

# Saint Cecilia School



## PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

St. Cecilia School prepares students for life by providing an engaging, high-quality education, guided by the teachings of our Catholic Faith, where students live out the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Cecilia endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accordance with the curriculum guidance for Catholic school education for the Diocese of Covington. Just as Jesus was a teacher, we believe that St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School is an integral part of St. Cecilia Parish's mission to assist our parents as their children's initial teachers. We do this by formalizing and intensifying the Catholic education that has its origin in the Catholic home.

St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School provides a safe climate that challenges students intellectually, culturally, socially, spiritually, and physically. Positive decision-making, critical thinking and spiritual development is fostered. As emergent learners, students realize their importance in the global society to become responsible stewards to live and walk by faith.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Create a safe, orderly, and drug free environment and maintain an atmosphere conducive to teaching, learning and Catholic identity.
- Exhibit an attitude of respect for students, staff, parents, and visitors.
- Administer discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students.
- Plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- Promote training for all staff in the areas of effective discipline, behavior management, and continuous teaching improvement.
- Develop a good working relationship among staff and with students.
- Encourage frequent parent/guardian communication and involvement with the school.

## **CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

As stated in our Mission, the religious and moral training of our students is the most important part of our school. All students, both Catholic and non-Catholic receive this training as one of their core subjects. The religion classes follow the curriculum guidelines established by the Diocese of Covington and are under the jurisdiction of the Pastor.

## **ADMISSION**

St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School is a parish school that is open to all members of the parish and community and will not discriminate against applicants on the basis of sex, race, disability, nationality, or ethnic origin. Admission to the school is based upon the availability of classroom space. Students will be accepted for admission in the following order of preference:

- 1) Students who are currently enrolled in St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School and their siblings.
- 2) Siblings or children of students who have graduated from St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School.
- 3) Registered parishioners of St. Cecilia Church not currently attending St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School.
- 4) Registered parishioners from a neighboring Catholic Church that do not have a school.
- 5) Non-Catholic students wishing to enroll and desiring a Catholic education. Non-Catholic applicants and their parents will be accepted on the basis of a personal interview to be in accord with the mission and philosophy of St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School.

### **Age for Admission**

Students must be five years old by the first day of October of the current school year in order to be eligible to enter kindergarten. To enter first grade students need to be six years old by the first day of October of the current school year and must have attended a certified kindergarten or comparable five-year-old preparatory program.

### **Requirements for Registration and Admittance**

To enroll a student, the parent or guardian must supply:

- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Social Security card (a copy will be made for our files, and the original will be returned)
- A completed registration form for the student
- Current Immunization Certificate
- Medical Records
- A Baptismal Certificate
- Prior Academic Records
- Custodial records or other applicable legal court orders

### **Transferring Schools**

In addition to the "Requirements for Registration and Admittance" above, any family that would like to transfer their child to St. Cecilia School during the school year must meet with the Principal and/or Pastor prior to registering. All families transferring children to or from St. Cecilia must be up-to-date with their tuition, fees, and cafeteria account balances.

**TUITION AND FEES**

The school is financed by student tuition and subsidized by the parish to keep tuition and operating costs low. The tuition rates are reviewed and approved annually by the St. Cecilia Parish Finance Committee. Each family is also charged school fees which are used to cover the cost of textbooks, materials, and other routine expenses associated with the operation of a school. All families of students attending St. Cecilia School have an obligation to pay tuition and fees. The following tuition rates have been approved by the Parish Finance Committee for the 2014-2015 school year.

<b>K-8</b>	<b>In Parish</b>	<b>Out of Parish</b>
1 Child	\$4,150.00	\$4,650.00
2 Children	\$6,250.00	\$6,750.00
3 (or more) Children	\$7,150.00	\$7,650.00

K-8 Fees: \$300 .00 (\$100.00 Registration fee, \$200.00 school fees)

<b>Preschool</b>	<b>In Parish</b>	<b>Out of Parish</b>
3 Yr Old Program	\$1,350.00	\$1,550.00
4 Yr Old Program	\$1,650.00	\$1,850.00
Pre-K Program	\$1,950.00	\$2,150.00

Preschool Fees: \$90.00 (\$60.00 if another child is enrolled at St. Cecilia)

Daycare/Aftercare: Registration fee - \$25 per family  
 Rate per half hour - \$2.25  
 (rounded to the next hour; maximum daily charge - \$30)

**Payment Options**

1. Payment in full by July 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. Monthly automatic deductions from your bank account to the school’s (at no cost to you). The monthly deduction may be made on the 5<sup>th</sup> or the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month per the family’s choice. The monthly payment begins in July and ends in June – a 12 month period.
3. Families with special financial needs may make a tuition payment arrangement that must be agreed upon by the family and the school principal, bookkeeper and pastor.

