



# 2017-2018 Student/Parent Handbook

Please sign and return the following to the front office no later than September 15, 2017

1. Concussion Action Plan on page 26
2. Mater Christi School Device Statement of Responsibility for Parent/Guardian and Student page 47
3. Student and Parent Handbook Agreement on page 49

## **President's Welcome**

August 2017

Dear Students & Parents:

Welcome to a new school year at Mater Christi School! As a school founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, we are proud of our rich history in the heart of Burlington, and our reputation as a truly child-centered and Christ-centered school that is rooted in the charism and values of the Sisters of Mercy. Our school is richly blessed with caring and intelligent students, dedicated faculty and staff, active parents, and committed alumni and friends. It is because of the commitment of our entire community that we have been able to offer daily the rigorous, progressive, and mercy-centered education for which we are so thankful and of which we are so proud.

It is our hope and expectation that every student who graduates from Mater Christi School will be prepared intellectually, interpersonally, and spiritually to enter high school and eventually navigate our larger, global society and make a difference in the lives of others.

This handbook has been prepared in order to give you important information about our school. It contains information about our school's philosophy, policies and procedures, as well as other vital information about our school community. We ask that you familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and discuss it with your child(ren). Over this past summer, this handbook was revised so you are asked to review this information thoroughly.

Thank you for entrusting your child(ren) to us and we look forward to working in partnership with you during the 2017-18 academic year!

May God bless your children and family as well as our school family in the coming year.

Mr. Tim Loescher  
President/Head of School

**Mater Christi School**  
**Student and Parent Handbook**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| President’s Welcome .....                    | 2  |
| Table of Contents .....                      | 3  |
| Faculty/Staff.....                           | 5  |
| 2017-2018 Tuition Rates.....                 | 6  |
| Day-to-Day Operations .....                  | 7  |
| Instruction and Support Services .....       | 11 |
| School Uniforms .....                        | 14 |
| School Policies and Procedure.....           | 17 |
| School Discipline Plan.....                  | 18 |
| Concussion Action Plan.....                  | 24 |
| Drug and Alcohol Policy .....                | 27 |
| Prevention of Student Harassment Policy..... | 29 |
| Weapons in School Policy .....               | 36 |
| Hazing Policy.....                           | 37 |
| Technology Acceptable Use Policy .....       | 39 |
| Student and Parent Handbook Agreement.....   | 49 |

# **MATER CHRISTI SCHOOL**

## **Mission Statement**

**Mater Christi is a private Catholic school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Northeast Community, serving students in preschool through grade eight. We are committed to providing a quality, values-centered education in the Catholic tradition that prepares students for the complexities of our diverse world.**

## **Core Values**

**Spiritual Growth and Development  
Personal and Educational Excellence  
Concern for Human Dignity  
Global Vision and Responsibility  
Compassion and Service  
Collaboration**

## **The Mission Statement of the Sisters of Mercy, Northeast Community**

**Sisters of Mercy are women who commit their lives to serving God's people, especially those who are sick, poor and uneducated. In the spirit of the Gospel, our mission is to help people to overcome the obstacles that keep them from living full and dignified lives. A life of prayer and community animates and supports us in our mission.**

## **Direction Statement**

**Animated by the Gospel and Catherine McAuley's passion for the poor, we, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, are impelled to commit our lives and resources to act in solidarity with**

- **the economically poor of the world, especially women and children;**
- **women seeking fullness of life and equality in church and society;**
- **one another as we embrace our multicultural and international reality.**

**This commitment will impel us to**

- **develop and act from a multicultural and international perspective;**
- **speak with a corporate voice;**
- **work for systemic change;**
- **practice non-violence;**
- **act in harmony and interdependence with all creation; and**
- **call ourselves to continual conversion in our lifestyle and ministries.**

**Mater Christi School**  
**Faculty/Staff**  
**2017-2018**

**President/Head of School:** Mr. Tim Loescher

**Assistant Head of School:** Ms. Amanda Barone

**PS:** Ms. Nicole Pinard

**PK:** Mrs. Patty LaMothe - Head Teacher  
Mrs. Luana McCormick - Assistant Teacher

**Kindergarten:** Mrs. Patrice Rogers

**Grade 1:** Mrs. Kristen Lee

**Grade 2:** Mrs. Miranda McClellan

**Grade 3:** Mrs. Jennifer Coulter

**Grade 4:** Mrs Leslie Sem (4-5 Math & Science & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grade 5:** Ms. Glenda Bedard (4-5 Social Studies & Language Arts & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grade 4/5:** Mrs. Leah Easley

**Grade 6:** Mr. Brent Tremblay (6-8 Social Studies & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grade 6:** Mrs. Emily Seix (6-8 English & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grade 7:** Mrs. Julia Melloni (6-8 Religion & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grade 8:** Mr. Allan Whyland (6-8 Literature & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grade 8:** Mrs. Jacie Kendrew (6-8 Mathematics & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom)

**Grades 6-8:** Mr. Mark Pendergrass (Science)

**Grades 6-8:** M. Konrad Herath

**K-5 French:** Mrs. Delphine Giron

**Office Manager:** Mrs. Jean Rock

**Art:** Mrs. Laura Poirier

**School Nurse:** Mrs. Ellen Ammirato

**Guidance Counselor:** Ms. Jenelle Dumas

**Technology:** Mr. Michael Early

**Music:** Mrs. Lori Marino

**Band:** Mrs. Barb Heath

**Makerspace:** Mrs. Tricia Finkle

**Physical Education:** Mr. Zac Farnham-Haskell

**Dining Room:** Mr. Daniel Phillips

**Finances:** Mrs. Trisha Pidgeon

**Enrollment & Marketing:** Mrs. Melissa Senesac

**Support Services Director:** Mrs. Carole McLenithan (Director & Grades 6-8)

**Support Services:** Mrs. Margaret Knows-the-Ground

**Teaching Assistant:** Ms. Courtney Tisdale

**After-School Director:** Mr. Pronto Parenteau

**Maintenance Staff:** Mr. Noel Boucher and Mr. Mustafa Semic

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Mater Christi is a private Catholic school and a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, Northeast Community. We welcome families of all denominations in preschool through grade eight.

### TUITION

Tuition at Mater Christi is set on an annual basis, based on the school's operational budget. Tuition pays for approximately 70% of all operating expenses. The total amount needed to maintain and operate the school is divided by expected enrollment to determine tuition. Thus, the cost to educate each child determines the tuition. This budget process is undertaken in the late fall and tuition and fees are typically set in January after approval by the Mater Christi Board of Trustees. Tuition and fees are then communicated to parents.

### 2017-2018 Tuition Rates

- Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten:
  - Full Time (5 days/week 7:55 - 2:50): \$8,392
  - Part Time (4 days or less, half or full days): \$7,553
- Kindergarten to Grade 8: \$8,267

### HOW TO MAKE YOUR TUITION PAYMENT

Tuition is paid through the FACTS Management Company to help us manage our tuition payment program. There is a fee per family for this service, depending on which payment plan you choose. Through FACTS you can conveniently pay your tuition online, receive email payment reminders before your payment is due, select from one of multiple payment options, and always review your account online. You can always drop off a check to Trisha Pidgeon, Finance Officer, in the main office and she can apply it to your account, if that is easier for you as well. First, you'll want to set up your account in FACTS by go to <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3JBTW>. Next, you'll choose your payment option. You'll be able to choose from the following payment options:

- One (1) Installment .....Due July 1, 2017 (payment by check) No Fee
- Two (2) Installments.....Due July 1, 2017 and January 1, 2018 (payment by check) \$10 Fee
- Ten (10) Installments.....Due July 1, 2017 through April 1, 2018 (payment by automatic withdrawal is required) \$43 Fee
- Ten (10) Installments .....Due July 15, 2017 through April 15, 2018 (payment by automatic withdrawal is required) \$43 Fee
- Twelve (12) Installments.....Due July 1, 2017 through June 1, 2018 (payment by automatic withdrawal is required) \$43 Fee
- Twelve (12) Installments .....Due July 15, 2017 through June 15, 2018 (payment by automatic withdrawal is required) \$43 Fee

If you have any questions, you can contact Trisha Pidgeon at 802-658-3992 ext. 113 or [tpidgeon@materchristischool.net](mailto:tpidgeon@materchristischool.net).

### TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance is available on a limited basis to families who cannot afford the full cost of educating their child/children at Mater Christi.

Parents and guardians seeking assistance are required to complete an application using the “F.A.C.T.S.” system. Determinations are then reviewed by the school's Scholarship Committee and families are notified in writing of the decision.

### POLICY FOR LATE WITHDRAWAL

In addition to the non-refundable registration fee, the following policy for late withdrawal is in effect:

**Withdrawal after July 1 and prior to July 31<sup>st</sup> = One (1) month's tuition forfeited.**

**Withdrawal anytime thereafter = Two (2) months' tuition forfeited plus prorated tuition for the time attended.**

The rationale behind this policy is as follows: the school loses the opportunity to place another family in that spot. Once class lists are filled in the early spring, families unable to obtain spots in classrooms at Mater Christi find it necessary to make alternate arrangements for their child/children. When an opening occurs at such a date, very often the families have made a financial commitment to another school and must turn down the opportunity to attend Mater Christi. In addition, the Board of Trustees must make budget decisions early in the winter based on a projected number of families expected to attend Mater Christi. Staffing needs are met and contracts signed, thus cementing Mater Christi's financial obligations for the new school year.

### BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

**The cost of consumable books, rental fee of hardcover books, science and computer fees, some field trips, paper, and miscellaneous supplies used throughout the school year are covered in the \$350 registration fee.**

## DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

### ARRIVAL

Students are not expected to arrive at school earlier than 7:30 a.m. (Arrangements for drop-off prior to 7:30 can be discussed – please contact the office if special circumstances exist.) School begins for grades 4-8 at **7:50 a.m.** and for pre-school-grade 3 at **8:00 a.m.** Preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students arriving at school prior to 8:00 must proceed to the pre-kindergarten classroom for early supervision, while all other students (grades 1-8) report to the middle school building. At 7:50 a.m., students in grades 4-8 will proceed to their individual homerooms while the younger students are escorted to the elementary building. Carpool information is available for parents whose work schedules make a 7:50 drop-off difficult.

- Preschool and kindergarten students must be accompanied to their classrooms. Parking is available behind the elementary building. Please do not park in front of the elementary building in the pick-up/drop-off area.
- Students in grades 1-3 are to be dropped off on the right hand side of the loop in front of the elementary building.
- Students in grades 4-8 are to be dropped off at the pick-up/drop-off area adjacent to the middle school.

