



St. Agatha Catholic School

St. Agatha Catholic School Parents—Student Handbook

Acknowledgement Form
2022-2023

I, as a Parent or Legal Guardian, acknowledge that I have read the entire contents of the Parent - Student Handbook and understand the consequences of any violations of the rules and policies of the school.

I agree to cooperate with the school in the interpretation and enforcement of the policies outlined in Parent –Student Handbook. I also understand that the school has the ultimate authority over the administration of the school and the interpretation of the school’s rules and policies. Moreover, I further understand that all of the school’s policies whether written or verbal are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school with or without notice.

I also hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms of the **RELEASES** outlined in the School Sponsored Events policy, the Participation in School Athletics or Organizations Policy, and the Use of Photos Policy.

Print Parent/Legal Guardian Name	Date
Signature Parent/Legal Guardian	Print Student Name



St. Agatha Catholic School

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St. Agatha Catholic School

St. Agatha Motto

CHRIST CENTERED ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



St. Agatha Mission

St. Agatha School collaborates with our families to provide Catholic formation of students through Christ-centered, academic excellence.



St. Agatha Catholic School

Message from our Pastor and our Principal

Welcome to St. Agatha Catholic School! We ask that you read this handbook carefully. You will find that it contains rules and regulations regarding all aspects of your affiliation with St. Agatha School.

Our faculty and staff are dedicated to the proper development of the entire individual. Our goal is to aid in the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth of all of our students. We take this responsibility very seriously. Each child has been blessed with many talents and gifts. We ask our children to share those talents with us and that they work to the best of their ability. We invite them to grow in their knowledge and love of God as well as their parents, teachers, and classmates.

We are one family at Saint Agatha Catholic School. If you have any concerns please feel free to stop by the office to set up an appointment. Together we will be able to educate the hearts and minds of our children. God bless you!

Rev. Marcos A. Somarriba
Pastor

Mrs. Patricia S. Hernandez
Principal

School Policy and Principal's Right to Amend

An interesting and challenging experience awaits you as a student or parent of the school. To answer some of your questions concerning the school's policies, the school has prepared this Parent-Student Handbook. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. The policies stated in this handbook are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school, as are all other policies, procedures, or programs of the school. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in policies. However, the school has the right to add, delete or revise any school policy or procedure with or without notice. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, and none of the policies or provisions should be construed as such. If you have any questions about the school's policies, please ask the principal for assistance.

Any student action that is not keeping with the philosophy/objective of St. Agatha School is subject to the review of the administration and may lead to withdrawal from the school.

Accreditation

Accreditation guarantees parents and students that the school is doing what it claims to be doing. It is the parents' assurance of legitimacy and the students' guarantee that his or her credits will be accepted at other schools and at institutions of higher learning. Accreditation also assures financial stability, safety, qualified teachers, sound curriculum, strong leadership and continuous improvement. St. Agatha is accredited through the Florida Catholic Conference.



St. Agatha Catholic School

Philosophy and Objectives

Our mission at St. Agatha is to collaborate with our families to provide Catholic formation of students through Christ-centered, academic excellence. We honor the dignity and diversity of our students by nurturing their individual God-given talents, while maintaining high academic and social standards.

The school assists, not only the parents, but also the Church, in providing their children with opportunities to deepen and strengthen academic achievement in accordance with the Christian principles of wisdom, justice, brotherhood and morality.

We, as educators, consider that our mission is to prepare our students to proclaim the Gospel and to translate it into action. Thus, we incorporate our aims into our philosophy: helping our students to achieve self-fulfillment through loving service to society and attaining their own spiritual fulfillment. Our education seeks to develop a student's potential, thus helping them accomplish all that is possible for them: becoming fully integrated, happy, loving, warm human beings.

St. Agatha School believes:

1. in establishing daily Christian values of discipline, love and respect that are essential in a successful society.
2. Catholic traditions directly foster the student's moral development, allowing the students to integrate faith and values.
3. parents are the primary educators who collaborate with the administration, faculty and parish community as part of an interconnecting puzzle that molds and educates each student.
4. fundamental academic skills serve as a foundation for student success.
5. as critical thinkers, the students synthesize and apply knowledge to real-life situations.
6. in honoring the dignity and diversity of our students by nurturing their individual God-given, unique talents, while maintaining high academic and social standards.
7. a positive self-image and healthy self-esteem promote individual growth and development while facilitating positive relationships within our community and moreover in society.
8. in creating an environment in which all children, including children with learning variances, participate fully in a community of faith and learning.
9. in the effective and ethical use of technology and scientific knowledge.
10. multi-cultural education fosters a greater understanding and tolerance of differences in peoples, religions and cultures.

Sacramental Preparation

The sacramental life of your child is very important to us as a Church community. We know that it is important to you too. There are certain requirements given to us by the Archbishop of Miami through the education office. There are other expectations that the local parish may require for its community for the betterment of its candidates. The parents are the first teachers of their children in the ways of our faith. They are also the best teachers in spiritual matters. It is vital that parents



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set an example of sincere Christian living by creating a religious atmosphere in the home, by family prayer, frequent reception of the Sacraments and regular participation at Sunday Mass. Students are taught the importance of the 3 T's (Time, Talent, and Treasure) on a weekly basis. We ask that parents continue to stress the importance of sharing these gifts by bringing their children to Mass every week. If a child has been baptized in a Christian church that is not Roman Catholic and they wish to join our catholic faith, a Profession of Faith is required prior to receiving any other sacraments. Please notify the office if this pertains to your child.

Mass Attendance

St. Agatha Catholic School students celebrate Holy Mass together on first Fridays of the month or more often as special occasions permit. The Holy Mass is at 8:30 am starting with First Fridays, but because of the school calendar or due to a special Feast Day another day may be chosen. Each class takes a turn hosting and preparing the liturgy. Students may invite and encourage their parents to join us. Other prayer services and devotions should also be celebrated, such as the Stations of the Cross (e.g. during Lent), and the May and October Holy Rosary in Honor of Our Lady. **These liturgies are NOT a replacement for participation at Sunday Holy Mass with the parish community**, but are added opportunities for our children to be trained and grow in their relationship to God and the Body of Christ, the Church.

In order to receive the active parishioner discount, St. Agatha MASS ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED. Attendance is monitored regularly by registered parishioner envelope use. The accounting department will confirm each family's Mass participation in order for the family to receive the active parishioner discount the following school year.

Confessions

It is the responsibility of the students and parents to receive and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance, Confession) regularly. Here at St. Agatha Catholic Church the opportunity is available every Saturday from 3:00-4:00 pm and one-half hour before each Saturday Vigil Mass and Sunday Masses. Other neighboring parishes also have weekend schedules. Teachers will make frequent reminders and prepare all the students. Special Penance services for the students in school are celebrated as often as the opportunity is available. However, a family serious about its spiritual development will go regularly (considered to be once a month) outside of school.

Parental Involvement

Parents can help their children through school by following the suggestions listed below. THINGS TO DO EACH DAY:

1. Assure your child that you love them.
2. Provide time for opportunities to talk with you about things in general, or about activities in



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school and in particular about lessons, books and projects

3. Take time to read to the younger ones each evening before bedtime.
 4. Help them abide by some type of daily schedule or routine for homework, technology/television time, home responsibilities, etc.
 5. Make sure they get plenty of rest each night. At least 8 hours are needed for healthy bodies and minds.
 6. Be sure you are an example of the type of personality you desire for your children. Instill in them the importance of showing respect towards elders and authority figures.
 7. Provide an opportunity for your children to develop spiritual faith that they can rely on during difficult growing years and when Mom and Dad are no longer available for guidance. Attend Mass on a weekly basis as a family.
- We ask both, parents and candidates to take seriously the involvement in the sacramental preparation for Communion and Confirmation.
 - We ask that you attend parent meetings.
 - We ask the candidates for Communion and Confirmation to make sure that all work is completed in class preparation.
 - We ask all middle school students and to a greater extent, students preparing to receive Confirmation to acknowledge their commitment to the community through a minimum number of community service hours. These community service activities must first be approved by the middle school religion teacher.

Home and School Association

At St. Agatha we are blessed to have a very active Home and School Association (HSA). All parents are automatically members in this group. The purpose of the HSA to strengthen Christian unity between the School, Home, Church and Community. Additionally, the HSA provides crucial support and financial assistance for all the “extras” that enhance our program.

Parent Participation Points

In order to build our school community, every family is required to participate by completing service hours at one school event.

In addition, each family is encouraged to fulfill 20 participation hours per academic year. These participation hours can be fulfilled in many ways, for example, attendance at Home and School meetings, working at the parish festival, serving as a homeroom parent, attendance at a St. Agatha retreat/mission, etc. You will be informed as to the approved participation opportunities via the school newsletter, webpage or the Home and School meetings. Only authorized activities will earn participation hours. These hours must be completed by May 1. \$10.00 discount will be given on each account for EACH participation hour that was fulfilled. These hours will be totaled and the



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discount given next school year.

Parents interested in fulfilling participation hours in the classrooms, as room parents, chaperoning field trips or in any capacity in which you are in contact with our students must be fingerprinted and must complete a “Virtus” workshop. All volunteers must also be up-to-date with their Virtus bulletins.

School Advisory Council

The School Advisory Council (S.A.C.) consists of parents and parishioners that are selected by the Pastor in consultation with the Principal. It is their responsibility to advise the school administration in the areas of policy proposals, finances, development of long and short term goals, recruitment of students, etc. It is this council that also reacts to major concerns of our parents in the above mentioned areas. Please refer to the school newsletter or webpage for the S.A.C. Bylaws.

If you do have a concern that you would like the School Advisory Council to address you are asked to complete the “Committee Action Request” Form” available in the school office.

Curriculum

The school curriculum aims to develop the total child through: moral and spiritual development, intellectual and cultural formation, social responsibility and physical fitness.

The following areas are developed at St. Agatha: Religion, Science, English, Literature (Reading), Mathematics, Computer Science (depending on grade), Social Studies, and Spanish (depending on grade). In addition, students receive instruction in Spanish, Art, Music, Computer and Physical Education and they visit our school library on a regular basis.

Religious Training: We hold that religious education has maximum priority in our basic education program. The cooperation of parents in this area is vital. Such cooperation involves: participation in Sunday Mass, parental preparation of children for the sacraments, special parish liturgies, adult education class and retreats.

Family Life, Touching Safety & AIDS Education

The Archdiocese requires that all schools have a Family Life Program in grades K-8. The Family Life Program facilitates educating our children on living as Catholics in today’s society. In doing so, topics such as growing into fatherhood, motherhood, and God’s gift of sexuality are covered within the structure of our faith and morality. Additionally, we incorporate two lessons in touching safety for our children.



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St. Agatha Catholic School follows carefully the spirit and guidelines put forth by the National Council of Catholic Bishops in their statement “Always Our Children” and NCEA AIDS curriculum. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please contact our school office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

At the beginning of the school year, there is an Open House when parents may meet the teachers and learn about the curriculum for each grade. The school sees as of the utmost importance that a clear chain of command be followed. If parents/guardians have a question or concern, they should make an appointment through the school office to see the child’s teacher. If parents do not get a satisfactory reply, then they should make an appointment to see the Principal/Assistant Principal and they will further discuss the issue. If the problem still cannot be settled, it may be brought before the Pastor for hearing. Parents may not confer with teachers during class hours nor disturb the classes for any reason. Instant conferences at arrival or dismissal are never an effective way to fully communicate and are strongly discouraged.

