

Incarnation Catholic School



Student and Family Handbook

2026-2027

Welcome to Incarnation Catholic School,

For over 60 years, Incarnation Catholic School has been dedicated to providing a faith-filled education to families in the Tampa Bay area. Our mission is to form students in the teachings of Jesus Christ while fostering academic excellence, moral integrity, and a lifelong commitment to serving others.

We believe that a strong foundation in faith and learning shapes well-rounded individuals who lead with compassion, integrity, and respect. Our goal is to empower students to become responsible, productive citizens who make a positive difference in the world.

We value and honor your trust in us as partners in your child's educational journey. Your cooperation, support, and involvement are essential to their growth and success. Open communication between parents, teachers, and students helps us ensure the strongest possible support system for every child.

To guide our partnership, the school has prepared a Parent-Student Handbook, which outlines our policies and expectations. Please review it carefully and keep it for future reference. All policies are subject to change at the school's discretion to best serve our mission and community.

We look forward to serving your family and continuing to build a strong, supportive community of faith and learning.

God Bless,

Robert F. Hernandez, Ed.S.
Principal
Incarnation Catholic School



WE ARE ICS

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Introduction

Welcome ICS Families,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Incarnation Catholic School community and our honor to serve you. Founded in 1964 as a parish school for the families of Incarnation Catholic Church and the surrounding community, ICS became a diocesan school in July 2023. Within this model, we continue to fulfill our mission to inspire, challenge, and encourage each student to reach their fullest potential.

Students of all faiths who are open to the teachings of the Catholic Church, as well as families of diverse cultural backgrounds, are welcome to join our community as we proclaim the message of Jesus Christ. By choosing ICS, you demonstrate a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The faculty and staff of ICS look forward to working with you in building a strong spiritual foundation rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church, while fostering the academic excellence needed for students to achieve success, share their gifts with others, and contribute to the greater good.

Throughout this school year and in the years to come our goal is to support your child's spiritual, moral, socio-emotional, and academic growth. We believe that the collaboration between home and school is essential to the development of the whole child. Parents, as the first educators of their children, play a vital role in forming positive attitudes and habits. ICS partners with you in this mission by providing a Christ-centered, academically rigorous, and nurturing environment where students can grow in faith and knowledge.

Together, we will work to instill the tenets of our Catholic faith and inspire our students to live as Christ calls us through their actions, service, and love for others. May God bless you and your family as we embark on this educational journey together.

Incarnation Catholic School Handbook Overview

Purpose of the Student and Family Handbook

The ICS Student and Family Handbook outlines the policies, procedures, history, and philosophy that guide our school community. It serves as a reference for parents/guardians and students throughout the school year, helping all families become active partners in Catholic education.

As a Catholic, private institution, this handbook represents an agreement between ICS and families. By enrolling at ICS, parents/guardians and students accept the responsibility of understanding and following the policies it contains.

Right to Amend

While every effort is made to include all current policies and procedures, unique circumstances may arise that require administrative interpretation. The principal, in collaboration with the Diocese of St. Petersburg Office of Catholic Schools and Centers, reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Families will be notified of changes by email.

Acknowledgement

The *Student and Family Handbook Agreement* is available through FACTS. Parents are expected to review the handbook with their children and complete the acknowledgement. The Acceptable Use Policy for technology is also included in this document.

Thank you for your cooperation in supporting the mission, policies, and values of Incarnation Catholic School.

Mission Statement

“In keeping with our tradition, we at Incarnation Catholic School: **I**nspire disciples of Christ, **C**hallenge each individual to be a life-long learner and **S**trive to live our Catholic faith through service to each other and the community”

Philosophy

Accreditation – Incarnation Catholic School is accredited through the **Florida Catholic Conference (FCC)** and is a proud member of the **National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)**.

Our Identifying Bible Verse

"I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me." **Philippians 4:13**

We, the students, faculty, staff, and parents of Incarnation Catholic School believe:

- Catholic education is an essential part of the Church’s mission to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to build faith communities, to celebrate through worship, and to serve others equally.
- Our school integrates Catholic faith with both learning and life.
- Each student is a unique and beloved child of God.
- Mutual respect among students, faculty, and staff fosters a healthy and positive learning environment.
- Administration, faculty, parents, and students share responsibility for creating a successful learning environment.
- A successful learning environment is safe, welcoming, supportive, challenging, faith-filled, and collaborative—helping each student grow in well-being, potential, responsibility, and sound decision-making.
- Continuous evaluation and improvement of curriculum, instruction, policies, and school culture are essential for maintaining a strong educational program and a thriving school community.

Parents as Educators

Parents are the prime educators of their children, whereas the school serves as an auxiliary instrument to assist the parents in their child’s education. The parent's attitude toward the school and the faculty/staff is most important, for it will become the basic attitude of the child. Parents are reminded that the child absorbs criticism, complaints, gossip, and words spoken in anger and become a part of his/her education. A consistent understanding of authority should exist between parent and school, for the teacher in the classroom or coach on the field is an extension of parental authority. Respect for authority cannot be learned in school if it has not originally been taught at home. Home responsibility is an important trait to be taught to each child. If a child has not mastered this responsibility at home, simple school tasks will be disregarded as nonimportant. The child should be prepared to receive what the school has to offer.

The following procedure should be followed before casting judgment on what may appear to be an unjust situation.

1. Obtain and discuss with the proper person, all the facts. A request for an appointment with the involved staff member should be made at your earliest convenience. It is necessary to hear both sides.
2. If necessary, after the conference, if the staff member does not resolve the concern, then contact the principal. This procedure is stressed because in most cases, the problem will be resolved with little difficulty. This act of courtesy will be greatly appreciated.

Parent Commitment

In partnership with Incarnation Catholic School, parents commit to:

- Upholding the school's spiritual values and belief statements.
- Fostering a Christ-centered, family-oriented school community.
- Supporting a positive learning environment.
- Meeting all financial obligations on time, including tuition, fees, and required service hours agreed upon at registration.
- Assisting with school fundraising and promotional activities.

Parents demonstrate support for the school's mission by:

- Attending weekend Mass and Holy Days of Obligation as a family whenever possible.
- Providing prayer experiences in daily life and setting a Christian example for their children.
- Partnering with teachers by encouraging good attendance, ensuring punctuality, and supporting their children's studies.
- Actively participating in school functions and parent meetings.

Custodial Rights:

In the case of divorced parents, the school will interact with the parent with legal custody of the child. The school ordinarily will deal with the parent having legal custody in matters of absence, lateness, truancy, early dismissal, disciplinary issues, school records, etc. The school reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed person and records and information about a minor child, including, but not limited to school records, may not be denied to a parent because the parent is not the child's primary residential parent. Full rights apply to either parent unless a court order specifically revokes these rights. In the latter case, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide evidence of such a court order.

Academic Program

Books

Students are expected to respect both personal and school property. Textbooks and library books must be handled with care. Hardback books, which are reused for several years, should be stored properly to preserve their condition. Students are responsible for paying fines or replacement fees for any lost or damaged books.

Grading Policy

Philosophy

At ICS, grading reflects student learning, mastery of standards, and growth. We believe:

- Students should clearly understand learning objectives.
- Grading should be timely, specific, fair, and accurate.
- Grades should measure a student's demonstrated understanding of content.
- Non-academic factors (behavior, work habits, effort) are reported separately.
- Assessments are essential for both teaching and learning.

Purpose of Assessment

Assessments provide:

1. Feedback to students on progress toward mastery.
2. Information for teachers on student learning.
3. Data to guide instruction and interventions.
4. Communication to parents about achievement.

Types of Assessment

- **Formative:** Practice work, classwork, homework, or quizzes used to guide learning and instruction.
- **Summative:** Tests, projects, and final assignments that demonstrate mastery after sufficient instruction and practice.