### DISMISSAL

**PS/Pre-K – 2:50 p.m.; K-3 – 3:00 p.m.; and 4-8 – 3:00 p.m.** Only those students enrolled in the Mater Christi After-School Program, athletics, or other extra-curricular activities, or those receiving help from teachers, should be at school after dismissal. If a child is not in a supervised program and remains on the

school grounds beyond **3:10 p.m. (3:15 for grades 4-8)**, he/she will be placed in the After-School Program at the parent's expense.

- PS/PK students are to be picked up at 2:50 p.m. from their classroom. Drivers are asked to park in the main parking lot behind the elementary school.
- Dismissal for K-3 students is at 3:00 p.m. Drivers are to pick up students on the right hand side of the loop. Kindergarten and first grade students will wait outside on the sidewalk nearest to the driveway in front of the elementary building. Students in grades 2-3 will wait on the ledge in front of the academic wing.
- Students in grades 4-8 are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. and are to be picked up at the pick-up/drop-off area adjacent to the middle school.

**Upon exiting the school's driveway during arrival and dismissal times, please take a RIGHT TURN ONLY.** Please do not park in the defined pickup/drop-off areas during arrival (7:30 - 8:30 a.m.) and dismissal (2:25 - 3:15 p.m.). In case of inclement weather students will wait in the lobby areas or in the gymnasium for their rides. Please be patient when this plan is activated.

\*\*Please be aware that there are several "reserved" parking spots located behind the elementary school building. These reserved spots were auction items which were bid on at last year's Spring Benefit. Please be aware and respectful of these posted spaces.

#### **AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM**

After school care is available for students in all grades PS-8 from dismissal until 6:00 p.m. Our program provides a safe and caring environment for Mater Christi students during the after school hours. **Parents who are in need of these services must complete the registration forms that will be mailed/emailed to them during the summer months. Because of licensing restrictions, acceptance will be on a first come, first served basis. Enrollment is limited based on staffing levels.**

#### **ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE**

Students need to be in attendance 175 school days. A habit of regular and faithful attendance is a prerequisite for a successful school experience. Students should be absent only in case of illness or emergency. If a student is absent because of illness or other unforeseen circumstance, **parents are required to notify the office before 8:30 a.m. by calling 658-3992. If there is a planned absence of even one day, advanced notice is essential. Please inform both the office and your child's homeroom teacher of the dates in which your child will be out of school.**

#### **FREQUENT ABSENCES**

If a student, for any reason whatsoever, is absent from Mater Christi for **more than 20 school days**, (not necessarily consecutive days), and does not attend a Mater Christi approved educational institution during the time of his/her absence from Mater Christi, he/she may be required to do one of the following:

- Make up the missing time by attending a Mater Christi approved summer school and successfully pass its course of studies.
- Repeat the school year.
- Report student to DCF

The administration may waive the above requirement(s) if the student receives extra academic help during the school year through tutors arranged by the student's parents/guardians.

### TARDINESS

Students in **grades 4-8** must be in their homerooms by the **8:00 a.m. bell** at the latest, or they are considered tardy and must stop at the main office to obtain an admission slip. Students requesting an excused tardy must present a note to the office. Students in **PS-3** who arrive after the **8:10 a.m. bell** are also considered tardy and should report directly to their classrooms.

Five Tardies in a Trimester - Letter of warning from the homeroom teacher to advise the family of a potential chronic tardiness problem and requests that the family plan a solution to the problem.

Ten Tardies in a Trimester - Assistant Head of School meets with parent (s) and child to determine why the tardiness is happening and plan a solution. The homeroom teacher in grades 4th-8th may issue a detention slip to begin discipline procedures depending upon the reason for the tardiness.

Fifteen Tardies in a Trimester - Student is now excessively tardy and the parent (s) and child must meet with the Head of School. At this point, the tardiness may also be considered “truancy,” and the Head of School will advise the family of options the school has for reducing chronic tardiness including contacting the Chittenden County Truancy Office.

If a student’s tardiness becomes excessive, the parents and/or guardian will be notified in writing, students may be assigned detention, a plan for improvement may be developed and in cases of chronic tardiness the county’s truancy intervention program would be involved.

### VACATIONS

Major school vacations are scheduled during December, February and April. Students are not expected to be absent from school for special vacations. Families should plan their trips to coincide with the regularly scheduled school holidays. Absences due to special vacations or trips outside the regularly scheduled vacation periods minimize the value of school and should be avoided. It is virtually impossible to reclaim the benefits of instruction and group interaction that occur during valuable class time. It is also disruptive to the educational process of other students when vacationing students return and are not current in their assignments or do not understand the material. Unavoidable absences of two or more days require students in all grades to obtain a “Planned Absence Form” from the office. This provides teachers with a documented record of skills and assignments that may need to be retaught/reviewed upon the student’s return. Forms are issued at the office (grades 4-8) or by the elementary teacher upon receipt of a written note from the parent or guardian. Notes should be sent in at least 5 days in advance of the absence. **Upon return to school, students will be required to meet with teachers (by appointment) to review missed instruction and complete missed assignments.**

### PRAYER

The school day at Mater Christi begins and ends with a period of prayer. Other customary times for prayer may include before lunch and/or at the beginning of each class.

### LITURGIES AND PRAYER SERVICES

Eucharistic celebrations and prayer services take place regularly at Mater Christi. Parents are always welcome to attend these liturgies which are held in the gymnasium. All students and faculty members, Catholic and non-Catholic, attend school worship services.

### SCHOOL VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

Federal Law requires **all parents, visitors and volunteers** to report to the main office before going to any classrooms. At Mater Christi, parents, guest speakers, and other visitors are welcome if they have been

properly cleared through the office in advance and have procured the appropriate name tag and wear it throughout the time they are volunteering or visiting at the school.

Parents are asked not to interrupt classes while they are in session or during dismissal time. Parents with students in K-8 should wait for students outdoors, not in the school lobbies or corridors adjacent to classrooms. We at Mater Christi School understand the importance of parent involvement within the school community. There may be times, however, when visits can create a distraction for students and others in the classroom. We respectfully ask that any infrequent visits from parents be cleared with the administration in advance. Joining your child for an occasional lunch in the cafeteria (1-2 times per year) is also possible with advance notice to the office.

Regular volunteers, chaperones, and drivers for field trips are required to undergo a background check. Forms, which must be signed and notarized, are available at the school office. There is no fee for this process. School employees and coaches are required to undergo a criminal background check. Applicants pay a small amount for fingerprinting and processing by the Vermont Criminal Information Center. All information is strictly confidential.

### **LINES OF COMMUNICATION**

Open communication between parents and teachers is essential to a successful school experience. Please contact your child's teachers directly to answer or clarify any questions or to resolve any issues at their source. During the school week, you may expect a response from your child's teacher within a 48 hour time frame. Teachers do not check school messages and emails during weekends and vacations. If for any reason, you do not receive a response within the appropriate time frame, please call the school office to verify that your message was received by the teacher.

### **PARKING**

Parking is available behind the elementary building (in marked spaces only) for visitors and parents. There is no parking in front of the elementary building or on Mansfield Avenue.

### **SNOW/EMERGENCY DAYS**

In the event of school cancellation due to weather or other circumstances, announcements will be made by local television and radio stations and on the MCS website and Facebook beginning at approximately 6:00 a.m.

### **THE PLAYGROUND**

The playground includes the area south of the parking lot that is enclosed by the fence behind and beside the elementary building. Students are supervised by faculty members while on the playground. Activities such as tackle football, wrestling, fighting, pushing, kicking, and playing with a hard ball are considered unsafe and are not permitted. Violent-themed games are also not permitted. Students in grades 1-8 are not allowed in the fenced-in Preschool/Pre-K play area.

### **DINING ROOM/SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

Lunch with milk is served each school day and costs \$4.25. Deposits to a student's account may be made at any time by writing a check to Mater Christi Hot Lunch or via MealTime Online. The amount deposited may cover several weeks or months worth of lunches. One check may be written per family. Checks should be mailed to 50 Mansfield Ave., Burlington, VT, 05401 or sent in with the student. Parents of students whose accounts are in arrears by more than \$16.00 will be reminded that additional funds must be sent to school. School menus are posted in advance on the internet at [mcschool.org](http://mcschool.org) and are published monthly in an end-of-the-week parent bulletin.

All students must have a bag lunch or a school lunch each day. Milk is also available for purchase daily for those students who bring a bag lunch. All students in grades 1-8 may bring a lunch from home that includes nut products. It should be understood that students wipe and wash their hands directly after eating lunch and that they eat at designated “nut” tables. Preschool and kindergarten students must remain nut-free for lunch and snack due to seating arrangements. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to their peers, the adults serving them, and those on duty in the dining room each day. Lunchtime should take place in a pleasant atmosphere. Students may converse quietly while eating and while waiting to accompany the adult on duty to the playground or gym. Each student is responsible for leaving his or her eating area clean for the next lunch period.

## INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Mater Christi School offers its students a well-rounded and enriching educational program. The school community attempts to address students’ needs in all areas of education - spiritual, emotional, physical and academic. It also provides an expanding program of co-curricular activities. Support Services will be provided based on the needs of the students.

### GRADING SYSTEM

Pre-School, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten: Written evaluations issued six times per year.

Grades 1 - 3: Students in grades 1-3 are evaluated using a letter system measuring each child’s personal progress with regard to academic expectations.

Grades 4 - 8: Numerical grades are used in grades 4-8.

In grades 1-8, an incomplete (INC) may be issued for unfinished assignments due to absences. In order to receive credit for assignments, work must be completed **one** week from the date that the student returns to school or within one school week after grades have closed for the trimester. Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with at the discretion of the teacher and administration.

### RELIGION CLASS

All students, Catholic and non-Catholic, are expected to attend and participate in religion class from preschool through grade 8.

### REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Trimester report cards are issued to students in grades 1-8 electronically approximately every 15 weeks. **Final report cards are issued only to those students whose parents have met all of their financial obligations to the school and need not be returned to school.** Progress reports for students in grades 5-8 will be on-line halfway through each trimester. Elementary progress reports and report cards will be issued in the same time frame as grades 5-8.

### STANDARDIZED TESTING

Achievement testing is one way to determine that students are learning and mastering the curriculum at Mater Christi. Testing is only one part of the total picture of a student’s proficiency. The child’s day-to-day achievement and successes, over the entire school year are also significant and valid indicators of his/her learning experience at Mater Christi School.