School Testing Program

A program of standardized testing shall be conducted annually according to guidelines provided by the Office of Catholic Schools.

Homework

Teachers may assign homework for purposes of reinforcing learning that has taken place at school and fostering habits of independent study and responsibility. Assignments will be given with consideration of students’ varying ability levels. At no time will homework be an excessive exercise in “busy work” simply to take up time. An assignment may not always be written work. Homework time should include time for reading, research, and review. A general rule for home study time is:

- **Grade 1-3: 45 minutes**
- **Grades 4-5: 90 minutes**
- **Grades 6–8: 150 minutes**

Students should have a quiet, well-lighted place to study, seated at a table or desk, undistracted by television, radio, stereo, etc. Homework should be done at about the same time each day. If the child finishes the assigned tasks before the end of the study time, please see that he/she has a book to read or research questions to investigate.



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Homework must be turned in when the teacher stipulates unless an illness or emergency prevents this. Such a situation should be rare, but if it does occur, a note signed by the parent must be sent to the teacher. It will be left to the teacher's discretion whether a makeup assignment is to be given and how much time the student will have to complete the assignment. **If a student is absent one day, they should wait until they return to school to ask for makeup work.** After two or more days of absence, parents may request assignments by calling the school office by 9:00 am the day the homework will be picked up. These assignments will be prepared by the teachers and left in the school office for 3:00 pm pickup.

In order to limit disruptions to class and help develop a sense of responsibility we will not permit the delivery of homework assignments, class projects, PE equipment etc. after 8:00 am.

Grading System

The evaluation of students' progress is one of the most important and complex duties of teachers. Grades for report cards are apportioned to include class work, class participation, projects, homework, tests, and quizzes.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Evaluation Key

The Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Observation Record is based on observation of your child. Additionally, portfolio assessments mark growth in the child's academic development.

Grades K through 8 Evaluation Key

Please refer to your child's report card for the evaluation key.

Elementary Grading Scale

Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade

Students will not receive a percentage grade. The student will be evaluated on a Performance Scale with as the exceeding expectations level 1 as emerging skills level. The scale is:

- 4 - Exceeding grade level standards
- 3 - Proficient in meeting grade level standards
- 2 - Development in meeting grade level standards
- 1 - Emerging in the development of grade level standards

The goal is for every student to reach a level 3 to be a proficient learner in grade level standards by the end of the school year.

The standards (under each subject) and Active Learner will be measured by:



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- + Area of strength
- S Satisfactory performance
- Area of weakness
- NA Not assessed this quarter

Grading scale used (Grades 3-8)

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Report Cards

St. Agatha School, through the Archdiocese of Miami Department of Schools, provides a standard report card for evaluating performance. A nine week marking period is used with report cards issued every quarter. With the implementation of the Plus Portal website parents will have access to their child's grades on a regular basis. This access should be balanced by parents in order to make learning a process. This process includes successes and failures. Students should be allowed by parents to have moments of weakness from which they can grow. This access will be offered from 3rd. to 8th grade only.

Promotion, Probation, and Retention

The principal, upon recommendation of a student's teacher, will promote or retain the student at the end of the year. Retention will only be considered when it is hopeful that it will help the child. Under some circumstances it is understood that it is best for students that are retained to repeat the grade in another school. Recommended transfer will be issued for students who do not show benefits from our program. The school will make the final decision in matters of retention.

Grades 3-8

Students failing two subjects at the end of the third quarter are placed on academic probation and parents will be informed of the pending retention. These letters are to be signed by the parents or guardians and retained in the student's file. Thus, a student will be retained if he/she fails to satisfactorily meet the objectives for three or more of the major subjects: Religion, English, Reading, Mathematics, Science, and/or Social Studies. These objectives are outlined in the curriculum guide for the Archdiocese of Miami. Decision to retain a student should be made by the teacher only after consultation with the administration and the parents. In addition to these areas, students should also have a proficiency in the following subjects: Music, Art, Spanish, Physical Education and Computer Science.



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Summer School

A student may be required to attend Summer School or have sessions with an approved tutor if he/she has failed any of the academic subjects in order to fulfill the requisites of that particular subject. In addition, a teacher may strongly recommend that a student attend Summer School or have sessions with an approved tutor if he/she has only mastered minimum competencies in any subject matter. The school may require documents from the tutor or approved program indicating the progress made during instruction.

Honor Roll Policy

Students may qualify for Honor Roll from fourth grade to eighth grade.

Honor Roll Criteria:

- Principal's Honor Roll: 95% or higher in all subject areas.
- First Honor Roll: 90-94% in all major subject areas.
 - 80% or above in all minor areas.
- Second Honor Roll: 85%-89% in all major subject areas.
 - 80% and above in all minor subject areas.

If student receives a minus in "self-regulation", under the active learner traits section, the student will NOT qualify for Honor Roll.

Please be aware that excessive tardiness (more than 5 per quarter) will disqualify a student from attaining the Honor Roll. Also, students that exceed 4 absences per quarter will be disqualified from attaining the Honor Roll.

Saint Agatha School Admission

Given the mission of the school as an agent of Catholic Christian formation, the school will give preference in admission to those children whose parents demonstrate an understanding of the specifically Christian nature of the school and a desire to participate in that mission.

Some students may not be accepted because the school's educational program and facilities are not able to meet the needs of the child. All new students will be admitted on a probationary basis.

In matters of admission and registration, the decisions of the local pastor and principal are final. Order of acceptance for admission:



St. Agatha Catholic School

- Brothers and sisters of children already at St. Agatha.
- St. Agatha parishioners— active participating members
- Active Catholic—other parishes

- Non-Catholics

Please note: A child will not be accepted into St. Agatha School with outstanding debts to other schools. Additionally, we will honor any and all agreements at the Deanery level pertaining to releasing or accepting students into other schools within our system.

Entrance Screenings

Students wishing to apply for admission to our school must complete an entrance exam/screening. This evaluation along with other pertinent information such as standardized test results and report cards permit us to determine if our program will be able to meet the needs of the applying student. A fee is levied for the processing of the paper work. Taking the test does not assure acceptance in the school.

Age Requirements

For entrance into our school we follow the guidelines set forth by the State of Florida which are:

- PK-3- Must be 3 on or before September 1, of that academic year
- PK-4- Must be 4 on or before September 1, of that academic year
- Kindergarten -Must be 5 on or before September 1, of that academic year
- First Grade - Must be 6 on or before September 1, of that academic year and must have successfully completed Kindergarten.
- **All students in PK3 or higher need to be “potty” trained to attend St. Agatha Catholic School.**

Waiting List

When a space becomes available, a brother or sister of those presently enrolled in school will be accepted first. Other students will be processed according to the date when all the registration procedures have been completed and in accordance with the order of acceptance for admission.

Procedure for Registration

Applications are available in the school office for Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade. It is not our policy to consider the acceptance of students into the 8th grade unless they are transferring from another Catholic school.



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Birth certificate	Catholic Church envelope number
Baptismal Certificate	Copy of last report card
First Communion Certificate	Copy of standardized test
Student Health Certificate & Immunization records*	Written letter from participating parish

Completed applications with the following documentations should be returned to the office as soon as possible, before the deadline given:

Health Requirements

St. Agatha Catholic School maintains health records in accordance with the Florida Department of Health in compliance with Florida Statutes. All directives issued annually by the Florida Department of Health concerning immunizations and other health matters are implemented. Prior to registration, each student must present a school entry health examination form (Form 3040) based upon an examination performed within one (1) year prior to enrollment, as well as an original and current Florida Certification of Immunization (Form 680). Immunizations are required for poliomyelitis, diphtheria, rubella, pertussis, mumps, tetanus, measles, influenza type b, varicella, and hepatitis B and other communicable diseases as determined by the rules of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. These requirements are mandated by state law and students may be kept from attending classes or dismissed from the school for non-compliance.

Students entering, attending, or transferring to the 7th or 8th grade in Florida schools will be required to have completed the hepatitis B vaccination series, a second measles vaccination (preferably MMR) and a tetanus-diphtheria booster. Students entering, attending, or transferring to Kindergarten-2nd grade will be required to have completed the hepatitis B vaccination series. Students entering, attending or transferring to Kindergarten through 7th grade are required to have a second dose of measles vaccine (preferably MMR).

Re-Registration

Re-registration applications for the next school year are sent home in January. These registration applications must be returned to school by the designated date with the registration fee for each child. Any applications not received by the designated date will be considered as openings for the next school year and the vacancies will be filled from the waiting list. Re-registration will NOT be accepted for any families that have delinquent accounts.



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Fees

<u>Registration : (non-refundable)</u>	
Students (all grades)	\$450.00 per child
Athletic Program Team Fee (if applicable)	\$50.00 per team sport

Tuition Information

St. Agatha Catholic School is a private parochial school and therefore can only function as an independent business. If you desire to enroll your children, you will be required to pay tuition and registration fees. If you desire your child to participate in our afterschool Athletics Program, you are required to pay an annual team fee.

We would further remind parents that children, by law, are entitled to a free public school education, part of your tax dollars are directed toward this end. If you, the parents, opt to enroll your children in St. Agatha School, then you also at the same time do so with the knowledge that an expense will be levied.

Tuition Rates

2021-2022

St. Agatha Tuition (10 installments)

Pre-Kindergarten	\$700.00
K—5	\$795.00
6—8	\$805.00

Tuition includes building fund, festival and technology fees.

Multi –student Discount

Pre-Kindergarten student with sibling	\$1,000.00 per family
Kindergarten---8 th	\$1,000.00 per child



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Discretionary Tuition Discounts

Third party Scholarship-McKay, Step Up or
 Gardiner Scholarship
 Active St. Agatha Parishioners
 Active School Parent

amount varies
 \$200.00 maximum per family
 \$200.00 maximum per family

Tuition Payment Plan

All St. Agatha families must have a tuition payment account plan through FACTS as per the Archdiocese of Miami. The tuition payment is by installments (10): Due on the 1st of each month. Tuition payment #1 is due on May 16 of prior school year. This payment is nonrefundable. Tuition payment #10 is due on May 1 of current school year.

Note: Any check (submitted in the school office for incidental charges) which is returned by the bank for INSUFFICIENT funds (NSF) will incur a \$20.00 penalty fee. After two NSF checks received, all payments must be made in cash or by money order.

Note: St. Agatha will not accept postdated checks nor will we hold checks.

IMPORTANT: If an account is past due for more than 2 months, and the parents have not shown good faith towards the financial responsibility, the Principal and/or Pastor reserve the right to withdraw the student (s).

Scholarship Funds

To provide a partial or full scholarship for an underprivileged Catholic child, please contact the school Principal. There are corporations that will match a donation to an educational institution. Please check with your employer. A full scholarship fund will cover annual tuition and any mandatory fee. A partial scholarship fund is an amount of money donated and designated to alleviate part of the annual tuition and mandatory fee expenses for a particular student. Excess funds received for a particular scholarship will be transferred to a partial scholarship when funds become available. A scholarship fund will be granted to a student who qualifies both financially and academically after consulting with the Finance Committee.

