



# PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

St. Peter's Catholic School  
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# Introductory Material

## Foreword

The information found in this handbook is presented as guidance for members of the St. Peter's Catholic School community. We realize that no handbook can be all-inclusive; therefore, the administration reserves the right to adjust and adapt policies based on the needs of the school.

It is the administration's expectation that all students, parents/guardians, faculty, and staff will familiarize themselves with these policies. By enrolling a child at St. Peter's Catholic School, parents and guardians acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agreed to respectfully abide by the policies, procedures, and expectations set forth in this Parent-Student Handbook as necessary. Parents and guardians agree to support the mission, values, and educational directives of St. Peter's Catholic School and the Diocese of Charleston.

***HANDBOOK IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE***

## Mission, Vision, and Belief Statements

### Mission Statement

Children throughout the Midlands will have access to an education anchored in the Catholic faith and traditions that prepares students for life-long learning and discipleship.

### Vision Statement

St. Peter's Catholic School, a ministry of the Basilica of St. Peter since 1852, offers Early Childhood 2's (hereafter referred to as EC2) through 6th grade students an academically challenging education in a safe, nurturing and globally diverse environment that prepares students for a life of faith, virtue, and excellence.

### Belief Statements

1. We believe that the mission of Saint Peter's Catholic School, a ministry of the Basilica of St. Peter, is to provide to EC2 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students of the South Carolina Midlands an education that is academically excellent, SACS accredited, and anchored in the Catholic faith and traditions.
2. We believe that education is a lifelong process, and we are dedicated to providing students with a strong academic foundation delivered in a manner that inspires their intrinsic desire to learn.

3. We believe it is our responsibility to recognize and encourage the development of each child's unique talents and abilities.
4. We believe that rigorous academic and personal expectations will increase individual student performance.
5. We believe that students learn in different ways and must be provided with a variety of instructional approaches that support their learning.
6. We believe that positive self-esteem enhances learning by engendering success. Therefore, we are committed to creating an environment of success based on trust and mutual respect among students, staff, teachers, administration, and parents.
7. We believe that a safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
8. We believe that education, self-knowledge, and spiritual well-being are the keys to becoming a useful citizen of the world.
9. We believe that participation in daily prayer, weekly Mass and the Sacraments is essential to the knowledge and growth of our Catholic faith.
10. We believe that our goal, as a community, is to become Disciples of Christ.
11. We believe that children of all faiths and races are welcome to learn, grow and achieve academically and spiritually as valued members of our community in Christ.

### Diocese of Charleston Elementary Schools Statement of Common Belief

The elementary schools of the Diocese of Charleston offer learning communities that are formed by the Catholic faith and deeply rooted in an appreciation for the dignity of the human person as "created in the image and likeness of God". This foundational belief informs the schools' missions, visions, and approaches.

"Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of existence a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life," Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2270-2275

Based upon this belief, the elementary schools of the Diocese of Charleston are led to be fully welcoming communities. They welcome families of diverse backgrounds who seek a Catholic education for their children. They value all students, acknowledge their unique gifts, and believe diversity and inclusion are blessings that enrich their communities. Their missions direct them to help students rise above cultural insensitivity and to teach them to treat all men and women, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or political background, with the utmost respect and dignity that every child of God deserves. Each empowers and encourages students to act for

justice and to become Christ-like leaders filled with empathy and respect for all -- both within their own schools as well as within the greater global society.

“Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the fourfold purpose of Christian education, namely to provide an atmosphere in which the Gospel message is proclaimed, community in Christ is experienced, service to our sisters and brothers is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of our God is cultivated” (US Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005).

It is the policy of the Catholic Diocese of Charleston that any issue or problem be addressed at the original point of origin. If a problem should arise that involves the teacher, then parents are advised to first address the problem with that teacher. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, then parents are welcome to present the situation to the Director of Parent Support.

## General School Information

### Administrative Authority

**Fr. Gary Linsky**

Rector, The Basilica of St. Peter

**Mrs. Kylie Skotniski**

Principal

**Mrs. Rachel Grant**

Assistant Principal

**Mrs. Joyce Buckingham**

Director of Early Childhood

**Mrs. Leslie Paretti**

Director of Admissions & New Parent Support

**Mrs. Kelli McAleenan**

Director of Finance and Business Operations

### School Overview and History

St. Peter’s Catholic School was established in 1852 by members of St. Peter’s Catholic Church—founded in 1829 by Irish immigrants who had settled in Columbia in search of employment. Motivated by a desire to nurture their children in the Catholic faith, these early parishioners laid the foundation for what would become the longest continuously operating Catholic elementary school in South Carolina. Today, it stands as the longest continuously operating Catholic elementary school in the state of South Carolina. From its beginning to the present day, St. Peter’s Catholic School has served as the largest ministry of the Basilica of St. Peter, offering an academically challenging education in a safe, nurturing, and globally diverse environment. Rooted in the Catholic tradition, the school continues to prepare its students for lives of faith, virtue, and excellence.

## Accreditation and Affiliations

St. Peter's Catholic School is fully accredited by Cognia and operates under the Office of Catholic Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston.

## Admissions and Enrollment

St. Peter's Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin. Preference is given to Catholic families who are active parish members. All students must meet age and academic readiness requirements and submit required documentation and fees.

As a private Catholic institution, St. Peter's Catholic School conducts a thorough admissions process to ensure alignment with the mission and values of our school. We reserve the right to deny any application should we determine that the child or family is not a suitable fit for our school community.

SC State law dictates that students entering the Early Childhood 2 program must be two (2) years of age on or before September 1. SC State law dictates that students entering the Early Childhood 3 program must be three (3) years of age on or before September 1. Students entering EC3 must be fully potty trained to attend. Students entering the Early Childhood 4 program must be four (4) years of age on or before September 1. Students entering 5-year-old Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age on or before September 1. First grade students must be six (6) years of age on or before September 1.

The following priorities will be used to accept members to St. Peter's Catholic School:

1. Members of the Basilica of St. Peter's Parish
2. Members of other parishes
3. Non-Catholic students

Students applying for Admission in grades Kindergarten-6 must present a copy of the current report card, standardized test results, any IEP or 504 Plans available, and two teacher recommendation forms from previous/current teachers. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Peter's Catholic School will meet the educational needs of the student. Additionally, students applying for Admission must present a current SCDHEC Immunization Record and Birth Certificate. Students identifying as Catholic are required to submit their baptismal certificate.

All new students are admitted on a 90-day trial basis. This period provides time for teachers, administrators, and parents to determine whether the school is an appropriate and beneficial

placement for the student. During this trial period, the school will assess the student's academic progress, behavioral adjustment, and overall fit within the school environment. A continued partnership beyond this period will be based on the mutual determination that St. Peter's Catholic School is the right setting for the student's success and development.

## Non-Catholic Families

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of St. Peter's Catholic School will be accepted on a space available basis. Non-Catholic students are expected to attend all religious observances and be respectful of Catholic teaching, rituals, and tradition.

## Parishioner Status

Parishioner Status Form for members of the Basilica of St. Peter or a local parish church: We are registered, contributing and active members of the Basilica of St. Peter or a local Catholic Church. We have been parishioners "in good standing" for a minimum of six months, our student/s have been baptized in the Catholic church and we have provided our student/s baptismal certificates to the school. We understand that the designated parish may be contacted regarding our status. We understand that if we do not qualify under the parish's requirements that we will be responsible for the non-parishioner rate.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

St. Peter's Catholic School admits students of any race, color, sex, national origin, disability, or age. Applicants must follow all policies and procedures regarding school-based entrance requirements, health examinations, and immunizations before finalizing any admissions.