### PROMOTION TO THE NEXT GRADE

The school is committed to providing its students with an enriching and successful learning experience at each grade level. When it is apparent that more time is needed at a particular grade level, and that a child would benefit from additional time in the present grade, dialogue among teachers, parents and administrators will commence as early as possible in order to plan an educational program best suited for the child and his/her growth and academic success.

Promotion of middle school students is based upon the recommendation of the Mater Christi faculty and the following criteria: 70% or more as year's average in all academic subjects. Should this requirement not be met, attendance at an approved summer school and/or successful completion (minimum of 30 hrs. per failed subject area) of an approved academic plan would then be required. Failure in three or more subject areas would require the student to repeat the grade level.

### **HOMWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

Homework is assigned as an extension and reinforcement of skills and activities introduced in the classroom situation. Assignments are made to ensure that students understand material being taught and to assess the individual's progress in, or mastery of, the material. Teachers will create time during the school day or will meet with students during "call back" time to ensure that students "know how" to complete homework assignments. In the event of an absence, students are responsible for getting work that they may have missed. Assignments for students in grades 5-8 will be prepared by homework partners and will be available in the lobby no earlier than 2:50 p.m.

The following time frame should be used as a guide for grades 1-8:

Grades 1 & 2: Approximately 15 minutes, nightly, plus an additional 20 minutes of reading

Grades 3 & 4: Approximately 30 minutes, nightly, plus an additional 20 minutes of reading

Grades 5 - 8: Approximately 1 hour of homework, nightly, plus a minimum of 20 of reading. Teachers will make an effort to coordinate with fellow teachers to monitor the number of tests and assignments. Homework on weekends will occur as necessary. Teachers communicate with each other regarding large, long-term assignments and tests.

### **EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The decision for graduation will be based on the following conditions, taking into consideration the student's academic and social benefits for promotion or retention as mutually agreed upon by the administration and teachers.

- A. Satisfactory achievement (70 and above) in all academic areas:
  1. If achievement is not satisfactory by the second trimester progress report:
    - A letter is mailed home.
    - The student is placed on academic warning.
    - An academic plan is developed.
    - Weekly progress reports are required.
  2. If, by the end of the **second trimester**, satisfactory work has not been achieved:
    - The student is placed on academic probation.
    - An academic plan is developed.
    - Weekly progress reports are required.
    - A parent meeting with the administration is required.
  3. If, by the third trimester progress report, satisfactory work has not been achieved:

- Parents will receive notification that the student may not graduate.
  - The student's academic plan may be amended or revised.
4. If, by the end of the third trimester, satisfactory work has not been achieved, parents are notified that their child will not graduate with the class and will be unable to participate in the graduation ceremony. Students must:
- Attend and successfully complete a Mater Christi approved summer school (minimum of 30 hours per failed subject area) before fall term begins, to determine academic status. Failure in more than two subject areas will automatically require the student to repeat the academic year.
  - Repeat academic year - usually at another school.
- B. Current enrollment status: If a student is suspended from school during the month preceding graduation, he/she may be asked not to attend the graduation ceremony.
- C. Report cards will be issued and transcripts for high school mailed for those students whose parents have met all of their financial obligations to the school.

#### **RECOMMENDATION LETTERS OR FORMS**

All forms or requests must be given to teachers two weeks prior to the institution's deadline. A stamped envelope addressed to the institution or organization must accompany requests.

#### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The school, in coordination with community health services, provides students with health appraisal and supervision, health counseling, emergency and first aid care. The school takes steps to control communicable diseases within the school. Immunization records are required for admission.

Health services are provided for every student. However, if a child becomes ill during the night or in the early morning hours, parents are requested to keep their child home. The health services office follows written policies, procedures and a plan of activity, in compliance with state requirements relating to vision and hearing screening, immunization, disability environment, and child abuse laws. Guidelines for keeping your child home are posted on the website.

Individual cumulative health records are maintained. Parents are informed about school health issues and individual student health needs.

#### **PRESCRIPTION AND NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS**

If medication is required during school hours, parents are requested to bring the medication to the health office. The nurse or delegate will dispense all prescription and non-prescription medication. For safety reasons, children are not to carry medicines on their person, in lunch containers, or in book bags with the exception of approved emergency medications for children with diagnosed life threatening conditions. Refer to 16 V.S.A. S1387. **All medications are to be in the original pharmacy container, labeled with the name of the medicine, reason for taking, specific directions, and name of physician.** Specific permission forms for prescription and non-prescription medicines must be completed and signed. If this information is not supplied, the medication will not be dispensed.

#### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS**

All students are expected to participate in physical education classes. A note from the child's physician is the only exception to participation in class. Please refer to the uniform guidelines for appropriate clothing for physical education class.

### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

An essential aspect of successful learning is a healthy partnership between parents and school. The Mater Christi PTO plays an important role in creating this partnership. Its primary purpose is to facilitate communication between teachers, parents, and students through the following: sponsorship of family-oriented school activities, regular informational meetings, fundraising and educational activities that support an excellent learning environment.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORMS**

Mater Christi School is a private Catholic school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy. Emphasis is placed on education in the academic, spiritual, physical and emotional domains. The uniform for students in grades K-8 was established to support a commitment to simplicity, neatness, cleanliness, and lack of competition in the area of dress. **Donnelly's Uniform Company** is the official supplier of Mater Christi uniforms. Order forms may be obtained at the office. Uniforms must be clean, fit properly, and be worn appropriately each day. For both boys and girls, **undershirts worn beneath the uniforms must be white, contain no writing and be tucked in at all times. Students who are not in proper uniform will be asked to contact parents to acquire proper uniform clothing or will be required to borrow available uniform clothing from the office.**

Please mark all clothing, sneakers, mittens, and coats with students' names. **Students should be dressed in school uniform beginning on the first day of school.**

It is important that all students adhere to the school's conservative policy on dress and refrain from styles in dress or appearance that distract from this policy. For safety reasons, dangling earring and hoops are not allowed. If anyone is not certain about the appropriateness or acceptability of clothing, jewelry, or hairstyle, he/she should consult with a member of the administration before spending money in these areas. Not doing so may result in unnecessary expense.

**Please be mindful of the fact that Mater Christi has a true uniform as opposed to just a dress code.** The uniform is very specific. We pay close attention to adherence to the uniform guidelines. This is part of who we are as a school. It works best when we are partners in supporting these guidelines.

## GIRLS' UNIFORM

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>GIRLS' UNIFORM K-3</u></b><br/>(opening day to October 15<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup><br/>through the end of the year)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Warm Weather Options</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skort* (classic navy) w/Polo shirt w/MCS logo</li> <li>● Drop waist jumper (classic navy/evergreen plaid*) with Peter Pan collar blouse (white)</li> <li>● Knee-length shorts (navy)*</li> <li>● Ankle or knee socks (solid white, navy, black)</li> <li>● Polo shirts must be white or light blue with MCS logo</li> <li>● Blouses/Polo shirts – long or short sleeve</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>*no more than 2 inches above knee</i></p>  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>GIRLS' UNIFORM 4-8</u></b><br/>(opening day to October 15<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup><br/>through the end of the year)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Warm Weather Options</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skort* (classic navy) w/Polo shirt w/MCS logo</li> <li>● Skirt (classic navy/evergreen plaid) with Polo shirt with MCS logo*</li> <li>● Knee-length shorts (navy)*</li> <li>● Ankle or knee socks (solid white, navy, black)</li> <li>● Polo shirts must be white or light blue with MCS logo</li> <li>● Blouses/Polo shirts – long or short sleeve</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>*no more than 2 inches above knee</i></p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Cold Weather Options</u></b><br/>(October 15<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drop waist jumper (classic navy/evergreen plaid)*</li> <li>● Skort (class navy) with tights*</li> <li>● Peter Pan collar blouse (white)</li> <li>● Crew neck cardigan with logo (navy)</li> <li>● Turtleneck (white)</li> <li>● Knee socks or tights (solid black, navy, white)</li> <li>● Leggings (solid white, navy, black) may be worn with socks as long as no skin is visible under jumper/skort</li> <li>● Plain or pleated front pant – twill/chino (navy) (no flares, cargo, skinny, cropped, or low rise)</li> <li>● Polo shirt, long or short sleeve with MCS logo (white or light blue)</li> <li>● MCS fleece jacket or vest</li> <li>● Belt (solid black, navy, brown)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>*no more than 2 inches above knee</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Cold Weather Options</u></b><br/>(October 15<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skort (class navy) with tights*</li> <li>● Skirt (classic navy/evergreen plaid)*</li> <li>● Polo shirt, short or long sleeve with MCS logo (white or light blue)</li> <li>● Crew neck cardigan with logo (navy)</li> <li>● Turtleneck (white)</li> <li>● Knee socks or tights (solid black, navy, white)</li> <li>● Leggings (solid white, navy, black) may be worn with socks as long as no skin is visible under skirt/skort</li> <li>● Plain or pleated front pant – twill/chino (navy) (no flares, cargo, skinny, cropped, or low rise)</li> <li>● MCS fleece jacket or vest</li> <li>● Belt (solid black, navy, brown)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>*no more than 2 inches above knee</i></p> |

## **BOYS' UNIFORM GRADES K-8**

### **Warm Weather Options**

*(opening day to October 15<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> through the end of the year)*

- Plain or pleated front shorts (classic navy, twill)
- Plain or pleated front pants (classic navy, twill) (no cargo or skinny)
- Polo shirt, short sleeve with MCS logo (white or light blue)
- Ankle socks (solid white, black, navy)
- Belt (solid black, navy, brown)

### **Cold Weather Options**

*(October 15<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup>)*

- Plain or pleated front pant (classic navy, twill) (no cargo or skinny)
- Polo shirt, short or long sleeve with MCS logo (white or light blue)
- Turtleneck (white)
- Ankle socks (solid white, black, navy)
- V-neck vest/crew neck pullover with logo (navy)
- Belt (solid black, navy, brown)
- MCS fleece jacket or vest

## **Physical Education**

On days when students have a specified physical education class he/she must come to school dressed for physical education class. The uniform dress for physical education classes is outlined below.

### **Girls' and Boys' Physical Education Uniform – All Grades**

Gym shorts with MCS logo (navy) (warm weather)

Sweatpants with MCS logo (navy) (cold weather)

Polo shirt, short or long sleeve with MCS logo (white or light blue)

Sweatshirt with MCS logo (navy)

Sturdy Velcro or tie sneakers and socks (solid white, black, navy) are required. Sneakers with shoelaces must be tied at all times.