Supply Fee

The supply fee of \$350.00 for Pre-Kindergarten is included in the tuition. Textbooks and workbooks for grades K-8 are sold to all parents by going to the St. Agatha bookstore online. Books will not be rented. A list of required supplies for students in grades K-8 will be sent home in the summer packet.



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Fundraising

No child may solicit funds in the school's name unless such solicitation has been authorized in writing by the principal.

Confirmation

Our students receive the Sacrament of Confirmation during their 8th grade year. The 8th graders prepare to receive the sacrament throughout the school year by participating in spiritual formation, such as the Confirmation retreat, as well as completing the coursework and assignments. The students receive the Holy Spirit during the Confirmation Mass. The school provides:

- Confirmation gown and certificate
- T-shirts

Eighth Grade Activities

We like to make 8th grade a very special year for our graduates. The 8th grade fee of \$150.00 per student covers the items below. The 8th grade fee will be charged, via FACTS, to parents on Oct. 1, in order to cover the following:

- 8th grade awards
- 8th grade parent/student retreat (lunch provided)
- 8th grade breakfast (served by 7th graders)
- 8th grade student retreat
- Promotion Mass —flowers, caps and gowns, tassels, programs
- Diplomas and covers
- 8th grade class banner
- .T-shirts
- Video coverage of promotion events

St. Agatha School ONLY sponsors 8th grade school events. We do not sponsor, nor encourage, nor chaperone, nor accept any liability if individuals choose to hold unofficial events. We absolutely forbid the use of our parish/school name, or the use of our tax exempt status for events not approved by the administration in writing.

Endorsements

St. Agatha Catholic School does not endorse any product.

Stewardship

Each family is actively encouraged to practice Sacrificial Giving (tithing). In practice it means, 5% of your total income of the week is given to the parish on Sunday and 5% to the school tuition and other charities.



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Student's Responsibilities

The first bell will ring at 7:50 am; school begins at 8:00 am and ends at 2:30 or 2:45 pm depending on the grade. It is important that a student report to school each day to receive the maximum benefit from classroom instruction. However, when a student must be absent from school, he/she should have his/her parents/guardians call the school office the day he/she is absent between 7:45 and 8:30 am. When returning to school after an absence **the student must bring a written note** to the teacher containing:

- the date of the absence
- the student's full name
- the reason for the absence
- the signature of the parent/guardian

In case of serious illness a release from the physician should be presented upon return to the school. The Principal has the right to refuse an excused absence in cases where the parents' reason for keeping the child out of school does not seem valid.

- School office hours are from 7:40 am to 3:40 pm. Monday through Friday. Parents are respectfully requested to conduct all school administrative business within these scheduled hours.
- In order to provide your child with the best possible education and to avoid administrative disruption, it is the policy of the school to discourage early dismissal. Students will not be released after 2 p.m. unless a parental note was sent with a valid reason for early dismissal upon the student's arrival in the morning.
- It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to insure that his/her child is picked up from school at the proper time. Parents or legal guardians are required to complete an emergency contact form. This form specifically lists all persons authorized to pick up the child from school. The school reserves the right to require proper identification from anyone who is listed on this form coming to the school to pick up a student who is not personally known to the teacher or administrator and to refuse release of the child without it. The school follows the guidelines set forth in Buckley Amendment pertaining to release of students.

Attendance Requirements

The State of Florida provides by law for compulsory attendance by all children between the ages of 5 and 16 years. When a student has been absent, the school requires a written excuse from the parent or guardian. St. Agatha Catholic School will report "truancy" to the Department of Children and Families when there is an extended absence without written explanation from the parent.



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A student who is absent from school more than 18 days a year (9 days per semester) may not be promoted to the next grade unless the Principal grants an exception and determines a way in which the student may receive additional instruction.

Students will be considered as present one half of a day if they arrive after 11:30 am or if they leave the school before 11:30 am. This designation will affect the students' perfect attendance at the end of the year, as will medical and dental appointments. The end of the year designation for perfect attendance is for students that have NOT been absent, for ANY portion of the day nor have been tardy on any school day. This includes late arrivals and early dismissal.

Policy on Tardiness and Truancy

1. A student is tardy if he/she arrives in classroom with or after the 8:00 am bell.
2. Every effort will be made to correct the tardy student.
3. If a student is habitually tardy a written explanation from the parent or guardian may be required.
4. **Ten repeated instances of tardiness will result in an Internal Detention with the opportunity to make-up missed work. After 15 tardies in one quarter, a parent conference must take place before the student is admitted back to school.**
5. Whenever a student is absent only part of the day, he/she must have a written note containing the same information stated above. However, he/she must also have an admit slip from the school office before returning to class.
6. Students who are not in school or who are tardy without parental or school consent will be considered truant. Truancy violates state and local attendance laws and will be considered a serious offense. Continued truancy may result in expulsion from school.
7. Any student accumulating more than 5 tardies or 4 absences per quarter **will not** qualify for Honor Roll recognition.
8. A student absence is defined as an absence, if a student is absent for any part of the entirety of the day.
9. Every student will be permitted a total of five (excused or unexcused) tardies per quarter
10. After accumulating 5 tardies, a fee of \$10.00 will be assessed for each tardy. After accumulating 10 tardies, a fee of \$20.00 will be assessed for each tardy.

*Chronic problems with tardiness may result in the possibility of a summer school requirement, denial of promotion, or denial of re-registration for the next academic year.

Medication

Students may have a need to take medicine (prescription or non-prescription). The school strongly encourages parents to medicate their children at home. In the event that a student must take medicine during school hours, St. Agatha will follow the required protocol.

- The parent must complete a medication authorization form and submit it to the office.
- The parent must submit the medication in the original container/box to the office.



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- Students may not bring medicine to school.
- The office staff will keep the medication in a secured location in the school infirmary.
- The office staff will administer the medication, as indicated by the parent on the medication authorization form, in the school office.
- The office staff will document the administration of the medicine to the child on the school medication log.

Early Dismissal

Parents are urged to leave their children in school all day. Doctor or other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours and on school holidays. If a child needs to be dismissed early, he/she should bring a note to the teacher stating time and reason. Parents must sign the child out in the school office. IN CONSIDERATION FOR THE TEACHER AND IN JUSTICE TO THE STUDENT, NEITHER THE TEACHER NOR THE CLASS SHOULD BE INTERRUPTED DURING CLASS HOURS.

Only the parent or guardian may request, in writing, special permission from the principal or her designee regarding the early dismissal of his/her child for valid reasons. Pleasure trips and vacations, while school is in session, are discouraged and parents should take full responsibility for such absences. Parents should not request an earlier leave than that scheduled by the Archdiocese for the regular vacation periods. Tardiness and early dismissals will preclude the student from receiving an award for perfect attendance at the end of the year, or Honor Roll recognition.

In order to limit disruptions to class, students will not be released between 2:00 p.m. and 2:45 p.m. from the school office.

Special Days

In the event of any problems, such as a hurricane, very cold weather, or any other unforeseen circumstance, St. Agatha School will follow the decision of the public schools in Dade County unless otherwise directed by the Archdiocese of Miami Office of Catholic Schools. St. Agatha School subscribes to the School Messenger program; this system permits us to contact all parents on their home and cell phones with a recorded message. This system is used for school announcements and for emergency notification purposes.

Faculty Meetings

Dismissal is at 1:00 pm on most First Fridays of the month so that the faculty may meet, attend workshops, or have professional growth activities. There will also be early releases on selected Wednesdays in order for faculty to participate in Professional Learning Communities.

Uniforms

Our students are required to be in complete uniforms at all times. Students who are out of uniform must bring a written excuse from home. Students are expected to come to school looking clean and



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neat. All uniforms must be in good condition. Items in poor condition must be fixed or replaced immediately. A \$1.00 uniform fee (or \$5.00 if socks are provided) will be assessed for every day a student does not comply with the code. Only the school PE tee shirt or a solid white tee shirt (or white turtle neck on cold days) may be worn under the school uniform. The sleeves of these tee shirts may NOT extend below the sleeve of the uniform shirt. No other color will be allowed. Uniform inspections will be held unannounced at varying intervals during the school year. **Let us take pride in our appearance!** The St. Agatha School uniform is available at AA & Dennis School Uniforms Company.

Please be mindful:

- Both boys and girls will be required to wear a specific shoe, available at AA uniform.
- For P.E., students purchase sneakers of their choice in any color.
- Students may only wear sweatshirts to school on P.E. days. Unless a P.E. day, middle school students are required to wear the regular uniform with the school vest. Only the fleece jacket with zipper will be allowed with the regular uniform.

BOYS:

- All boys are required to have their hair neatly cut and tapered to length not touching ears, eyebrows, or shirt collar. Shaved cuts resulting in two different hair lengths will not be acceptable nor will shaved “parts” be permitted.
- Facial hair will not be permitted.
- A solid black leather belt must be worn with all trousers and pants must be worn at the waist. Pants that are too small or too big will not be acceptable.
- Boys will be permitted to wear one necklace/chain, one ring, and one bracelet. The necklace/chain may be of no more than 1/4 inch in thickness and only one charm or medal may be worn. String shell jewelry, rubber bands “jelly bands”, ponytail holders or other fads will not be considered acceptable jewelry.
- Tattoos will not be permitted, Henna or otherwise.

GIRLS:

- Skirts are to be modest. Length must touch knee.
- Students are not to wear any makeup.
- Girls will be permitted to wear one necklace/chain, one ring, and one bracelet. The necklace/chain may be of no more than 1/4 inch in thickness and only one charm or medal may be worn. Strings shell jewelry, rubber bands “jelly bands”, ponytail holders or other fads will not be considered acceptable jewelry.
- Only the first button of the shirt may be open.
- Acrylic or acrylic-like nails and nail polish will not be permitted.
- Girls will be permitted to wear ONE pair of stud-type earrings (in the lobe).
- Tattoos will not be permitted, Henna or otherwise.
- Hair accessories should be in school colors.
- Hair dye of any kind will not be permitted.



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*The school reserves the right to reject any fad or accessory which is not complimentary to the overall appearance of the student. A small fine will be assessed for ALL uniform infractions, including rental of belts, purchase of socks, etc.

Physical Education:

On P.E. days grades K through 8th students will be permitted to wear their complete P.E. uniforms to school (including sneakers) and keep them on the entire day. On Mass days: K through 8th regular school uniform, with P.E. uniform under the regular uniform, and bring sneakers in a bag.

Cold Weather Clothing:

The uniform makes provisions for cold weather clothing. We have a St. Agatha jacket and sweatshirt that may be purchased at AA Uniforms. If the cold weather is too extreme as to require additional clothing, the student may wear any article as needed over the school uniform. Once inside the building, the article must be removed and the student should be in compliance with the dress code.

*Only white undershirts or turtlenecks will be permitted.

*Girls may wear white tights if wearing a skirt.

PK through 8th grade may wear the sweat pants and sweatshirt to school, along with their sneakers, only if P.E. is scheduled for that day.

Book Bags

Students in grades 1-8 may carry book bags to school. These must be kept clean and free of any writing, drawing, etc. For safety purposes, book bags with wheels are allowed but not recommended.