**OFFICE HOURS**

The school office is open from 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday, when school is in session. Summer office hours are announced to school families each year through the school newsletter.

## **SCHOOL VISITORS**

All visitors to the school (including parents, volunteers, former students, etc.) must come through the main entrance to the school. For safety and security reasons, all visitors are required to sign in at the reception area. All visitors and/or volunteers must wear a designated badge that may be picked up and returned upon signing in and out.

Parents and former students will not be permitted to visit classrooms during instructional time or lunch and recess unless an appointment or arrangement is made through the classroom teacher or school office.

Forgotten items may be dropped off at the reception desk and will be delivered to students by school staff to minimize class disruptions.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

### **Morning Arrival**

The doors at the main entrance of the school will open at 7:00 AM. Upon arrival, all students will enter through the main doors of the school building and report to the school cafeteria except Kindergarten, Preschool, and Daycare students who will report directly to their classroom. Students will remain seated with their class until the supervisor dismisses the students to their classroom. School for K-8 students begins at 7:20 AM. Students arriving after this time are tardy and must sign in at the reception desk and pick up an admittance slip to present to their teacher.

### **Early Dismissal**

St. Cecilia School encourages all families to schedule appointments and vacations outside of the school day. In the event that a child must leave early from school, the parents will notify the school with a signed and dated note. The parents should come to the reception desk to pick their child up and the office staff will call the student from his/her classroom. If a student arrives at school after 7:45 AM or leaves early, his/her parent must come in to school to sign the student in or out. Late arrivals and early dismissals will be recorded as tardies.

### **Afternoon Dismissal**

1. Bus riders will be dismissed from school first. All students should exit the building and walk to their bus.
2. Car riders in grades 4-8 and younger siblings will be dismissed second. These students will exit through the main door of the school and will be escorted to the lower lot by the church undercroft.
3. Car riders in grade K-3 will be dismissed third. These students will exit the building through the old building doors and be picked up in the top lot in the front of school.
4. Aftercare students, students attending after school activities, and walkers/bike riders will be dismissed last. Walkers and bike riders will not be permitted to leave the lot until all buses/cars have left.

### **Special Circumstances**

All children must be picked up by 2:30pm unless they use the Aftercare or stay for a scheduled activity. Any student who is not picked up by 2:30pm will be sent to Aftercare and the hourly charge will be assessed. If this happens on more than one occasion, the Aftercare registration fee must be paid and all necessary aftercare forms completed.

No child will be allowed to change his/her usual dismissal procedures. If there is a change to their regular routine, it must be communicated to the school office via phone, email or a signed and dated note. This should be communicated as soon as possible.

### **Private Transportation**

On days when the Kenton County buses do not operate, the following procedures will be followed:

- Students in grades 4-8 and younger siblings will be picked up in the lower lot by the church undercroft.
- Students in grades K-3 will be picked up in the top lot next to the school.
- If a student is not riding with their parent/guardian, a note should be written and sent to the child's teacher.

### **Kenton County Bus Service**

Bus service to and from St. Cecilia School is provided by Kenton County only on days when the Kenton County Schools are in session. If a parent would like their child to ride the bus, he/she must contact the Kenton County bus garage to make the necessary arrangements and to ensure they reside in the area where the county provides transportation.

The Kenton County Board of Education requires good student conduct on the school buses in order that the driver may devote the major part of his/her time and attention to the safe operation of the school bus.

Students riding the school buses are under the direct supervision and direction of the school bus driver and he/she shall direct the students in matters of conduct and safety. The driver has the authority and responsibility for seeing that the policies, rules, and regulations of the Kenton County Board of Education are carried out.