## **SHOES**

Sneakers in good condition or leather closed-toe shoes without elevated heels are appropriate for both boys and girls. **For safety, sandals, flip-flops, boots, Crocs and open back shoes are not allowed at any time.** “Platform” style heels and soles must stay securely on the feet at all times.

## **DRESS-UP DAYS**

Dress-up days will be called on special occasions at the discretion of the Administration. In the event of a dress-up day, the student's appearance must be neat and clothing must fit properly. Boys must wear solid colored, oxford-style or polo shirts, tucked in with a belt. Ties are encouraged, but not mandatory. Girls may choose to wear skirts, dresses, or dress slacks (no yoga-style or skinny pants). Skirts must be no more than two inches above the knee. Tops must be modest and unrevealing. No bare midriff or open back shirts. Flip-flops or open-toe shoes are not allowed (see previously stated guidelines).

**Shirts with ads or other writing, denim jeans, sweat pants, wind pants, tank tops, t-shirts or shirts with spaghetti straps are not appropriate for dress-up. No bare midriffs are allowed.** Dress-Down Days will be called on special occasions, also. Camouflage clothing or any military type clothing is not considered appropriate and may not be worn. T-shirts with ads or other writing are not allowed.

### **HATS**

All hats, bandanas and scarves must be removed when entering the building except for medical or religious reasons.

### **HAIR**

Hair is to be neat and clean and bangs should be at or above eyebrows. Boys' hair should be out of the eyes, above the ear and not touching the shirt collar. No "unusual" hairstyles or "unnatural" hair colors will be accepted at school. Students not in compliance with this rule may, at the discretion of the administration, be asked to leave school and not return until their hair is returned to its natural color and/or acceptable style.

### **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

Practices including tattooing, body painting and body piercing undermine the school's commitment to simplicity and lack of competition in the area of dress and are forbidden. Jewelry and makeup should be simple and of a conservative nature. Earrings must be no bigger than the diameter of a dime and dangling earring/hoops are not allowed.

### **Note**

Students who are out of uniform will receive a verbal warning. Repeated uniform infractions will be followed up by a phone call home and disciplinary action. It is your responsibility as parents to make sure that your child is in uniform before he or she gets into the car in the morning.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Mater Christi School is committed to providing all of its students with a positive school environment. The following policies and procedures are intended to help all have a positive, productive and successful experience. The goal of the faculty and staff is to support students in developing responsibility, self-reliance, and self-discipline.

All members of our school community need to be good role models of our Catholic faith to our students. Therefore, it is our expectation that all written and verbal communication between parents, guardians and school staff will be respectful. Education in a Catholic school is a partnership. If the partnership is broken, in the opinion of the Principal, you may be required to take your child out of our school.

**Appropriate Use of Technology:** Students are expected to follow the school policy of appropriate use of technology at all times, whether on school property or off campus. Misrepresenting the identity of another, or accessing the account of another will result in serious consequences. Computer Use Agreement forms are

provided yearly to each student and must be signed prior to any computer use. Please find a form for your child's use at the end of this document.

**Email Expectations:** It is routine for parents to use email as a form of communication with Mater Christi teachers. Parents may expect that teachers will respond either by email or by phone within a period of 2 school days. Teachers are not expected to be in contact with parents over school vacation periods or throughout the summer months. If your message is urgent, please call the school office.

## School Discipline Plan

### **Philosophy**

At Mater Christi School we remember that the words “discipline” and “disciple” come from the same root meaning “to follow.” As followers, learners, and companions of Christ, we follow our philosophy statement, which reminds us that developing respectful relationships is one key to living the Gospel. In this way, we will truly be self-disciplined individuals who live Gospel-centered, well-informed lives. We intend to ensure meaningful and effective communication with all appropriate parties.

### **Standards of Student Behavior**

A safe, caring and respectful atmosphere of learning is carefully maintained at Mater Christi School. The teachers and students create classroom rules and guidelines at the start of each school year. Students are clearly educated about these rules and are expected to follow them. The following are guidelines for behavior:

- Students will respect the safety, rights, health, and property of themselves and others.
- Students will respect the rules for specific areas in the school.
- Students have the responsibility to complete educational and work assignments.

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

It is the student's responsibility, appropriate to the student's age and grade level, to maintain appropriate behavior in the classroom and throughout the campus at Mater Christi School. The following levels of discipline are guidelines to follow so that a positive school climate is maintained at all times. The student represents Mater Christi School at all times. A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is contrary to school values, may be disciplined by the administration. Discipline will involve the student and, in most cases, reflection, conversation and cooperation in the process of making things right. Documentation of behavior infraction will be kept.

#### **Level 1:**

#### **Behavior Infractions [may include but are not limited to]:**

- Violation of classroom rules/procedures
- Violation of non-classroom space rules/procedures (i.e. cafeteria, recess)
- Tardy to class
- Violation of the school uniform policy
- Moderate disruption of a class
- Inappropriate verbal interactions (Non-Harassment terms as defined by the State)
- Inattention to classroom work
- Throwing snowballs
- Coming to class unprepared

**Logical Consequences:** Offenses at Level 1 are handled at a classroom level and **will merit one or more** of the following consequences, but not limited to:

- A “take-a-break” within the classroom
- Appropriate consequences as determined by the teacher
- Parental notification
- Verbal warning
- Loss of privilege
- An opportunity to self-reflect with a “Buddy Teacher”

**Level 2:** Handled by Assistant Head of School

**Behavior Infractions [may include but are not limited to]:**

- Repeated Level 1 violations
- Inappropriate language, gestures or defiant behavior
- Inappropriate physical behavior (i.e. rough housing)
- Disrespectful behavior toward other students
- Possession of unacceptable items
- Cheating and plagiarism
- Unexcused absence from school
- Disruptive behavior in a class to the point of removal
- Being in an unauthorized location without permission
- Failure to report to a teacher for detention
- Disruptive behavior in the hallways, stairways or classrooms
- Electronic device usage without permission

**Logical Consequences:** Offenses at Level 2 are handled by the Assistant Heads of School and **will merit one or more** of the following consequences, but not limited to:

- A “time out” with a “Buddy Teacher.”
- Removal from class with notification to the office
- Phone conversation with parents or guardians
- Written reflection and action plan for going forward
- Detention (Detentions will most often be service-oriented in nature. Students will be given a detention notice to be brought home and signed by a parent. The notice must be signed by a parent and returned to school.

**Level 3:** Handled by the Head of School

**Behavioral Infractions [may include but are not limited to]:**

- Repeated Level 2 violations
- Failure to comply with reasonable request/direction of school personnel
- Disrespectful behavior toward a faculty or staff member
- Action that threatens the safety of others or self
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Violation of harassment, hazing or bullying policies (see policies in this Handbook)
- Violation of alcohol, tobacco or drug policy (see policy contained in this Handbook)
- Violation of weapons policy (see policy contained in this Handbook)
- Leaving the school grounds during the school day without permission
- Forgery
- False complaint
- Inappropriate use of technology
- A second suspension in a school year
- Threatening a member of the faculty, staff or student body
- Assaulting another person on school grounds

- Failure to cooperate with the administration
- Making a bomb threat or any other threat of that nature

**Logical Consequences:** A Level 3 offense is very serious and **will lead to one or more** of the following consequences, but not limited to:

- Parental notification **will** occur followed by a parent meeting
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension (up to 10 days)
- Disciplinary probation: In being placed on disciplinary probation, a student and his/her parents need to agree to a behavioral contract as set forth by the administration. If the student does not comply, he/she may be expelled from school.
- Expulsion

**NOTE:** In the case that a suspension is warranted, the student is required to have all assigned work completed up his/her return to school. Students have between 3-5 days from the day of their return to complete all missed tests and/or quizzes. All work not made up within the allotted time will be recorded as a **zero**. **Teachers are not expected to provide any extra help of tutorial to a suspended student.**

### **LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Leaving the school grounds during the school day is not permitted. The school day begins when students arrive at school and ends when they are picked up, take the bus or walk home. Students at Mater Christi after the end of the school day must be in a sanctioned and supervised school program at all times on school grounds.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Devices such as radios, CD players, iPods, iPads, laser pens, MP3 players, handheld computers, laptop computers, and beepers, which may interfere with the proper atmosphere for learning, are **not** to be brought to school. Parents should not expect to contact their children via cell phone during the school day. If contact with your child is urgent, please call the school office. **Cell phones may not be used during the school day for any reason** and must be **turned off and kept in the student's backpack inside the locker.** Students may use cell phones only to contact parents for transportation purposes after dismissal or at the conclusion of a school sponsored activity. If students do not follow these guidelines, they will be asked to leave their phones at the office where they can be picked up at the end of the day.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Students may use the school telephone for **emergencies only**. Students and teachers will not be called out of class for telephone calls, except in an urgent situation. Arrangements for after school events and activities should be made at home **before coming to school**. **Students may not use the telephone to call parents for forgotten homework assignments.**

### **USE OF STUDENT INFORMATION/PICTURES**

The school reserves the right to use photos and names of students in promotional materials **unless parents or guardians notify the school in written format.** Please complete the Mater Christi School Permission Form that was included in the summer information packet which was mailed to each home at the end of July. Additional copies of this form are available at the office.

### **USE OF MATER CHRISTI LOGO**

Please contact the office if you need to use the Mater Christi School logo for any reason. We ask that you do not download the logo from the internet, scan it from another document, etc.

### BOTTLED WATER AT MATER CHRISTI

The Sisters of Mercy have taken a corporate stance against the use of bottled water. As a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, we support this stance and ask that bottled water not be brought to school.

### SNACKS

Each classroom in preschool through grade 8 may have its own snack time. Peanut-Free, Nut-Free snacks in a separate container from the lunch should be sent from home. Again, **all snacks MUST BE PEANUT-FREE, NUT FREE**. Parents are encouraged to provide nutritional snacks that do not promote tooth decay, such as fresh fruit, cheese, raw vegetables, and crackers. Please **do not** send fruit juice for snack time. Plain water is available.

### CANDY AND SODA

To promote healthy and nutritional choices, candy and soda are not permitted as part of students' regular school lunch or snack and should never be sent with children for general distribution at any time.