## Required Documentation

Per Diocesan policy, the following documents must be submitted and kept on file for the duration of the student's attendance:

1. Parish Verification (for parishioners only)
2. Baptismal Certificate required for Catholic students
3. Birth Certificate Copy
4. DSS Form 2900 for students in Early Childhood Programs
5. SC Cumulative School Health Record if applicable
6. SC Certificate of Immunization (DHEC Form 2740)\*
7. Academic Records and testing from prior schools (for transfer students only)

8. Documentation for students with special education, psychological and/or medical needs from doctors provided by parents/guardians
9. Two Teacher Recommendation Forms from previous/current school
10. Any legal documents or custodial agreements ordered by the South Carolina legal system and/or Family Service Agencies

\*Failure to submit a SC DHEC Form 2740 with the box checked for school admission or a SCDHEC Form 2740 with the Medical Exemption Section completed within thirty (30) days of admission may result in suspension of the student until the form is received. Due to changes in DHEC Immunization Regulations, updated forms may also be requested of any student at any time and must be received within thirty (30) days of the request or less if notified of such.

## Notice of Change in Policy

The Diocese of Charleston mandates that all Catholic Schools within the Diocese refuse to accept a Certificate of Religious Exemption for new students to satisfy the requirement of an immunization record for enrollment.

## Policy 3510 Immunization Requirements

*All students in the Diocese of Charleston Catholic schools must be immunized in accordance with the immunization requirements and guidelines of the Diocese of Charleston and the South Carolina Department of Education. Catholic moral teaching urges parents/guardians to immunize their children against infectious diseases given the grave risk of non-vaccination to other children, pregnant women, the elderly, immunocompromised people, and the general population. Exemptions may be provided to those applicants with a physician-documented medical reason why said immunization is a serious threat to the health of the applicant.*

## Custodial Rights and Legal Documents

St. Peter's Catholic School requires up-to-date copies of any legal documents pertaining to:

- Custody or guardianship
- Restraining orders
- Other court-ordered arrangements

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure these documents are submitted and kept current.

## Buckley Amendment

St. Peter's Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in permanent records. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address.

Be advised that if a teacher, staff member, or principal is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will need to pay the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, parking, food, etc.).

## Child Protection Policies and Procedures

All diocesan schools shall adhere to the Diocese of Charleston Policy, Code of Conduct and Ministerial Standards for Church Personnel and the procedures and guidelines from the Catholic Schools Office and the Office of Child and Youth Protection Services.

As directed by South Carolina General Statute, school personnel who have cause to suspect child abuse or neglect have a legal responsibility and moral obligation to report such cases to the principal who, in turn, reports to Child Protection Services of the Department of Social Services in the county where the student resides or is found.

In such situations, a caseworker may need to interview the child without specific parental/guardian consent.

## Returning Students

Each January, currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to re-enroll for the following school year. A re-enrollment email will be sent to you to complete and return by the deadline to guarantee a spot for the next school year. The family's financial account must be current in order for the student to return to St. Peter's for the upcoming academic school year.

## Special Needs

Parents must submit documentation from certified medical professionals for any conditions that require special services, accommodations, and/or consideration. If the school can meet the child's needs, the school administration and guidance staff will develop a Student Assistance

Plan (SAP) that will offer reasonable yet specific classroom accommodations for students and will work closely with the classroom teacher to monitor and assist teachers in making sure these provisions are being successfully implemented in the classroom. For special services that are not offered at St. Peter's parents are asked to contact the SC State Department of Education and/or the local public-school district for guidelines regarding services available through the local school district.

## Staffing Ratios

Students shall always be supervised by St. Peter's Faculty and/or Staff following SC DSS Staffing Ratios. A written account for students in the Early Childhood Programs will be maintained by the Lead Teacher or designee. This account will track a student's movements on the premises during program hours. All students will be tracked as they enter and/or exit the school and as they move about the building using face to name recognition.

## Class Placement Policy

Class placement decisions are made solely at the discretion of the school administration. Parents may not request specific teachers for their child(ren). Administration considers a variety of factors - including academic needs, social dynamics, and teacher recommendations- when determining class assignments. These decisions are final and are made with the best interest of all students in mind.

## Transfer and Withdrawal

Notice of transfer or withdrawal of a student is to be made in writing by the parent or guardian to the Director of Admissions and Parent Support no later than two (2) weeks before the withdrawal date. The school requires a withdrawal form to be completed on the student's last day of attendance. This will enable the teacher to secure grades and the parent/guardian to settle accounts. Records will be sent directly to the transfer school. A student withdrawing from St. Peter's in the first semester must pay for the entire first semester. A student withdrawing during the second semester is bound to pay the entire years' tuition.

***All financial obligations must be paid upon student departure.***

## Request to Withdraw Disclaimer

We believe that the education of students at St. Peter's constitutes a partnership between the school and parents/guardians. Just as the parent/guardian has the right to withdraw a child from school, the school administration also reserves the right to require student withdrawal if the administration determines that the school/parent partnership is irrevocably broken.

# Tuition Management

## Tuition and Fees

### Tuition Payment Options

Tuition is collected monthly on either the 5th or 20th of the month by automatic withdrawal through the FACTS Tuition Management System. Payments may be drafted from a checking, savings, or money market account. Tuition may be spread over a 12-month period beginning in July and ending in June. Families may also choose to:

- Pay in full via check or cash directly to St. Peter's School
- Pay monthly or annually using a credit card through FACTS

All tuition, student fees, and incidental charges must be paid through the FACTS Tuition Management System. Failure to pay tuition may result in suspension of the student until the account is made current.

### Discounts

A 3% discount is available for tuition paid in full by:

- Mid-July with a date determined annually by the Director of Finance (for returning students)
- Time of enrollment (for new students)

This discount does NOT apply if the student receives other financial assistance or scholarships.

### FACTS Fees

FACTS charges the following non-refundable fees:

- \$20 set up fee for accounts paid in full by the deadline
- \$50 set up fee for accounts set up for monthly drafts
- \$10 returning family fee for Parents Portal access
- \$20 new family fee for Parents Portal access
- Additional fees apply when applying for financial assistance

Returned checks will incur a \$35 fee. FACTS may charge an additional return fee.

### Delinquent Accounts

Families are expected to remain current with tuition and fee payments. Accounts more than 30 days past due may result in:

- Suspension of student until account is made current
- Withholding of student records
- Denial of re-enrollment

Please contact the Director of Finance with any questions regarding your account.

## Tuition Rates and Parishioner Discounts

Tuition is established annually by the School Advisory Council and approved by the Pastor.

Families who are registered parishioners “in good standing” with the Basilica of St. Peter or another local Catholic parish may qualify for a parishioner tuition rate. A parishioner “in good standing”:

- Is registered at the parish and provides documentation from the pastor
- Attends Sunday Mass weekly with their child
- Makes regular, identifiable financial contributions to the church
- Participates in the ministries of the Church

To receive the parishioner discount, a baptismal certificate is required for any student listed as Catholic. Failure to submit the certificate may result in the loss of the parishioner designation and discount.

## Non-Refundable Student Fees

A **\$275 Registration Fee** is due upon re-enrollment for returning students and at the time of enrollment for new students.

An additional **\$400 in student fees** for students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 is paid in equal monthly installments throughout the school year.

All student fees are **non-refundable**.

## Tuition Assistance and Financial Aid

St. Peter’s Catholic School acknowledges the financial sacrifice many families make to provide a Catholic education and offers limited tuition assistance based on demonstrated need.

Applicants are reviewed confidentially and awarded based on demonstrated need.

### **To apply:**

- Complete the Tuition Assistance Application through FACTS/RenWeb during registration or re-registration
- Pay a modest application fee

- Participate in a required meeting with a school representative
- Sign a Letter of Understanding prior to receiving any funds

Funds are awarded in late spring and applied to the following school year's financial account. Assistance does not roll over and must be reapplied for each academic year. The awarded amount may differ from year to year. Unused funds are retained by the school for future aid purposes. Families are required to participate in a meeting with a school representative and sign a letter of understanding prior to receiving funds.

## Withdrawal and Refund Policy

- Families may withdraw prior to July 1 without a tuition cancellation penalty.
- After July 1, all registration and student fees are non-refundable regardless of withdrawal date.
- If a student is withdrawn or asked to leave, the family remains responsible for prorated tuition, as determined by the pastor and principal.
- Tuition refunds are prorated by quarter only.

All withdrawals must be submitted in writing.