Grades

Grades communicate progress and achievement by:

- Informing students of performance relative to standards.
- Helping teachers assess mastery of content.
- Keeping parents informed of student progress.
- Documenting performance for transcripts and program evaluation.

Grade Composition

- Summative Assessments: **80% minimum** of trimester grade.
- Formative Assessments: **20% maximum** of trimester grade.
- Conduct and learning behaviors are reported separately.

Reporting Grades

- Minimum recorded failing grade: **50%**.
- Letter Grade Scale:
 - **A (90–100):** Deep understanding & fluent application
 - **B (80–89):** Approaching mastery
 - **C (70–79):** Partial understanding
 - **D (60–69):** Beginning to grasp basic concepts
 - **F (50–59):** Minimal to no evidence of understanding

Kindergarten–2nd grade students receive skills-based report cards.

Conduct & Approaches to Learning (ATL)

ICS emphasizes respect, responsibility, organization, collaboration, and reflective thinking. Rubrics for conduct and ATL assess student behaviors such as preparedness, participation, teamwork, respect for others, and openness to feedback.

- **Organization:** Preparedness, punctuality, task completion.
- **Collaboration & Communication:** Participation, attentiveness, teamwork.
- **Reflection & Personal Initiative:** Openness to feedback, personal study habits, improvement effort

Approaches to Learning (ATL) Rubric

4 – Exceeds	Consistently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.
3 – Meets	Frequently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.
2 – Developing	Occasionally displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.

- 1 – Rarely** Rarely displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.

Graduation Requirements

- To graduate from ICS, 8th grade students must:
- Earn a passing average (minimum **60%**) in all subjects.
- Satisfy all financial obligations (tuition and fees).

Promotion, Retention & Remediation

- **Grades K–2:** Students must show mastery in Language Arts and Math to be promoted.
- **Grades 3–8:** Core subjects include Religion, Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.
 - Failure of **1 subject** → Remediation required.
 - Failure of **2 subjects** → Remediation or retention at principal's discretion.
 - Failure of **3 or more subjects** → Retention required.

Remediation Guidelines:

- Must be completed with a certified teacher or approved program (not the student's current/future teacher).
- Documentation of attendance and proficiency must be submitted before the new school year.
- The original failing grade remains on record; proof of proficiency is recorded separately.

ICS reserves the right to withhold report cards or FACTS access if tuition, fees, or required conferences are not met.

Religion

Religious formation is central at ICS. Students:

- Participate in daily Religion classes.
- Attend Mass, Reconciliation, Eucharist, and para-liturgical celebrations.
- Are encouraged to live their faith through daily actions.

Parents are partners in faith formation and are expected to model Christian living, including Sunday Mass attendance.

Student Records

Permanent records include personal, academic, attendance, health, and sacramental information.

Parents/guardians (or eligible students age 18+) may request to review records in writing, with at least 24 hours' notice. Reviews are conducted in the presence of the principal.

Announcements / Communications

Incarnation Catholic School strives to provide clear and timely communication to parents regarding all school-related happenings. Important communication from the school will be sent home in print, when necessary, as well as electronically through the **FACTS Family Portal** via emails and text messages.

FACTS: School Information System

ICS uses FACTS, a secure online system for communication and record-keeping. FACTS provides parents with access to assignments, grades, messages, and re-enrollment information. Families receive login instructions and secure credentials at registration.

Parent Alert System

Parent Alerts are text messages sent through FACTS to communicate important updates, reminders, or emergency information. This system helps prevent phone tie-ups and ensures timely communication.

Each week, parents will receive the **ICS Newsletter** by email containing school news, flyers, events, and other information of interest. It is the parent's responsibility to read these communications in their entirety. Parents are also asked to check with their child daily for any information sent home. Please sign and return any forms that require a signature and keep all other communication for your reference.

Parents are encouraged to regularly visit the school's website, www.icstampa.org and FACTS Family portal for important school information.

While it is important for the school to communicate regularly, it is equally important for parents to communicate with the school. This partnership helps ensure that everyone is informed regarding the school calendar, activities, and any other items that may occur during the school year.

Emergency Closings

At times, the school community may be threatened by severe weather. In such cases, ICS may have unscheduled closures or delayed openings. If a **Tropical Storm Warning** or **Hurricane Warning** is issued, the school may close for the duration of the warning. A "warning" indicates that a tropical storm or hurricane is expected within 24 hours.

To determine if the school is open or closed:

- Check the website: www.icstampa.org.
- Watch for a **Parent Alert** text message and email.

Office Hours

The school office is open to the public on school days from **7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

Summer office hours are **9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday**, unless otherwise communicated.

School Hours

The regular school day runs from **7:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.** Parents must assume responsibility for children who arrive before **7:00 a.m.**

Arrival & Dismissal

Early Morning Care

- Early Morning Care is free and begins at **7:00 AM**.
- There is no adult supervision before 7:00 AM. Students must be with a parent until school staff arrive.
- **Location:** School Library (back exterior walk-up entry).
- Parents must drop students at the gate near the library where staff greet them.
- No entry from other campus points.
- Entry closes promptly at **7:25 AM**. Students arriving after that time stay with parents until regular drop-off at **7:30 AM**.

Tardies

- Students must be in their homeroom seat by **7:45 AM**.
- After 7:45 AM, students are tardy and must be signed in by a parent at the main office.
- **No drop-offs for tardy students** without a parent.
- After 4 tardies, consequences may apply.

- 10 or more tardies in a trimester are considered excessive, a meeting with administration and the homeroom teacher may be required.

End of School Day

- Full day dismissal: **3:00 PM**
- Half day dismissal: **12:00 PM**
- Students not picked up by **3:20 PM** (full days) or **12:20 PM** (half days) are sent to Aftercare.
- No early sign-outs after **2:20 PM** (full days) or **11:20 AM** (half days).
- Changes in dismissal require a **written, signed note** from a parent/guardian.

Extended Day Program (Aftercare)

- Hours: **3:20–6:00 PM** on full days.
- Fees apply, see the Extended Day form for rates.
- Late pick-up after 6:00 PM: **\$1 per minute per child** — repeated late pick-ups may result in loss of Aftercare privileges.

Arrival & Dismissal Routes

- **Walk up:** Entrance via Hillsborough Avenue (front of school).
- **Carline:** Entrance via Gateway Drive (back of school).
- **Rainy-day** dismissal: Parents will park and walk up to the entrance next to the main office to pick up children.
- **Severe weather:** Dismissal will be delayed until safe.

Walkers & Bikers

- Requires written parent permission (for a specific date or the whole year).
- Must check out from the office before leaving.
- Helmets are required by law for all bikers.
- Bicycles may not be ridden on campus. ICS is not responsible for loss/damage.

Athletics & Extra-Curricular Activities

Athletics and extra-curricular activities are available for ICS students. Participation in team sports is achieved through sports tryouts. Spaces are limited. Students who try out for a sport may or may not be selected to be on the team. Additionally, participation in sports activities depend on the generosity of adults willing to coach a team. As with any other sport, the decision of the coaches regarding who plays the sport, or decisions regarding disciplinary procedures, remains final.

Eligibility:

Incarnation Catholic School provides an extracurricular sports program for our Student-Athletes. It is important to recognize that in the school community, there is an emphasis on the student first, and the athlete second. Each Student-Athlete is expected to maintain an academic and behavioral minimum standard.

Academic Eligibility:

Participation in a school-sponsored extracurricular, i.e., sports, junior varsity, varsity, drama, etc. is a privilege that requires a student to balance participation times, games, and their academic responsibilities. To be eligible to play, the student-athlete must have no less than a C in any subject. Student-athletes who have 2 D's or 1 F may be academically ineligible to play their chosen sport for the week. Students will be eligible to play when their grades improve to meet the academic standard. Grades are checked by the Athletic Director on a weekly basis for all players during each sporting season.