Open House

The school will hold an Open House for parents/guardians once a year. This provides an opportunity to meet teachers and become familiar with all the school surroundings.

St. Agatha School Discipline Policy

The school views the education of a student as a partnership between the parents and the school. Parents and students are expected to comply with the school rules and policies, and to accept and support the authority of school officials. Just as a parent can withdraw a child from the school if desired, the school has the right to disenroll a student if it determines at its discretion that the parent of student partnership with the school has been irretrievably broken.

- A. **Philosophy**—the essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline. At St. Agatha School discipline is considered an essential aspect of Christian development. Its purpose is to form loving people who appreciate themselves, others and most of all, the God who created them. Enrollment as a student in St. Agatha School implies the willingness of both parents and student



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to comply with the policies and regulations of the school. The registration of a student at St. Agatha Catholic School is an expressed agreement on the student's part and on the part of his/her parents or guardians that they will comply with all the guidelines and regulations of the school as set forth in this Family Handbook, or otherwise promulgated by the school administration and faculty.

- B. **Respect for Property**—Children should be taught to respect school property and the property of their classmates. If they find money or articles that other children have lost on the school grounds or premises, they should take these articles to the office. Parents are financially responsible for any damages caused by their children. Students will be expected to clean up after themselves. Cafeteria monitors will be assigned weekly with the responsibility of making sure their table area is clean for the next class.
- C. **Rules**—Student's responsibilities: The teacher and students will work together to determine the classroom rules that will be practiced for orderly classroom management. Students are expected to practice good etiquette at all time. They are to come in complete uniform daily. Parents are expected to help students comply, as they are the primary educators in their children's formation. Chewing gum is not allowed at any time. Students are to follow directions to and from class and all other places on the school grounds. Proper behavior in church is imperative.
- D. **Good Manners**— Students are expected to exercise courtesy, respect, and good manners at all times. This is an important part of a Christian character and personality. Of course, this would only be a follow-up to what is taught at home. The following is a very basic list we try to implement and practice at St. Agatha. As the need arises, other items are taught and emphasized.

Ten Commandments of Good Manners

1. Greet any adult or fellow student, with "Good Morning," "Hello," or "Welcome to St. Agatha School".
2. Answer any adult with "Yes Ma'am" or "No, Sir," or the answer with the adults name. Never say "yeah," "huh," or "what?"
3. When called from a distance, go TO the person calling you. Do not answer while walking away or yell from another room.
4. Stand up when an adult enters the room or classroom and when answering a question for a teacher or staff member, unless the teacher tells you it is a drill or another exercise. This is for the benefit of the whole class, not just for the teacher.
5. Use "pardon me" or "excuse me" when you have not heard something. Use this also when stepping in front of anyone, whether adult or your own peers.
6. Step back from the door to allow an adult to enter first. Hold the door open if you arrive before the adult. Gentlemen hold the door and let the ladies enter first.
7. Offer to help carry books, packages, etc. for your teachers, staff members, etc., unless you are



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managing your own heavy objects. Do the same at home for parents or other adults.

8. Never read or touch items on teachers' desks. Never open envelopes addressed to someone else, especially your parents or teachers. This is illegal as well as showing a great lack of respect.
9. At the table:
 - a. keep elbows off the table
 - b. take small bites and chew with mouth closed
 - c. swallow before speaking
 - d. don't play with food
 - e. keep place neat
 - f. wait to be excused from the table before leaving and remove all trash, food leftovers and personal items before leaving the cafeteria
 - g. use an appropriate, conversational level
 - h. always say please and thank you!
10. Look for opportunities to help other people by asking "Can I help you?"

E. **Discipline**— St. Agatha Catholic School is a Christian community based on respect for the individual. Students are expected to follow school rules and procedures. However, there are many times when it may be necessary to retain a child after school or ask a child to arrive before school. Parents will be notified at least 24 hours in advance and they are expected to handle the transportation. Detention will be no longer than 1 hour in duration for grades 3-8. Students receiving more than four detentions in one report period may be subject to suspension. Parents will be notified.

F. **Major Disciplinary Infractions**—The following infractions may result in suspension/and or expulsion:

1. Continued misbehavior which undermines the classroom discipline and impedes the academic progress of the other students.
2. Continued detention, tardiness, or truancy.
3. Acts of violence (physical assault, fighting, etc.) which endanger other students, school personnel, or other individuals.
4. Intimidating or threatening teacher/students and or school personnel.
5. Repeated disregard of school regulations, lack of respect for authority, or habitual profanity and vulgarity.
6. Vandalism or willful damage or destruction of school property.
7. Drugs: refer to table of contents for drug policy.
8. Stealing: any act or attempt to take away the property of another person or property of the school.
9. Weapons are not permitted anywhere on school grounds. Students who bring weapons on school grounds, who are in possession of weapons, or who threaten others with weapons or



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items used as weapons will be expelled from the school.

10. Immoral conduct or lewd behavior which is detrimental to our school's Christian values.
11. Possession of obscene materials on the student's person, or in his/her locker or desk.
12. Cheating on academic work or forgery of signatures will minimally result in a zero given of that assignment. This includes the copying of homework.
13. Any other crime, scandal, immorality, or disruption constituting a threat to the physical or moral welfare of the school, its students, or other individuals.
14. Maliciously and/or falsely accusing another person of sexual abuse or actions that have not taken place.
15. Gang affiliation of any kind.
16. Inappropriate displays of affection on school grounds, at school-related events, or any time a student represents St. Agatha School will be considered a major infraction.
17. Using a technological device (whether on or off campus) to access, transmit, copy or create materials that are illegal or violate the school's code of conduct or the principals of our Catholic faith.

Threats of Violence

The disciplinary consequence for a student who's verbal or written comments, including communication via technological tools (such as texts, e-mails, social media post, etc....), that threaten serious bodily harm to another students or member of the faculty or staff or destruction of property, may include, but no be limited to:

- Immediate suspension from the school.
- Treatment or consultation by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the parents' expense and/or by the school counselor, both of whom may be asked to submit a written evaluation. If it is determined that the child was serious about the threat and has the capacity to carry it out, the child may be expelled from the school. If it is determined that the child did not seriously intend to do harm to others, the child may be allowed to return to the school, at the discretion of the school principal.
- If allowed to return to school, the child may be placed on probation with an indication that, should a similar threat occur, the child will be expelled from school.
- The school should inform the Department of Schools of these cases. The school may submit an informational report to police.

Suspension/Expulsion

1. Students serving a suspension will be expected to complete missed assignments. The grade of "0" will be assigned to all work.
2. Expulsion or recommended transfer may be made in exceptional cases. The parent or legal



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custodian will be notified if expulsion is warranted, but not limited to the grounds listed above in Section F, as determined by the administration.

3. The administration of St. Agatha Catholic School reserves the right to review, investigate, and reach final determination of situations involving a student's academic work, misconduct, neglect, or serious disciplinary infractions which are detrimental to St. Agatha Catholic School, in regard to probation, suspension, and/or expulsion of the student from the school.
4. A student may be suspended from school for up to 10 days.
5. A student who has been suspended will receive a "--" under self-regulation on the report card.

*NOTE: An occasion may arise when the administration determines that a student is physically or emotionally unable to control themselves or does not have the proper mindset to benefit from being in school. On these rare occasions the parents may be asked to pick the child up from school.

THE PRINCIPAL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PASTOR, IS THE FINAL RECOURSE IN ALL DISCIPLINARY SITUATIONS.

Lockers

Respect for school property and another person's property is expected and required at all times. Lockers are to be used ONLY for keeping books and other personal property necessary for school activities.

The administration of St. Agatha reserves the right to inspect the lockers at any time to insure compliance with these guidelines.

Cellular Phones and Cameras

In order to discourage interruption during instruction and for the safety of all of our students, the possession of cell phones or cameras will not be permitted while students are on school grounds. Please be aware that cell phones will be confiscated and returned ONLY to the parents or legal guardian or the student. A one-day internal suspension will be imposed for a first offense. Any further infraction will result in the confiscation of the phone until the end of that academic year. Cameras will not be permitted unless specifically authorized by the yearbook moderator. I Phone watches or similar devices will not be permitted. Cellphones are not permitted on school campus and on St. Agatha field trips and service hour activities.

Technology

Our Middle School students (grades 6, 7, 8) will be accessing their textbooks through the internet. This implementation will require the purchase of a laptop for use here in school. While we will make every effort to secure these laptops it is ultimately the responsibility of each student to take care of all of their school supplies. St. Agatha School will not be responsible for loss, or breakage of



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a student's laptop or any other student property. Parents are solely responsible for the maintenance of their students' laptop. This policy applies to the Padre Pio Program students who will be accessing their textbooks using iPads and the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students using Kindle readers.

Legal Proceedings

It is the policy of St. Agatha School, to attend any and all legal proceedings, hearings, depositions, trials, etc., represented by its attorney. Therefore, any and all legal fees and or costs incurred by St. Agatha Catholic School will be charged to and become the responsibility of the parent prompting any such attendance.

Closed Campus

St. Agatha is a closed campus. Students are not permitted to leave the school premises at any time during the school day unless picked up by a parent or parent delegated person. All students are then picked up from the school office. All students remain on the school premises for their lunch. Fast food lunches will not be permitted.

Visitors

Parents or anyone entering the school MUST first report to the school office. No one is admitted into the classrooms while school is in session. Parents that have been asked to assist in a classroom, for some specific project MUST first register with the school office before going to the class.

Special Deliveries

The office will not accept or deliver supplies, sneakers, homework, etc. forgotten by students after 8:00 am. The only exception will be if a student has forgotten their lunch or glasses. Remember, fast food lunches are not acceptable.

Governmental Authorities

The personnel in our school attempts to cooperate with any local, state, or Federal investigators or law enforcement officers who may contact the school in the course of any criminal investigation. All investigators and law enforcement officers must present proper identification prior to obtaining any information from the school. All investigators or law enforcement officers must identify themselves to the school Principal or the Principal's designate upon contact with the school.

Whenever an investigator or law enforcement officer comes on to school property with appropriate legal authority to request records and information, that person will be provided with access to these records. Appropriate legal authority typically involves a court subpoena specifying the documents and information to be reviewed.



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Except in cases involving abuse at home, the Principal or her designee will contact the parents of a child with whom the law enforcement person wishes to speak. In the former case, the Principal will request permission to call the parents, but will follow the decision of the officer. The Principal or her designee will request permission from the officer/investigator for a school representative to be present at any meeting between a student and an investigator or law enforcement officer that occurs on school grounds. In cases involving abuse at home, the Principal will request permission for a school representative to be within the line of sight of such a meeting, but again will follow the decision of the officer.

Field Trips

Field trips that are planned with an educational objective may be sponsored by school authority provided that they are safely conducted, adequately supervised and do not represent an unreasonable financial burden on the individual student.

Field trips that extend beyond school hours are discouraged for elementary schools. Overnight field trips are forbidden for elementary schools. Students not able to attend class field trips may receive a zero for any follow-up activity.

Students attending a field trip must remain in school until the end of the school day. Students choosing not to attend field trips are asked to stay home, as alternative activities for the day will not be assigned.