## Academic Policies

### Curriculum Overview

St. Peter's Catholic School provides a rigorous academic program grounded in the classical tradition and aligned with Diocesan standards. Students receive instruction in the areas of Religion, Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Spanish, Art, Music, and Physical Education. Teachers follow Diocesan, State and National Curriculum standards.

### Grading

Students in 1st through 6th grade receive letter grades in academic subject areas. Grades "E"-Excellent, "S"-Satisfactory, "N"-Needs Improvement, or "U"-Unsatisfactory are assigned for special area subjects.

Please note that participation at two music performances is required for all students. Students who do not participate may not receive a grade higher than an "S"

Letter grades correlate to the following numerical scale:

98-100 A+	80-82 C+
95-97 A	77-79 C
92-94 A-	74-76 C-
89-91 B+	70-73 D
86-88 B	69 and below F
83-85 B-	

## Homework Policy

Homework reinforces classroom learning and teaches responsibility. The amount of homework will vary by grade level. Parents are encouraged to provide an environment conducive to study and to support their child's efforts without completing the work for them.

The following is a recommendation for the average amount of time students should spend doing homework based on grade level:

EC2, EC3, EC4, K5	15 minutes of nightly reading
Grades 1 and 2	15-30 minutes, plus 15 minutes of reading
Grades 3 and 4	30-45 minutes, plus 20 minutes of reading
Grades 5 and 6	45-60 minutes, plus 30 minutes of reading

If your child consistently needs more time than the above guidelines, please notify your child's teacher.

Homework will not be assigned on any school activity night. Homework is not assigned on weekends apart from long-term projects or extended assignments, or make-up work due to absence. If a student is ill or absent, parents/guardians may request homework assignments. Upon return the student's teacher will work with the student if any additional make-up work is necessary. Adequate time will be given for completion of missed assignments.

Homework is posted in each classroom and students in grades 2 through 6 are given time each day to copy their assignments in their student planners. Students learn personal responsibility by being held accountable for recording all assignments and for returning all homework materials and textbooks to school the following day. Teachers will check and review homework and give timely feedback to students and parents.

## Report Cards and Conferences

Report Cards will be issued every nine weeks. Progress reports will be sent home at the end of the first four and one-half weeks. Progress reports will be sent at the four and one-half week point for the remaining marking periods.

The first nine-week report card will be given to parents on the day of conferences. Students will not attend school on that day to allow teachers to meet with all parents. Appointments must be made for these conferences. You will be contacted by your child's teacher to schedule a conference. Please do not phone teachers directly to schedule conference times. Please check with your child's teacher about their preference regarding students attending conferences.

Either the teacher or the parents may request additional conferences at any time. Parents requesting conferences should contact the teacher. Due to additional responsibilities and time constraints of teachers, conference scheduling is required.

For students in the Early Childhood 2, 3 and 4 Program as well as students in Kindergarten 5 teachers will use a developmental checklist format rather than the standard Diocesan report card.

Please consult the school calendar for distribution dates for all progress reports and report card distribution dates.

## Honor Roll

End of Quarter Honor Rolls will be issued at the close of each Semester for grades 3 through 6 ONLY:

- [A] Honor Roll – Grades of A- and above in a marking period; S or E in Special Areas
- [A/B] Honor Roll – Grades of B- and above in a marking period; S or E in Special Areas

## Angel Pin

The purpose of the "Angel Pin" is to give greater emphasis to academic achievement and/or academic improvement, hard work and determination. The pin will be awarded to students in grades 3 through 6 at the completion of the first and second semesters.

### Criteria

1. Limited to students in grades 3 through 6.
2. Academic improvement based on an increase of one letter grade in at least one subject while maintaining grades in all other subjects and not failing any subject.
3. All Special Area grades must be an "E" or an "S".

## St. Peter's Keys of Success

Students in grades 3 through 6 who exhibit Academic Excellence, self-discipline, consideration of and service to others, respectfulness, honesty, and a high regard for Christian values may be awarded a St. Peter's Key. The St. Peter's Key is presented at the completion of the first and second semesters.

## Religious Education

All students, regardless of faith, are required to take religion classes, attend liturgies, and respectfully participate in other required religious activities.

## Assessment of Religious Knowledge (ARK) Testing

The Diocese of Charleston currently utilizes the Assessment of Religious Knowledge (ARK) test in the subject area of religion. ARK is to be administered annually to all students in grades 2-11 in all diocesan schools within the window defined by the Schools Office. School administrators and teachers will have access to relevant results and data via the ARK dashboard.

## Summer Reading

Summer reading is a requirement of the academic program. Summer reading lists and assignments are distributed prior to summer break for returning students and are included in the Back-to-School Packets distributed in July.

## Technology

Technology instruction is integrated into the curriculum to enhance math, writing, and research skills.

## Promotion and Retention

Students are promoted when they have successfully completed the Diocesan requirements for their grade level. St. Peter's considers the following benchmarks when considering retention:

- Inadequate completion of grade level work
- Report card grades in two or more subjects for more than two quarters
- Demonstration of social, emotional, or physical immaturity not compatible with grade level peers
- Attendance

## Standardized Testing

In accordance with Diocesan policy, the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) Test is administered to students in grades Kindergarten 5 through grade 6. MAP Testing will take place 3 times over the course of the school year. MAP Testing is used to measure a student's progress or growth in school. Teachers use student scores to differentiate their classroom instruction in an effort to meet the needs of all students. Copies of test results will be distributed, and parents will be informed of how to interpret their child's test results.

## Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is essential. Cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty in any form will result in disciplinary action and may affect academic standing.

# Student and Parent Conduct

## Code of Conduct

St. Peter's students are expected to demonstrate respect, reverence, and responsibility at all times. Christian behavior is expected on campus, in church, and during all school-sponsored activities.

## Lost and Found

Lost and found is located on a clothing rack in the hallway near the elevator. Items not collected at the close of the school year become the property of the school.

## Uniforms

Students in all grades wear uniforms at St. Peter's. Uniforms may be purchased online or by phone from:

Lands' End School Uniforms

(800) 469-2222

[www.LandsEnd.com](http://www.LandsEnd.com)

To order uniforms online, go to [www.StPetersCatholicSchool.org](http://www.StPetersCatholicSchool.org) and click on School Resources then Uniforms and then the Lands' End link. St. Peter's School Land's End Preferred School Number is 900047911.

## General Uniform Policy

Students are expected to be neat, clean, and well-groomed at all times while on campus.

Uniforms must be:

- Clean and free of stains
- Worn neatly, with shirts tucked in at all times

## Jewelry Guidelines

- Girls may wear small post-style pierced earrings
- Boys may not wear earrings of any kind
- Modest religious jewelry (e.g., small cross or holy medal on a thin chain) is allowed at the discretion of administration
- All other jewelry (e.g., bracelets, large necklaces, decorative accessories) is not permitted.

## Hairstyle expectations

- Must be traditional, conservative, and allow for clear vision
- Hair must be natural color
- Boys' hair must be cut above the ears and not touch the collar

## Make Up Policy

- Students are not permitted to wear makeup to school.

## Nail Polish Guidelines

- Students may wear nude or natural-colored nail polish. Painted nails for special occasions must receive prior approval from the Administration, and approval is granted at the discretion of the Administration.

Visible tattoos are not allowed for any student

## Boys Uniform

**Mass Uniform** *Every Wednesday & additional dates as announced*

- White or light blue collared Oxford shirt (short or long sleeve) *with* solid navy blue or "Classic Navy Plaid" tie or bowtie
- EC3-2nd: Optional solid navy blue suit coat, solid navy blue sweater, or navy blue quarter zip
- 3rd-6th: Solid navy blue suit coat required
- Navy blue dress slacks (no shorts)
- Navy blue, brown, or black belts must be worn with pants for EC4-6th

- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Dress shoes that are predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound-producing footwear.)

