

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy (Grades 5-8)

Code of Conduct

We want and expect everyone at **St. Francis** to feel welcomed, accepted, and safe. Everyone has a right to be treated with respect. Relationships at the **school** are based on Jesus' basic principle of ... *love your neighbor as yourself*... (Mark 12:31). We do not expect anyone in the school to be teased, bullied, harassed, or excluded, either in the classroom, or in the school yard, because of their gender, skin or hair color, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation, body size or shape, physical ability, academic ability or performance, physical skills, special talents, personality, or anything else that makes them the unique individual God created.

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy is a Catholic education institution that provides supportive discipline. All students have the right to learn and interact in a safe and structured environment. All students have a responsibility to respect the rights of others at all times. Appropriate behavior should be praised, while inappropriate behavior must be acknowledged and corrected immediately.

Self-discipline is the Christian ideal, which our students ought to be encouraged to achieve. In order to form proper habits and attitudes, rules of conduct must be emphasized. Respect for all people and property, courtesy at all times, unselfishness towards others, and a sense of honesty, fair play and trustworthiness are among the values, which must be imparted to our students.

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy students are taught in an atmosphere of cooperation, honesty, and respect for classroom rules and procedures. The rules are determined by the teacher and communicated to students at the beginning of each school year. An atmosphere of mutual respect is where students learn in a caring and respectful environment.

Students are expected to be responsible, make good choices, and participate in **St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy** community life in a mature manner. This positive behavior is reflective of their deepening faith and religious development, together with the guidance from their families/guardians.

Some of the expectations that demonstrate this progression are:

- Being considerate and respectful of other students
- Respecting class and school policies
- Speaking to one another with respect and care
- Speaking and acting respectfully to teachers and other families
- Controlling anger at all times

- Showing responsibility by doing homework each night and preparing for the next day's class
- Arriving at school on time
- Respecting school property, for example: keeping desks neat and clean; covering books, etc.
- Keeping school grounds free of litter and graffiti
- Looking neat and clean at all times

In the past, certain behavior was considered harmless child's play. However, in our world today, the same behavior can be seen as bullying. **Any behavior that can be interpreted as intimidating, humiliating, or disrespectful, whether in word or action is absolutely unacceptable.** This includes any behavior that causes undue trouble, worry or discomfort.

If a student(s) is/are thought to have acted in a bullying manner the following disciplinary steps will be taken:

- A thorough administrative investigation of all parties involved will take place.
- Students found to have engaged in bullying behavior will face disciplinary actions (up to exclusion from school activities, suspension and/or expulsion)
- Any student who thinks he or she has been the victim of any type of bullying should report the conduct to someone in authority.
- Follow up on the behavior will occur throughout the school year

Discipline Policy

The objectives of the Discipline Policy are:

1. To stop the inappropriate action
2. To allow the action to be discussed
3. To teach appropriate behavior
4. To communicate with our students and their families regarding behavior trends and responsibilities

To provide a classroom environment that is conducive to learning we will:

1. Encourage character development and help students build self esteem
2. Promote growth in self-discipline
3. Foster respect for authority and peers

The following rights and responsibilities should be seen as a guideline that will be used by our teachers to develop their classroom rules and expectations.

Rights

1. To learn without interference.
2. To have your work respected.
3. To be listened to when speaking.
4. To receive help in your work.
5. To have your property respected.
6. To work and play in a safe environment.
7. To have your opinion respected.
8. To maintain personal space

Responsibilities

1. To accept ownership for your learning.
2. To respect the work of others.
3. To speak clearly and to actively listen.
4. To wait patiently for help.
5. To respect the property of others.
6. To be aware of your own safety and the safety of others.
7. To express your opinions politely.
8. To respect a person's right to personal space

Classroom/Teacher Discipline Plans

The rights and responsibilities listed above will provide a framework for the discipline plans in our individual classrooms. Within each class positive discipline will be modeled and used. These will vary between grade levels and will be explained to the students by their teachers and administration.

The teacher has a range of consequences for minor offenses which may include loss of a privilege, loss of recess, etc. Parents will be notified by the teacher or principal if the misbehavior persists. Parents will be asked to come in for a conference if the teacher notices a pattern of misbehavior. Good communication is essential for understanding the problem and shaping behavior changes.

