

# **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy Family Handbook 2020-2021**



**Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy**  
45-11 245<sup>th</sup> Street Douglaston, New York 11362

**School Office:** 718-631-3153

**School Fax:** 718-631-3945

**Web site:** [www.dwcaonline.org](http://www.dwcaonline.org)

**E-mail address:** [dwisdom@dwcaonline.org](mailto:dwisdom@dwcaonline.org)

**Office Hours:** 8:00am – 3:30pm Monday through Friday

**St Anastasia Religious Ed. Office:** 718-225-5191

**School Hours:**

**Nursery:**           **Full-Day:**           **8:00am – 2:30pm; (Monday through Friday)**  
                          **AM session:**       **8:00am – 11:00am; (Monday through Friday)**  
                          **PM session:**       **12:00noon–2:30pm**  
  **(Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)**

**PKA:**               **8:00am – 2:20pm (Monday through Friday)**

**Kindergarten:**   **8:00am – 2:30pm (Monday through Friday)**

**Grades 1 – 8:**     **8:00am – 2:45pm (Monday through Friday)**

# Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy Staff 2020 – 2021 School Year

## Board of Directors

Robert Schirling, Chairperson  
Peter Ermish, Vice Chairperson  
Patricia Zaccone, Treasurer  
Kathleen Furlong, Secretary  
Carolyn Meenan  
James Peveraro  
Sherise Elmore  
Suzanne Karl

## Administration

Miriam Bonici, Principal  
Linda Keppel, Associate Principal  
Sylvia Roccia, Early Childhood Director  
Frank Signorello, STEM Director  
  
Nicole Moskowitz, Guidance Counselor  
Mary O'Byrne, Bookkeeper  
Debra Fasciana, Executive Admin. Assistant  
Jennifer Sandoval, Operations Manager

## Faculty

8-1	Juliana Carron	8-2	Patricia Murphy-Lynch	8-3	Katherine Kurre
7-1	Lorie McClain	7-2	Karen Ann Carrella		
6-1	Gina Savage	6-2	Joanna Lombardi		
5-1	Lisa Pospischil	5-2	Faith Delmonte		
4-1	Anne Iveagh	4-2	Laura DiMarcello		
3-1	Suzanne McCarthy	3-2	Veronica Penny		
2-1	Genevieve Cheng	2-2	Laura DiMarcello		
1-1	Patricia Van Buskirk	1-2	Christine Landers		
K-1	Vanessa DeVito	K-2	Kristina Seise		
PreK-1	Lisa Blanco	PreK-2	Christina Buscemi	PreK-3	Maria DeNardo

Nursery Stacy Cannella

Learning Lab	Christine Collins Kerri Okula
Spanish	Maria Lago
Art	Daniela Filiberti
Phys. Ed	Matthew Russo
Music	Anthony Russo
Technology	Michelle Kurzyna

Teaching Assistants: Isabel Alcantara  
Aurora Brunetti-Lihac  
Manuela Ficuciello  
Marie Loftus  
Mirtia Torres

# Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy

**Divine Wisdom Catholic** endeavors to provide a Christ-centered education that is academically rigorous and empowers students to reach their full potential – spiritually, intellectually, morally, physically, and socially. Our goal is to nurture each student’s ability in developing their gifts to be used in lifelong service, following Jesus’ example through prayer, service and love.

Based upon Jesus’ teachings, all members of the Academy are striving to live like Jesus lived, love like Jesus loved and believe like Jesus believed.

**Divine Wisdom’s** students are asked:

- ❖ To develop a truly Christian attitude in all activities and relationships with adults and other students.
- ❖ To be courteous and considerate to others.
- ❖ To maintain a respectful and academic atmosphere in the classrooms, large gathering spaces, outside during lunchtime recess, and while changing classes in the hallways.
- ❖ To treat the entire **Academy** community with dignity and respect.
- ❖ To extend courtesy and respect to guests and visitors of the **Academy**.
- ❖ To carry this philosophy of discipleship into the community.

The **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** community continually seeks new ways for our students to develop their intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical gifts to their fullest potential. We want their educational experience at the Academy to provide them with all the tools they will need for the role they will play in carrying the message of Jesus into the world now and in the future. We want them to understand that they can make a difference in the world, and it is their Christian duty and responsibility to do so with compassion and respect for all.

## Attendance

There is a high correlation between academic success and school attendance. Prompt, regular attendance has a marked influence on student achievement. Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule vacation days in accordance with the official school calendar.