Students with a Student Support Plan may have alternative criteria and will be assessed by teachers for consistent academic effort. Grades will be checked on Fridays for the next week of extracurricular eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to let the athletic director or advisor know that they brought the grade up to eligibility. If a student does not meet these requirements, they will be ineligible for the first game that week and/or meeting of the week. Students must be present for a minimum of 4 instructional hours of the school day to be considered eligible for an extracurricular activity. If a student is absent from school or leaves school early due to illness (even if they meet the 4-hour minimum), the student cannot participate. If the activity is on a Saturday, the student must be at school on the Friday before.

Behavioral Standard:

Students who receive one detention will not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activities (including but not limited to practices, games, or events) until after the detention is served. The student must have appropriate conduct and grades in all subject areas. Behavior is checked by the Athletic Director on a weekly basis for all players during each sporting season. The Athletic Director and/or Administration may impose disciplinary action for conduct at practice or sporting events. The Athletic Director, adviser, or coach, in consultation with the principal, reserves the right to suspend or remove any student from the school-sponsored activity.

Transportation:

All transportation for inter-scholastic competitions is provided by parents. Parents of involved students are expected to share the transportation responsibility. Parents who wish their child to travel with another family must email the Coach and Homeroom teacher prior to the activity or have that family listed in your Facts Emergency Contact and Authorized Pick-up Form.

Sports League:

Incarnation Catholic School participates with other area Catholic schools in the Catholic Conference League. Annual membership fees for each sport are paid to the league. Our program is governed by a code of conduct for coaches, athletes, and spectators. Our philosophy is to promote good sportsmanship, fellowship, and youth development through competition. It is important to maintain these high standards in all our athletic endeavors.

Players' Code of Conduct:

Incarnation Catholic School students and students in Catholic schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg subscribe to the principles of good sportsmanship, fellowship, and youth development through athletic competition. Recognizing these principles, these students understand that profanity and/or any unsportsmanlike conduct will cause:

1. Suspension from the team, or
2. Removal from the team, or
3. Other disciplinary measures.

Coaches' Code of Conduct:

Coaches for Incarnation Catholic School, agree to subscribe to the principles of good sportsmanship, and fellowship and understand that profanity and/or unsportsmanlike conduct will result in their termination as coach. The coach will try to give the opportunity to all players; however, the time on the field or court may not be equal. It is understood that the coach has the authority at the athletic event over players and parents. However, it is understood that the Principal, Faculty member on duty, or Athletic Director has ultimate authority over players, parents, and coaches.

Spectators' Code of Conduct:

Spectators understand that the Incarnation Catholic School athletic program is designed to teach the principles of good sportsmanship, fellowship, and youth development. Recognizing these principles, spectators understand

that profanity and/or unsportsmanlike conduct is not acceptable. At no time may a spectator heckle, shout, or insult the coach of another team or the official. Spectators are to sit in the areas designated and may not sit with the team. It is understood that failure to adhere to these principles could result in spectators being asked to leave the athletic event in question by the coach, official, or faculty.

Student Spectators:

Incarnation Catholic School does not assume responsibility for students or their siblings on the grounds after dismissal, except for school sponsored activities. If a student is participating in a school sponsored activity, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange for the supervision of siblings during the event. It is not the Athletic Director's or the Coach's responsibility to supervise siblings or other students. Parents may not ask them to do so. If the parent is not supervising their children and has arranged for another parent to be responsible for their child's after-school care, written notification is required. This notification is to be turned into the homeroom teacher. Students not participating in a school-sponsored activity may not be present without adult supervision.

Anti-Bullying

Incarnation Catholic School is committed to creating a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all students. Bullying in any form is **strictly prohibited** and will not be tolerated.

This policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that results in:

- Physical, emotional, or mental harm.
- Damage to, extortion of, or theft of personal property.
- Reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm.
- Reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.
- An intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's learning or the Catholic mission of the school.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is **willful and repeated harm** inflicted on another person. It may include but is not limited to:

- Teasing, name-calling, or slurs
- Spreading rumors or false accusations
- Jokes, intimidation, or stalking
- Innuendos, demeaning comments, or pranks
- Social isolation or exclusion
- Threatening gestures
- **Cyberbullying:** misuse of technology to tease, intimidate, or make false accusations, including sending or posting inappropriate messages, images, or content online (e.g., email, texts, social media, blogs).

Bullying reflects a pattern of behavior, not a single isolated incident. This definition also includes students who actively participate in bullying or who, through their behavior, support another student's bullying.

Attendance

Consistent daily attendance is essential for success in school and in life. Skills are built over time, and regular presence directly impacts academic achievement.

Florida law requires children ages 5–16 to attend school. Attendance and punctuality are key to student progress. Families are strongly encouraged to plan vacations during scheduled school breaks.

Reporting Absences:

Parents/guardians must call the school office at (813)884-4502 before 8:30 AM. If no call is received, the school will contact the family. When reporting an absence (phone or email), include:

1. Student's full name
2. Dates of absence
3. Reason for absence

For absences of three or more days due to illness, parents should request classwork before 8:30 AM so it can be ready by dismissal. Allow up to 24 hours for preparation. Students will have a reasonable period to complete missed work based on the number of days absent.

Excessive Absences:

Six (6) absences in a trimester are considered excessive and will trigger a written notice. At this point, a conference with the administration and homeroom teacher may be required. Seven or more absences may result in further consequences. Extended absences for family commitments must be requested in writing at least one week in advance.

Participation Requirements:

- Students must be well enough to participate in activities.
- A minimum of four (4) hours on campus is required to be marked present.
- To join after-school activities, students must be present that day.
- Students with more than 20 absences may be subject to administrative review, possible retention, or withdrawal from ICS.

Make-Up Work & Assessments:

Students must make up missed work. If absent one or two days, they should see the teacher immediately upon return. Teachers will set deadlines; late work may be recorded as a zero until completed. Missed summative assessments must be made up upon return one day absent equals one day to make up the test. For multiple-day absences, the teacher will set the schedule.

Appointments:

Medical or dental visits should be scheduled outside school hours whenever possible. If unavoidable, parents must sign the student in/out and provide an explanation. Students may not be signed out at 2:15 PM or later for appointments.

Birthdays & Invitations

If party invitations are distributed at school, they must include the entire class or all students of one gender. Parents should follow classroom teacher guidelines for parties or birthday celebrations.

Cell Phone Policy

- Cell phones must be turned in to the homeroom teacher upon arrival and returned at dismissal.
- Student may not use cell phones on campus at any time, unless specifically approved by a teacher or administrator.
- Refusal to turn in a phone result in loss of privilege to bring it to school and discipline consequence.

Counseling

ICS provides a Guidance Program to support students' educational, social, and personal growth. Individual and group counseling, along with parent-teacher conferences and referrals to outside agencies, are available.

Students and parents may schedule appointments through the school office. Confidentiality is maintained. A Resource Specialist is also available for small group or individual support.

Discipline Policy

We are commanded by Christ to love one another. This love flows from respect for one another, which leads us to rules, regulations, and guidelines that insist upon mutual respect as the basis for the love that binds a Christian community together.

Enrollment at Incarnation Catholic School implies the willingness of both parents and students to comply with the commandments of Christ, as well as the policies and regulations of the school. The teachers and staff of ICS work to establish an atmosphere throughout the school in which students feel safe, secure, happy, and have the maximum opportunity to learn. For your child and all students to have the learning climate they deserve, each student must behave appropriately.

A student of ICS is considered a student of the school at all times. A student who engages in conduct whether in or out of school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school may be disciplined by school officials. The principal reserves the right to determine the appropriate disciplinary measure.