Infractions of Discipline Policy

When a child chooses to disregard the rules that have been put in place, it is important that he/she understands that consequences will take place.

The Supervising Teacher May Issue an Infraction Referral for any of the Following Infractions:

1. Disruption of classroom learning
2. Disregard of classroom or school rules

3. Misuse of Technology (Chromebook, Ipad, Cell Phone, etc.)
4. Failure to be prepared for the day on a consistent (more than once) basis (Not having chrome book, classroom materials, lunch, etc.)
5. Inappropriate physical contact
6. Disrespect of staff or peers
7. Failure to complete homework on a consistent basis (more than once)
8. Other Minor Infractions

It is important that the parents support this process and that they take time to discuss the infraction that occurred and a plan for how their child can improve his/her behavior.

When a student has earned three written infraction referrals, the student will get a demerit and at least a one-day detention

Immediate Demerits May Be Issued for the Following Infractions:

1. Fighting, harassment, bullying, cyber bullying and any forms of intimidation
2. Defacing of school property
3. Dishonesty – which could include but may not be limited by the following: cheating on tests, copying someone else’s work, letting someone else copy your work, looking at a test, quiz or exam of another student’s, signing a parent’s name, etc.
4. Abusive, profane, indecent language or gestures
5. Stealing
6. Failure to Comply with the Acceptable Use Policy

Demerits/Detentions

Detentions are issued immediately when serious offenses occur. A detention is also given automatically when a student receives a demerit. Detention occurs from dismissal until 3:30 p.m. Families will be notified via a written notice or via the FACTS Family Portal the day before a detention is to be served. Please note all demerits are recorded in FACTS. Families must sign and have students return the notice to school the day of the detention. Any extracurricular activities scheduled for this day will be forfeited.

If a student receives three demerits in a given school year the student will serve a week of detention (5 days) and a conference will be held with the student, parents, the Principal and teachers to discuss consequences and strategies for improving the student’s conduct. If a student earns another three demerits in the given school year the student will serve another week of detention (5 days) and be placed on disciplinary probation for one year. Students on disciplinary probation who continue to not follow the code of conduct and discipline policy will be asked to leave the school.

Suspensions / Expulsions

Any deliberate action that is contrary to the moral climate, serious in nature, and having potential to cause harm to any student or staff member may result in a suspension of up to five days and/or expulsion.

Suspensions may be “in-school suspensions” or “out of school suspensions” depending on the seriousness of the offense.

The procedure to be followed for suspension will be:

1. A telephone call will be made to the student’s family.
2. A conference will be held with the family, teacher, administrator, and student.
3. The family and student will sign a letter concerning the suspension.
4. The student will be either in the care of the parent or the Administration for the time indicated.

For the period of suspension, the student is required to do all classwork and homework and is responsible for any assessments given.

The Board Director will be informed of the incident .

Immediate Suspension and/or Expulsion May Be Issued for the Following Infractions:

1. The use or possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind
2. Fighting that causes or has the potential to cause serious injury
3. Leaving the school grounds during school hours without permission
4. Flagrant violation of the Diocesan Bullying and Cyber Bullying Policy
5. Flagrant violation of the Acceptable Use Policy for technology
6. Flagrant inappropriate physical contact

Many times, a child who is suspended will be placed on disciplinary probation for a period of time up to one year. Any major violation of the code of conduct by a child who is on disciplinary probation can result in expulsion.

Violence

Violence is any mean word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings or things. If a student threatens violence by any means -- verbal, written, e-mail, etc.:

1. **THE THREAT WILL BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.**
2. The principal and/or assistant principal will address these issues with the families and student(s) and such issues will be investigated by the police if necessary..
3. The Diocesan Office will be notified immediately and, if serious enough, the Superintendent.

Any threat of this nature will result in **SEVERE PENALTIES**. Expulsion from school and counseling may be recommended.