### **Daily Fall/Spring Uniform**

- White or light blue collared polo shirt
- Solid navy blue sweater, navy blue quarter zip, or school sweatshirt
- Navy blue dress shorts or pants
- Navy blue, brown, or black belts must be worn with shorts/pants for EC4-6th grade
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Most types of footwear are acceptable. Athletic/dress shoes should be predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound producing footwear.)

### **PE Fall/Spring Uniform** *Every Friday & additional dates as announced*

- St. Peter's gray t-shirt with logo available from Land's End
- St. Peter's navy blue sweatshirt with logo available from Land's End
- Navy blue athletic shorts
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Athletic shoes as described above

### **Daily Winter Uniform**

- White or light blue collared polo shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Solid navy blue sweater, navy blue quarter zip, or school sweatshirt
- Navy blue dress slacks (no shorts)
- Navy blue, brown, or black belts must be worn with pants for EC4-6th grade
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Most types of footwear are acceptable. Athletic/dress shoes should be
  - predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound producing footwear.)

### **PE Winter Uniform** *Every Friday & additional dates as announced*

- St. Peter's gray t-shirt or navy blue sweatshirt with logo available from Land's End

- Navy blue sweatpants
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Athletic shoes as described above

## Girls Uniform

### **Mass Uniform** *Every Wednesday & additional dates as announced*

- Round collared plain white or light blue button-up blouse (short or long sleeve)
- EC3-2nd: “French Blue Plaid” jumper of modest length
- 3rd-6th: “French Blue Plaid” skirt of modest length
- Solid navy blue sweater, navy blue quarter zip, or solid navy blue sweater vest
- Solid white or navy blue knee/ankle socks or tights (Socks must be above the ankle. NO nylons or leggings.)
- Dress shoes that are predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound-producing footwear.)

### **Daily Fall/Spring Uniform**

- Round collared plain white or light blue polo shirt
- Solid navy blue sweater, navy blue quarter zip, or school sweatshirt
- Navy blue or “French Blue Plaid” skirt or skort of modest length
- Navy blue dress shorts or pants
- Navy blue, brown, or black belts must be worn with shorts/pants for EC4-6th grade
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Most types of footwear are acceptable. Athletic/dress shoes should be
  - predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound-producing footwear.)

### **PE Fall/Spring Uniform** *Every Friday & additional dates as announced*

- St. Peter’s gray t-shirt with logo available from Land’s End
- St. Peter’s navy blue sweatshirt with logo available from Land’s End
- Navy blue athletic shorts or skort
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)

- Athletic shoes as described above

### **Daily Winter Uniform**

- Round collared plain white or light blue polo shirt (short or long sleeves)
- Solid navy blue sweater, navy blue quarter zip, or school sweatshirt
- Navy blue or “French Blue Plaid” skirt or skort of modest length paired with knee-high socks or tights
- Navy blue dress pants
- Navy blue, brown, or black belts must be worn with pants for EC4-6th grade
- Solid white or navy blue knee/ankle socks or tights (Socks must be above the ankle. NO nylons or leggings.)
- Most types of footwear are acceptable. Athletic/dress shoes should be
  - predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound-producing footwear.)

### **PE Winter Uniform** *Every Friday & additional dates as announced*

- St. Peter’s gray t-shirt or navy blue sweatshirt with logo available from Land’s End
- Navy blue sweatpants
- Navy blue skort of modest length (must be paired with knee-high socks or tights)
- Solid white or navy blue knee/ankle socks or tights (NO nylons or leggings.)
- Athletic shoes as described above

### **Summer Uniform**

- Navy blue athletic short or navy blue skort
- Any St. Peter’s t-shirt
- Solid white, black, or navy blue socks (socks must be above the ankle)
- Most types of footwear are acceptable. Athletic/dress shoes should be
  - predominantly white, black, gray, navy, or brown. (NO - boots, sandals, platform shoes, heels, flip flops, clogs, Crocs, Heelies, UGGs, light up, or sound-producing footwear.)

***Uniform Dress Code is subject to change.***

## Bookbags and Supplies

- Students may use a backpack of their choice. Students may not use backpacks with wheels or suitcases as a backpack.
- Supply lists are distributed at the end of each school year and in the Back-to-School Packet. Parents are to purchase school supplies and send them to school during supply drop off or Back to School Night.
- Lost or damaged textbooks and workbooks will be replaced at parents' expense.

## Parents as Partners

Effective communication between home and school is essential. Teachers should be contacted first regarding academic or behavioral concerns. Unresolved issues may be brought to the Director of Parent Support.

As parents in the educational process at St. Peter's Catholic School, we ask parents:

- To set rules, times and limits so that your child:
  - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
  - Is dressed according to the school dress code
  - Completes assignments on time
  - Has a nutritious lunch and snack every day
  - Gets to bed early on school nights
- To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- To notify the school with a written note or email when the student has been absent or tardy;
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic Faith by word and example;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;

- To treat teachers and administration with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems;
- To not post negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration on social media;
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences; PTO Meetings, events and fundraisers.

## Parents Role in Education

St. Peter's Catholic School recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children and values the essential partnership between home and school. Consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church, parents and educators share a common responsibility to foster each student's academic, spiritual, social, emotional, and moral development.

Enrollment at St. Peter's Catholic School signifies a commitment by parents and guardians to support the mission, philosophy, policies, procedures, and educational decisions of the school and its educators and support staff. Parents are expected to maintain a relationship of mutual trust, respect, and cooperation with faculty, staff, administrators, and volunteers.

The school entrusts teachers and administrators with the professional authority and responsibility to make decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, classroom management, student conduct, assessment, placement, and the overall operation of the educational environment. Parents are expected to support these decisions and to address questions or concerns through appropriate school channels in a respectful and constructive manner.

Actions that undermine the authority of school personnel, interfere with the educational process, encourage student disregard for school expectations, or foster division within the school community are inconsistent with the spirit and mission of Catholic education. Parents should refrain from disparaging faculty, staff, administrators, students, or school policies in communications, on social media, or in public forums.

The school reserves the right to determine whether a parent, guardian, or family has failed to support the mission, policies, personnel, or educational objectives of the school. In circumstances where the partnership between home and school has become irreparably impaired, the administration may, at its sole discretion and in accordance with diocesan policy, deny re-enrollment, discontinue enrollment, or take other appropriate action deemed necessary to preserve the integrity of the educational environment and the mission of the school.

By enrolling their child, parents and guardians acknowledge their commitment to work collaboratively with school personnel, to presume goodwill and professional competence, and

to contribute positively to a faith-filled community rooted in respect, trust, and Christian charity.

## Scheduled Meetings and Classroom Access

To protect instructional time, maintain a safe learning environment, and ensure that concerns receive appropriate attention, parents and guardians may not initiate discussions regarding student matters, personnel concerns, disciplinary issues, academic concerns, or school operations during school events, in hallways, at student arrival or dismissal, during carline, or through unscheduled visits to classrooms or offices.

Parents are expected to schedule conferences in advance through the appropriate school personnel and allow reasonable time for a response and meeting arrangement. School employees are not required to engage in impromptu conferences during the school day, at extracurricular events, or while supervising students.

Unannounced requests to meet with teachers, administrators, or staff members may be declined and rescheduled for a later time. Likewise, parents may not enter classrooms, observe instruction, remain in classrooms, or request immediate access to students, teachers, or learning environments without prior authorization from school administration and the appropriate school personnel.

The school reserves the right to limit, postpone, or deny access to classrooms, instructional settings, and school personnel when such access would disrupt the educational process, compromise student privacy, interfere with employee responsibilities, or conflict with school procedures.

Respect for instructional time and established communication protocols is an essential component of the partnership between home and school. Failure to adhere to these expectations may result in restrictions on campus access or other actions deemed appropriate by the administration.

## Communication

Parents may contact the school office by phone to leave a message for classroom teachers during regular school hours; 8:00 am until 3:30 pm. Parents may also contact teachers via school e-mail.

Parents wishing to speak or schedule an appointment with faculty & administration are welcome to phone the school office during business hours; 8:00 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

To ensure concerns are addressed efficiently and by the individual most directly involved, parents and guardians are expected to communicate first with the classroom teacher regarding any academic, behavioral, social, or classroom-related matter involving their child.