Please make sure your child arrives to school on time. **All students are to be in their homeroom classrooms no later than 8:00 am. Parents in seventh and eighth grade are encouraged to check attendance and lateness monthly.**

**When a child is late** it becomes a bad way to start the day for the child and a disruption to the teacher and other students in the class. Some of the consequences for chronic lateness will be: privileges being revoked, detention and mandatory parent conference.

### When a child is absent:

- It is the responsibility of the child to make up assignments, projects and tests missed during any absence. Homework and class assignments will be emailed or posted on class pages. All work must be completed upon the student's return.
- Reporting a child's absence is required. For the 2020-2021 school year, all reporting is to be completed on-line, using the parent tab on the **Academy** website. Please send an email to [dwisdom@dwcaonline.org](mailto:dwisdom@dwcaonline.org). Parent will be contacted to verify absence.
- New York State Education law requires a written note to be submitted to the school via the homeroom teacher. School absence note may be printed from the parent tab to record the dates and reason for the absence. **Please note that if a note has not been submitted by the end of the month, the absence will be recorded as an illegal absence on student permanent record.**
- For three or more consecutive days of absence a doctor's note is required.

## Dismissal Procedures

For the safety of the children, each student is assigned to a specific place to be at dismissal. Students may not arbitrarily leave with a different teacher, or on a different line. If a student normally takes a bus home, but the parent/guardian intends to pick him/her up one day, **a note or email from the parent/guardian must be sent to the homeroom teacher that morning.** If a student who is normally picked up at dismissal, but is to remain in the afterschool program that day, **a note or email from the parent/guardian must be sent to the homeroom teacher that morning.** If a student is going home with a friend, neighbor or other family member, **this must be communicated in writing to the homeroom teacher that morning.**

Any changes from the regular dismissal procedures should be addressed in a note or email to the homeroom teacher, who will forward the note/information to the school office.

## **Early Dismissal**

We encourage parents to make their children's doctor, dentist, and any other appointments **after** school, or on school breaks; leaving school early or during the school day interrupts a child's learning, which is impossible to make up.

If a student must leave school **before** dismissal, he/she must bring a note from a parent or an email must be sent to their homeroom teacher at entry. Included in this request should be the student's name and class/grade, the reason for the early dismissal, the name of the person who will pick up the student, and the time requesting to leave. The person who comes for the student needs to meet the student in the school office and sign him/her out. Students sent home sick by the school nurse must also be signed out in the office.

## **Emergency Information**

Emergency contact information is collected electronically at the start of the school year. It is essential that the electronic survey be completed promptly and accurately. Any changes that occur in this information over the course of the school year must be reported to the administrative staff immediately. **Inaccurate information impacts your child's safety and security.** Lastly, only adults listed on the emergency contact sheet are authorized to take a child from school.

## **Emergency School Closing**

In the event it is necessary to close school due to an emergency, or inclement weather, there may be a general announcement that all schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn are closed, or we will have the closing will receive an email blast, text and information will also be posted on the **Academy** website (<http://www.dwcaonline.org>)

**Please do not telephone St. Anastasia Rectory.**

If the NYC Public Schools close due to weather, **Divine Wisdom** will automatically close.

## **Email Correspondences/Blasts/Texts**

It is extremely important that the school offices are aware of each family's email address and cellphone number. Weekly throughout the school year, email blasts and texts will be sent out. All families are to have access to the information being sent out.

## **Calls to the School**

Calls cannot be taken for children except in a real emergency. If a family plan changes, it is a parent/guardian's responsibility to make arrangements that do not involve the school office. Children are not permitted to make phone calls from the school office, except in a real

emergency. Children are **never** to use a cell phone during the school day to communicate with a parent/guardian.

## **Bus Behavior**

As **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** has grown, so has the number of students taking school, private and NYC buses. Below is a listing of bus behavior expectations and protocols:

- Please be cooperative and courteous to the bus driver.
- Observe the same conduct/behavior on the bus as in classroom; all **Academy** policies apply as well on the bus.
- Stay in your seat at all times, and keep your hands to yourself. People in the community are known to call the office to report dangerous behavior.
- Keep the bus clean. Make sure all papers and belongings leave with you at the end of the ride.
- Eating and drinking are allowed **only** with the direct permission of the bus driver.
- Nothing can be thrown out of the windows, including garbage.
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- The bus driver has the authority over the conduct/behavior on the bus, and is authorized to assign seats.
- Illegal or dangerous items are not allowed on the bus.

Bus privileges may be suspended for inappropriate or uncooperative behavior.