While chaperones are needed to help with field trips, we are not always able to accommodate all parents interested in attending. Chaperones will be required to complete a "Virtus" training session and have a fingerprint clearance.

Bus Service

The school does not provide transportation service. However, the parent can contact a privately operated bus service.

Extra-Curricular Activities

St. Agatha provides various types of extracurricular activities which are designed to meet the needs of and to develop the talents of our students. We do believe that the daily academic work of the student must always remain the first priority.

For a student to be academically eligible to participate in an after school activity, the following criterion must be met:

1. The student must maintain an overall "C" average
2. The student may not receive an "F" in any subject area on their progress report or report cards.



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3. Student conduct will be closely monitored and will be a determining factor for that student's continued stay on the team.
4. The final decision as to student participation will be left to the sponsor/coach and the principal.

Students wishing to watch an after school sporting event MUST be supervised by a parent or an adult authorized through written consent of parent. No student will remain unsupervised on school grounds.

Lost and Found

Please mark all sweaters and jackets with the student's name. Lost articles will be kept in the school office for a three week period only, and then given to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. St. Agatha Catholic School is not responsible for any personal valuables brought to the school by the student.

Elevator

Only students with a documented medical condition by a medical doctor, may request use of the elevator.

Newsletter and Calendar

The newsletter, monthly calendar and web pages, published monthly by student body and administration respectively, will be used to notify parents of activities and accomplishments of the school community. Please read them carefully.

Use of the School Telephone/Messages

In order to maintain an appropriate classroom environment, classroom interruptions should be limited to emergencies. Please do not ask the office to relay messages to your child. This should be done prior to school. Students are NOT permitted to call home for lunch, homework, test papers, folders, etc. If a true emergency occurs then the office should be notified at 305-222-8751.

Library

We strongly encourage all students to develop the habit of a daily reading period for enjoyment at home. Our media center is rich in materials from which your child may choose. Library-bound books are very expensive. Students are responsible for their care and will be charged for lost or damaged books.

Joint Custody

In cases of joint custody it will be the responsibility of the parent providing primary care to the student to provide copies of school documents to the other parent and inform other parent as to



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progress or lack of student progress.

Fire Drills

Students will be trained to leave the building in an orderly manner and in silence. Drills are conducted by the school personnel and the city fire department.

School Problems

In the event a problem arises, it is important to discuss your problem with the proper person as soon as possible.

1. Get your facts from the proper person.
2. Classroom teachers appreciate having the FIRST opportunity to resolve problems.

If you are not comfortable with the results of the parent/teacher conference, please call the school office to schedule a conference with the Principal or the Assistant Principal.

Emergency Phone Numbers and Emergency Contact Information

It is of the utmost importance that precise information be entered on the student emergency contact card. A record of this information is kept in the school office in case you need to be contacted, please make sure all telephone numbers and addresses are accurate and carefully written. Remember to include the names and telephone numbers of persons who can be contacted in case you cannot be reached. Please notify the school if you change address and/or telephone numbers during the year. It is very important to your child's welfare that our records are kept up to date.

The parents must provide the office with a telephone number where the parent can be reached without delay during the day. A second telephone number of a relative or neighbor who could make emergency decisions must also be supplied.

Emergency Procedures

While it is impossible to foresee every type of emergency that might occur, St. Agatha Catholic School has an emergency plan that provides guidelines that may be useful in different situations.

School Lunches

A lunch program is provided daily for a nominal fee. All students are required to have a school account via www.myschoolaccount.com. Further details on the program will be sent separately. Student may bring their own lunch or buy the lunch served by the school. **Parents will not be permitted to bring "fast food" lunches (i.e. McDonald's, Burger King etc.)**

Students will be given a written notice when their account has \$5.00 or less in order to alert the parents to replenish the lunch account. Students will not be permitted to buy on credit. If the occasion arises that a student does not have money in their lunch account and they have not brought



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their lunch from home, they will be given an alternative meal. Parents are expected to verify the status of their child's (ren) lunch account. It is ultimately the parents' responsibility to make sure their children come to school with lunch from home or with the funds to purchase lunch at the school.

Parents of children in grades PK3 – K grade are asked to complete their menu choice the week prior and submit to the teacher. Students in grades 1 – 8 will not be required to fill out a monthly menu as the parents of the little ones will do. Students will continue to make their selections daily.

For student safety, the cafeteria provides plastic utensils. Students are not allowed to bring metal knives or glass containers to school.

Homeroom Parent/Ambassador

The school will assign a homeroom parent/ambassador to each homeroom. The homeroom parent/ambassador will have met Virtus and fingerprint requirements. The school will provide the homeroom parent/ambassador the contact information for the parents in the homeroom, so that the homeroom parent/ambassador may disseminate official school and class information. If a parent would not like for his/her contact information to be given to the homeroom parent/ambassador, the parent must submit a written notice to the school.

Class Parties

As an educational institution it is paramount that we emphasize teaching time and minimize party time. **If a parent of a student in Pre-Kinder through 3rd grade** would like to provide cupcakes, brownies, or cookies (individual servings) to their child's class in celebration of a birthday, these snacks may be dropped off at the school office and we will have them delivered to the class. We will not accept "goodie" bags, or party favors of any kind.

Evacuation Procedures

THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WILL BE ADHERED TO IN THE EVENT OF A SCHOOL EMERGENCY MANDATING AN IMMEDIATE EVACUATION.

1. Teachers will ensure that their respective students exit their classroom as well as the building in an orderly and expeditious manner. In addition, teachers must be vigilant that no students are left behind.
2. Students, teachers and other school personnel will evacuate the building via designated exit location. These locations are in accordance to room numbers and nearest exit.
3. Once the evacuation process has been initiated, evacuees will proceed to predetermined locations on OR near the general vicinity of the school grounds.
4. Once the students are safely situated at their designated staging areas, teachers will ensure that ALL their student are accounted for and will promptly report missing children to emergency personnel on the scene.



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5. Under no circumstances will anyone attempt to enter the building once it is evacuated. This responsibility rests with the responding emergency personnel.
6. Police and fire department personnel will determine the severity of the emergency and will expand the evacuation distance if needed.
7. All emergency evacuations will be considered as life threatening situations requiring immediate attention as well as an expeditious response. Strict adherence to the outlined procedures is essential to eliminate any exposure to danger.

No-Nit Policy

Head lice do on occasion present itself in the school environment. Head lice are passed from person to person by direct contact or on shared objects (brushes, combs, hair clips, etc.) Nits are the tiny white eggs that attach themselves to the shaft of the hair. If your child is found to have head lice or the nits, they may not return to school unless ALL NITS ARE REMOVED, no longer present. Upon returning to school, the child must report to the school office to be checked by a school staff.

Morning Drop-off and Afternoon Dismissal

Our most important objective is the SAFETY of the children at our school and the expediency with which we carry out morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal. We would like to emphasize that the teachers and administrative personnel will NOT be on duty until 7:30 a.m. The first bell will ring at 7:50 a.m. The second bell will ring at 8:00 a.m. to start classes. Student safety patrols will help direct traffic. Please, be proud of our future leaders.

Morning Drop-Off Procedure

You will drop-off your child using the school driveway starting at 7:30 a.m. Do not park in the driveway. Keep traffic moving. Students should be dropped off at the sidewalk and not in the parking lot. We do not want any child walking across traffic.

The bell will ring at 8:00 a.m. Your child will be marked late after 8:00 a.m. The driveway will be closed at approximately 8:15 a.m. After 8:15 am, you will need to park in the parking lot and walk your child to the school office.

Afternoon Dismissal

You will pick-up your child using the school driveway. Dismissal time per grade level is as follows:

<u>Regular Dismissal</u>		<u>Early Dismissal</u>
PK	2:20 p.m.	12:50 p.m.
K – 5 th & MTP	2:30 p.m.	1:00 p.m.
6 th – 8 th	2:40 p.m.	1:10 p.m.



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A multiple child family will be dismissed according to the oldest sibling's designated time. Each child will be dismissed only to an authorized parent or legal guardian or an authorized adult with parent written authorization. Once the child is dismissed, the child's safety is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

On rainy days, parents will pick up their child (ren) via the driveway at the designated time. **REMEMBER, THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS TO ENSURE OUR CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND WELL BEING ARE COOPERATION AND PATIENCE.** We thank you in advance.

Please respect ALL MARKED PARKING SPACES. The spaces are few and reserved for a reason. Do not park in fire lanes. Thank You!

Extended Care Program – Before School Care

The teachers, administrative staff and other personnel of St. Agatha Catholic School do not arrive at the school and assume their duties until approximately 7:40 am on scheduled school days. Therefore, St. Agatha Catholic School provides a Before School Care Program. All children who arrive at school prior to 7:40 am on scheduled school days will have to report to the cafeteria and a \$1.00 per day fee will be assessed. Our before care program is available at 7:00 am daily.

After School Care Program

An after school care program will be provided from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm, on days that school is in session (unless otherwise indicated). It is assumed that any child not picked up by 3:00 pm is in need of this service and will be placed in the after school program. In either case, parents will be responsible for this additional fee as incurred. Before school care is charged at a rate of \$1.00 per day and after school care at a rate of \$10.00 per day. Refer to After-School Program.

School Sponsored Events and Employees

As a point of clarification, we have employees that also choose to have their children attend St. Agatha. It is understood that the presence of these employees at a social event or an event NOT sanctioned by the school administration does not render this a school event. This employee is merely attending as a parent and clearly NOT as an employee.

Civil Rights

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended and Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, or national origin. St. Agatha Catholic School adheres to this code.

Epidemic or Pandemic

During an epidemic/pandemic, the school will follow guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and state and local government agencies. Employees, parents and students will adhere to the school



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epidemic/pandemic procedures, including: wearing face masks on campus and social distancing.

Remote Learning

During remote learning, the student will participate in synchronous and asynchronous learning. The parent will facilitate and monitor student participation. The student will participate in daily live instruction, via a platform such as Zoom, allowing the teacher to confirm daily attendance.

St. Agatha School discipline policy and proper student behavior/conduct applies during remote learning. The student will wear the St. Agatha School uniform during live virtual instruction. The student will adhere to the following Student Remote Learning Code of Conduct.

- I pledge to seek the truth honestly and to love all that is good and beautiful.
- I will strive to achieve clarity of thought, nobility of character and purity of heart, especially while I am using technology to further my education.
- I will pursue my education with diligence, humility and sincerity; embracing excellence, renouncing mediocrity and encouraging others to do the same.
- I will treat my teachers and peers with the utmost dignity and respect in all my communications.
- I will honor my family and myself by giving my best effort daily in my schoolwork and by making positive contributions to family life.
- I will honor God by developing the gifts He has given me, completing my own work to the best of my ability.
- Above all, I will aspire to the wisdom of a life lived by faith, hope and charity; fulfilling my destiny as a child of God.



St. Agatha Catholic School

Early Childhood

Introduction

The Archdiocese of Miami Early Childhood program provides the experiences that meet each child's needs. They stimulate learning in all developmental areas. Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration and interaction. Children plan and execute many of their own activities from a variety of learning areas that the teacher's prepare. Children are expected to be physically and mentally active. They are provided with many opportunities to see how reading and writing can be useful before they are instructed in letter names, sounds and word identification. Listening to stories and poems, dictating stories, participating in dramatic play, talking informally with other children, and drawing, all prepare children for later formal instruction.