### PARTIES

Holiday parties and other approved special occasions serve only Peanut-Free, Nut-Free snacks, cookies and cake. Other food allergy needs are met on an individual basis. Birthdays are creative celebrations within a classroom and are NON-FOOD sharing occasions with classmates or staff. Non-food ideas are available on request and we encourage cooperation and parent involvement to make birthday events special. If food is brought to school to be shared at any time other than an approved occasion, it will not be distributed.

School or class parties are held only when permitted by the administration. Invitations to private parties, (e.g. birthday parties) **may not be distributed within the classes or on the school grounds**.

### SAFETY DRILL

The school conducts two types of drills regularly for the purpose of keeping students and adults safe inside and outside the buildings. Our fire safety drills will acquaint all with a knowledge of exiting the building quietly and orderly in case of a fire or other emergency. Our lockdown safety drill will acquaint all students with the procedure for remaining inside the buildings in a safe manner. It is the expectation of the school that all students comply with the safety directives or receive the logical consequences.

### FIELD TRIPS

**Students:** Signed permission slips and money, if necessary, must be returned to a homeroom teacher one day prior to the field trip. **Parents/Guardians must sign the required office-issued form which will be sent home prior to all trips and the yearly Statement of Consent for Medical Treatment which will be mailed to all parents in the summer.** A note, FAX, or phone call will be unacceptable if the required form is not received on time. Children who are unable to participate in a field trip will remain at school in a supervised area.

**Drivers:** Drivers for school field trips must be 25 years of age or older. All drivers and chaperones **must have completed the Criminal Record Check**. Please check with the school office if you have questions. Drivers must give a copy of their driver's license and current automobile insurance card to the student's homeroom teacher or to the office. All students must travel in a properly used child restraint in accordance with Vermont State Law. No student, regardless of age, is permitted to sit in the front seat of a vehicle on a school-sponsored trip or as he/she is transported to a school-sponsored athletic event. Unauthorized stops are prohibited and drivers may not provide food snacks. (See Policy on Volunteers.)

### **TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Mater Christi School is a tobacco-free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all school buildings and on the school grounds by anyone. See also Drug and Alcohol Policy: VIII, Tobacco Products.

### **ALLERGEN SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

Mater Christi School provides an allergen safe and supportive school environment through appropriate accommodations, ensuring that each student is provided every possible opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

For the purposes of this plan and procedures issued to implement it, “allergen safe environment” means an environment in which reasonable precautions have been identified and undertaken to minimize exposure to an identified allergen or allergens. It does not mean an environment guaranteed to be free of the allergen.

Mater Christi School recognizes that students with documented life-threatening allergies or dietary needs are protected as individuals with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. When the school is notified that a student has an allergy it will be determined whether the allergy constitutes a “disability” under those laws, and, if so, prepare a 504 Plan or an **Individualized Hhealth Plan (referred to as an IHP).**

Mater Christi School also recognizes and acknowledges it is impossible to avoid or control completely the introduction of allergens into our school environment. The emphasis of this plan is to:

- Work with teachers, staff, students, and parents within the school community to reduce a child’s risk of exposure to allergens.
- To provide a procedure for planning appropriate, individualized support and accommodations to any child.
- To have an appropriate individualized response plan in place for each such child, identifying steps to be taken in the event of an exposure or an allergic reaction.

**Accommodations** – Mater Christi School is responsible for developing accommodations for the care of students with documented life threatening allergies or dietary needs. Such accommodations shall include, but not be limited to:

- Medical documentation of a student’s typical symptoms and dosing instructions for medications.
- Strategies for physically identifying a student’s risk with documented life threatening allergies or dietary needs.
- Strategies to manage student’s allergies or dietary needs including avoidance measures, staff development and training.

ACT 178 VSA references that a safe and supportive school environment be provided. Title 16 of Vermont Statutes annotated, section 1387 provides for students with life threatening conditions to possess and self-administer emergency medication consistent with a plan of action authorized and developed in accordance with the statute. Contact the school office or health room for complete copies of either law.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**

- Teach child strategies to avoid allergen contact.
- Encourage student to report to an adult any possible ingestion or contact with allergen.
- Provide allergy documentation from physician with protocol for treatment including medication orders, specific care instructions and list of potential symptoms.
- Provide non-expired medication(s) in proper pharmacy labeled packaging.

- Provide pertinent updated information to school nurse, teachers, staff, and other parents as necessary.
  - Meet with school personnel to discuss strategies for safety and to review plan annually or as changes occur.
  - Accompany child, particularly a very young child, whenever possible, on school sponsored field trips.
  - Encourage student to wear medical alert bracelet or necklace at all times.
2. **School Nurse**
- Prepare a 504 or an Individualized Health Plan (IHP) for student annually.
  - Share plan with parent, administrators and relevant teaching staff.
  - Provide staff training in the knowledge of allergy, recognition and response to symptoms.
  - Provide training and return demonstration by trainees in use of Epi-Pen (Epinephrine) administration.
  - Provide peer and family education for students/families in the child's classroom/grade.
  - Encourage frequent hand washing and use of hand wipes.
  - Continually monitor school environment for potential allergens.
3. **Classroom Teacher**
- A student's medicines, 504, or IHP should be readily available throughout the day.
  - Supervise peers in frequent hand washing on entering classroom.
  - Monitor food products to assure no allergic products enter classroom.
  - Plan snack strategies with families of all students consistent with allergy restrictions.
  - Meet with room mothers/fathers prior to special parties and events.
  - Delegate supervision of student when appropriate to teachers of specials, lunch staff and all other activity coordinators.
4. **Food Service Personnel**
- Establish a safe environment for students with food allergies.
  - Provide food allergy free table(s), washed thoroughly prior to contact.
  - Provide Peanut-Free, Nut-Free menu.

**The safety of students with medically documented life threatening allergies or life threatening dietary needs at Mater Christi School depends upon the cooperation of the entire school community. We will work as partners with parents and medical professionals to protect these vulnerable children from potential harm.**

## **Mater Christi School Concussion Action Plan**

In accordance with Act 68, Mater Christi School has developed this plan to address the identification and treatment of concussions for students who participate in school sports. All coaches are required to certify concussion management training every two years. Parents and athletes must be informed about concussions annually.

### **CONCUSSION FACTS**

A concussion is a brain injury caused by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head. Concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function. However, signs or symptoms may not be noticeable for hours or days. Loss of consciousness only occurs in about ten percent of concussions. It is important to give the brain time to heal before returning to play.

The athlete must inform the coach about any previously sustained concussion. The greatest risk factor for concussion is a previous concussion. There is increasing concern that recurrent concussions contribute to long-term neurological impairment. Proper fit and use of equipment, player respect, adherence to sport rules, sport-specific technique and encouragement of symptom reporting reduce the incidence and severity of concussion.

### **RECOGNITION OF CONCUSSION**

The following signs and symptoms seen after a witnessed or suspected blow to the head or body indicate a probable concussion.

#### **SIGNS (OBSERVED)**

Appears dazed or stunned  
Confusion  
Slowed speech  
Moves clumsily  
Balance problems  
Personality change  
Forgetful  
Loss of consciousness (not required)

#### **SYMPTOMS (REPORTED)**

Headache  
Dizzy  
Nausea or vomiting  
Double or blurry vision  
Sensitive to light or noise  
Feels drowsy or sleepy  
Numbness or tingling  
Difficulty concentrating  
Difficulty remembering

### **REMOVAL FROM PLAY**

Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion must be removed from practice or competition. The athlete will not be allowed to practice or compete with a school team until the athlete has been examined by and received written permission to participate in athletic activities from a health care provider (per Act 68). The team coach has been designated as the individual who can make the initial decision to remove an athlete from play when a concussion is suspected. The team coach will notify parents/guardians within 24 hours if a student sustains a concussion.

### **RETURN TO LEARN (RTL) PROTOCOL**

The following steps are required before the student can return to academic activity. The student is required to complete the RTL protocol and be symptom free for 24 hours before beginning the return to play protocol. The attending health care practitioner will determine school accommodations and time frame for recovery.

Examples of accommodations include extra time to complete assignments, lightened homework load, no computer or iPad use, no significant or standardized testing and rest breaks.

1. Home with total rest
2. Home with light mental activity
3. School (part-time) with accommodations
4. School (full-time) with accommodations
5. School (full-time) with full academics and no accommodations

### **RETURN TO PLAY (RTP) PROTOCOL**

The RTP protocol should start only when the student has been without symptoms for 24 hours. The primary concern with early RTP is decreased reaction time leading to increased risk of injury. The student should not take any over-the-counter pain medications while moving through this plan. The attending health care practitioner will determine athletic accommodations and time frame for recovery and determine full clearance for return to play.

1. Light aerobic conditioning – walking, swimming or stationary cycling – to increase heart rate
2. Sports specific drills – basic (no contact) – to add movement and coordination
3. Sports specific drills – more complex (contact) – to restore confidence
4. Full clearance for return to play

For more information please visit [www.cdc.gov/concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion)

Ellen Ammirato, MS, RN  
Revised 1/14/2014

**Mater Christi School  
Concussion Action Plan**

Per Act 68, I have read and understand the Mater Christi School Concussion Action Plan regarding the recognition of concussion signs and symptoms, how to reduce the risks of concussion and the impacts of concussion.

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Parent Signature Date

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Athlete Signature Date

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Sport and season of participation

# DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

## PHILOSOPHY

Education at Mater Christi School is provided for not only the intellectual and spiritual growth of the students, but also for their emotional and physical growth. Mater Christi School expects that the students will develop a respect for all life. Ingestion of harmful substances such as drugs or alcohol hinders the growth and development of the individual and is contrary to the philosophy of Mater Christi School. The presence of devices of any kind associated with drug, alcohol or tobacco use by students is prohibited from school premises at all times.

The home has primary responsibility for treating health problems; however, Mater Christi School shares these responsibilities in the areas of education and referral. The school also shares the responsibility of supporting any student who is attempting to change a pattern of use.

School administration and support services will work with the family in providing prevention and treatment opportunities.

## GUIDELINES

### I. Programs

The main purpose of these programs is to provide periodic drug education for school personnel, students and parents.

These programs will be of three types:

- A. School Personnel – Establish and maintain an in-service drug education program for all school personnel as appropriate.
- B. Students – Establish and maintain a realistic and appropriate drug education program for students in grades K-8 in compliance with guidelines established by the State of Vermont.
- C. Parents – Parental educational programs shall be implemented in response to specific requests from parents.

### II. Violation of the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy

A violation of the Mater Christi School Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy is any drug or alcohol related incident which occurs on school premises or at school sponsored functions, and includes the purchase, use, possession, being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, dealing in alcohol or other drugs, and the possession of devices associated with alcohol or drug use.