## **Visitors/Forgotten Items**

All visitors/parents/guardians/volunteers **must** enter through the main entrance and sign in at the security desk. While parents are welcome and encouraged to visit, they are asked **never** to interrupt classes. To encourage student responsibility, parents will not be permitted to deliver “forgotten” items. Please note that the **Academy** is not responsible to get “forgotten” homework, sneakers, etc. to a child during the school day. The only exceptions will be eyeglasses, and medication.

If a child has forgotten his or her lunch, a parent is permitted to drop off their child’s lunch by 10:30am to the security desk or office. **No “fast food”** (McDonald’s, or Burger King) is allowed to be brought into the school. All lunches are to be left at the security desk at the front door or on the counter in the office, clearly labelled with your child’s name. **Parents are not allowed to deliver lunch or lunch bags to Father Smith Hall at any time. Ordering and delivery of lunch from local vendors should be done only in emergencies.**

## **Classroom/Student Placement**

**Divine Wisdom** believes that the balance of the students in the classroom is crucial for creating a strong learning environment for all of the children. Many factors are considered in making decisions regarding placement.

At the end of the school year, grade team teachers meet to discuss class composition for the following year. They review students, their grades and overall group dynamics as they recommend and build heterogeneous classes for the following school year. The grade level teachers draft a proposed class list, which is reviewed by administration and finalized. Once the classes are assembled, **changes are not made except for extenuating circumstances.**

**Divine Wisdom's** administration is unable to consider requests regarding specific teachers or classmates.

## **Birthdays \*Please note that due to COVID-19, in-school birthday celebrations will be put on hold for the foreseeable future.**

There are varieties of ways in which we celebrate birthdays at **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy**. Celebrations are at the discretion of the teacher, but may include handmade cards, storytelling, the sharing of a book, etc. In Nursery, parents are invited to participate in the child's celebration during snack time. In Pre-K and Kindergarten, parents/guardians may drop off party goods (cookies, cupcakes, etc, small plates, napkins, etc.) with the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day.

In grades 1-5, parents/guardians may send in cupcakes (or any item of food that does not require cutting or slicing). Please communicate with the homeroom teacher beforehand. Parents/guardians may drop off party goods (cookies, cupcakes, etc, small plates, napkins, etc.) with the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day. In grades 6-8 birthday celebrations are limited to a small treat that the student may distribute during the lunch period.

**The Diocese recommends that all food items shared be store bought. The reason for this rule is strictly to serve as a safety precaution, allowing the school to know the ingredients of any item. We ask that no toys, goody bags, frozen treats, be brought into school.**

**Party invitations are not to be distributed at school, unless the entire class is invited.**

## **Mobile Device Policy**

**Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** administration recognizes that parents provide their children with cell phones for safety reasons. The **Academy** would prefer that students leave cell phones at home. It is important that families establish appropriate cell phone use guidelines, as part of the responsibility for a student possessing a phone.

**If a student brings a cell phone to school, the following conditions apply:**

- **Cell phones must be turned off and concealed in the backpack at all times.**
- Cell phones **may not** be used to take pictures on school grounds for the safety and privacy of our students and staff.
- Students may **not** use their cell phones to call or text to request that their parents deliver a “forgotten” item (e.g. homework, permission slip, etc.).
- Cell phones may be turned on **at the end of school day upon exiting the building.**
- The **Academy** is **not** responsible for lost or stolen phones.
- Bluetooth setting must be turned off during the school day when wearing a Smartwatch.
- Students **may not** wear Smartwatches at the Academy. They have become a very big distraction in class.
- **Cell phones that are seen during the day will be confiscated. A parent/guardian will be required to come to school to retrieve them. Repeated offenses may lead to other disciplinary actions.**

## **Student Internet and Computer Usage Contract**

All students in grades 4 through 8 must read, discuss and sign an agreement to abide by what is written in the contract.

Students are responsible for good behavior on the school computer Internet network. Access to the Internet is provided for students to conduct research for instructional purposes and to communicate with others. It is not being provided to access social websites, chat rooms, instant messaging, or inappropriate websites.

Access to the Internet is provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner, as defined in the contract. Parent/guardian permission is required for Internet access.

Individual users of the school’s Internet network are responsible for their behavior and communications over this network. It is presumed that users will comply with **Divine Wisdom’s** standards and will honor the agreements which they have signed. Individuals will strive to act in all situations with honesty, integrity, and respect for the rights of others.