Individual self-directed activities, small group activities, and total group activities are used in our early childhood program. Each child is evaluated regularly and parents are informed of progress through progress reports and personal conferences. The Catholic school early childhood programs are committed to assisting the family in shaping the basic values of the young child as he/she eagerly seeks to know God and creation. Therefore, developmentally appropriate religious experiences are an integral part of the daily program.

Philosophy

While all children have the same basic needs and all go through the same overall developmental processes, each child is a unique human being created by God with special strengths and needs. The curriculum and educational program should be as individualized as possible within the limitations of our program. The child should be allowed to progress at his/her own pace with the encouragement from a trained staff to explore and search for answers in a planned environment. In addition, our Early Childhood Program (PK3-4) follows the Archdiocese of Miami curriculum standards.

Understanding the important role of the family in the life of the young child, this educational plan draws upon the parents' knowledge of the child. In return for this information, the school provides parents with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the child and his developmental steps through observation and conferences with the teachers.

Age

Children who are two years old will be eligible for Pre-Kindergarten (2), UPON TURNING 2.

Children must be three years old by September 1 to be eligible for Pre-Kindergarten (3). Children must be four years old by September 1 to be eligible for Pre-Kindergarten (4) and five years old by September 1 for Kindergarten (5).

The child must be able to take care of all of his/her toilet needs without any adult assistance in order to be registered at St. Agatha PK3 and PK4 program. If an accident occurs, the parents may be contacted to come to school to assist the child.



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Attendance

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:30 p.m. Each day is an important day in our Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. Please make every effort to bring your child to school each day, unless he/she is sick. If your child must miss school, it is required that a written excuse be sent to the school by the parent on the day of his/her return with the following information:

- a) The date of the absence
- b) The student's full name
- c) The reason for the absence
- d) the signature of the parent or guardian

Children are expected to arrive at school on time so that class can begin promptly. However, if your child must come to class late, you must obtain a tardy slip from the office for admittance to class. Please try to be on time.

If your child has any special health problems - physical limitations, allergies, etc. - please inform the teacher in writing. It is very important that we know how to get in touch with you in case of an emergency. Please be sure that your correct telephone numbers are on file in the office. You should also provide us with an emergency phone number (that of a relative or friend) to be used if we cannot reach you at home or business.

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other trinkets to school. From time to time, days will be designated for children to bring special "things" to school, but you will be informed ahead of time.

Snacks and Lunch

PK 2 includes lunch and snack with tuition.

Our PK3 and PK4 will be provided with an afternoon snack daily. This short snack time does not allow them to eat a meal or large snack. An appropriate snack will be juice and a few cookies or a piece of fruit.

Small cans or boxes of juice are easy for children to handle. A thermos is fine for juice, milk, lemonade, etc., but please do not put carbonated drinks in a thermos.

For your child's safety, please do not send any food in glass containers. They are easily dropped and broken. Lunches may be purchased from our cafeteria on a monthly basis or it may be brought from home every day.

Clothes

1. On the first day of class, PLEASE BRING A CHANGE OF CLOTHES FOR YOUR CHILD. These clothes are to be left in school for use in case of an accident, spilled juice, broken zippers, etc. Please place the clothes in a bag and label it with your child's name. These clothes preferably should be a uniform.
2. Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten children must wear the regular St. Agatha uniform.
3. Jewelry, large hair decorations, fingernail polish, etc. are not part of the school uniform.



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Transportation

1. Pre-Kindergarten children may be escorted to the school by an adult or an older brother or sister.
2. At dismissal time, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children should be picked up promptly.
3. Please notify us **in writing** if your child's usual means of transportation will be changed for any reason. If your child usually rides the bus and you are planning to pick him/her up, you should inform the teacher in the morning. If a relative or friend will pick up your child, we must be informed. This communication is extremely important in order to ensure your child's safety.

Special Days

1. On the first Friday and the third Wednesday of every month, the school is dismissed at 1:00 p.m. to allow for faculty meetings. Please be prompt in picking up your child.
2. If you would like to bring cupcakes, brownies, or cookies (individual servings) for the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children in celebration of a birthday, these may be dropped off at the school office and we will have them delivered to class.
3. There are special days designated for parent-teacher conferences during the year, however, we will be glad to meet with you at any time to discuss your child's education. Please call the school office to make an appointment for a conference. All records and conferences are treated as confidential matters. A child's progress will not be discussed with anyone, except his/her parents unless authorized in writing by a parent.

Parents Can Help

1. Make sure your child gets enough sleep.
2. See that your child has breakfast before coming to school.
3. Talk to your child.
4. Listen to your child.
5. Take your child places.
6. Read to your child.
7. Make books available for your child and teach him/her to take care of them.
8. Limit the time your child spends watching television and/or using technology.
9. Help your child learn his/her address and phone number.
10. Help your child learn to tie shoes.
11. Accept your child as he/she is and avoid comparing him/her with other children.
12. Encourage your child to have fun! Our hope is that the child's first school experience will be enjoyable and therefore develop a positive attitude toward school and learning.



St. Agatha Catholic School

Exceptional Student Education: Padre Pio Program & Mother Teresa Program

Padre Pio Mission Statement

The Padre Pio Program strives to serve students who demonstrate average to above average intellectual ability, who do not have severe physical handicaps, and/or behavioral or emotional disabilities, but who have academic deficits in one or more of the following areas: reading, mathematics, language arts and/or writing.

Philosophy and Objectives

The professional community offers many options to educate students with learning variances. Our program focuses on students who experience low achievement in spite of regular classroom accommodation, inclusion, or resource classroom participation. Placement in the Padre Pio program allows these students to receive an appropriate education in which they function according to their ability. Certain factors, such as a low teacher to student ratio, individualization of instruction, and trained professionals, in our program allow the educator to meet the students' specific learning needs by addressing information processing problems, and focusing on learning modalities.

Therefore, the purpose of the Padre Pio program at St. Agatha Catholic School is to serve students who learn differently by providing a curriculum that addresses learning needs and renders instruction in academic concepts, skills and learning strategies. We aim to facilitate students' intellectual, emotional and spiritual development in a Catholic school setting, so that the individual who learns differently may function at his/her highest level and participate effectively at school, at home and in the community. Ultimately, it is the goal of the program to allow students to master the appropriate academic and social skills for their grade level and eventually transition into a high school program.

Plan of Study

The Padre Pio program plan of studies is based on the Florida State Standards and any appropriate modifications needed by the individual student. The content of the curriculum includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a. religious formation (Archdiocese of Miami religious education standards)
- b. reading competencies
- c. writing competencies
- d. communication competencies
- e. language competencies
- f. mathematical competencies
- g. learning skills and organizational strategies
- h. social and personal strategies



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- i. content knowledge (Religion, Science and Social Studies)

Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for the Padre Pio program includes, but are not limited to, these points:

- grade/age criteria determined on need
- review of social, psychological, medical and achievement data
- evidence of academic achievement, which is significantly below the student's level of functioning documented by a psychologist's evaluation (discrepancy between IQ and academic achievement)
- documented evidence which indicates ineffective interventions
- documented evidence of a processing deficit in one or more of the following areas: reading, language, writing, and mathematics
- documented psychological examination performed by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist
- documented evidence that learning problems are not due to other disabling conditions

Mother Teresa Mission Statement

The Mother Teresa program strives to educate children in a Catholic environment, who have cognitive disabilities and/or varying exceptionalities but do not have emotional and/or severe physical handicaps.

Philosophy and Objectives

The Mother Teresa Program is designed to focus on students who are in need of intermittent / limited support in an educational setting. Our program focuses on students who are in need of behavioral support, adaptive technology and a multi-sensory approach to learning in order to succeed in a classroom environment. Students in the Mother Teresa program experience borderline to low-average intelligence and deficits in adaptive behavior, which occur during their developmental period of childhood, causing a deficiency in their ability to learn. Placement in the Mother Teresa Program will allow our students to receive an appropriate education in which they will be capable of achieving success based on their functional level.

The purpose of the Mother Teresa program at St. Agatha Catholic School is to go beyond what is expected in serving exceptional students in a Catholic environment. We provide our students with a curriculum that addresses their learning needs, and renders instruction in a spiritual environment. Functional Math, Language Arts, computer skills, social skills, daily independent living skills and vocational skills are the focus of our program. The goal of the Mother Teresa program is to prepare our students according to their intellectual level to be a fully functioning Catholic member of society.



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Plan of Study

The Mother Teresa program is based on the Sunshine State Standard Performance Objectives for Elementary Students receiving a diploma of completion. The content of our curriculum includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Religious Formation (Archdiocese of Miami religious education standards)
- Functional Mathematics
- Functional Language Arts (Receptive/Expressive Language)
- Functional Computer Skills
- Vocational Skills
- Daily Independent Living Skills
- Social Skills

Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for the Mother Teresa program includes but is not limited to the following:

- A psycho-educational evaluation by a licensed psychologist
- A chronological age of eight years or older
- An intelligence quotient of 60 or higher
- Toilet trained

Special Education Rates

Tuition is payable the first of each month from August through May. A late charge will apply via FACTS.

Registration

- \$450.00 per child (non-refundable)

Tuition Rate

- Padre Pio Program \$1,180.00 per month—\$11,800.00 a year
- Mother Teresa Program \$1,380.00 per month—\$13,800.00 a year

Tuition Payment Plan

All St. Agatha families must have a tuition payment account plan through FACTS as per the Archdiocese of Miami. The tuition payment is by installments (10): Due on the 1st of each month. Tuition payment #1 is due on May 16 of prior school year. This payment is nonrefundable. Tuition payment #10 is due on May 1 of current school year.

Note: Any check (submitted in the school office for incidental charges) which is returned by the bank for INSUFFICIENT funds (NSF) will incur a \$20.00 penalty fee. After two NSF checks received, all payments must be made in cash or by money order.



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BOOK FEE: \$400.00 is included in the tuition.

STEWARDSHIP:

Each family is actively encouraged to practice Sacrificial Giving (tithing). In practice it means 5% of your total income of the week is given to the parish on Sunday and 5% to the school tuition or other charities.

MCKAY AND FLORIDA PRIDE SCHOLARSHIPS:

We gladly accept the McKay, Step-Up and PLSA Scholarships from the State of Florida. It must be understood however, that if reimbursement to our school by the state is less than our annual tuition, the parents will be assessed the difference.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

Students in need of additional services may be assessed for those services.



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After-School Program

Philosophy

St. Agatha After-School Program strives to construct an enjoyable atmosphere with varying activities, including homework time, indoor games, and vigorous outdoor play whenever possible, according to the child's level.

Admission Policy

Only students enrolled in St. Agatha Catholic School will be allowed to enroll in the after school program. Extended care is a privilege, not a right. Therefore students must obey the rules and regulations in order to continue in the after school program. All students and parents must comply with all the guidelines of the school as outlined in the **Parent/Student Guidelines Handbook**.