Teachers should be afforded the opportunity to address questions, provide clarification, and work collaboratively toward a resolution before parents seek assistance from school administration, parent organizations, or other school personnel. If a concern remains unresolved after communication with the teacher, parents may then follow the school's established chain of communication by contacting the appropriate administrator.

Please allow 48-72 hours for a response from teachers and the administrative team. Timely and respectful communication is appreciated to ensure all concerns are addressed appropriately.

Failure to follow this communication protocol may result in delays in addressing concerns and may impede the school's ability to effectively support students and families.

## Weekly Folders

Each Tuesday, school folders are sent home with important school and classroom information. Parents are responsible for reviewing and signing the contents promptly. Teachers may also have individual procedures for classroom folders that must be followed.

## Platforms

Parents are responsible for keeping up with information sent via weekly folders, school emails, Class Dojo, and/or text messages. Teachers may also use weekly newsletters or Google Classroom at their discretion to share classroom updates, resources, and reminders. It is the responsibility of parents to monitor and stay informed using the communication methods utilized by their child's teacher.

## Weather Emergencies

St. Peter's families will be notified using the school's Emergency Contact System – Parent Alert, school's social media outlets and local news stations for school closings, delayed openings, or early dismissals due to inclement weather.

## Parent Volunteering and Fundraising Requirements

### Safe School Environment

- St. Peter's Catholic School offers a variety of opportunities for parents, guardians, and grandparents to volunteer and actively participate in school life. In accordance with diocesan policies and to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, any adult

wishing to volunteer in any capacity must complete the diocesan child protection awareness program, Virtus, and undergo a background screening. These requirements are strictly followed to maintain a safe and supportive school environment for every child.

- To register for a session or to learn more about Virtus, visit [www.virtusonline.org](http://www.virtusonline.org).
- Once registered, please complete a background screening, electronically sign policy documentation, and complete online training 'Protecting God's Children'. Once this has been done, please provide the corresponding certificate.

### Service Hour Requirements

Each family is required to complete 5 verified service hours each school year between the months of August and May. Opportunities to fulfill these hours include, but are not limited to:

- Cafeteria Assistant
- Mum & Poinsettia Pick-Up Days
- Fall Fest
- Book Fair
- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Spring Dance
- Field Day

To volunteer, contact the Director of Admissions & Parent Support by phone or email to be added to an event roster. Upon arrival at the event, volunteers must sign in with the Director or Admissions & Parent Support, who will maintain records of completed hours.

Failure to complete the required 5 service hours will result in a \$500 fee and ineligibility for tuition assistance for the following school year. Alternatively, families may choose to opt out by submitting a \$500 check to the PTO.

### Mandatory Fundraising Requirements

St. Peter's Catholic School relies on three key fundraising events that require participation from all families:

1. Fall Harvest Drive (Mum Sale)
  - Each student must sell a set number of mums per student as determined by St. Peter's Catholic School for a given year.
  - Families with multiple students must meet a proportional requirement.
  - Any shortfall in sales will be added to the family's tuition statement.

## 2. Winter Wonderland Drive (Poinsettia Sale)

- Each student must sell a set number of Poinsettias per student as determined by St. Peter's Catholic School for a given year.
- Sales shortfalls will also be charged to the family's tuition account.

## 3. Midlands Gives

- This is our largest fundraiser, held annually on the first Tuesday of May.
- Each family is required to donate a minimum of \$20 per child to help us qualify for matching grants and prize incentives during the Power Hour (12:00–1:00 PM).
- Families are encouraged to give more, but the \$20 minimum is required per child enrolled at St. Peter's Catholic School..

Income generated from these three fundraisers is essential to the school's operating budget and supports the mission of keeping tuition competitive while maintaining educational excellence.

Families are welcome and encouraged to exceed the minimum requirements by selling additional mums and poinsettias to friends, neighbors, local businesses, and others in the community.

Note: Families are encouraged to exceed minimums—extra sales benefit the school's budget and mission

## Stewardship

Catholic schools exist to provide faith formation and academic excellence. We are all called by our Church to be stewards for the generations to come. As such, our primary mission is to create life-long learners with a commitment to Christian service. As the stewards of our school, St. Peter's School families are expected to provide time, talent, and treasure. We are answering the call of our Church as a school by providing our students with Gospel truths in a safe and competitive academic environment. All Catholic families must be in good standing with their parish in order to receive the parishioner rate and are required to support the mission of the school through regular attendance at Mass.

Participation in the fundraising efforts of the school is required for each family. All monies raised and received are used to maintain affordable tuition rates.

## Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is composed of teachers and parents working in collaboration with the principal and the advisory board to support the educational, financial, and spiritual goals of the school. PTO Officers organize standing committees that mobilize volunteer teams to coordinate events like Catholic Schools Week, picnics, fundraising drives, Teacher Appreciation Week and other school

events. Members of the PTO coordinate room parents, assist teachers in classrooms and in the school cafeteria, chaperone on field trips, and implement activities to support and improve our school. Please consider becoming an active member in your PTO.

## Student Discipline Policy

The discipline policy at St. Peter's Catholic School is rooted in Gospel values and Catholic virtues. Student behavior is addressed with love, consistency, and fairness, always with the goal of forming character and promoting a respectful, faith-filled learning environment. Consequences for inappropriate behavior may include conferences, loss of privileges, detention, suspension, or, in serious cases, expulsion.

Disruptive behavior that interferes with classroom instruction will not be tolerated. Aggressive or violent behavior—including bullying, harassment, or cyberbullying—is strictly prohibited. In such cases, students will be removed from the classroom, and parents will be notified immediately. Repeated incidents may result in detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Students may not make up work missed during an Out-of-School Suspension.

Teachers may establish additional classroom rules at their discretion. Students are not permitted to chew gum anywhere on campus, including parking lots. Corporal punishment is strictly prohibited and is never used as a form of discipline.

In accordance with Diocesan Policy #5053.1, expulsion may be required in the following circumstances:

- When the moral or physical well-being of the student body or faculty is endangered (e.g., if a student brings or threatens to bring a firearm or weapon to school);
- When there is active promotion against the Catholic faith or its teachings.

Students may not possess, handle, use, or distribute any item that can reasonably be considered or perceived as a weapon. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to: knives, razors, ice picks, explosive devices (such as firecrackers or fireworks), machetes, firearms (including BB or pellet guns), or any similar object.

### Overview of Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to demonstrate respect for self, others, authority, and property. Positive behaviors are modeled and reinforced consistently throughout the school day. Discipline is viewed as an opportunity for formation, not merely punishment.

## Minor Behaviors

Minor behaviors are those that disrupt the learning environment but are not severe or dangerous. Examples include off-task behavior, minor dress code violations, or failure to follow directions. These infractions are typically addressed by the teacher through redirection, reflection, or consequences such as loss of privileges. Repeated minor behaviors may be documented and communicated to parents and administration for further intervention.

## Major Behaviors

Major behaviors are serious violations that may threaten the safety or well-being of others or show deliberate defiance of school rules. Examples include fighting, bullying, theft, or use of inappropriate language. These actions warrant immediate referral to administration and may result in significant consequences such as suspension, behavioral contracts, or in severe cases, expulsion.

## Progressive Discipline

Our approach follows a progressive model that seeks to guide students toward making better choices through restorative practices, parent communication, and consistent follow-through. Disciplinary responses are aligned with the developmental level of the student and the severity of the behavior.

## Partnership with Parents

Parents are vital partners in upholding the school's disciplinary standards. Open and respectful communication is maintained when addressing behavioral issues. Together, we work to help students reflect on their actions, accept responsibility, and seek reconciliation when necessary.

## Harassment and Bullying

- **Harassment** occurs when a person makes verbal comments or physical contact with another person who does not want these comments or contacts.
- **Sexual harassment** is a particular type of harassment that involves sexual comments, innuendo, invitations and/or requests.
- **Bullying** is a type of harassment that involves some type of force, whether overt or subtle.
- Harassment of any kind demeans another, and the perpetrator fails to respect the dignity of the victim.