### **The following are not permitted:**

- Sending, receiving, accessing, or displaying offensive messages, pictures, or other inappropriate material
- Using obscene language

- Accessing chat rooms, instant messaging, games or other items not pertaining to school needs
- Altering another student's work, username or password
- Hacking
- Dissemination of personal information

**Students who have websites, or who post information on a website such as, but not limited to; Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat that portray Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy, or any member of the Academy community in a negative light or threatens any individual will be subject to disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal, even if the posting is done outside of the school during non-school hours.**

- Violations will result in the loss of computer and/or internet access
- Additional disciplinary action will be determined by the nature of the violation, including possible expulsion from the Academy. The final decisions regarding disciplinary actions are made by the school administration

**It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to monitor closely what their children are doing on their computers in the home, as well as cell phone use, so that problems do not carry over to the school.**

## **Communication**

### **With Faculty**

If you have a question or concern about your child's work, progress or behavior, the **Academy** encourages you to contact your child's homeroom, or subject class teacher **first**. This faculty member is the one with the most information and day-to-day contact with your child. If you have specific concerns about your child's work in one of the special area classes (Spanish, art, computer, music, physical education), please contact the teacher of that class.

If there are specific events, problems or changes in your family's usual routine, which may affect your child, please let your child's homeroom teacher know. This will help the teacher better understand and support your child.

### **Social Networking**

All faculty, staff and **Academy** employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship with their students. **Academy** personnel may not engage in cyber-networking with children. It is essential for faculty and staff to establish boundaries where minors and adults are not

properly “friends”. Faculty will not accept **Divine Wisdom** students, or any minors (under 18, or students who have not graduated from high school), who are associated with the **Academy** in their circle of friends on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, not excluding other social media platforms. Students should not be offended if their teacher does not accept these forms of communication from them.

Please be respectful of the privacy of others when posting pictures and information on a personal account. It is always best to contact the other people who might be affected by personal information or photographs of their family being posted. Please remember that the safety of the students is what we continually strive for.

## **Class Trips- due to COVID-19 class trips are cancelled for the foreseeable future.**

Class trips are an important part of **Divine Wisdom’s** curricular work. Teachers organize and arrange trips to coincide with the topic they are teaching. Therefore, trips are not optional excursions. They will range from walks around the neighborhood, to visits to the City’s cultural institutions, such as museums, cultural institutions, historical landmarks, and theaters. Classes will travel on foot, or by school bus, chartered bus, railroad, depending on the student level and destination.

Teachers will notify families of upcoming trips and provide specific information on lunch, transportation, trip costs, etc.

Teachers will also request parent chaperones to accompany the class and assist in supervision. Parent chaperones play a vital role in maintaining the safety and educational value of the trip. **ALL TRIPS MUST BE PAID WITH A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER MADE OUT TO DWCA.**

## **“Rules of the Road” for parent chaperones...**

- All field trip chaperones must be Virtus trained, as per Diocesan guidelines. Please use [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) to register for training.
- Follow the directions of the teacher who organized the trip.
- Turn off your cell phone and put it away.
- Limit adult socializing.
- Do not bring siblings of any age, this is a liability as well as a safety issue.
- Do not purchase souvenirs or food for your child, or any students unless requested to do so by the teacher.
- Remember that you are chaperoning and are there for all the students, not just your child.
- All students must return to the **Academy** at the conclusion of the field trip, even if you are chaperoning the trip.

## Health and Safety

**Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** has a full time nurse assigned every day, and is available to students as needed. Minor injuries are cared for at the school. For more severe illnesses or injuries, the nurse will notify parents to have the child taken to the doctor. In emergency cases, the school will be required to call for an ambulance. Parents/guardians will always be notified of a serious problem. **Divine Wisdom** follows N.Y.C. Department of Health policies and protocols for all health related issues.

The school nurse can be contacted at: 1.718.746.2539. If you cannot get through, call the school number, and you will be transferred to the Nurse's office.

## Keeping Children Home...

- Any child with a fever of 100 degrees or higher, and/or two or more flu-like symptoms must be kept home for 24 hours after a normal temperature has returned.
- If a child has a fever in the morning before school, he/she should not be given Tylenol, or any fever reducing medication and sent to school.
- Any child with vomiting or diarrhea should be kept home for 24 hours after the last symptom.
- Pink eye is contagious—a child must have a doctor's note to return to school.

By keeping your child home, you are not only helping him/her to get well faster, you are also preventing the illness from spreading to other members of the **Academy** community. Let the **Academy** know as soon as possible that your child is ill. When your child returns to school, please give him/her a note for the teacher explaining the absence.