There is a registration fee of \$30.00. After school service fees will be charged to the student's account the week following attendance. **Any parent arriving after 6:00 pm will be required to pay a \$20.00 penalty fee in addition to \$10.00 for each 5 minute period thereafter. A warning will follow. In the event a second occasion occurs the student will be removed from the program.**

Communication

If parents need to address special issues to the after-school personnel, a special appointment should be made, as the staff member must supervise students in his/her care.

Daily Release

Parents must designate, in writing, those persons who may pick up their children. If, on a special day, a child is to be released to someone other than the designated person (s), the parent/guardian must send it in writing to the teacher with the child.

Discipline

Every student is expected to abide by the regulations of the program/person in charge, as well as respect staff members, other students and all property. If a child violates these standards, we will first take action by removing the child from the group and seating him/her by himself/herself for a designated period of time. If the child does not respond to this and the problem behavior persists, the parent will be called for a conference. Should there continue to be problems, a second conference will be arranged and, at that time, the child may be dismissed from the after-school program.

We reserve the right not to offer extended care services if the behavior of the student is not consistent with our policies.



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After School Rules

- Each child is expected to participate in all activities to the best of his/her abilities.
- No child is to leave the supervision of his/her teacher without expressed permission.
- No foul language or profanity will be tolerated.
- No bodily harm to another individual will be tolerated.
- Running in the hallway and stairs are not permitted.
- Each child will be expected to help clean up his/her toys and to straighten up the room.
- Please do not bring toys or other articles from home without permission from the teacher.
- Students are to wear the St. Agatha P.E. uniform or complete school uniform. Un-tucked shirts, other tee shirts, shorts and other clothes are not allowed.

Before School Care

All rules and regulations for after school care also apply to our before school care program.

Emergency Procedures

Please fill out the information form requested and return to us immediately.

Nutrition

Good nutrition is vital. Students should have a snack each day. An appropriate snack would be a juice, a few crackers or a piece of fruit. Do not send any food in glass containers, they are easily dropped and broken.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act

Prior to the end of 1988, all schools of the Archdiocese of Miami were inspected by the firm of Law Engineering in accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA).

As required by federal law, the three (3) year cycle for asbestos re-inspection has been completed. Schools within the Archdiocese of Miami were re-inspected during the 2018 school year by the firm of ARS Environmental, Inc. St. Agatha Catholic School was found to be in full compliance with federal standards.

In further accordance with AHERA 40 CRF 763.93 (g), asbestos related documentation is available without restriction for your inspection at the school's administrative office or at the Archdiocese of Miami Pastoral Center, 9401 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami Shores, FL.



St. Agatha Catholic School

Archdiocese of Miami Policies and Procedures for Schools

Verbatim Policies for Student/Parent Handbook

This document provides schools with Verbatim Policies that must be placed in each school’s Student/Parent Handbook. Policy language may not be changed, although fonts and layout may be modified as needed.

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I. Anti-Bullying Policy

The school is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. As such, bullying is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal or written conduct or gestures directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- (1) physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student;
- (2) damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- (3) placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm;
- (4) placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or the Catholic mission of the school.

1. Definition

- a. **Bullying** is the willful and repeated harm inflicted upon another individual which may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). Bullying reflects a pattern of behavior, not a single isolated incident.



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- b. This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

2. Scope

- a. This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:
 - i. on school premises before, during, or after school hours;
 - ii. on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity; or
 - iii. during any school function, extracurricular activity or other school-sponsored event or activity.

3. Reporting Complaints

- a. Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the school principal. The principal will provide the student/parent with the Bullying Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated and signed by the complaining party so that the school may initiate further inquiry, when appropriate.

4. Disciplinary Action

- a. Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, administrative withdrawal, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the principal's discretion.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate remedial action which may include, but is not limited to, the assessment of costs incurred by the School in its investigation and review of any reports deemed to have been made in bad faith.

II. Child Protective Investigations

Florida law provides that any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person responsible for the child's welfare must report such knowledge to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The school will cooperate with all child protective investigations by DCF or the local law enforcement agency. Reports should be made to Florida's Department of Children and Families by calling the Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).



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Child protective investigations by DCF or local law enforcement agencies sometimes include interviews of students at school and may occur without advance notice. When it is reasonably possible, the school will seek to notify the parents that their child has been asked to participate in a child protective investigation. The school may also request the presence of a school staff member during investigative interviews on school property. However, please note that, under Florida law, DCF and local law enforcement have the discretion to conduct unannounced interviews and to disallow school staff member's presence during these interviews.

III. Community Service Activities

Community service activities are not school activities and **St. Agatha School** does not mandate or direct any specific location or locations in the community where these services are to be performed. Students are free to select the location where they wish to perform community service so long as the location and the activity meet the requirements of the school. **St. Agatha School** does not operate or control the locations where students choose to perform community service and consequently the school, its agents, and affiliates do not assume responsibility for any injuries, damages, or losses incurred in the course of performing these services in the community. Students perform these services at their own risk.

IV. Conduct

Students and Parents are expected to behave consistent with the mission, philosophy and spirit of the school and the moral teachings of the Catholic faith as determined by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Miami. Because the school cannot anticipate all conduct that violates this policy, it reserves the right to take any form of (1) student disciplinary action, including administrative withdrawal, and/or (2) restrictions against any behavior that violates this policy, even if not specifically stated in this handbook.

V. COVID-19 and Related Items

Attendance at school and participation in school activities poses some risks including the transmission of COVID-19 and exposure to related variants. Although the school has taken various measures to reduce the risks of transmission, the possibility of infection from COVID-19 or other communicable diseases is nonetheless present. Parents expressly assume such risks by allowing their children to attend school and participate in school activities and/or by coming onto the school campus and attending school activities themselves.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or any other circumstances which in the judgment of the school administration make it unfeasible, unsafe or otherwise imprudent to continue



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campus- based education, school educational programs shall resume as soon as practical by way of distance learning and/or other methods. There will be no suspension, reduction, or refund of tuition in these circumstances.

VI. Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood-altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs by any student on school property or while attending or participating in any school-sponsored activity or at any time the student is wearing a school uniform is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include administrative withdrawal from the school, even for a first offense.

Any student selling drugs on school property or at school functions may result in a disciplinary response, up to and including administrative withdrawal.

The school is committed to a drug-free environment. This commitment may, under some circumstances, prompt a need for testing of students for evidence of substance abuse. It may also involve the use of drug dogs and other methods in the discretion of the school administration which seek to deter the use and/or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol.

If a student exhibits the symptoms, or is suspected of substance abuse, the school may require that the student undergo substance abuse testing at the parents' expense. If the results of the test suggest abuse (and the substance was not used on or brought to campus or a school-related activity), the school will normally use this information to help the student seek assistance. Refusal to participate in such a test may result in administrative withdrawal from the school.

At times, the school may choose to conduct random drug testing of the student body at the parents' expense.

A school may conduct random searches as set forth in this handbook.

VII. Electronic Acknowledgments

Periodically, the school may require that parents or guardians make electronic acknowledgments confirming the receipt and/or acceptance of various policies, procedures, notices, releases or updates. Any time a parent/guardian makes an electronic acknowledgment by clicking "submit" or "accept" on an electronic document, that individual is agreeing that he/she has read, understood, and agrees to be bound by the contents of the electronic document. Electronic acknowledgments and signatures are valid and binding and may serve as consent to the contents of any electronic communication. Parents and guardians are responsible for reviewing the contents of any electronic document prior to making any electronic acknowledgments. In addition, **Parents/Guardians, by executing the acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY AGREE** to receive and be bound by electronic acknowledgments.



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VIII. Financial Obligations

The satisfaction of all financial obligations to the school, including tuition and fees, constitutes a material condition for continued enrollment in the school. The school may disallow students from taking quarterly, semester, or final examinations if the parents or legal guardians fail to meet any financial obligation to the school. In addition, the school may withhold the issuance of transcripts or any other student records and/or disallow participation in or access to school activities, and/or administratively withdraw the student if any financial obligations are not met.

IX. Fundraising

No student or family member may solicit funds in the school's name unless such solicitation has been authorized in writing by the principal.

X. Harassment and Discrimination

The school is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of a person's protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status. All employees, faculty members and students are protected under this policy. In addition, this policy applies to all conduct occurring on school grounds, at assignments outside the school, or at school-sponsored events. All students are responsible for helping to assure that any harassment or discrimination is reported. If a student witnesses or learns of any conduct that violates this policy, the student must immediately report the incident to his/her principal. If, however, the principal is the individual who is believed to have engaged in the inappropriate conduct, the student should notify the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Miami. If an investigation reveals that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school will take corrective action based on the circumstances.

XI. Immunizations

The Archdiocese of Miami requires that, prior to attendance in school, each student present or have on file with the school a certificate of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health. A Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH 680) completed by a health care provider participating in Florida Shots is required to document the administration of prescribed immunization doses or to document a permanent or temporary exemption therefrom. An exemption from immunization requirements is permissible only with a physician's certification as to the need for either a temporary or permanent medical exemption. An exemption from immunization requirements is not permissible for religious, philosophical, personal, or other reasons.



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XII. Introduction to Handbook

An interesting and challenging experience awaits you as a student or parent of **St. Agatha School**. To answer some of your questions concerning the school's policies, the school has prepared this Parent-Student Handbook. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. The policies stated in this handbook are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school, as are all other policies, procedures, or programs of the school. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in policy. However, the school has the right to add, delete or revise any school policy or procedure with or without notice. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, and none of the policies or provisions should be construed as such. If you have any questions about the school's policies, please ask the principal for assistance.

XIII. Medication Guidelines

Except as authorized by the school, students are not permitted to carry or distribute any prescription or non-prescription drugs or treatments, including aspirin, on the school grounds or at any school function. The administering of medicine to a student outside the doctor's office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should only be delegated to school personnel when necessary and authorized by the school. Parents should ask their physicians if it is possible to prescribe medication so it can be administered at home. Only when necessary will the school allow the administration of medication on campus, and only under the following guidelines:

1. An authorization form must be completed and submitted by a parent or legal guardian of the student. The name of the medication and dosage should be indicated on the form.
2. Medications to be dispensed at school should be labeled with the child's name and the exact dosage. The name and telephone number of the physician should also be on the label.
3. While the school may monitor a student taking the medication, the school will not remind students to come and take their medication.

Exceptions to this policy may be made for the use, supply and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection (EpiPen), or as otherwise authorized in writing by the school. In particular circumstances, the school may agree to administer medication or otherwise provide health care interventions that go beyond a minor adjustment for a particular student. In those cases, Parents hereby release the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of those health care interventions that are beyond minor adjustments.



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XIV. Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should complete the Request for Release of Student Records and submit it to the School principal (or appropriate school official) identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:



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Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

XV. Open Admission Policy

The school has an open admission policy. No person, on the grounds of race, color, disability or national origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in the receiving of services. Nor does the school discriminate in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, gender, or national origin.

XVI. Parental Cooperation

The school views the education of a student as a partnership between the parents and the school. Parents and students are expected to comply with the school rules and policies, and to accept and support the authority of school officials, whether it be at school events, on or off school campus, or on social media or other public forum. Just as a parent can withdraw a child from the school if desired, the school has the right to administratively withdraw a student if it determines at its discretion that the parent or student partnership with the school is irretrievably broken.