- The following are facts and guidelines concerning harassment that all St. Peter's students and families should be aware of and follow:
  - An action does not have to be overt to be harassment. Sometimes suggestive looks have been considered harassment.
  - Harassment does not have to be a pattern of behavior. One incident may constitute harassment. The recipient sets the standard.
  - Since touching, in any manner can be construed as harassment, teachers, parents and students should be careful about putting their hands on one another.
  - Demeaning behavior of any kind can be considered harassment. Do not single out a particular student to be the recipient of jokes or teasing. The student may not think it is funny, and your actions may be considered harassment.
  - There is no firm line separating joking or teasing from harassment. BE CAREFUL! Ask yourself: How would it feel if someone treated me this way?
  - Harassment will not be tolerated in any form at St. Peter's including cyber/internet bullying on or off campus.

## Social Media

Engagement in online social media platforms such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student or parent's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, faculty, or other students, other parents, or the parish.

No parent should open a Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or GroupMe account under the name of the school or a particular grade or organization. A parent who chooses to create such an account may subject his/her child(ren) to separation from the school.

## After School Detention

The Administration of St. Peter's Catholic School reserves the right to implement After School Detention as a consequence for behavioral, attendance and uniform policy infractions. A notice will be sent home requiring a parent's/guardian's signature.

## Expulsion

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from St. Peter's Catholic School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school for any reason without prior permission from

Administration. Any student expelled or asked to leave the school for disciplinary reasons will not be eligible for re-enrollment, may not participate in or attend school-sponsored activities, and may not enter school property without permission from administration.

Students whose parents have violated the Parents as Partners agreement in this handbook may also be excluded from St. Peter's Catholic School. The reasons for expulsion or withdrawal will be shared with other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Charleston upon request by that school.

Students who have been dismissed, expelled, or asked to withdraw from Saint Peter's Catholic school for behavioral, academic, or disciplinary reasons are not eligible for re-enrollment at any time. This policy ensures consistency and maintains a safe, positive learning environment for all students and staff. Decisions regarding admission, eligibility are final and made at the discretion of the school administration.

## Off-Campus Conduct

The administration of St. Peter's Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the school day. This off-campus behavior includes, but is not limited to, cyber-bullying.

## Personal Property

Students are discouraged from bringing personal items to school. Non-instructional items are not permitted at school. These items include but are not limited to smart watches, iPods, tablets, electronic games, cell phones, fidget spinners, etc.

## Personal Cell Phone and Device Policy

In accordance with South Carolina state law (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-63-280), the possession and use of personal electronic communication devices, including cell phones, are prohibited in schools during instructional hours unless specifically authorized. St. Peter's Catholic School enforces a no cell phone policy during school hours. Exceptions to this policy may be made for students with documented needs included in a 504 plan (specifically a medical plan) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Such accommodations must be reviewed and approved by the school administration in coordination with appropriate documentation.

# Attendance

Regular school attendance and punctuality is essential to student success and is a shared responsibility among the school, the student, and the family. St. Peter's Catholic School adheres to the compulsory attendance laws of the State of South Carolina (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-65-10 et

seq.), which require that all children between the ages of 5 and 17 attend a public or approved private school regularly. The school day begins at 7:55 am. Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 am following the tardy bell. Based on state regulations, students must be in attendance for 180 days.

A written statement giving reasons for the absence or tardiness must be brought to the student's teacher upon the student's return. Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are to consult with administration and present a written reason for the absence.

**Please be advised that per SC State Law, excessive absences may result in student retention. Whenever possible, professional appointments should be scheduled during after school hours or on school holidays.**

## Reporting Absences

Parents/guardians must notify the school office by 8:00 AM on the day of the absence. A written note, email, or medical excuse must be submitted upon the student's return to school. Absences not verified in writing within three (3) days will be marked unexcused.

## Excused Absences

- Personal illness with a written note from the parent (maximum of 10 days per academic year).
- Medical or dental appointments (documentation required).
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family.
- Recognized religious holidays.
- Pre-approved family trips or educational opportunities (limited and at the discretion of the principal).

## Unexcused Absences

Absences for reasons not listed above (e.g., vacations without prior approval, truancy, or lack of transportation) will be considered unexcused.

## Truancy Policy

In accordance with South Carolina law, a student is considered truant when:

- The student has three consecutive unexcused absences, or
- The student has five total unexcused absences during the school year.

Once a student is deemed truant, the school will:

- Notify the parent/guardian in writing.
- Develop a written intervention plan in cooperation with the student and family.
- Refer to the appropriate attendance officer or family court if the intervention plan is not followed and unexcused absences persist.

## Chronic Absenteeism

A student is considered chronically absent when they miss 10% or more of the school year for any reason (excused or unexcused). Chronic absenteeism may affect academic progress, promotion, and extracurricular eligibility.

## Attendance Classification and Early Dismissal Policy

To maintain accurate attendance records and support student success, the following guidelines apply regarding early dismissals and tardiness:

### Early Sign Outs

Parents needing to remove a student from school prior to afternoon dismissal must report to the office. **Parents are not permitted to go to classrooms to collect students at any time.** A staff member will call for the student to report to the office. Any student needing to leave school early must be signed out by a parent, guardian, or an approved person (**with permission to pick-up on file**). If someone other than a parent/guardian is to pick a child up, the parent/guardian must send a written or email note to that effect and/or have direct contact with the School Office granting permission.

- Students who leave school prior to 11:30 a.m. for any reason other than illness or a pre-scheduled medical or clinical appointment will be marked absent for the entire school day.
- Students who arrive at school after 11:30 a.m. will be marked absent for the entire school day.
- Students who are dismissed after 11:30 a.m. will be recorded as having a half-day absence.
- All early dismissals must be communicated to the main office in advance and are subject to administrative review and approval.
- Students may not be dismissed during the last 30 minutes of the school day. It becomes a disruption to the class as teachers are closing instructional activities for the day,

important school announcements are being made, and all classes are ending with prayer.

## Appointments

For an absence or early dismissal to be considered medically excused, the student must provide a doctor's note indicating the date and time of the appointment and/or the date the student is cleared to return to school.

## Tardiness and Late Arrival

- Students arriving after the official start time must report directly to the main office and be signed in by a parent or guardian.
- Frequent tardiness or repeated early dismissals may result in administrative intervention and may carry academic or disciplinary consequences.

## Consequences for Excessive Tardies

To alleviate excessive tardiness, each quarter the minutes late will be calculated. Parents/guardians will be notified of the accumulated loss of instructional time. If unexcused tardiness exceeds 90 minutes per quarter a conference with Administration may be required.

**Excessive absence (40) days or the equivalent of 40 days (including tardies) can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year.**

## Early Care

Supervised Early Care is provided free of charge. Students may arrive as early as 7:30am.

## Make-Up Work

Students with excused absences are permitted to make up missed assignments within a reasonable time frame. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to coordinate with teachers to complete make-up work promptly.

Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation. Arrangements for regular classroom tests missed because of an absence are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests must be taken within one week of the original test date. Due to the educational advantage of returning graded tests to students in a timely manner, some missed tests may not be made up.

## Support for Attendance

St. Peter's Catholic School is committed to working with families to support consistent attendance. We encourage open communication and early intervention to address any barriers to attendance.

## Health and Safety

### Health Records and Immunizations

All students must have up-to-date immunization records on file in accordance with South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) regulations. Medical exemptions require official documentation.

### Emergency Information Card (Blue Card)

An Emergency Information/First Aid Permission form will be distributed to parents/guardians for each child. One form must be completed for each child registered. This form will be retained in the School Office and in ParentsWeb. Parents must keep this regularly maintained and up-to-date. It is the parents' responsibility to contact the office with updates when appropriate.

### Immunization

A South Carolina Certificate of Immunization, SC DHEC 2740 with the box checked for school admission or a SC DHEC 2740 with the Medical Exemption Section completed, must be on file in the school office.

The Diocese of Charleston mandates that all Catholic Schools within the Diocese refuse to accept a Certificate of Religious Exemption to satisfy the requirement of an immunization record for enrollment.