## Prescription and Over the Counter Medications

If your child requires prescription medication during the school day, a written note from the doctor is to be provided to the nurse, along with the medication in its original container with the child's name and the name of the medication on the bottle. A 504 medical form is required to be filled out by the child's doctor, and signed by the child's parents. Forms are available in the Nurse's office.

A child who feels ill in the middle of the school day will be given a pass and escorted to the nurse's office. If it is determined that the child needs to leave school for the day, a parent/guardian will be contacted to take the child home.

Teachers are not allowed to administer medication to students, even with a doctor's note. **Students are not allowed to take medications on their own.** All requests must be referred to the school nurse.

## **Injuries**

A doctor's note is required for any child who comes to school wearing a splint, cast or other appliance. A medical note is also required for any restrictions on physical activities. This includes restrictions and limits for gym, movement and outdoor recess. **Students who are injured and require crutches may not return to school until they can safely move around the building without assistance.**

## **Head Lice**

Head lice do not pose a health hazard, transmit disease, or indicate poor hygiene, but they are a disturbing nuisance. Our goal at **Divine Wisdom** is to prevent lice from spreading.

Keeping lice out of school requires a collaborative effort between home and school. Children found with lice (live bugs) will be sent home and can return to school when they are lice free. However, if a child is found with a few nits (eggs) only, she/he can remain in school and should be treated at home.

## **Nut and Other Food Allergies**

Divine Wisdom would like to raise every parent's level of awareness about food allergies that a few of our children have at school. For these students, foods can represent a danger and must be carefully monitored. The welfare and safety of all of our students is Divine Wisdom's top priority.

It is the family's responsibility to notify the Academy of a child's allergies. The family and the school team will then work together to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school day.

While **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** is not able to be entirely "nut free," we request that snacks and other foods brought into the school to share with students are free of peanuts and tree nuts. "Peanut Free" tables are available in Father Smith Hall at lunchtime.

## **Sanitation at Divine Wisdom**

The **Academy** bathrooms need to be safe and clean so that all students are comfortable using them. Families should help encourage children to follow some simple rules:

- Always flush after using the toilet/urinal.
- Toilet paper belongs in the toilet—paper towels belong in the trash. Never throw paper on the floor.
- Always wash hands with soap and water after using the bathroom.
- Report any concerns to your classroom teacher.

Families can take a leading role in ensuring that children's healthy home habits continue in the school. Please take some time to go over these rules with your child!

## Lost and Found

Students are expected and encouraged to respect the property of others, in keeping with the **Academy's** belief in the importance of honesty and citizenship. If anyone finds clothing, lunch boxes, etc., they should take these articles to the Administrative Office. Money, jewelry and books found should also be taken to the office. Anyone who has lost property should check the Lost and Found (located in Father Smith Hall, and in the Administrative Office. It may be necessary to check several times and parents are encouraged to look through the lost items when they are in the building.

**PLEASE LABEL ALL STUDENT PROPERTY!!!!!!**

## Safety

The safety of the **Academy** students in our care is one of **Divine Wisdom's** top priorities. **Divine Wisdom** has an **Emergency Management Plan** on file with the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office and the NYC Police Department. The **Academy** monitors access to the building through vigilance and an electronic security system, and rehearses safe evacuations and emergency drills in the building.

As adults, it is our responsibility to do our best to protect our children from harm one way we do this is by conducting safety drills periodically. In light of our current world situation, we have a comprehensive emergency plan, covering a number of possible situations which may be drilled including fire and lockdown drills.

In the classroom, following a drill and at other appropriate times, the teacher will review the performance of the class and explain the purpose of the drills, emphasizing the importance of following the safety procedures, and stressing the need to follow teacher instructions carefully and quickly.

Fire drills are conducted periodically at different times during the day; so that students and teachers will be adequately prepared if a need for evacuation occurs. This allows for students and faculty to be aware of procedures in any part of the building, or area of the campus.

## Code of Behavior

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

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

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

**Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** students are taught in an atmosphere of cooperation, honesty, and respect for classroom rules and procedures. The rules are determined by the teacher and communicated to students at the beginning of each school year. It is in an atmosphere of mutual respect that students learn in a caring and respectful environment.

Students learn to be responsible, make good choices, and participate in **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** community life which is reflective of their deepening faith and religious development, together with the guidance from their parents/guardians.