### III. Reporting Drug or Alcohol Related Incident

All school personnel are expected to immediately confront students verbally to discuss any suspected or actual drug/alcohol incident that occurs on the school premises and/or at school-sponsored functions, and to report the incident immediately to the administration.

- A. In all reported instances of actual drug or alcohol policy violation, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be notified immediately by the administration. The administrators will also investigate and evaluate the situation to determine appropriate action.
- B. If, in the opinion of the administrators, an emergency situation exists, an area rescue squad and/or the Burlington Police Department will be called upon for their service. The school nurse will serve in a

support capacity in such instances. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be notified prior to such action when possible and in all other instances as soon as possible thereafter.

#### IV. Consequences

- A. Disciplinary action for the first reported violation of the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy shall involve suspension from school to begin immediately and last for a maximum of 10 school days.
  1. Students found to be selling drugs and/or alcohol will be recommended to the Board of Trustees for immediate expulsion.
  2. When the administration has sufficient information as the result of observation or reason to suspect that a probable violation of the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy has occurred, the student(s) will be expected to cooperate fully. This may include emptying pockets, pocketbooks and/or backpacks. In such situations, the administration also reserves the right to inspect students' lockers.

The student(s) will meet with the administrators and with an outside professional before re-entering school following suspension. In some instances, sustained professional guidance and treatment may be a condition of continued enrollment in school.

- B. A second violation of the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy within a given school year shall result in an automatic 10-day suspension to begin immediately. A recommendation shall also be made for referral to an alcohol and drug treatment program that is approved by the Head of School.
- C. In the event that a third violation of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy occurs within a given school year, a recommendation will be made to the Board of Trustees for expulsion.

#### V. Indications of Alcohol or Drug Abuse

In some instances, school personnel may observe over a period of time changes in the academic, social or personal behavior of the student that might be related to alcohol or drug abuse.

These are some indications of possible alcohol and drug abuse:

- Drop in class performance
- Frequent tardiness or absences
- Inappropriate behavior in and/or out of class
- Change in family or peer relations
- Change in sleeping and eating patterns

These behaviors are not violations, but, rather, early indicators of a possible problem. School personnel are encouraged to observe student behavior that may signal a need for assessment by appropriate school personnel.

#### VI. Self-Referral

When a student recognizes that he/she has a problem with chemical use, and chooses to report to school personnel that she/he wants to do something about this problem, the school will cooperate as fully as possible with this student, and he/she will receive assistance.

#### VII. Prescription and Non-Prescription Drugs

If medication is required during school hours, parents are requested to send the medication to the health office. The nurse or delegate will dispense all prescription and nonprescription medication. For safety reasons, children are not to carry medicines on their person, in lunch containers or in book bags with the exception of approved emergency medications for children with diagnosed life-threatening conditions. **All medications are to be in the original pharmacy container, labeled with the name of the medicine, reason for taking, specific directions, and name of physician.** Specific permission forms for prescription and nonprescription

medicines must be completed and signed. If this information is not supplied, the medication will not be dispensed.

### VIII. Tobacco Products

Students found to be selling, possessing or using tobacco products on the school grounds and/or at school-sponsored activities will be referred to the Administration for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Parents will be notified.

The Head of School or his or her designee shall develop procedures, rules and regulations that are in his or her judgment necessary to implement this policy and, at a minimum, will include provisions ensuring that tobacco products are confiscated when found in the possession of students and that referrals to law enforcement agencies are made when appropriate.

1. School Grounds means any property and facilities owned or leased by the school and used at Any time for school related activities, including but not limited to school buildings, school buses, areas adjacent to school buildings, athletic fields and parking lots.
2. School sponsored activity means activities including but not limited to field trips, project graduation events, sporting events, work internships and dances.
3. Tobacco product has the same meaning as set forth in 7 V.S.A. 1001(4), as amended from time to time.<sup>1</sup>

**Students in the company of persons found to have committed the above offenses will be considered in violation and subject to the same consequences.**

Source: South Burlington High School  
Revised: Mater Christi School – 1990

<sup>1</sup> The term “tobacco product” is defined in 7 V.S.A.1001(4) as “cigarettes, cigars, cheroots, stogies, periques, granulated, plug cut crimp cut, ready rubbed, and other smoking tobacco, snuff, snuff flour, Cavendish, plug and twist tobacco, fine-cut and other chewing tobaccos, shorts, refuse scraps, clippings, cuttings and sweepings of tobacco and other forms of tobacco prepared in a manner suitable for chewing or smoking in a pipe or otherwise, or both for chewing and smoking.”

## PREVENTION OF STUDENT HARASSMENT POLICY

### I. HARASSMENT

The Mater Christi School is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. This policy addresses incidents and/or conduct that occurs on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, or incidents and/or conduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity but where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s equal access to educational programs.

Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. It is the policy of Mater Christi School to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. Consistent with these purposes, annually,<sup>1</sup> Mater Christi shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their

availability in the publications that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for Mater Christi School.<sup>2</sup>

It is the intent of Mater Christi School to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this harassment policy is to prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that is likely to substantially disrupt the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources, or create a hostile learning environment.

Mater Christi School shall promptly and effectively address all complaints of harassment in accordance with the procedures established by this policy. In cases where harassment is substantiated, the school shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline. Such serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a person for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.

## II. Definitions

**A. "Harassment"** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, religion, ancestry, medical status or disability, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

1. Sexual harassment is conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:
  - i. submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status or progress; or
  - ii. submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student
2. Sexual harassment also includes student to student conduct, as well as other conduct which results in the creation of a hostile environment.
3. Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, ancestry, creed or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, negative references to cultural customs, and taunts on manner of speech.
4. Harassment of members of other protected categories, is conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, religion, ancestry, medical status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults,

derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

- B. “Complaint”** means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.
- C. “Complainant”** means a student who has filed an oral or written complaint with a school employee or a student who is the target of alleged harassment in a report made by another person.
- D. “Designated employee”** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of harassment pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1). The names and contact information of the buildings two designated employees shall be posted in the building.
- E. “Employee”** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with Mater Christi School, an agent of the school, a member of the Mater Christi Board of Trustees, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer.
- F. “Notice”** means a written complaint or oral information that harassment may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the harassment, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred.
- G. “Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.
- H. “School administrator”** means a superintendent, Head of School or his/her designee.

### III. Reporting Student Harassment

- A. Student reporting:** Any student who believes that s/he has been harassed under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.
- B. School employee reporting:** Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee. Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute harassment shall immediately report the information to a designated employee. If one of the designated employees is the person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the complaint shall be immediately filed with the other designated employee or the school administrator.
- C. Other reporting:** Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.

- D. Documentation of the report:** If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in a harassment complaint form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses.

<sup>1</sup> See 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).

<sup>7</sup> See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(E).

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>3</sup> Effective July 1, 2007, 1 V.S.A. §144 defines “gender identity” as “an individual’s actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual’s gender or gender-identity, regardless of the individual’s assigned sex at birth.”

- E. False Complaint:** Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of harassment when the person has a good faith belief that harassment occurred or is occurring.

#### **IV. Procedures Following a Report**

- A. Notification:**<sup>6</sup> Upon receipt of a complaint of harassment the designated employee shall immediately inform the school administrator of the complaint. In addition, the designated employee shall immediately provide a copy of this harassment policy to the complainant and accused individual. If either the victim or the accused individual is

- under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be:
- promptly notified that a complaint of harassment has been filed and provided with a copy of this policy
- notified if an alternative dispute resolution method will be offered and, if it occurs, of the outcome of any such attempt
- notified in writing that the complaint was substantiated and a consequence was imposed.

All notification letters shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. A school administrator may seek waiver of confidentiality rights of the accused in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that harassment or other misconduct occurred.

- B. Investigation:**<sup>7</sup> The school administrator shall, no later than one school day after the filing of a complaint with a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to

whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment. When the initial determination concludes that an accused student has engaged in harassment, the school administrator shall use his or her discretion to decide the appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies.

All levels of internal review of the investigator's initial determination, and the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the School, be completed within 30 calendar days after the review is requested.

- C. Action on a substantiated complaint: If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes harassment, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent any recurrence of harassment. Such action may include warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, suspension and/or termination of an employee.
- D. Alternative dispute resolution:<sup>9</sup> At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. The following should be considered before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods: (1) the nature of the accusations, (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual, (3) the agreement of the complainant, and (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual. If an alternative dispute resolution is either not appropriate or is unsuccessful, the school administrator shall initiate or cause to be initiated an investigation of the allegations in accordance with the timelines established in this policy.
- E. Appeal: A person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it may appeal the determination and/or the disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with Mater Christi School's discipline policy or applicable statutes.
- F. Independent Review: A complainant may request an independent review if s/he: 1.) believes that the school did not correctly analyze the complaint and failed to conduct an investigation of the incident because the school believed the alleged conduct did not constitute possible harassment, 2.) is dissatisfied with the final determination following an investigation as to whether harassment occurred, or 3.) believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the Chairperson of the Mater Christi Board of Trustees.

Upon such request, the Chairperson of the Mater Christi Board of Trustees shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 565(f), and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation. Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: 1.) as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any

harassment found to have occurred, and 2.) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Commissioner. The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the School. Mater Christi School may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

- G. Retaliation:** It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or

See 16 V.S.A. §14(c)(3).

<sup>6</sup>See 16 V.S.A. §14(a).

<sup>7</sup>See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(E).

hearing related to the harassment complaint. A person may violate this anti-retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of harassment is substantiated.

## **V. Confidentiality and Record Keeping**

- A.** The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with Mater Christi School's obligation to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.
- B.** The School Administrator shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by Mater Christi School in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

## **VI. Reporting to Other Agencies**

When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. §4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq.

If a harassment complaint is made at Mater Christi School about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under the State Board of Education rules for licensing action, the Head of School will report the alleged conduct to the Superintendent of Schools.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude anyone from reporting any incidents and/or conduct that may be considered a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

## **VII. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting**

- A. Dissemination of Information.**<sup>12</sup> Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, Mater Christi School shall provide notice of this policy and procedures to

students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and employees. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of harassment. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in the Mater Christi Student and Parent Handbook and in the Mater Christi School Faculty/Staff Handbook that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for Mater Christi School.