### Accident or Illness

Students may be sent to the Health Room for the following:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Rash
- Head Lice - Student must remain at home until treatment has been initiated and head is nit-free.

- Impetigo - Students must remain at home for 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye with white or yellow discharge). Students must remain at home until their condition is evaluated and treated.
- Any illness that prevents the child from participating in class.
- Any illness that appears to be infectious or contagious.
- Accidental injury sustained at school.

## Illness Policy

Regular attendance is important; however, students who are sick—especially those with a fever or contagious illness—should remain at home. A fever is defined as a temperature of **100 degrees or higher**. Students must be **fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication** before returning to school. If a student becomes ill during the school day, parents will be contacted and must make arrangements to promptly pick up their child.

Any student who has undergone an oral or medical surgical procedure—especially those involving anesthesia or the possibility of excessive bleeding—must remain in the care of a parent or guardian and should not be brought to school.

In the event of a serious accident or illness requiring emergency medical attention, 911 will be called prior to contacting parents. If transport is necessary, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital. The school will make every reasonable effort to reach the parent/guardian or emergency contacts listed on the student’s emergency form (Diocese policy #5074) before making such decisions. The school, the Basilica of St. Peter, and the Diocese will not be held liable for the financial cost of emergency medical services.

## Medications

St. Peter’s Catholic School is required to follow the Diocese of Charleston Catholic School System protocol. A medication permit form is available in the School Office. Students are not allowed to have any type of medicine with them or in their backpack during the school day.

Prescription and over-the-counter medications may only be administered by authorized school staff with written parental permission and physician instructions. All medications must be in the original container.

## Prescription Medications

Prescription medication for conditions such as epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, ADD/ADHD or other medical conditions will be administered at school only under the following conditions:

- Medication is necessary for the student to remain in school. A medication permit form must be completed by the parent/guardian, signed by the physician, and returned to the school office, along with the medication in its original container. Medications must contain a current pharmacy label. Medications sent in containers other than the original will not be accepted.
- Parents are responsible for bringing all medication to the school office and for the removal of any unused medication at year's end. Medication left at school will be disposed of.
- Nebulizer treatments for asthma may also require parental administration if they are needed during school hours

### Over the Counter Medications

All over the counter medications given for four or more consecutive days need a parent/guardian and medical provider signature. Parent/guardian and medical provider signatures are needed for over the counter medications that exceed the dosage or frequency for the student's age and weight. If a student receives any over the counter medications for up to three (3) consecutive days, the parent/guardian must complete and sign the Medication Authorization Form.

### AHERA Compliance

In compliance with the **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)**, St. Peter's Catholic School maintains an active Asbestos Management Plan. This plan outlines the inspection, monitoring, and management of any asbestos-containing materials in the school building to ensure the continued health and safety of students, staff, and visitors.

An accredited inspection has been conducted, and a management plan is on file in the school office. This plan is available for review during normal school hours by parents, guardians, staff, and other interested parties.

St. Peter's Catholic School strictly adheres to all federal and state regulations regarding asbestos, including periodic inspections and response actions as required under AHERA. The school's ongoing commitment is to provide a safe and compliant environment in accordance with the guidance of the Diocese of Charleston and applicable law.

## Emergency Procedures

Emergency drills, including fire, tornado, and lockdown, are conducted regularly. In the event of an actual emergency, parents will be notified using the school's communication system.

## Security

St. Peter's Catholic School recognizes that attempting to maintain the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors to our school is implemented with a multifaceted approach. To the extent that modern technology provides tools to maintain safety and security, cameras are in place in the school, on school grounds, at the basilica and on the basilica's property. Cameras are not permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

## Visitor Policy

To ensure the safety of our students and the integrity of our instructional time, all visitors must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All parents and visitors must sign in at the front office upon entering the building.
- Classroom visits must be scheduled in advance with the teacher. Unscheduled visits may be denied at the discretion of the teacher.
- Visitors must wear a visible visitor badge at all times while on campus.
- Our instructional day begins promptly at 8:00 AM and concludes at 3:15 PM. Instructional time is highly valued and protected from unnecessary interruptions.

## Activities

### Field Trips

St. Peter's unique location in the heart of downtown provides many excellent opportunities for teachers to extend learning beyond the classroom walls. Field trips are an important part of the educational experience and classes are encouraged to take advantage of the many cultural and educational opportunities available to St. Peter's School. When needed, transportation will be by school bus or by foot. Field Trip permission forms must also be submitted. Students will not be permitted to attend a field trip without the signed official permission forms. A telephone call will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip. All monies collected for a field trip are non-refundable. Official chaperones may not bring siblings on the field trip. Chaperones must have completed Virtus Training and submit to a background screening by the Diocese.

## Service Learning

Service to others is an important part of our Catholic Christian tradition. Students are involved throughout the year in projects with local hospitals, nursing homes and other local agencies that provide services to families in need.

## Honor Guard

The Honor Guard is comprised of fifth and sixth grade students whose purpose is to serve St. Peter's School, its teachers, and students. Honor Guard members will assist students and teachers during afternoon carline. This is a responsibility that must be taken seriously. When a student is scheduled to be an Honor Guard, he/she must remain for the entire duration of carpool in the afternoon. Excessive discipline and/or behavior problems will result in removal from the Honor Guard.

## Alter Servers

Catholic students in grades 4-6 are eligible to be trained as altar servers and may serve at School Masses and funerals with parent permission. Excessive discipline and/or behavior problems will result in this privilege being revoked.

## Parties

Classroom celebrations must be kept simple. Appropriate treats must be prepackaged and individually wrapped. No piñatas, balloons, etc. are permitted.

No invitations of any type may be given out at school unless the entire class is invited; single gender invitations are allowed.

# Daily Operations

## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

For the safety of all students and faculty, parents and guardians must use the carpool line during arrival and dismissal times and refrain from using cell phones while in line. To maintain a secure and orderly process, parents are not permitted to park and walk their children to or from the building during carline hours.

Only individuals with a valid handicap placard may use the designated handicap parking spaces located near the school entrance. All faculty have been instructed not to allow parents or visitors to enter the building during carline pick-up times.

Please observe these important security measures. While you may be easily recognized by your child, not all staff members may know you. It is essential that students are released only to individuals who have been authorized for pick-up.

If someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up a student, written or emailed permission must be submitted to the school office in advance.

### Morning Drop Off

All families must use the **Park Street gate** for both arrival and dismissal.

For morning drop-off, vehicles should form a **single line** and proceed to the **car loop**, where faculty will be present to assist children as they exit the car. **Students may not be dropped off until a staff member is on duty.**

All students will enter the building through the **playground gate**. While use of the **car line is strongly encouraged, parents will not be permitted beyond the playground gate during drop-off.**

Drop-off at the Hampton Street gate is strictly prohibited.

### Afternoon Pickup

**Cars are to form three single lanes for afternoon pick-up.** Cars will alternately feed, four at a time, from the three lanes as directed by a faculty member. This system will prevent cars from backing up on Park Street and causing a traffic hazard. Students will enter cars from Loading Zones, all delineated by a bright cone. When you are directed into the loading area, please pull all the way up, so that we may load all four cars at one time. Please note the Honor Guard students at the cones in Zones who will help your student into your vehicle.

Please have your car line tag displayed in a visible location. This procedure allows names to be called in advance so that your child can be sent to the appropriate loading Zone. While students are loading, all other cars are to remain stopped. **No car will be allowed to pass any other car that is stopped for loading.**

If your child requires additional assistance once loaded into your vehicle, please pull forward slowly to the end of the drive, park to the right side, and secure your child in a safety belt.

For the safety of our Faculty, Staff, and our students, we ask that there be no cell phone use during carline.

Students not picked up in the carline by 3:30pm will be sent to the after school program. Fees will incur.

## Lunch and Recess

All students should bring lunch to school with them daily. Students may also be instructed by their classroom teacher to bring a snack.