Some of the expectations that demonstrate this progression are:

- Being considerate and respectful of other students
- Respecting class and school policies
- Speaking to one another with respect and care
- Speaking and acting respectfully to all adults which includes After School staff
- Controlling anger at all times
- Showing responsibility by doing homework each night and coming prepared for next day's classes
- Arriving at school on time
- Respecting school property, for example: keeping desks neat and clean; cleaning their lockers, picking up garbage around them, etc.

## Code of Behavior (continued)

- Keeping school grounds free of litter and graffiti
- Looking neat and clean at all times
- Respecting the uniform policy

Members of the **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** are taught to show the utmost respect to one another, in words and actions. Pushing, hitting or fighting are not acceptable behaviors. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the parent/guardian being notified, and a meeting set up to discuss a plan of action to improve behavior. Continued hitting or fighting with another student may result in the parent/guardian being asked to remove the child from the academy. This is at the discretion of the principal.

In the past, certain behavior was considered harmless child's play. However, in our world today, the same behavior can be seen as harassing. **Any behavior that can be interpreted as intimidating, humiliating, or disrespectful, whether in word or action is absolutely unacceptable.** This includes any behavior that causes undue trouble, worry or discomfort. The deciding factor is whether a particular phrase, gesture, or behavior is unwelcome by the student or students receiving it or witnessing it.

Harassment of a sexual nature may include notes, letters, drawings and offensive words or comments, spoken privately to a person or in front of others. It also includes unwanted physical contact, as well as non-verbal and non-physical gestures, looks and displaying of suggestive objects, pictures, magazines, etc.

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

- A thorough administrative investigation of all parties involved will take place.
- Students found to have engaged in harassing behavior will face the possibility of exclusion from school activities, suspension and/or expulsion.
- Any student who thinks he or she has been the victim of any type of harassment should report the conduct to an adult.

With rights come responsibilities; when a student does not follow a school policy, he/she must face the consequences of his/her behavior. The consequences differ depending upon the severity of the misbehavior, and/or the number of occurrences of the misbehavior.

A student who behaves in a manner that contradicts school policy may face one or more of the following consequences: a verbal warning; a disciplinary letter sent home; family conference; or detention.

# DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN: ANTI-BULLYING/ HARASSMENT POLICY

## **Communication of Policy:**

On January 18, 2011, the Office of the Superintendent—Catholic School Support Services announced the creation of a Diocesan Anti-Bullying Harassment policy. All members of the various constituencies (staff, students and parents) which make up **Divine Wisdom** are to be apprised of this new policy.

## **Purpose:**

The school communities within the Brooklyn Diocese believe in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Research shows that students who learn in a safe and supportive environment succeed academically. Students have a right to learn in an environment free of any harassment that substantially interferes with their education.

## **Definition:**

**Bullying, bias-based harassment /intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons.** It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal.

If not addressed, bullying can lead to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student's educational opportunities.

The behaviors include but are not limited to:

- **Physical:** physical violence, stalking, threats, aggressive or menacing gestures, exclusion from peer groups which is intended to humiliate or isolate the target (relational bullying)
- **Verbal:** taunts, teasing, derogatory language, derogatory jokes, name calling, slurs, spreading rumors

- **Written/Cyberbullying:** written or graphic material including graffiti containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically written and transmitted via internet, social messaging platforms, blogs, instant messaging, text messages, cell phones, webcam. This would also include forwarding such messages if received.

## Reporting Procedures:

- The targeted student, parent/guardian of a student or other students in the school (bystanders), or any school staff who believe that bullying has occurred should report the incident to the principal.
- The principal needs to conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties separately and make DASA coordinators, comprised of teachers, aware of the incident for further investigation and documentation.
- The parents of all involved students should be notified.
- If it is determined that bullying has occurred the child who bullied is to be subject to consequences per the school's disciplinary code.
- Parents should be advised to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if the situation warrants such a report.
- Referral to counseling should be made for all parties if deemed necessary.
- The principal must follow up to see that the offending conduct has stopped.
- All students should be notified that retaliation against anyone who makes a report will not be tolerated and those that retaliate will be subject to disciplinary actions.

Office of the Superintendent—Catholic School Support Services  
January 18, 2011

## Uniforms

By choosing to attend **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy**, you are agreeing that your child will wear a school uniform. Students are to be in complete uniform at all times. Jewelry is not part of the uniform. Girls may wear posts, or small hoop earrings. Girls are also not permitted to wear make-up. **Only clear or light colored nail polish, or French manicures are allowed. Press on nails or tips are not permitted.** Both boys and girls are required to have neat hairstyles. Hair may not be dyed or use colored hair extensions. Flip flops, backless sandals, mules, etc. may not be worn on dress down, or dress up days. This is for safety reasons.