- B. Training.**<sup>13</sup> The school administrator shall use her/his discretion in developing age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help prevent harassment. The school administrator shall implement training for school staff within the context of professional development to enable staff to recognize, prevent and respond to harassment.
- C. Data Gathering.** Mater Christi School shall provide the Vermont Department of Education with data requested by the Commissioner of DCF.

### VIII. **Alternative Complaint Process**

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

<sup>8</sup> An “internal review” is any procedure provided by the school through policy or practice and is not the same as an “independent review” as described below.

<sup>9</sup> See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(C).

<sup>10</sup> See 16 V.S.A. §565(f).

<sup>11</sup> Such as those identified in Section VIII of this policy.

<sup>12</sup> See 16 V.S.A. §565(d).

<sup>13</sup> See 16 V.S.A. §565(d).

Vermont Human Rights Commission  
14-16 Baldwin Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301  
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)  
(877) 294-9200 (tty)  
(802) 828-2481 (fax)  
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
33 Arch Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02110-1491  
(617) 289-0111 (voice)  
(877) 521-2172 (tdd)  
(617) 289-0150 (fax)  
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

### **Legal References:**

Title V, Section B, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794 et seq.;

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d;

Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§1681 et seq.;

Family Education Rights Privacy Act; 20 U.S.C. 1232g;

Public Accommodations, 9 V.S.A. §§4500 et seq. ;  
Education, Classifications and Definitions, 16 V.S.A. §11a (26);  
Education, Harassment, Notice and Response, 16 V.S.A. §14;  
Education, 16 V.S.A. §140(a)(1);  
Education, 16 V.S.A. §166(e);  
Education, Harassment and Hazing Prevention Policy, 16 V.S.A. §565;  
Education, Discipline, 16 V.S.A. §1161a;  
Education, Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils, 16 V.S.A. §1162;  
Child Abuse, 33 V.S.A. §§4911 et seq.;  
Adult Protective Services, 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq., all as they may be amended from time to time.

*Washington v. Pierce*, 179 VT 318 (2005)

(See Form 5152, 5153, 5154.)

Superintendent of Schools

Diocese of Burlington

Updated – MCS – August, 2012

Promulgated: February 1, 2006

Revised: February 2, 2009

See 16 V.S.A. §14(c)(3).

## WEAPONS IN SCHOOL POLICY

The Mission and Core Values of Mater Christi School state in part “that motivation for maximum learning is supported in a creative and caring environment” and that education at Mater Christi involves guiding each child in developing a value system that “includes a respect for life.”

Consistent treatment of each person with dignity and respect at school must be an outstanding characteristic of the school. This mutual dignity and respect must be shared by faculty, staff, board members, students, volunteers, visitors, and any other persons who form the support system of the school.

The school’s Mission and Core Values indicate that the education of the whole child will be most successfully accomplished in an atmosphere of caring security. Thus, any action that undermines that atmosphere is out of place at Mater Christi School including threats of violence whether spoken or written. Students engaging in these threats will be subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the principal.

The presence of weapons in school not only creates unacceptable risks of injury or death, but also creates a climate that undermines the educational purposes of Mater Christi. Accordingly, it is the policy of Mater Christi School to forbid the possession, custody, and use of weapons by unauthorized persons in or around school property.

### **Definitions:**

#### **Weapons:**

For purposes of this policy, a “weapon” is any firearm, knife, explosive, or other object, even if manufactured for a nonviolent purpose, that has a potentially violent use, if, under the surrounding circumstances, the purpose of keeping or carrying the object is for use, or threat of use, as a weapon.

#### **Firearm:**

For the purposes of this policy, a “firearm” is defined as any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; and firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any destructive device.

**Prohibitions:**

It is the policy of the Mater Christi School that no student shall bring a weapon onto school property, nor carry or keep any weapon on school property or while attending or participating in any school activity, including during transportation to or from such activity.

**Enforcement:**

Any member of the Mater Christi faculty or staff who suspects that a student has brought a weapon to school or to a school event may search for and confiscate such weapon.

**Penalties for Violations:**

- A. Any student, faculty, or staff member found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline, including long-term suspension and expulsion. Any volunteer, visitor, or other person in violation of this policy shall be subject to immediate expulsion from the premises.
- B. Any student found to be in violation of this policy due to possession of a firearm, as defined in this policy, shall at a minimum, be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year (365 days). The Head of School may impose this discipline after they review the circumstances of the incident. The Head of School also may modify the penalty in appropriate cases at their discretion.
- C. The Head of School will appoint appropriate school personnel to work closely with the student and his/her parents/guardians so that the transition experience either out of or back into school for the student will be a beneficial time for the student.
- D. Faculty or staff members in violation of this policy face discipline up to and including termination. The Head of School may impose the discipline after he/she reviews the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Whatever level of discipline the Head of School chooses to impose, the appropriate law enforcement officials will be notified when anyone has brought a weapon to school. The Head of School will also inform the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees that a student, faculty or staff member brought a weapon to school and the subsequent disciplinary action taken by the Head of School.

#### HAZING POLICY

Mater Christi prohibits the hazing of students. "Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with an educational institution; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning the student, or endangering the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off the campus of an educational institution. See 16 V.S.A Section 565.

It is the policy of the State of Vermont and of Mater Christi School in particular that every student be provided a safe, orderly, civil, and learning environment. Harassment, hazing, and bullying have no place and will not be tolerated at Mater Christi School.

Hazing may be grounds for discipline up to and including dismissal. Any person with a hazing complaint is encouraged to report the complaint as soon after the incident as possible. Mr. Patrick Lofton, Head of School,

(802) 658-3992 and a representative of the Sisters of Mercy Northeast Regional Community, (802) 863-6835 have been designated to receive hazing complaints. Students are encouraged to report such an incident to one of these individuals or to any teacher or school administrator of their choice.

Teachers and other staff members at Mater Christi School will receive training in preventing, recognizing, and responding to harassment/hazing. This training will take place annually as part of faculty/staff meetings or during faculty/staff in-service days.

Additional information about procedures relating to harassment complaints is contained in the section of the school's Prevention of Student Harassment and sexual harassment section entitled "Formal Complaint Procedures." These procedures will be used to report, file, investigate, and respond to complaints of hazing, and include addresses and phone numbers to report hazing to state or federal agencies, which agencies may also investigate hazing as permitted or authorized by law. Retaliation in any form against a person making a complaint of hazing is also a violation of school policy.

Adopted September, 2001 - Revised July, 2010 and August 2012.

# Mater Christi School

## Technology Acceptable Use Policy

September 2017

Mater Christi School  
50 Mansfield Avenue  
Burlington, Vt. 05404

### **Mater Christi School Technology Acceptable Use Policy - September 2017**

#### **Digital Learning Vision Statement**

Our goals are to enhance opportunities for learning through virtual experiences and to prepare students for the complexities of the twenty-first century, to extend access to learning opportunities and materials and enable students to learn at their own pace, provide a means of making personalized accommodations to meet the needs of all learners, and to foster not only communication and connectivity with the global community but facilitate deeper respect in our students and a sense of responsibility as global citizens.

#### **Creation of this Policy**

The Mater Christi School Team has worked collaboratively to craft and implement the following policy. The policy represents our commitment to best practices for the use of digital resources and hardware, administrative regulations, procedures, terms and conditions for use and user agreements consistent with the Catholic mission of Mater Christi School. The policy will be revised at the conclusion of each school year by the School Team of teachers and our Technology Leadership Team.

#### **Introduction**

The Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Mater Christi School is enacted by the School Team to provide the parents, students, and staff of the Mater Christi School with a statement of purpose and explanation of the use of technology within the MCS educational community. This policy is reinforced by practice, together with **acceptable** use standards and is required reading before accessing the technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure of Mater Christi School. Students, parents/guardians, and all staff members of MCS must read and sign the accompanying Technology **acceptable** Use Policy.

## **Purpose**

MCS encourages the judicious use of information technology to assist staff and students with academic success, preparation for the workplace, and lifelong learning. MCS provides access to a wide range of information technologies to support learning, facilitate resource sharing, increase authentic communication, enhance student engagement, and assist staff and students in acquiring innovative skills. The technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure will also be utilized to share relevant school information and develop links with the local and global community.

## **Definitions**

“Technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure” is defined as the MCS network, the Internet, Google Apps for Education, email, hardware, software, printers, peripheral devices, individual computer devices, and web enabled devices.

“Information technology” is defined as Internet access, blogging, podcasting, email, published and unpublished documents, and various forms of multimedia technology.

“Educational use” is defined as a use that supports communication, research, and learning.

“Devices” refer to MCS owned/leased, staff owned devices, and student/family owned devices.

## **Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)**

Congress enacted the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act, 15 U.S.C. §6501, et seq. (COPPA) in 1998. COPPA required the Federal Trade Commission to issue and enforce regulations concerning children’s online privacy. The Commission’s original COPPA Rule became effective on April 21, 2000. The Commission issued an amended Rule on December 19, 2012 that became effective on July 1, 2013.

As MCS teachers, students and families work together to advance learning using technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure, all parties should work to inform students about the risks of providing personal information for the purpose of creating web based accounts.

## **Content Filtering**

Mater Christi School uses software designed to block access to certain sites and filter content as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, 47 U.S.C. §254 (CIPA). MCS is aware that not all inappropriate information can be filtered, and the school will make an effort to correct any known gaps in the filtering of information without unduly inhibiting the educational use of age appropriate content by staff and students. Users should inform teachers or administrators of any inadvertent access to inappropriate material in order to modify the filtering profile. MCS continually educates students about appropriate online behavior and technology usage.

## **Monitoring**

MCS monitors the use of the school's network to protect the integrity and optimal operation of all computer and system networks. There is no expectation of privacy related to information stored and transmitted over the MCS network. The information on the network in general files, MCS Google domain files, email and third-party devices brought into the school building by students is not private and is subject to review by the network manager at the request of the MCS administration to substantiate inappropriate activity and to comply with requests of law enforcement agencies as part of their investigations.

MCS will cooperate with copyright protection agencies investigating copyright infringement by users of the computer systems and network of MCS.

Technicians and computer system administrators maintain full access rights to all storage devices, and may need to access/manage such storage devices as part of their duties.

Routine system maintenance and monitoring may lead to the discovery of violations of the MCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy, other school policies, state laws, or federal laws.

Search of particular files of a user shall be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law or MCS Policies. The investigation will be reasonable and in the context of the nature of the alleged policy violation.

## **What are Google Apps for Education?**

MCS provides staff and students with a Google Apps for Education account. Google Apps is a free web based suite of programs provided by Google for schools to use.