We expect our students to:

- Model the teachings of Christ
- Be in clean, proper uniform always (including P.E.)
- Be on time
- Walk quietly in halls using conversational tones
- Come prepared for the day
- Keep our school clean
- Respect the rights and property of others
- Be considerate of and helpful to others
- Follow directions the first time
- Leave portable electronic devices, toys, and novelties at home unless given permission by a teacher

Students must understand that disrespect, inappropriate behavior, and failure to follow rules are not acceptable. Proper discipline occurs when both school and home reinforce this understanding. ICS involves parents in disciplinary actions of a serious nature, and all direct measures of action are in accordance with diocesan policy.

The following behaviors are not tolerated and will result in action:

1. Lack of respect for any supervising adult (e.g., talking back, leaving the classroom without permission)
2. Physical contact, fighting
3. Lack of honesty: lying, cheating, plagiarism
4. Improper appearance, such as noncompliance with the uniform code
5. Verbal, physical, or written obscenity
6. Possession, use, or sale of any controlled substance or dangerous object
7. Destruction, damage, or vandalism of school property
8. Chewing gum during school hours or on school property
9. Bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment
10. Repeated violations of school rules (excessive referrals)

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any kind is not tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism may result in a failing grade, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The ICS community strives to educate the whole student, from Pre-K through 8th grade, by providing an atmosphere of care and concern. Every student has the right to feel safe at school. In an environment that is physically, socially, and emotionally safe, a student can realize his/her full potential.

Our goal is to create a safe environment that prevents bullying and victimization. Through student, faculty, parental, and community involvement, every effort will be made to reduce bullying on campus. We also aim to provide bullying education to prevent incidents, using diocesan-approved policies. ICS will intervene positively, encouraging self-esteem and self-worth, and will address concerns without fear of retaliation.

Investigation Procedures:

When a bullying incident is reported, the administration will investigate thoroughly, which may include interviews with students, parents, and staff, reviewing school records, and considering family circumstances.

Consequences/Intervention:

If bullying is confirmed, parents of both the aggressor and the victim will be notified. Consequences will depend on the severity of the act and may include parent conferences, counseling, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Additional steps may be taken to ensure safety, such as implementing safety plans, separating students, providing staff supervision, or involving law enforcement if necessary.

Disciplinary Progression:

Detentions

- Faculty or administration may assign detention for disciplinary reasons. Any foul, profane, explicit, or racist language (written or spoken) will result in detention.
- Parents will be informed through the FACTS Behavior Report, and a signed form will be required the next school day.
- Sports and extracurricular activities do not excuse a student from detention.
- Missed or late detention results in an additional detention. A second missed detention may result in suspension.

Off-Campus Conduct

- Incarnation Catholic School (ICS) reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus behavior that does not reflect the expectations of our school community. Such decisions are handled on a case-by-case basis and may involve consultation with the principal or diocesan administration.

Suspension & Expulsion

- Major infractions may result in immediate suspension or removal from activities.
- Two suspensions may result in a Principal's Warning or expulsion.
- Expulsion may be immediate if the incident warrants it.

Parent Notification

- Parents will be informed of inappropriate behavior via FACTS Behavior Reports or direct staff communication.

Additional Consequences:

- Three demerits = detention
- Three detentions = suspension
- Two suspensions = removal of a student from field trips
- Discipline consequences do not reset each trimester

Probation:

- A period during which a student must correct behavior through specific actions determined by administration.

Expulsion:

- Permanent removal from ICS and part of the student's permanent record.

Students' Rights

Students will not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating, frightening, or related to food, rest, or toileting. Physical punishment is prohibited.

Appeal Process

ICS follows the diocesan appeal policy for serious disciplinary matters. This process must be initiated in writing within five business days of the decision, with further procedures outlined by the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers. The Superintendent's decision at the diocesan level is final.

Final Authority

The principal is the final authority in all disciplinary matters and may act on behavior not specifically listed if it violates the mission, spirit, or philosophy of ICS. The school also reserves the right to dismiss any student who does not uphold academic, behavioral, or community expectations.

Dress Code & Appearance Guidelines

The dress code applies during the school day, aftercare, and all school-sponsored events unless otherwise stated. The administration reserves the right to determine if clothing and appearance meet school standards.

If a student is out of dress code:

- Parents/guardians will be called to bring appropriate clothing.
- The violation will be documented.
- Repeated violations may lead to disciplinary action.

General Expectations

- Wearing the ICS uniform is a privilege and should be done neatly, completely, and with pride.
- Damaged, faded, or stained items must be repaired or replaced.
- Students should leave school in the same orderly, full-uniform condition they arrived.
- Shorts, pants, and skorts must be worn at the waist (not rolled or sagging).
- Skirts must reach the knee or longer and may not be rolled to appear shorter.
- Long uniform pants are optional for all students.
- Uniform sweatshirts may be worn in cold weather.
- Defacing a school uniform is a disciplinary offense.
- The complete uniform includes **grooming, footwear, belts, carriers, jewelry, and makeup.**

Neatness & Grooming

- Students must be well-groomed and presentable at all times.
- Hairstyles should be conservative and in good taste.

Hair

- **Boys:** Neatly trimmed, above the eyes, off the collar, and not covering more than half the ear. No excessive height. Must be clean-shaven; no facial hair or long sideburns.
- **Girls:** Conservative styles; allowed hair accessories include bows, ties, and headbands (reasonable size).

- **Not allowed for any student:** Hair coloring, tinting, highlighting, hair extensions, bandanas, costume headbands, or hats (unless approved).

Shoes & Socks

- **Shoes:** Black, white or a combination of black and white (including soles & logos), lace-up, loafer, or Mary Jane style.
- Athletic shoes must be black, white or a combination.
- No lights, wheels, boots, heels, Crocs, sandals, or unsafe footwear.
- Shoes must be properly fastened and stay on the feet.
- **Socks:** Solid white or black. "No-show" socks are not allowed.

Belts

- Must be worn if pants/shorts have belt loops.
- Plain black or brown, traditional style. No studs, designs, or embellishments.

Backpacks, Purses

- Must be large enough for school supplies appropriate to the student's grade.
- Contents limited to:
 - School supplies
 - Clothing changes for school-related reasons
 - Approved school-day devices
- Girls may carry a small purse for personal items (not for medication).

Labeling

All clothing, shoes, carriers, and personal belongings should be clearly marked with the student's name.

Non-Uniform Days

Students must still dress modestly and appropriately for a Catholic school.

Not allowed:

- Sleeveless shirts, spaghetti straps, tube tops, crop tops
- Clothing with suggestive or offensive language/symbols
- See-through fabrics
- Miniskirts, mini-dresses, bike shorts/tights (unless under skirts/dresses)
- Ripped clothing or shorts above fingertip length
- Jewelry/accessories that are distracting or unsafe
- Crocs, flip-flops, sandals, extreme heels

Repeated disregard for guidelines may result in:

- Being sent home (unexcused absence)
- Parent conference or demerits
- Loss of future non-uniform privileges

Jewelry & Makeup

- Jewelry limited to:
 - Small religious medal or cross on thin chain
 - Small wristwatch (no Apple or smart watches)
 - For girls only: Up to 2 earrings per ear- studs or small hoop earrings touching the earlobe.
 - Up to 2 bracelets (must be non-political, non-offensive)
- No makeup, nail polish, acrylic/fake nails
- No tattoos (real or temporary)

Uniform Purchases

All uniform clothing items (except belts, socks, and shoes) must be purchased through Risse Brothers.