**ALL UNIFORMS ARE TO BE PURCHASED AT: Flynn and O'Hara: 1.800.441.4122**  
[www.flynnohara.com](http://www.flynnohara.com) (to inquire about store hours and

directions.)

**Boys: Grades: Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup>**

DWCA navy twill pants, short or long sleeve polo shirt in heather gray.  
DWCA gym sweatshirt and sweatpants, t-shirt and shorts.

**Grades: 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>**

DWCA gray flannel pants, short or long sleeve polo shirt in navy blue.  
DWCA gym sweatshirt/sweatpants, t-shirt and shorts, or optional tracksuit.

**Girls: Grade: Kindergarten**

DWCA school skort, short or long sleeve polo shirt in heather gray.  
DWCA gym sweatshirt, sweatpants, t-shirt and shorts.

**Grades: 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup>**

DWCA plaid jumper with school emblem, short or long sleeve polo shirt in heather gray. DWCA gym sweatshirt/sweatpants, t-shirt and shorts.

**Grades: 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>**

DWCA pleated skirt or kilt in school plaid, short or long sleeve polo shirt in navy blue.  
DWCA gym sweatshirt/ sweatpants, t-shirt and shorts, or optional tracksuit.

**ALL POLOS MUST BE TUCKED IN.**

**Please note: students are not permitted to wear articles of clothing not purchased at Flynn and O'Hara. Parent will be notified if student is not in compliance with the uniform policy and will have 14 days to purchase the correct uniform.**

**Shoes**

All students are required to wear black shoes. A black sneaker-like shoe with a black sole **is** permitted to be worn. The following shoes are not permitted in the classrooms: boots, work boots, hiking boots, Uggs, clogs, any shoes with a heel higher than one inch.

**Students must change out of snow boots upon arrival at school.**

**Summer Uniform**

An optional summer/fall uniform is allowed to be worn from the first day of school, until October 31st (weather permitting), and again beginning on April 15<sup>th</sup> (weather permitting) until the last day of school.

If the temperature forecast is expected to rise above 80 degrees at any time during the day, students are permitted to wear their summer/fall, or gym uniform.

## Dress-Down Days

The following rules are in effect any time a “dress-down” day is scheduled:

- No tank tops, thin strapped, bare midriff shirts, ripped jeans or shorts
- No flip flops, or backless shoes
- No inappropriately worded t-shirts
- Boys pants, or shorts must be worn at the waist
- No shorts shorter than two inches above the knee
- No leggings or sports leggings are to be worn with short tops, tunic tops only

## After-School and After-Hours Enrichment Programs

Families interested in participating in the **After-School Program** are to complete a registration form and pay a \$25.00 registration fee. In case of an emergency, all registration contact information must be up-to-date.

Payment is due on the first day of the week, for those children participating on a per diem, or weekly basis; or the first day of the new month, for a monthly registrant. Failure to keep current in payment may lead to suspension of services.

Families will also be notified when the **After-Hours Enrichment Programs** will begin. As in the past, a separate registration fee will be charged for each program.

## Volunteers

**Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** has been greatly assisted by many wonderful and generous volunteers. **DWCA** needs and appreciates this service. If you could volunteer your time and talent, please do so when the call for volunteer support is made.

All volunteers (anyone in contact with children, **including school trip chaperones**) must attend the Virtus training session, sign a Code of Conduct form, and participate in a background screening. The protocol described is required by the Diocese of Brooklyn Safe Environment Office. All volunteers must enter the building through the main entrance and sign in. Volunteers may not walk around building when volunteering at lunchtime.

## Mandated Hours of Service

All **Academy** families are to provide **15** service hours towards fundraising activities, or are to pay \$60.00/hour for hours not served, up to the maximum of \$750.00. **The number of hours**

**is reduced to 7 service hours for families with a child in the Nursery half-day program only.**

Please note, it is the individual family's responsibility to participate in any fundraising activity of their choice, and to keep track of all hours served. This is very important that when the School office completes the final tally, there are no discrepancies.