All of the Google Apps services can be accessed from anywhere you have an Internet connection (school, home, smart phone, etc.) Among the purposes for integrating Google Apps for Education in our school environment are to:

- Address equitable digital access
- Enhance collaborating in the learning environment
- Promote authentic 21st Century learning and teaching
- Provide opportunity to grow as digital citizens
- Enhance the daily educational experience

### **Uses for Student MCS Domain Gmail**

Email can be a powerful communication tool for students to increase communication and collaboration, and serves as a link to the digital classroom. Therefore, students will be encouraged to check their MCS email regularly. Teachers may email students to communicate reminders, course content, pose questions related to class work, and such. Students are encouraged to email other students to collaborate on group projects and assist with school assignments.

### **Student MCS Domain Gmail Permission**

Mater Christi School's Gmail system controls to whom email messages can be sent and from whom they can be received. MCS Students cannot send email to parent accounts or anyone outside of the MCS School domain. All MCS students cannot receive email from outside of the domain. Therefore, students should not use their MCS email for setting up accounts that need to be verified via email or receive notices via email. Exceptions to this policy can be made for academic purposes at the discretion of the School Team and the MCS Administration.

### **Student MCS Domain Emails to Staff**

At teacher's' discretion, students may email their teachers with questions or comments regarding class. However, there will be no requirement or expectation for staff to answer student email, although they certainly may if they choose. For example, an unanswered email to a teacher would not excuse a student from turning in an assignment on time.

### **General Email and On-line Chat Guidelines**

*Below is a general summary of guidelines related to email and any form of online chat or instant messages:*

- All emails to staff and faculty should model proper etiquette and format (which will be taught in class). The content should be specific to school related subjects.
- Email and on-line chat among students is to be used for school-related communication.
- The following actions are prohibited:
  - \* Sending harassing email, instant messages or content.
  - \* Sending offensive email, instant messages or content.
  - \* Sending spam email, instant messages or content.
  - \* Sending email or instant messages containing a virus or other malicious content.
  - \* Sending or reading email or instant messages at inappropriate times, such as during class instruction time.
  - \* Sending email or instant messages to share test answers or promote cheating in any way.
  - \* Using the account of another person.

### **User Access and Explanation of Guidelines**

Access to information technology through the Mater Christi domain is a privilege, not a right. Students, parents, and staff shall be required to read the MCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy and sign and return the Statement of Responsibilities.

The MCS Acceptable Usage Policy shall govern all use of technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure. Student use of technology resources, digital resources, web enabled devices, and network

infrastructure will be governed by school disciplinary policies as outlined in the policy manual of the MCS school handbook.

Since information technology is constantly changing, not all circumstances can be anticipated or addressed in this policy. All users are expected to understand and comply with both the “letter” and the “spirit” of this policy and show good judgment in their use of these resources. Any questions should be addressed to the Administration.

MCS provides students access to its technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure, along with information technology for educational use. Students who have doubts regarding whether a resource has educational merit, should ask a staff member.

### **Scope of Technology Policies**

The scope of the policies includes the MCS domain, MCS network, MCS school grounds or at/during MCS school functions, use of MCS accounts, and MCS school issued devices. School issued devices include but are not limited to the following: tablets, classroom computers, and any other device issued by the school.

### **Expectation of Privacy**

At any time and without prior notice, MCS reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any and all usage of technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure, along with information technology as well as any information sent or received in connection with this usage. Staff and students should not have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

### **Consequences for Violation of Technology Policies**

Use of the computer network and Internet is an integral part of research and class work, but abuse of this technology can result in loss of privileges. Students who use technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure or any information technology inappropriately may lose their access privileges and may face additional disciplinary or legal action.

The length of time for loss of privileges will be determined by building administrators and/or other staff members. If the user is guilty of multiple violations, privileges can be revoked.

### **Unacceptable Uses of Technology Resources**

#### **Inappropriate technology use includes but is not limited to the following:**

- Interfering with the normal functioning of devices, computer systems, or computer networks.
- Damaging or theft of devices, computer systems, or computer networks.
- Accessing, modifying, or deleting files/data that do not belong to you.
- Sending or publishing offensive or harassing messages and content.
- Accessing dangerous information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or danger to others.
- Giving your username or password to any other student, or using the username or password of someone else to access any part of the system.
- Sharing and/or distribution of passwords or using another student or faculty member’s password.
- Intentional viewing, downloading or distribution of inappropriate and/or offensive materials.
- Gaining unauthorized access to computer and or telecommunications networks and resources.
- Viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic, obscene, vulgar and/or indecent materials.
- Using obscene language, harassing, insulting or bullying others, posting of private or personal

information about another person, spamming of the school email system, violating any federal or state law, local regulation or school policy.

- Violating copyright laws and/or the diocesan policy on plagiarism.
- Copying software or applications from Mater Christi School devices through any electronic means unless the particular licensing agreement in place for the software allows user distribution.
- Intentionally wasting limited network or bandwidth resources.
- Destructions/vandalism of system software, applications, files or other network resources.
- Employing the network for commercial or political purposes.
- Using the network / Internet to buy or sell products.
- “Hacking” and other illegal activities in attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted files, other devices or computer systems.
- Uploading any harmful form of programming, bypassing filters; installing any type of server, aliasing / spoofing, peer-to-peer networking or remote-control software.
- Possession of and/or distribution of any software tools designed to facilitate any of the above actions will also be considered an offense.

Saving inappropriate files to any part of the system, including but not limited to:

- *Music files*
- *Movies*
- *Video games of all types, including ROMs and emulators*
- *Offensive images or files*
- *Programs which can be used for malicious purposes*
- *Any files for which you do not have a legal license*
- *Any file which is not needed for school purposes or a class assignment.*

Uses that contribute to the violation of any other student conduct code including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, hazing or harassment, theft, falsification of records, possession of banned substances/items, etc.

### **Progressive Discipline**

Mater Christi School will apply progressive discipline for violations of the school policy and signed Acceptable Use Agreement Form which may include revocation of the access to the MCS domain, MCS network, technology use on MCS school grounds or at/during MCS school functions, use of MCS accounts, and MCS school issued devices. Other appropriate disciplinary or legal action may be undertaken by the MCS Administration, including suspension or expulsion.

### **Mater Christi School Limitations of Liability**

Mater Christi School makes no warranties of any kind, implied or expressed, that the services and functions provided through the technology devices, digital resources and network infrastructure, along with information technology will be error free or without defect. MCS will not be responsible for damages users may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data or interruption of service.

MCS, along with any persons or organizations associated with the school department internet connectivity, will not be liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the internet through the school network infrastructure. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise for their actions while connected to the internet.

The MCS School staff assumes no responsibility for any information or materials transferred or accessed from the internet.

Parents/Guardians should read this MCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy. Parents/guardians should discuss the technology use responsibilities with their children. Questions and concerns can be forwarded to the Administration of Mater Christi School.

Parents and guardians agree to accept financial responsibility for any expenses or damages incurred as a result their student's inappropriate or illegal activities on the Mater Christi School network. Parents and guardians agree to reimburse MCS for any expenses or damages incurred in the use of school owned devices.

### **Modification**

The Mater Christi School team, and Administration reserve the right to modify or change this policy and related implementation procedures at any time without prior notification.

## **Mater Christi School Student/Parent Statement of Responsibilities**

### **Student Expectations**

I have read, understand and will follow this Acceptable Use Policy. If I breach this agreement, the consequences could include suspension or revocation of Technology privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand the school network, domain and email accounts are owned by Mater Christi School and Mater Christi School has the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time.

### **Parent/Guardian Acceptable Use Signature**

Parent collaboration and consent is a crucial focus of Mater Christi School. Through our technology integration, we want to work with parents so they understand the various initiatives that are taking place at school. We encourage you to have your children guide you through their work so you will see their progress as it develops.

As parents, students and teachers working together, we become an ever-stronger learning community, therefore, creating more opportunities for our students to become more successful. As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Mater Christi School Responsible Use Policy. I understand that technology is provided for educational purposes in keeping with the educational goals of MCS and that student use for any other purpose is inappropriate. I recognize it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the school network. **I understand that children's information technology activities at home should be supervised by me as they can affect the academic environment at school.**

I understand the importance of this Responsible Use Policy and will support my student in adhering to it. I am aware that if my child breaches this agreement, the consequences could include suspension

or revocation of Technology privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand the school network, domain and email accounts are owned by MCS and that MCS has the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time. I hereby give permission for my child to use technology resources at Mater Christi School.

**Parent/Guardian Student Images for Educational Purposes**

Mater Christi School attempts to provide students with the best educational practices and resources. Images and videos may be used in the classroom setting to enhance and enrich student learning. Images and videos should be taken and used for educational purposes only. School images and student images should not be used on non-school or non-MCS Domain based sites/apps (i.e. personal accounts). The use of videos and images is used at the discretion of the classroom teacher and the MCS Administration.

**Mater Christi School Device Statement of Responsibility for Parent/Guardian and Student**

I have read and understand the MCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy. I accept responsibility for any damage, destruction, or loss of any device. I understand that I am responsible for the total cost of replacing a damaged, destroyed, or lost device.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Name (please print)      Student Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature      Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date      Date

### **ACCESSIBILITY OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

Mater Christi receives federal funds for some of its programs. In recognizing that some areas of the school are inaccessible to handicapped individuals, the school adopts the following policy:

All federally funded programs at Mater Christi School are available without discrimination, to handicapped individuals as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Whenever a handicapped individual selects a federally funded program for participation in a program that is inaccessible, the program will be relocated to an accessible area. In no instance will the relocation of the activity be delayed beyond two (2) school days. The principal are responsible for implementing this policy by relocating federal programs within the existing building.

### **SCHOOL/ADMINISTRATION'S RIGHT TO AMEND HANDBOOK**

Given the complex nature of education and common purpose, it is impossible to predetermine a policy to cover every situation. Accordingly, the administration, after due consideration may, from time to time, be required to make judgments as to the best course of action in a given circumstance or to make changes to this handbook. When necessary, exceptions or changes will be made with the greatest benefit to the educational purpose in mind. Mater Christi School's administrators retain the right to amend the **Student and Parent Handbook** at any time and for any reason the schools administrators determine is appropriate. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

**We have read, understand and agree to be governed by this document.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature                      Homeroom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature                      Homeroom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature                      Homeroom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature                      Homeroom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature    Date

- Families of Students in Preschool through Grade 8: please return the signed copy to the school office by September 15, 2017.