All classes will have at least one 20-to-30-minute lunch and recess period daily. All students need the opportunity for play and exercise. Teachers are discouraged from taking away recess as a disciplinary consequence. Lunch and Recess periods may be changed without notice as deemed necessary by the Administration.

## Hot Lunches

St. Peter's Catholic School offers Hot Lunches **five** days a week and each month a new order form will go home with the dates and prices if you choose to get Hot Lunch for your child(ren). If you choose not to get Hot Lunch, please send your child with lunch to school.

## Food Delivery

St. Peter's Catholic School does not allow outside food entities, such as Door Dash or UberEats to deliver food to ensure the safety of our staff and students. Parents may bring food to the front office if needed.

# Technology Use

## Acceptable Use Policy

St. Peter's Catholic School provides Internet and email access to support student learning and foster innovation, collaboration, and creativity in alignment with our curriculum. Technology use is integrated into classroom instruction to enrich education and connect students to a broad range of resources and learning opportunities.

With Internet access, students may:

- Research up-to-date information and educational resources
- Participate in email and online discussions
- Collaborate with classrooms across the globe
- Access databases, learning tools, and instructional software

Student Responsibilities:

Students are expected to use all technology respectfully and responsibly:

- Use appropriate, polite language

- Follow teacher instructions and observe security rules
- Use devices for educational purposes only
- Respect all digital content and communication as private property
- Care for school equipment (no food or drinks near devices)
- Understand that email is not private

Prohibited Actions:

Students may not:

- Share personal or others' contact information
- Access or download inappropriate or offensive content
- Use another person's login or identity
- Tamper with hardware, software, or security settings
- Engage in hacking, vandalism, or introduce viruses
- Use devices for personal gain, advertising, or political lobbying
- Install or misuse unapproved software or shareware

## Use of Personal Devices

Students may not use personal electronic devices during school hours unless specifically approved by faculty for academic purposes. Unauthorized use will result in confiscation.

## Internet Safety and Digital Citizenship

Students are taught responsible online behavior and digital citizenship. The school maintains filters and monitoring systems in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

## Instructional Technology and Screen Use

St. Peter's Catholic School is committed to providing a developmentally appropriate, research-based educational experience that supports the academic, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth of every child. Instructional technology, including interactive displays, televisions, tablets, computers, educational videos, and digital learning platforms, may be utilized as one component of a comprehensive curriculum across all grade levels.

The school's use of technology is intentional, limited, and directly connected to educational objectives, state standards, diocesan expectations, and age-appropriate learning outcomes. Technology is not used as a substitute for active learning, teacher interaction, hands-on experiences, outdoor play, faith formation, social engagement, creative expression, or developmentally appropriate instruction.

In early childhood classrooms, including two-year-old, three-year-old, and four-year-old programs, screen use is limited and purposeful. Educational media may be incorporated to reinforce learning objectives through activities such as movement, music, language development, religion, literacy, science exploration, and interactive participation. Students are not engaged in unrestricted or entertainment-based viewing.

As students progress through elementary grades, technology use may increase to support research, writing, assessment, digital citizenship, collaboration, creativity, and preparation for future academic success. Instructional technology remains teacher-directed and educationally focused.

The school reserves the right to determine the appropriate type, frequency, duration, and instructional application of technology within each classroom and grade level. Such decisions are made by qualified educators and administrators based on professional judgment, curriculum requirements, student needs, educational research, and applicable health and safety recommendations.

Parents who enroll their children at St. Peter's Catholic School acknowledge and support the school's professional discretion regarding instructional methods, materials, educational technology, and classroom practices. While families may choose different technology practices within their homes, instructional decisions within the school setting remain the responsibility of school personnel and will be implemented in a manner consistent with the school's mission and educational philosophy.

## Compliance Forms

The following compliance forms must be completed and submitted annually and kept up to date:

- Google Workplace for Education
- Media Release Authorization
- Emergency Contact & Medical Form

All forms are provided at the beginning of the school year and are available in the school office or online.

## After School Program

The Program runs from **3:30 pm to 5:30 pm on regular school days** and from **2:15pm until 5:30pm on all 2:00 pm early dismissal Mondays**. The After School Program is not available on

holidays or 11:30am Dismissal Days unless otherwise stated. In the event of inclement weather, the After School Program will be closed if the school is closed.

Parents will be given the opportunity to enroll their student(s) in the Program at the beginning of the school year by completing an enrollment card located in their Back-to-School Packet. Any change in enrollment status must be made to the Director in writing. Billing changes will become effective on the 1st day of the following month.

**Students not picked up from the regular carline by 3:30 pm will be sent to the After School Program and charged the daily rate of \$20.00 per day beginning at 3:30 pm.**

Each student remaining in the After Care Program after 5:30 pm, will be assessed a late fee of **\$10.00 per child for the first 15 minutes or any part there-of and a \$1.00 per minute beginning at the 16th minute thereafter for any child picked up after 5:30 pm.**

If you know you will be late picking up your child, please call the school. If you do not receive an answer, please leave a message. The phones are monitored daily until the last student is picked up. If you have not picked your child up by 5:30 pm, the After School Program Staff will attempt to reach the parent or guardian of any student who has not been picked up. If the staff is unable to reach the parent or guardian, an attempt to reach the emergency contact will be made using the information provided on the Emergency Information/Health Form completed at the beginning of the school year. Should the staff be unable to reach a parent/guardian and/or emergency contact to arrange for pickup, the principal will be notified.

Should it be necessary for a student to be picked up by someone other than a parent, guardian or anyone under the age of 21, the parent must notify the principal and/or the operator in writing. The note should include the name of the designated pick-up person, their contact number, the date(s) of pickup and a parent contact number if the student is not retrieved. **No student will be released from the After School Program to any person without prior contact with a parent or guardian granting permission.**

The After School Program begins the first full day of school.

**The full-time After School Program fee is \$200.00 per month, per child.**

Participation in the After School Program is a privilege. Should an account become delinquent, the principal and/or Operator may deny participation in the program and all after school extracurricular activities until the balance is paid in full. Outstanding bills must be brought current by the close of December, in order for a child to continue participation in the After School Program for the remainder of the school year.

The program includes, but is not limited to mandatory supervised homework, sustained silent reading, educational games, puzzles, and computer time on designated days. EC2, EC3, EC4 and K5 students will participate in songs and movement, read-alouds, shared writing activities and

arts and crafts. All students will have scheduled recess. Additional core activities may be added at the discretion of the principal and/or operator.

Students in the After Program will be provided an afternoon snack. Parents may elect to send a snack with their child if they choose. Students remaining at school for an extracurricular activity only are encouraged to bring their own snack. The After School Program will not provide a snack for students remaining after school only for an extracurricular activity.

## Extracurriculars

All students at St. Peter's are given the opportunity to join, upon additional payment to private instructors, special classes, or programs. These programs are run by instructors who are required to attend Virtus Training and sign a Volunteer's Code of Conduct just as our parent volunteers are required to do.

Students will not be charged for time in the After School Program prior to and including the time they are participating in an extracurricular activity. Students are signed in to the After School Program at the close of their special class by the instructor if a parent/guardian is not present for pick-up. Parents will be charged only for the time that students stay in the After School Program after their class has finished. Please notify the principal or operator if your student plans to return to the After School Program after their activity on a regular basis. This will help us supervise students and make billing easier.

Students participating in the After School Program are required to remain in their school uniform. Students are not permitted to change into other attire (sports uniforms, dance leotards, etc.) while in the care of the After School Program Staff. Special allowances may be made by the principal or the operator at their discretion.

Extracurricular clubs/classes/tutoring offered by employees of St. Peter's Catholic School will be invoiced through FACTS.

Extracurricular clubs/classes/tutoring offered by outside vendors will invoice families directly.

Course instructors are required to communicate directly with parents concerning change in class times, cancellations, fees, etc. ***Should a course be cancelled, it is the responsibility of the course instructor to contact parents. Please do not call the school regarding cancellations, etc. Please contact the course instructor. If your child is not picked up, he/she will be placed into the After School Program and the parent/guardian will be charged for the day.***