**Volunteers are accepted for all fundraising activities on a first-come, first served basis through Sign Up Genius on the Academy website.**

## **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy Tuition Policy**

*This policy is not intended to deprive anyone of a Catholic education. It is **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy's** desire to maintain a fair and just approach to collection of tuition and fees and to provide a sound financial policy for the overall welfare of the **Academy** community.*

1. The **Academy** develops its tuition policy in accord with the guidelines issued and as approved by the Board of Directors. It is important that all materials be available at the time of registration/re-registration and that parents are encouraged to apply for financial assistance through the TADS application.
2. The tuition policy is found in the **Academy** Handbook and on the **Academy** website under Admissions Tab.
3. The tuition payment schedule is shared with families through FACTS, Tuition Manager. The first tuition payment for **new** families to the **Academy** is April 1<sup>st</sup>, with the second payment due on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Returning families first tuition payment is June 1<sup>st</sup>, for the following school year, with the second payment due September 1<sup>st</sup>. The 10<sup>th</sup> (last) tuition payment is due on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Families have a choice for paying full tuition up front, or over ten installments. Those seeking an alternative payment schedule need to contact the **Academy** to discuss the specific circumstances.
4. The **Academy** will issue appropriate communication with the families when a delinquency of payment occurs. The usual protocol is as follows: 1) The responsible party listed on FACTS will receive an email. 2) Failure to communicate with the **Academy** and resolve the delinquency through a payment schedule approved by the **Academy** will result in suspension of services for the student.

5. In the event that two (2) or more monthly tuition payments are not settled prior to the commencement of a trimester, the student will not be permitted to attend class at the start of the trimester. In no event will a student be permitted to begin an academic year if any portion of the previous year's tuition is not settled. In addition, for any tuition delinquency, the **Academy**, in its sole discretion, may withhold, trimester exams, report cards, transcripts, records and diplomas until all financial obligations are satisfied in full.
6. In order to fully participate in graduation activities, including trip, all debts for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must be cleared by the first Monday of May. Grade 8 final transcripts will not be released to the high schools if the financial obligations have not been met. The **Academy** principal should be contacted if there are any questions.
7. The **Academy** reserves the right to place severely delinquent accounts in the hands of a collection agency or its attorneys for collection. It is not our desire that any family should incur unnecessary legal fees or suffer further embarrassment or inconvenience in this regard. We, therefore, encourage prompt communication with the **Academy** in an effort to avoid litigation.
8. All families must sign an enrollment contract that guarantees the family will be responsible for the full payment of tuition for the academic year.
9. Notice of a withdrawal of a student should be made by a parent in writing to the principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another academy/school until **all amounts due** have been settled.
10. No student will be permitted to begin an academic year unless all registration, and other required fees are current. Enrollment for students whose families are not current in the registration or other required fees by June 30<sup>th</sup> may be cancelled at the discretion of the **Academy**. In no event will the student be permitted to attend class at the commencement of the academic year unless the delinquency is paid in full.
11. All fees must be paid in full before records/progress reports will be processed.

**ALL TUITION PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE THROUGH FACTS UNLESS OTHER PAYMENT PLAN ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE ACADEMY.**

## **Bounced Check/Failure to Pay Procedure**

A \$25.00 fee will be charged for each bounced check to **Divine Wisdom**. Once a family has two checks returned for insufficient funds, all check writing privileges will be suspended, and that family will be put on a money order, or bank check only basis for all venues – NO EXCEPTIONS. We ask that ALL debts incurred during the school year be rectified as soon as possible and must be paid in full by June 1st. The school office will not release report cards, transcripts, or any type of record until the situation is resolved.

**Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** offers several programs that have a monetary cost and are not included in tuition. “Special” lunches, as well as After School Care services and enrichment programs are additional expenses that are optional to all families. Fundraisers are also offered and are always optional. The Bounced Check fee procedure will be in effect for all venues offered through the **Academy**, including the above services and/or opportunities.

**ALL SPECIAL LUNCHESES AND AFTER SCHOOL FEES MUST BE PAID BY CHECK OR MONEY ORDER MADE OUT TO DWCA.**

# **Receipt and Acknowledgement of the Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy Family Handbook 2020-2021**

The policies in the **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** Handbook are to be considered as guidelines. The **Academy**, at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue any part or parts of the policies in the Handbook at any time without prior notice.

Should any provision of this Handbook be found to be unenforceable and invalid, such finding will not invalidate the entire Handbook, but rather only the subject provision.

**Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgment of the Handbook.**

1. I have received and read a copy of the **Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy** Family Handbook. I understand that the policies, rules and benefits described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the **Academy**, at any time.
  
2. I understand that my signature below indicates I have read and understood the above statements, have received a copy of the Handbook, and have discussed the contents of the handbook with my child(ren).

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**Signature of Parent/Guardian**

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**Signature of Parent/Guardian**

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**Signature of Student**

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**Signature of Student**

**Sign, scan and return to your oldest child's homeroom teacher by September 11, 2020**