Risse Brothers

4228 North Armenia Ave. Tampa, Florida 33607
 Near St. Joseph's Hospital, East of Raymond James/Bucs Stadium
 813-282-8338 Fax: 813-282-8362
<https://www.rissebrothers.com/loc200.cfm?sn=tampa>

Uniform Guidelines

Incarnation Catholic School Uniform List

Uniforms Available Only at Risse Brothers

P.E. Uniform (All Grades – Boys & Girls)

- Navy ICS P.E. shirt with **full front name** (older version with small logo not permitted)
- Grey ICS P.E. shorts with logo
- Black athletic sneakers (all black, including soles and logos; no lights, wheels, or boots)
- Solid white or solid black socks, visible above the shoe

Cold Weather:

- Navy ICS sweatpants with thigh logo
- Green ICS crewneck sweatshirt with logo (no hoodies)

Boys' Dress Uniform – Pre-K3, VPK, & Kindergarten

- Green ICS polo (long or short sleeve)
- Navy elastic waist pants or shorts
- Solid white or black socks (no visible logos)
- All-black shoes (including soles and logos) with laces or Velcro (no lights, wheels, or boots)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan in cold weather

Girls' Dress Uniform – Pre-K3, VPK, & Kindergarten

- White Peter Pan blouse with collar logo (green polo not permitted)
- Plaid jumper with logo (no skirt/skort until 1st grade)
- Black or navy biker/cartwheel shorts under jumper (not longer than jumper)
- Solid white or black socks (ICS plaid socks permitted)
- All-black shoes (including soles and logos; no lights, wheels, or boots)

Cold Weather:

- Navy, white, or black solid tights (footed)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan

Boys' Dress Uniform – Grades 1–5

- Green ICS polo (long or short sleeve), **tucked in**
- Navy pants or shorts with back logo
- Brown or black belt
- Solid white or black socks (no visible logos)
- Black, white, or black/white shoes (laces, Velcro, buckles, or loafers)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan in cold weather

Girls' Dress Uniform – Grades 1–5

- Plaid jumper with logo, worn with white Peter Pan blouse with logo **OR**
- Green ICS polo (long or short sleeve), **tucked in**, with navy slacks or shorts (belt required)
- Plaid skort (within 2 inches of knee)
- Solid white or black socks (ICS plaid socks permitted)
- Black, white, or black/white shoes (laces, Velcro, buckles, loafers)

Cold Weather:

- Navy, white, or black solid tights (footed)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan

Boys' Dress Uniform – Grades 6–8

- Green, grey, or white ICS polo (long or short sleeve), **tucked in**
- Navy pants or shorts
- Brown or black belt
- Solid white or black socks (no visible logos)
- Black, white, or black/white shoes (laces, Velcro, buckles, or loafers)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan in cold weather

Girls' Dress Uniform – Grades 6–8

- Green, grey, or white ICS polo (long or short sleeve)
- Navy, khaki slacks or shorts (belt required; shorts must be within 2 inches of knee)
- Plaid skort (within 2 inches of knee)
- Solid white or black socks (no visible logos)
- Black, white, or black/white shoes (laces, Velcro, buckles, loafers, Mary Janes; no heels)

Cold Weather:

- Navy, white, or black solid tights (footed)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan

Boys' Mass Uniform – Grades K–8 (1 day/week)

- Long-sleeve white oxford with ICS logo (tucked in)
- Grey dress trousers
- Brown or black belt
- ICS plaid tie (tied and worn properly)
- Solid white or black socks (no visible logos)
- Black, white, or black/white shoes (laces, Velcro, buckles, or loafers)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan in cold weather

Girls' Mass Uniform – Grades K–8 (1 day/week)

- $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve white blouse with ICS logo
- Grey skort (within 2 inches of knee)
- ICS Navy criss-cross tie (worn properly)
- Solid white or black socks (no visible logos)
- Black, white, or black/white shoes (laces, Velcro, buckles, loafers, Mary Janes; no heels)
- Undergarments must not be visible through the blouse

Cold Weather:

- Navy, white, or black solid tights (footed)
- Green ICS sweatshirt or navy ICS cardigan

Enrollment

Non-Discrimination Policy

- Incarnation Catholic School (ICS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

Admission Policy and Process

ICS has an open admission policy. To ensure a strong school-student fit, the admissions process includes:

- Review of academic and conduct records.
- Admissions assessment (primary, elementary, and middle school).
- Student/family interview with the principal.

Admission may be granted or denied at the discretion of the principal to maintain a thriving and supportive learning environment.

Early Learners (Pre-K 3, VPK, Kindergarten)

Early learning programs at ICS follow the same philosophy and expectations as all grade levels.

- **Age Requirements (by Sept. 1):**
 - Pre-K 3: 3 years old and fully toilet-trained
 - VPK: 4 years old
 - Kindergarten: 5 years old
- **Screening & Interview:**
 - Pre-K 3 & VPK: general readiness screening
 - Kindergarten: readiness screening and/or standardized assessment
 - All families meet with school administration

Admission may be denied for just cause.

Registration Requirements

For registration, families must submit:

1. Original birth certificate
2. Report card/testing data (if applicable)
3. Health certificate with Florida immunization compliance

Age Requirements (by Sept. 1):

- Grade 1: 6 years old
- Kindergarten: 5 years old
- VPK: 4 years old

Catholic school transfer students must settle all financial and service-hour obligations at their prior school. Registration is incomplete until all requirements are met. **New students are accepted on a 90-day conditional basis.**

Immunizations

- Florida law requires all students to be immunized. Records must be submitted on the DH 680 form (“blue card”) before the first day of school.

Hillsborough County Immunization Schedule:

- **Pre-K:** Varicella (or proof of disease), Hepatitis B, Hib, DTP, Polio, MMR (age-appropriate doses)
- **K-3:** Varicella (or proof of disease)
- **K-6:** DPT (5 doses), Polio (4 doses), MMR (2 doses), Hepatitis B (series)
- **7-12:** DPT (5 doses), Polio (4 doses), MMR (2 doses), Hepatitis B (series), TD (1 dose)

Consent to Exchange Information

- No information may be shared with outside parties without a signed **Consent to Exchange Confidential Information** form, except in cases of abuse, neglect, endangerment, or medical emergency.
- Questionnaires for physicians or specialists must be submitted to the office for administrative review before being sent to teachers.

Non-Custodial Parents

- ICS abides by the Buckley Amendment regarding access to student records. Non-custodial parents may receive academic and school-related information unless a court order states otherwise.
- **It is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide official court documents to restrict access.**

Special Needs

- Applicants with diagnosed special needs are considered individually. Families must submit relevant psycho-educational or medical documentation.
- A **Student Support Plan (SSP)** may be developed, outlining reasonable accommodations that do not compromise ICS academic standards or place undue burden on resources. Parents initiate the process with the principal and school counselor.

Transfers

- Parents must complete a withdrawal form in person prior to transferring. Records are sent directly to the receiving school once:
- All ICS property (texts, library books, iPad, charger) is returned.
- Tuition, fees, and obligations are paid in full.

No records are released if financial commitments remain outstanding.

Withdrawal Policy

- Enrollment at ICS reflects a mutual commitment between school and family. Withdrawals should only occur after careful consideration and consultation. Parents must provide written notice. Tuition is charged through the withdrawal date; registration, technology, and graduation fees are non-refundable.

Eligibility for Re-admittance:

- May be granted for withdrawals due to relocation, financial hardship, or mutual agreement with ICS administration. Families must provide 30 days' notice when possible.

Ineligibility for Re-admittance: Occurs if withdrawal is due to:

- Policy or disciplinary violations.
- Multiple withdrawals without valid cause.
- Unresolved conflict undermining the parent-school relationship.
- Extreme cases requiring immediate withdrawal.

School Hours:

- Faculty: 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM
- Students (full day): 7:45 AM – 3:00 PM
- Students (half day): 7:45 AM – 12:00 PM
- School Office: 7:45 AM – 3:30 PM
- Extended Care (full days): 3:20 PM – 6:00 PM

Field Trips

Throughout the year, students may have the opportunity to participate in field trips that enrich their learning. To be eligible, students must maintain satisfactory conduct and complete all assigned work. Students must travel to and from the field trip destination with the group.

