look to remind and teach a child about proper class behavior is necessary. Particularly in K-2, many lessons are taught daily about how to stand still in line, work on projects with teammates, sharing, walking through the halls quietly, playing nicely, inclusion, etc. These are all forms of discipline. Sometimes discipline will carry consequences, such as loss of privilege, or having a time out.

If a student’s behavior is repeated or disruptive, the teacher may ask that the Principal or Assistant Principal to speak to the child. It is not always necessary to report this to parents. These interactions are handled appropriately at school, often with only dialogue between a student and adult. If a situation is more serious, parents will be notified by the teacher and/or an administrator, and dialogue begins between the parties involved.

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 consequences, such as lunch detentions, and Conduct Referrals. Three lunch detentions in any quarter will result in a Conduct Referral. Conduct Referrals can result in adverse high school admissions decisions.

**Bullying** is defined by the Archdiocese in specific language which we cannot change, and it is defined in the parent handbook as follows:

“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.”

There is more information about bullying in the parent handbook. Bullying is taken seriously, but is not sometimes quickly, instantly, or easily solved. Bullying is often insidious; not easy to see. Sometimes the bully is someone who has been bullied, so then turns and bullies others; sometimes a bully needs attention or counseling as much as the person being bullied.

**Parent tips:**

- The word bully is tossed around too often. While it is possible that someone can be bullied in just one incident, bullying is defined as **focused and repeated**. Sometimes kids have a fight with each other- that’s not bullying. Similarly, when kids become friends in the lower grades, it is often friendship born of proximity- neighbors, or convenience of carpool, or parents are friends. As children get older, they gravitate more to friends with common interests.
- If you ask your child this question daily, “Was anyone mean to you today? or “Did anyone pick on you today?” you are very likely to get an affirmative answer- my teacher, Joey, everyone. You might want to use a more open statement, like, “Tell me about your day.”

**Home and School Association/School Advisory Board**

1. The Home and School Association – aka “The HSA” - The role of the Home and School Association is to foster communication between parents and the school, to build community by hosting school events and to support the school’s fundraising goals. The HSA offers many opportunities for parents to support the school and to get to know other parents. Look out for its frequent postings in the BSS Weekly.  
   President for School Year 2016-17: Maryann Luongo, maryannluongo@gmail.com

2. School Advisory Board – The role of the School Advisory Board is to advise the pastor and the school principal regarding the oversight, mission, status and sustainability of the school. It
advises and supports the principal on key issues relating to school policies and areas of concern. The SAB also uses the BSS Weekly to communicate with parents.

President for School Year 2016-17: Jennifer Leonard, JenniferGLeonard@verizon.net

Security

The doors to the school are always locked. When parents come in to volunteer, even for lunch and recess duty, parents must enter through the school’s main entrance and sign in and get a visitor’s pass. Please do not ask students to let you in through locked doors.

Sports

BSS does not offer any sports except through the parish (see below). There are some vetted physical activities offered after school, but these are not run by the school, but by vendors who rent space from us, such as HoopED or Excel Sports. The name of any sports organizations included in this section implies nothing-no endorsements or preferences of any kind.

BS parish offers CYO sports for boys and girls-soccer in the fall for grades 4-8, and CYO basketball in the winter for grades 4-8. All information about CYO sports is on the parish website and/or can be obtained by contacting the parish’s athletic director Kate Ryan at kryan@blessedsacramentdc.org.

Parent tips:

- **Read and repeat**- Blessed Sacrament School does not offer sports, organize teams, or recommend any sports organization (except CYO).
- Stoddert Soccer in DC and MSI soccer in Montgomery County have leagues for children of all ages. Sometimes K teams form, and you may be able to get on a team with classmates from BSS by request, but you need to get information from the league, not school.
- CYO basketball tryouts start in October. There is a team for everyone - no one gets cut. However, please pay attention to CYO announcements in the parish bulletin for tryouts.
- Capitol City Little League offers both Baseball and Softball for boys and girls ages 5 through 14. Visit www.capcityll.org for more information or email Rob Grabarz at rgrabarz@lsm.com. BCC baseball is another option.
- If you are new in town, your best bet is to ask someone in your class about teams as soon as possible.
- Many students in the Washington, DC area play lacrosse, which may be a new sport to you if you are not coming from a lacrosse “hot bed.” Check It Out and Next Level are popular lacrosse clubs.
Best practices for positive interactions between home and school

If you need to speak to a teacher about a matter involving your child, the best way to contact a teacher is by email. Teachers are expected to answer emails within 24 hours if at all possible. If you email on a Friday afternoon, you might wait until Monday. Almost none of the teachers have a phone extension in his/her room, so often calls are impractical or impossible.

Faculty tip:
- When you need to speak to a teacher about a problem your child is having, please try as hard as possible to remember that the version you hear from your child about said problem is through the eyes of your child. The teacher might have a different point of view, and he/she can offer nuances and explanations to clarify situations. Talking to a teacher about a problem isn’t adversarial- it’s a conversation.

Parent tip:
- Speaking up about something you think a teacher is doing wrong will not result in reprisals against you or your child.