Chemical Substance Abuse Policy

Students found to be under the influence or in possession, sale or exchange of a chemical substance (alcohol or drugs) in the school, on school grounds, or at school-related activities will be subject to penalties commensurate with the gravity of their actions. The following procedures will be used in such cases:

1. After being notified, the administrator will have a legal right to search the student's personal belongings.
2. The families will be notified and the student will be suspended to the care of his/her family.
3. The administrator, in consultation with the board chair will evaluate the case and, depending upon all the factors involved, will choose from the following alternatives:
 - A. Refer the student to an appropriate outside agency for help. A repeat of this behavior while the student is receiving professional help could be grounds for expulsion.
 - B. Expel the student immediately.

Vaping, E-cigarette Use, Juuling, etc.

The use of electronic cigarettes or vaping devices is increasing in our community and around the country. In a recent e-journal from Freedom from Chemical Dependency, the topic of electronic

cigarettes was the focus of the presentation. Data from Prevention Works Survey indicate 17% of students in grades 6 through 12 report using electronic cigarettes in the past year. 10% indicated use in the past 30 days. More students reported e-cigarettes use rather than traditional cigarette use. This data is a year old and our opinion is that use of these devices is escalating.

The hazards associated with e-cigarettes and vaping devices are significant. Students who use these delivery systems are exposed to chemicals that may have short and long-term health hazards. Additionally, as a nicotine delivery system that is not regulated, adolescents can be exposed to high levels of the addictive chemical. Vaping devices can also be used to deliver alcohol and marijuana in substantial concentrations. Aside from the aforementioned health risks, explosion of e-cigarettes have led to severe burns and disfigurement.

For all of the reasons noted above, it is our position that St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy students should not use e-cigarettes, vaping or juuling devices. Should any of our students be found to have used these devices at school, on school grounds, or at school- sponsored events, the student or students will face serious consequences including automatic suspension with the possibility of further discipline/expulsion.

Uniform Violations

Students will be issued a uniform violation/warning when they are not wearing the correct uniform. After two violations/warnings the student will earn an infraction.

Personal Electronic Devices

Students may not use cell phones, iPods, radios, cameras, or any other electronic devices on school grounds. Such items if used will be confiscated and turned into the principal's office. All confiscated items must be picked up from the Principal by the student's parent. Students may only use cell phones in case of an emergency. During the school day, all cell phones should be turned into the teacher. Any use of electronic device will result in at least an infraction referral.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Because honesty is most important, cheating will not be tolerated. Students who are found cheating (both those who give and those who take answers) will receive a demerit and possibly a zero on the test or homework.

An incident of cheating will be a negative factor in determining students who may participate in the National Junior Honor Society or may be eligible for academic awards at graduation.

Cheating also includes copying book reports, projects, homework, and forging a parent's signature. **Honesty is more important than receiving a high mark.**

According to Google Dictionary, plagiarism is defined as: “the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.” In order for our children to grow into honest, confident and competent students and individuals, teaching them the severity of plagiarizing must begin in the elementary school years. The occurrence of a student using another person’s words or work as their own will result in consequences that are at the discretion of the principal and teacher. Repeated incidents will result in more serious consequences, such as academic probation, removal from National Junior Honor Society in grades 6-8, detention(s), lowering of individual assignment grades or final averages, among others.

Parental Support of the Discipline Code

Each teacher implements a plan of discipline for his/her classroom. It is the student’s responsibility to follow the behavior guidelines provided by the staff and learn what behaviors are acceptable in the classroom, at recess time, and in the cafeteria. Students will be held accountable for following rules. Parents are expected to support the Discipline Code. If any infractions or demerits are brought home, parents should take them seriously because it is an indication that the child is deviating from acceptable behavior. If a child constantly ignores rules, it becomes apparent that he or she has not embraced the school philosophy at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy and may be asked to leave.

Please be aware that the Discipline Policy may be changed at the discretion of the administration.

Any questions regarding the Discipline Policy may be addressed to the school’s administration. Thank you in advance for your assistance in supporting our policy.

Please detach and return to school no later than Tuesday September 21st and keep the attached document for your records.

Date _____

We have read, discussed, and understand the 2021-2022 St. Francis de Sales Catholic Academy Discipline Policy.

Student Name _____ Grade _____

(Parent Signature)

(Student Signature)