XVII. Participation in School Athletics or Organizations

The school recognizes the following sports, activities and clubs:

1. School Clubs: organized by school employee/moderator
2. Major School Activities: organized by school employee/moderator
3. Dances: organized by school employee/moderator
4. Athletics: team sports organized by Athletic Director and official school coach/moderator

Parents acknowledge that participation in these sports, activities, or clubs may be inherently dangerous and, the school cannot ensure the safety of all students involved in its activities and programs.

Prior to participation in any sport, each student must complete the Parent Consent and Release of Liability form and a physician's certificate to the effect that the student is physically fit for participation



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in the sport. Participation includes pre-season conditioning, open gym, tryouts and practice. **Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to participation in any sports, leagues, clubs, activities, or volunteer service-hour programs.**

The school is not responsible for student participation in any sports, leagues, activities, or clubs not identified above. Parents hereby acknowledge that students who participate in any such program or activity do so at their own risk. Parents further acknowledge that the school does not control or sanction any such program or activity and that it shall not be held liable for any injuries or damages sustained by students or others arising from participation in such program or activities.

For purposes of this handbook, a club is defined as a group of individuals dedicated to a particular interest or activity and a league is defined as a group of teams or individuals participating in an athletic activity.

XIII. Private Tutoring, Coaching or Lessons

Except as specifically noted in this Handbook, the school does not sponsor, oversee, or otherwise provide private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services. Parents who engage school staff members for the provision of these services do so at their own risk and expense and are hereby advised that such services are outside the scope of the staff member's employment with the school. **Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services, regardless of where they may occur.**

XIX. Public Display of Affection

The Catholic school promotes friendship, charity, kindness, love and respect for self and others. However, student inappropriate displays of affection, such as kissing or embracing which connote more than simple friendship, are not permitted in school, at school dances, or at any school event. Those who violate these rules may be subject to disciplinary measures, including detention, suspension or administrative withdrawal. The administration reserves the right to determine what is, or is not, appropriate behavior in a Catholic school.

XX. School-Sponsored Events

The school does not sponsor, oversee, or in any way control parties or social functions at private residences. School-sanctioned events, including all field trips, excursions, or parties, are specifically



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identified in this Handbook or are identified in the school calendar and/or written notices generated and distributed by the school.

Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to attendance at parties or social functions at private residences or from participation/attendance at events not identified in the school calendar or in written notices from the school, including field trips, excursions, or parties.

Students engaged in conduct that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the school may be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a school-sponsored function.

XXI. Search and Seizure Policy

The principal and his/her designee has access to any lockers, handbags, electronic devices, cell phones, book bags, desks, cars or any other object that is brought onto the campus of the school or any school-sponsored event, and may remove or confiscate any object which is illegal or contrary to school policy.

XXII. Section 504 – Policy Statement

St. Agatha School complies with the mandate of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in certain programs and activities. Pursuant to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, **St. Agatha School** will make those minor adjustments that can accommodate students with disabilities to the school's educational programs and activities.

The school's designated 504 Coordinator and contact information are as follows: Brenda Cummings, (305)762-1268. Parents with questions regarding the school's disability accommodations or related items should contact the 504 Coordinator. Parents may file a grievance as to any decisions related to a disability accommodation and request an internal hearing and review by sending a written notice addressed as follows:

Jim Rigg
Archdiocese of Miami
Superintendent of Schools
9401 Biscayne Blvd
Miami Shores, FL 33138

The internal hearing and review will seek the prompt and equitable resolution of disability discrimination complaints.



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XXIII. Sexting

The electronic transmission or receipt from one minor to another of any photograph or video that depicts nudity may constitute illegal sexting. Students engaged in sexting will be subject to serious disciplinary consequences which may include administrative withdrawal from school. In addition, the school administration may report instances of sexting to the Florida Department of Children and Families or local law enforcement for appropriate investigation as to violations of law. The electronic transmission of sexually explicit language by a student may also constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

XXIV. Smoking/Vaping

It is a violation of Florida law for any minor to knowingly possess any tobacco product, nicotine product, or nicotine dispensing device. In addition, the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and vaping carry known health risks that can be very serious. The use of any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and/or vaping in any form is prohibited on school property and at any school events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences which may include administrative withdrawal from school. __

XXV. Technology Use

The school may provide its administrators, faculty and students with access to technological devices (e.g. computers, tablets, etc.) various information technology resources including email and Internet access in order to enhance the teaching and learning environment of the school and to improve the school's operations. Students must use these resources in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the school and Catholic teachings. Therefore, students must abide by the following general rules of conduct:

1. Respect and protect the privacy of others:
 - a. Use only assigned accounts and passwords;
 - b. Do not share assigned accounts or passwords with others;
 - c. Do not view, use or copy passwords, data or networks to which you are not authorized;
 - d. Do not share or distribute private information about yourself or others.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources:
 - a. Observe all network security practices;
 - b. Report security risks or violations to the school principal;
 - c. Do not vandalize, destroy or damage data, networks, hardware, computer systems or other resources;
 - d. Do not disrupt the operation of the network or create or place a virus on the network;



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- e. Conserve and protect these resources for other students and Internet users.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others:
 - a. Do not infringe on copyright laws including downloading or copying music, games or movies;
 - b. Do not install unlicensed or unapproved software;
 - c. Do not plagiarize.
4. Respect the principles of the Catholic school:
 - a. Use only in ways that are kind and respectful;
 - b. Report threatening or discomforting materials to the school principal;
 - c. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that violate the school's code of conduct (such as indecent, threatening, rude, discriminatory or harassing materials or messages);
 - d. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that are illegal (such as obscene, stolen, or illegally copied materials or messages);
 - e. Do not use the resources to further any other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct;
 - f. Do not use the resources for non-educational purposes such as visiting chat rooms, social websites or networks;
 - g. Do not send spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings;
 - h. Do not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business or political campaigning without prior written approval from the school's principal.
 - i. Do not engage in any form of cyberbullying.

Supervision and Monitoring

The school and its authorized personnel may monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. The school reserves the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks or on any technological devices used by students on campus in order to further any administrative concern. It may also use this information in disciplinary actions and may furnish evidence of a crime to law enforcement.

Unacceptable Use of Outside Technology

The school expects students to use information technology and social media (including, but not limited to, the Internet, email, instant messaging and text messaging) in a responsible and ethical fashion



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in compliance with all applicable laws and with Christian moral principles, both in and out of the school setting. Accordingly, students may not post, place, upload, share, or communicate any images, photographs, statements or inferences relating to or including profanity, vulgarity, indecency, illegal use of drugs, illegal use of alcohol or other illegal or illicit activities. Additionally, students may not use information technology for the purpose of defaming, threatening, teasing or harassing any other student, staff member, parent, faculty member, or other person. This includes, but is not limited to, texting and communications on social networks. In addition, this rule applies to communications both during the school year and while students are on vacation or summer breaks. Students are responsible for all materials and communications made on personal websites and on social media, and the materials and communications should be consistent with Christian moral principles, including any materials or communications posted on their sites by other individuals. Moreover, any unauthorized use of the school's name (or common names associated with the school) or any likeness or image of the school or its employees or agents is strictly prohibited.

Consent

Many technological devices used at school have the capacity to generate audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, and other similar reproductions of images, likenesses, and/or sounds. The use of any such recordings and reproductions is governed by school policy. Parental/guardian execution of this Handbook constitutes an express consent and waiver as to any such recordings and reproductions incidental to the use of any technological devices on school property or at school events.

Consequences for Violations

A violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privilege to use the school's information technology resources and any additional consequences at the principal's discretion including administrative withdrawal.

XXVI. Testifying in Divorce or Custody Proceedings

The Catholic Church recognizes marriage as a Sacrament. In the Union of Christian spouses, the sacrament of Matrimony celebrates the relationship of Christ to the Church. Therefore, the school strongly supports the sacrament of matrimony as the foundation of family life and of the domestic Church. In recognition of the importance of the matrimonial sacrament to the Catholic faith, parents agree not to compel the attendance, testimony, or deposition of any school or church employee in any divorce, custody, or other legal proceedings which may in any way involve the dissolution of marriage or the determination of parental/custody rights.

In the event that a parent or legal guardian breaches this policy, any school or church personnel who are required to attend legal proceedings may be represented by an attorney. In addition, any and all legal fees and costs incurred by the school will be charged and become the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.



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XXVII. Text Messaging/Telephone Calls

The school may use text messages and automated telephone calls to alert parents/guardians of important information related to the school's mission, operations, and activities. Parents/guardians acknowledge and consent to the receipt of these messages when providing their telephone numbers.

XXVIII. Threats of Violence

The disciplinary consequences for a student whose verbal or written comments, including email messages, that threaten serious bodily harm to another student or member of the faculty or staff or destruction of property, may include, but not be limited to:

1. Immediate suspension from the school;
2. Treatment or consultation by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the parents' expense and/or by the school counselor, both of whom may be asked to submit a written evaluation. If it is determined that the child was serious about the threat and has the capacity to carry it out, the child may be administratively withdrawn from the school. If it is determined that the child did not seriously intend to do harm to others, the child may be allowed to return to the school, at the discretion of the school principal.
3. If allowed to return to school, the child may be placed on probation with an indication that, should a similar threat occur, the child will be administratively withdrawn from school;
4. The school should inform the Office of Catholic Schools of these cases. The school may submit an informational report to the police.

XXIX. Transportation Arrangements

Parents hereby acknowledge and agree that the school does not provide or arrange for student transportation to or from school, except as specifically set forth in writing by the school. Student transportation to and from school each day is a parental responsibility. The school does not authorize or endorse any private transportation arrangements. In limited and documented circumstances, a parent may engage a commercial transportation company to transport a student from school; however, any such engagement requires the written authorization of the school and the execution of school documents allowing for such an arrangement.

XXX. Undocumented Students

A student's enrollment and/or graduation from school does not confer a legal status nor does it serve to regularize an undocumented student. Although the Archdiocese of Miami may assist with the completion of an I-20 form, the school does not guarantee or confer any privileges or rights available to



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documented legal residents. Parents should consult with immigration legal counsel if they have any questions as to immigration status.

XXXI. Use of Photos

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school or Archdiocesan publication including but not limited to print publications, videos, or websites including Facebook, Twitter and other social media websites. Any parent who does not want his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year. **By executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, Parents HEREBY CONSENT, authorize and grant permission to the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their agents, employees or duly authorized representatives to photograph or videotape students and parents and CONSENT to their publication for any purpose deemed proper by the school, including but not limited to, use on the internet.**

Additionally, Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student or parent photos.

XXXII. Weapons Policy

Weapons are not permitted anywhere on school grounds or at any school activity. Any student who brings a weapon to any school activity, who is in possession of a weapon, or who threatens others with a weapon may be administratively withdrawn from the school. Any item used to threaten or cause bodily harm may be considered a weapon. In particular, the possession of any instruments or objects that can be used to inflict serious harm on another person or that can place a person in reasonable fear of serious harm will be considered weapons. Included in this category are BB guns, Airsoft guns, and toy or replica guns represented as real guns. Also included in this category is the possession or storage of items which are prohibited at school, including but not limited to ammunition clips, bullets or cartridges, flammable liquids, combustible materials, poisonous substances, mace, pepper spray, and any other items which may result in injury.