- Each field trip requires a signed parental permission slip. Telephone calls cannot substitute for written permission.
- Transportation will be provided by a chartered bus or designated parent chaperones. At the discretion of ICS, parent chaperones may drive students in their own vehicles. In some cases, students may walk to nearby destinations.
- All parent chaperones must meet Safe Environment Guidelines and have current clearances before participating.
- Chaperones must follow the itinerary provided by the teacher. Please note that the number of chaperones may be limited. Selection is based on the number of students a parent can safely transport or on a first-come basis. ICS administration and faculty reserve the right to determine final chaperone assignments.
- Younger siblings are not permitted on field trips.

Fundraising

Fundraising using the school's name or premises must first be approved by the principal. The purpose of fundraising activities must support the mission of Incarnation Catholic School. The school relies on fundraising activities to help defray the cost of educating your child/ren.

Illness & Injury

If a student becomes ill or injured during the school day or in after care, a parent or designated emergency contact will be notified immediately.

- **Medication:** Teachers may not administer medications, including aspirin, Advil, or cough drops. All medications must be in the original container, with a doctor's instructions and parent signature, and administered through the school office. EpiPens and emergency inhalers may require special consideration; a doctor's note is required for a student to carry these medications.
- **First Aid:** ICS staff provide basic first aid only. They may not treat injuries that occurred at home, change bandages applied by a physician, diagnose, or provide treatments beyond first aid.

Physicals & Immunizations

- Students must comply with Florida and Hillsborough County requirements for physical exams and immunizations.
- Pre-K, Kindergarten, and students transferring from out of state must provide current forms before the school year begins.
- Seventh-grade students must have required immunizations.
- Sports physicals are required for participation in ICS extracurricular sports.

Emergency Information

Parents must complete an online emergency form for each child in FACTS, noting allergies, limitations, or regular medications. Forms must be updated as needed.

Sick Policy

- Do not send a sick child to school. Students exhibiting symptoms that prevent normal participation must stay home.
- If a child becomes ill at school, parents are expected to pick up their child within one hour. If unavailable, the emergency contact will be called.

Symptoms Requiring Exclusion from School

- Fever: 100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F orally
- Fever with sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion
- Diarrhea: 2 or more loose stools in 4 hours, or bloody stools
- Vomiting: 2 or more episodes in 24 hours
- Breathing difficulties, continuous coughing, sore throat, or swollen glands
- Lice, rashes, or any signs of contagious illness
- Excessive irritability, crying, or need for attention that compromises care for other students

Students may return after being **symptom-free and fever-free for at least 24 hours** without medication.

Retention / Summer School Policy

At Incarnation Catholic School (ICS), students are promoted upon satisfactorily completing the assigned curriculum, defined as passing all **core subjects**: Religion, Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.

- **Failure of One Core Subject:** Student must participate in a remedial program.
- **Failure of Two Core Subjects:** Remediation or retention will be determined by the principal.
- **Failure of Three or More Core Subjects:** Retention may be required.

Failure is defined as failing the entire year in a core course.

Remediation Guidelines:

1. Remediation must be completed through one of the following:
 - A Catholic school within the Diocese of St. Petersburg,
 - A certified teacher approved by the principal (not the current or future subject teacher), or
 - A program approved by the principal.
2. Before the next school year begins, the principal must receive:
 - Verification of attendance, and
 - Proof of proficiency (work samples, test scores).

Failure to meet remediation requirements will result in retention.
3. Documentation:
 - Original failing grades remain on the permanent record.
 - Proof of proficiency is recorded separately.
4. **Transfer Students:** Must meet the remediation guidelines of the originating school.

After remediation, the principal may administer further assessment to determine proper placement.

Note: Students with existing Student Support Plans will be reviewed individually through the Student Support Team process.

Safety and Security

Animals

For the safety of all students, no pets from home may be brought to school for show and tell or for any other reason. The only exception is for service and therapy animals (e.g., guide dogs or support animals) as protected by civil law. Class pets in cages are permitted with teacher supervision.

Child Abuse Reporting

The faculty and staff of ICS are morally and legally mandated to protect the safety of every child. The State of Florida requires that any professional working with children report suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, or endangerment of a child to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Teachers and staff are trained to recognize signs of abuse and neglect.

- If a staff member suspects abuse, they are *required* to report it to DCF.

- It is not the school's role to investigate; DCF determines whether an investigation is needed.
- Professionals acting in good faith are protected by law when making a report.
- Once a report is filed, the investigation belongs to DCF and law enforcement. The school will follow all directives from these agencies.
- **Harassment Policy**
ICS is committed to a Christian, supportive, and professional school community. The Diocese of St. Petersburg prohibits harassment of any kind. ICS will address all credible allegations in accordance with diocesan policy.

Hurricane Preparedness

- Per diocesan policy, if a **Hurricane Warning** is issued, ICS will close for the duration of the warning. Two closure days are forgiven; any beyond that must be made up on designated **Hurricane Make-Up Days** shown on the school calendar.
- While ICS often follows Hillsborough County school closures, the principal (in consultation with the Superintendent and Pastor) may decide to close or remain open independently for the safety of the community.

Insurance

- Every ICS student is covered under secondary accident insurance provided by the Diocese of St. Petersburg. This coverage is included in annual school fees and applies to all school activities, including travel between home and school.
- All accidents must be reported to the ICS office so that claim forms can be filed.

Medications, Illness, Injuries, Lice

- Students should not attend school if they have a fever or were ill the previous night.
- If a child becomes ill or injured at school, parents will be called to pick them up. Parents must ensure emergency contact information is always up to date.
- A physician's note is required to excuse a student from physical education and again to clear them for participation.
- **Parents must personally deliver all medications** (prescription and over the counter) to the office, with a completed Medication Authorization Form signed by both the parent and the physician. Students may not carry medication.
- Special health needs (e.g., asthma, severe allergies, diabetes, chronic illness) must be documented with the office, and emergency medications supplied to the clinic or classroom as needed. Teachers should also be informed.
- Head lice must be treated before a student may return to school. Parents must accompany the child to the office after treatment, and the child will be re-examined. Students must be completely free of lice and nits to return.
- ICS is not authorized to administer special treatments, procedures, or therapies. Parents must make arrangements to administer those personally. In emergencies requiring immediate care, the school will call 911 and then notify parents.

Safe Social Environment

- ICS is committed to protecting the dignity and well-being of all students, staff, and families. This includes respecting appropriate physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual boundaries in all interactions.

Safety Patrols

- Student Safety Patrols assist with arrival and dismissal. All students and parents are expected to follow their directions and established traffic procedures:
- Drive slowly and remain vigilant.

- Yield to pedestrians.
- Do not block traffic, pass cars, or exit your vehicle.
- Ensure students exit from the passenger side only.
- Remain courteous, patient, and cooperative with patrols and staff.

Smoke & Substance-Free Environment

- ICS is a smoke-free, tobacco-free, alcohol-free, and vape-free environment.
- These substances are not permitted on school grounds during school hours or school-sponsored events.

Search and Seizure

- To maintain safety and security, ICS reserves the right to search desks, lockers, students, and personal belongings when necessary to protect the well-being of the school community.

School Organizations

School Advisory Council (SAC): Comprised of parents, parishioners, and community members, the SAC advises the principal on school matters. Interested participants should contact the principal.

Home & School Association (HSA): This organization supports ICS through fundraising, parent engagement, and assistance to faculty and staff. Contributions of time, talent, and treasure are valued.

Student Council: Encourages student involvement and promotes:

- School spirit
- Student expression
- Positive faculty-student relations
- Leadership development
- Publicity for school activities
- Fundraising and community programs

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS): NJHS fosters academic enthusiasm, service, character, citizenship, and Catholic values.

Eligibility:

- No referrals, detentions, or suspensions during the application year
- Meets grade-level, attendance, and GPA requirements
- Demonstrates service, leadership, citizenship, and character

Telephone Calls

ICS phone lines must remain available for school business. Students may only use the phone with permission and only in cases of emergency or illness. Forgotten items such as homework or supplies do not constitute an emergency. Students are responsible for being prepared each day.

Visitors

All parents and visitors must sign in at the front office using the Raptor Technology system and wear a visible badge while on campus during school hours. This includes volunteers and attendees at meetings. Visitors may not roam the campus without a specific purpose or school-related business.

Volunteer Information

Classroom Parent:

Classroom parents serve as a communication link between the teacher and parents, sharing school information, promoting events, and representing parent concerns. The CP helps engage families in school and parish life and assists with the Buddy Family program.

Volunteer Requirements:

Per the Diocese of St. Petersburg, anyone working with children must maintain a complete Volunteer File, which includes a completed application, cleared fingerprints, and Safe Environment training. This is required for classroom help, field trips, cafeteria assistance, or coaching. Please contact the School Office for details.

Volunteer Hours:

- Two-parent families: 20 hours per school year or \$25 per hour in lieu of service.
- Single-parent families: 10 hours per school year or \$25 per hour. (Single-parent is defined as one parent deceased or living outside Hillsborough County.)
- Of the required hours, five must support major fundraisers Remaining hours may be completed at other approved events listed on Mobile Serve.
- Only the event chair, principal, HSA Leadership Team member, or Director of Advancement & Engagement may validate hours.
- Hours are tracked through Mobile Serve and must be completed by May 1. Families who do not complete or pay for hours by May 15 will have report cards and records withheld.

CHANGE POLICY

This handbook communicates ICS policies and practices but may not capture all procedures, including those passed by oral tradition. Parents and students agree to follow both written and necessary oral policies. ICS reserves the right to update policies at any time and will communicate changes via letters, newsletters, the website, FACTS, or other communication channels.

“In Unity We are One in the Lord”



*A Code of Conduct
for
Parents, Guardians, Caregivers,
Volunteers, and Visitors
of Catholic Schools
in the
Diocese of Saint Petersburg*

“Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart”

-Psalm 139

This **Code of Conduct** is designed to guide all stakeholders in their dealings with staff, other parents, students, and the wider school community regarding Catholic schools and school-sponsored activities, meetings, and/or functions within and outside of school hours.

The Catholic school is a multifaceted organization comprising a diversity of populations that have distinctive relationships to one another. Relationships are at the very core of our Catholic Christian belief in our Triune (three persons in one) God. The Holy Trinity is God in relationship! This beautiful doctrine inspires all of us in Catholic Schools, to attempt to be a living Christian community in relationship with God and others. It is essential in such a community that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. “All rights have to be balanced by responsibilities because we are in relationship” (Putney, 2005).

The responsibility for promoting and upholding these core values of the school community must fall on all those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions. Therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers/volunteers and visitors always model acceptable behavior within the school setting, at school sponsored activities, or when the school can be involved in any social or professional media. “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; and in fulfilling their duty, teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem” (*The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 796, Para. 2).

As a parent, celebrate that you play a foundational role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equity, and worth together with all members of the school community. You are one of the most instrumental role models within your child's life. “Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators” (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1965, para. 3).

In living out the Gospel values, we strive to create a safe environment for all stakeholders developing:

- Christian attitude and behavior towards all people
- An ability to appreciate the situation of others
- Cooperation and ability to work civilly with others
- Open, positive, and honest communication
- A reverence for Creation
- Trusting relationships
- Responsible actions

Expectations for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors

As a member of our Catholic school community, we ask that you:

- Support the philosophy and mission of Catholic education in both words and actions.
- Partner with the school to promote the well-being and success of all students.
- Communicate respectfully and constructively with school staff, without disrupting school operations.
- Encourage and support your child's education through praise, engagement, and modeling a positive attitude.
- Promote healthy problem-solving and help your child understand the value of doing their best rather than comparing themselves to others.
- Listen to your child's perspective while remaining open to other interpretations of events.
- Foster a respectful and collaborative relationship with teachers; share concerns in a constructive manner.

- Support school policies as outlined in the handbook and website both in school and at home.
- Work cooperatively with staff if your child's behavior does not meet school standards, following proper communication protocols.
- Refrain from gossip, hearsay, and negative commentary, including on social media.
- Interact respectfully with staff, students, and other community members at all times.
- Uphold the reputation of the school, particularly when using social media.
- Do not smoke or use offensive language on school premises or at school events.

Your Rights as a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, or Visitor

You have the right to:

- Be treated with respect, courtesy, and professionalism by staff, students, and other parents.
- Clear communication regarding your child's education and development.
- Have your confidentiality respected in sensitive matters.
- Receive a timely, appropriate response to concerns.

Guidelines for Conduct

- Advocate for the school and be mindful of how social media can impact others and the school's reputation.
- Never approach another student to discuss or discipline them. Refer concerns to staff.
- Respect faculty/staff and their professional time; schedule appointments for discussions.
- Use respectful communication, including in emails, online platforms, and social media.
- Follow the school's outlined procedures and chain of command for resolving concerns or conflicts.
- When volunteering or attending events, follow the direction of the supervising teacher or staff member.
- Participate respectfully in school liturgies and events, supporting the communal life of the school

Communication Process for a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

Our Catholic schools want to work in partnership with our families. If anyone has a **current complaint, criticism, or concern***, it is expected the following steps be followed:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved (e.g., class teacher) first and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. Where/if possible, make an appointment with the relevant person.
2. If for some reason this is not possible, then make an appointment to meet with an administrator or parish priest, following the specific school's established chain of command.
3. The Administrator should attempt to mediate and find a resolution in the presence of both parties.
4. If, having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction, you may complete the Parent Concern Form found on the website of the Diocese of St. Petersburg - Office of Catholic Schools and Centers for further facilitation.

* If your concern relates to allegations of physical or sexual abuse by a faculty/staff member towards a child, you should immediately contact the **Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Mr. Chris Pastura**, at ocsc@dosp.org and the **Florida Department of Children and Families Abuse Hotline 1-800-962-2873**.

By accepting enrollment at a Catholic School in the Diocese of Saint Petersburg, parents, guardians, and/or caregivers agree to abide by this Code of Conduct in full. Deliberate breaches and/or demonstrated inability to comply with these guidelines, may result in exclusion of a parent, guardian, caregiver, volunteer, and/or visitor from a school, and/or disenrollment of their child/ren.



Incarnation Catholic School

All students represent Incarnation Catholic School, their families, and themselves. ICS students should reflect on Jesus Christ through their words and actions. In doing this, there are high standards that we hold our students to when using all technology. We remind students to be the face of Christ in all their interactions in person and online. This agreement provides students and their families with clear and concise guidelines regarding properly using school-issued devices. AUP (Acceptable Use Policy)

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

All students represent Incarnation Catholic School, their families, and themselves. ICS students are called to reflect Jesus Christ through their words and actions, both in person and online. Because of this, we hold high standards for the use of technology. This agreement provides students and their families with clear guidelines regarding the proper use of school-issued devices.

General Expectations

- iPads and computers are tools for school purposes only. Misuse will result in disciplinary action.
- Devices taken home must be charged nightly to ensure sufficient battery for the school day.
- Students may bring chargers to school but are expected to begin the day with a fully charged device.
- All technology is the property of ICS. Devices must be returned immediately if requested. Each device may only be used by the student who signed the agreement.

Prohibited Uses (*unless permission is granted by faculty or administration)

- Social media and direct messaging applications
- YouTube, Spotify, WhatsApp, Netflix, Discord, gaming sites, or social profiles
- Audio or video recording without prior permission from all parties involved
- Inappropriate or copyrighted media as screensavers or wallpapers

Network and Internet Use

- The school network may not be used for personal or private business (e.g., online shopping).
- Inappropriate materials (pornographic, violent, extremist, gambling, harassing, etc.) are strictly prohibited.
- All sources used in assignments must be properly cited in compliance with copyright law.

- Plagiarism (using text, graphics, music, movies, etc. without credit) is prohibited.
- If a student accidentally accesses offensive or inappropriate material, they must notify a teacher immediately.
- Students may not share personal information (name, phone number, address, etc.) online unless absolutely certain of the recipient's identity.
- Passwords and usernames must never be shared.

Privacy and Monitoring

- While the school respects privacy, stored files and email accounts may be inspected if inappropriate use, harassment, or handbook violations are suspected.
- Random checks of student devices may be conducted throughout the year.

Cyberbullying

Is strictly prohibited and includes, but is not limited to:

- Sending or posting false, cruel, or harmful messages
- Creating or sharing cartoons, stories, pictures, or jokes that ridicule others
- Hacking into accounts to embarrass or harm others
- Tricking someone into revealing personal information and sharing it
- Posting a student's picture without permission

Consequences

- Violations of the AUP may result in consequences such as:
 - Loss of device privileges for a set period of time
 - Disciplinary action by administration
 - Possible legal action
- Repeated violations may result in permanent loss of access to school-issued devices.
- Parents are responsible for repairs if a device screen is cracked; replacement must be arranged directly with Apple, including paying the deductible.
- Students are expected to report any known violations to school staff.

Agreement

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Incarnation Catholic School Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to cooperate with the school in the interpretation and enforcement of these guidelines. I understand that policies are subject to change at the school's discretion, with or without notice.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



Incarnation Catholic School

2026–2027 Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

As parent or legal guardian, I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the **Incarnation Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook**.

I understand the following:

- The handbook contains the rules, policies, and expectations of Incarnation Catholic School.
- The school reserves the right to initiate, change, or modify these policies as needed.
- The administration has the ultimate authority to interpret and enforce all school rules and policies.
- All policies, whether written or communicated verbally, are guidelines subject to change at the school's sole discretion with or without prior notice.

I agree to cooperate with the school in supporting and upholding the policies outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the handbook and agree to abide by its policies.

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____

Student Name (Print): _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Name (Print): _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Name (Print): _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Name (Print): _____ **Grade:** _____

Date: _____



Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Grades K-3

Academic Year 2026-2027

Purpose

The purpose of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that all technology resources are used safely, responsibly, ethically, and in a manner consistent with the mission and values of our Catholic school.

Use of school technology is a privilege, not a right. Students who use school-owned devices anywhere or personally owned devices at school are expected to follow this policy and all school rules.

Student Honor Code (Grades K-3)

Teachers/Parents: Please read and discuss these simple points with younger students.

My Digital Promise 🌻

1. **I will be kind.** I will use technology in ways that are Christ-like. I will not use my device to say mean things to others.
2. **I will take care of my device.** I will keep food and drinks away from it, carry it with two hands, and treat it gently.
3. **I will only use apps and websites approved by my teacher.** I will not search for things that are scary or inappropriate.
4. **I will protect my passwords.** I will never share my passwords or type my name, email, phone number, or address online without asking a teacher or parent first.
5. **I will ask for help.** If I see something on my screen that makes me feel uncomfortable or sad, I will close the screen and tell an adult right away.

Privacy

Students should have no expectation of privacy when using school technology.

The school reserves the right to:

- Monitor internet usage.
- Review files stored on school devices or school accounts.
- Access emails and digital communications.
- Inspect devices used on the school's network when permitted by law.

Monitoring is conducted to protect students, maintain network security, and ensure compliance with school policies.



Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Grs. 4-8

Academic Year: 2026-2027

Purpose

The purpose of this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to ensure that all technology resources are used safely, responsibly, ethically, and in a manner consistent with the mission and values of our Catholic school.

Use of school technology is a privilege, not a right. Students who use school-owned devices anywhere or personally owned devices at school are expected to follow this policy and all school rules.

Student Honor Code (Grades 4-8)

Respect Yourself & Others (Digital Citizenship)

- **Kindness Online:** I will use technology in ways that reflect Catholic values of respect, honesty, kindness, and integrity. I will not engage in cyberbullying. I will not use school technology to harass, tease, intimidate, or exclude others.
- **Classroom Courtesy:** I will only use devices during designated times. I will not record video, audio, or take photos of students or staff without their explicit permission and teacher supervision. I will not access websites, applications, and resources unless approved by the teacher or school.
- **Digital Footprint:** I understand that once something is posted online, it can be permanent. I will not post or send anything I wouldn't want my teachers, parents, or future schools to see.

Protect Personal Safety & Security

- **Password Privacy:** I will keep my passwords private and will never log in under another student's account.
- **Personal Information:** I will never share my name, email, phone number, address, birthday, or location online without permission from a parent or teacher. I will not share personal information about classmates or staff without permission.
- **Safety Alerts:** If I receive a message or see content that makes me feel uncomfortable, threatened, or concerned for my safety, I will report it to a staff member or parent immediately.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence tools may be valuable learning resources when used responsibly. Students may use AI only when permitted by the teacher.

Students may not:

- Submit AI-generated work as their own.
- Use AI during quizzes, tests, or assignments where independent work is required.
- Use AI to create harmful, inappropriate, or misleading content.
- Enter confidential or personal information into AI tools.

Students are expected to acknowledge AI assistance when required by the teacher.

Internet Safety

Students will:

- Notify a teacher immediately if they encounter inappropriate material.
- Never arrange to meet someone they met online.
- Never respond to inappropriate online messages.
- Use caution when communicating online.
- Respect the privacy of others.

Respect School Property & Network

- **Care of Equipment:** I will treat school devices carefully. I will not modify device settings, attempt to bypass internet filters, or download unauthorized software/extensions. I will keep food and drink away from my device and others. I will report damages immediately to a school staff member.
 - Intentional damage or negligent misuse may result in financial responsibility for repair or replacement.
- **No Hacking:** I will not attempt to access accounts, files or networks that do not belong to me.
- **Honest Work:** I will not plagiarize. I will cite my sources and give credit when using images, text, or ideas found on the internet.

School Email and Communication

School email accounts and communication platforms are provided for educational purposes and may only be used as authorized by the teachers.

Privacy

Students should have no expectation of privacy when using school technology.

The school reserves the right to:

- Monitor internet usage.
- Review files stored on school devices or school accounts.
- Access emails and digital communications.
- Inspect devices used on the school's network when permitted by law.

Monitoring is conducted to protect students, maintain network security, and ensure compliance with school policies.

Consequences of Misuse

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in:

1. Temporary or permanent loss of technology privileges.
2. School disciplinary action (in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct).
3. Financial responsibility for damaged equipment.
4. Referral to law enforcement when required by law

The school administration will determine appropriate consequences based on the severity and frequency of the violation.

Parent & Guardian Responsibilities

Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- Discuss responsible technology use with their child
- Realize the parental responsibility to monitor technology usage outside school hours.
 - If their child is the recipient of inappropriate emails, images, etc., it is the parents responsibility to contact the police.
- Reinforce expectations of digital citizenship.

- Report concerns regarding online safety to the school.

Parents and guardians understand:

- **Web Filtering:** In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the school utilizes internet filters to block inappropriate, obscene, or harmful content. However, no filter is 100% effective, and I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the network.
- **Financial Liability:** Parents/guardians may be held financially responsible for the full repair or replacement cost of school-issued devices if damage is caused by negligence, abuse, or intentional misconduct.
- **Device Take-Home Policy (If Applicable):** If my child is permitted to bring a school device home, I will supervise its use and ensure it is returned fully charged each school day.

Signatures & Consent

Student Signature (Grades 4-8):

I have read (or had read to me) the Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to follow these rules when using technology at school or home.

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature:

I have reviewed this policy with my child and give permission for my child to access the school network, device programs, and the internet.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____