If a driver finds it necessary to report a student for misconduct on the bus, the bus driver will write out a bus incident slip. This is delivered to the school Principal who will administer a punishment as follows:

1. The student shall be suspended from bus privileges for one day for the first report.
2. If a student is reported a second time for misconduct, the student shall be suspended from bus privileges for one week.
3. A third report shall result in suspension from bus privileges for an indefinite period depending on the circumstances of the situation.

The Kenton County bus garage can be contacted at 356-5050.

## **DRESS CODE**

All students in grades K-8 must be in proper dress code each day. Students not in proper dress will face disciplinary action. To ensure students are in proper dress code, **uniforms should only be purchased from Schoolbelles**. Items can be purchased online or from their retail store. St. Cecilia's school ID # is 1956.

Schoolbelles of Taylor Mill  
5046 Old Taylor Mill Road  
Taylor Mill, KY 41015  
859-581-3111  
[www.schoolbelles.com](http://www.schoolbelles.com)

### **Girls**

**Uniform** – Regulation blue plaid jumpers for grades K-3, regulation blue plaid skirts for grades 4-8. Skirts and jumpers must be knee length.

**Blouses/shirts** – White or light blue blouses with collars or white or light blue polo shirts are permitted. Shirts must be tucked in neatly and completely at all times. Middle school students in grade 5-8 may wear the red middle school polo shirt. Only a plain white shirt may be worn under the uniform shirts.

**Pants** - Regulation uniform navy blue dress slacks must be worn. If there are belt loops, a black, dark blue or brown plain belt must be worn. All pants must be worn at the waist.

**Tights/Leggings** - Solid red, white, or navy blue tights/leggings may also be worn during colder weather. The tights/leggings must be tight fitting on the leg and go into the sock or have the feet included. During the winter months (November 1 – March 31) girls may wear plain navy blue sweatpants under their uniform during arrival, recess, and dismissal.

### **Boys**

**Pants** - Regulation uniform navy blue dress slacks must be worn. If there are belt loops, a black, dark blue or brown plain belt must be worn in first through eighth grades. All pants **MUST** be worn at the waist.

**Shirt** - White or light blue shirts with collars or white or light blue polo shirts are to be worn. Shirrtails must be tucked in neatly and completely at all times. Middle school students in grades 5-8 may wear the red middle school polo shirt. Only a plain white shirt may be worn under the uniform shirts.

### **Dress Code – Boys and Girls**

**Sweatshirts/Fleece Pullover** – St. Cecilia School sweatshirts or fleece pullovers may be worn as part of the uniform. Solid red or navy blue sweatshirts are also permitted. St. Cecilia Logo Sweatshirts can be purchased at Schoolbelles or from the St. Cecilia Sports Committee.

**Sweaters** – Solid navy blue or red cardigans, pullovers, V-neck or vests are permitted.

**Shoes** – Dress shoes are optional. Athletic/gym shoes may be worn. Shoes with laces must be tied at all times. Clogs, sandals and boots\* are not permitted. No light up shoes may be worn. *\*Snow boots may be worn to school on days of inclement weather. However, shoes must be brought to school to change into during the school day.*

**Socks** – Plain white, black or dark blue socks covering the ankle should be worn. Small logos are acceptable on socks. Socks or tights must be worn at all times and be visible.

**Shorts** – Regulation navy uniform shorts may be worn from the start of the school year until October 31<sup>st</sup> and from April 1<sup>st</sup> through the end of the school year.

**Jewelry** – Girls may wear earrings that do not hang below the ear lobe. Boys may not wear earrings. Boys and girls are permitted to wear religious necklaces and watches. No rings, bracelets, or anklets may be worn. No body piercing other than girls' ears will be permitted.

**Makeup** – No makeup, including nail polish and acrylic nails, may be worn. Writing on the body and clothing is prohibited at all times.

**Hair** - Hair must be kept neat and clean. No hair coloring or bleaching is permitted. No extreme hair styles, such as Mohawks will be permitted. Boys' hair must not touch the top of the shirt collar, must be above the eyebrows and trimmed around the ears. Students may not have designs shaved into their hair.

**Fads** – Any “fad”, including hairstyles, that the principal and staff deem improper for school, will not be permitted.

#### **Out of Uniform Day Dress Code**

- Shirts must have sleeves, completely cover the stomach and not be too tight or revealing.
- Shorts must be an appropriate length and should only be worn on out of uniform days during the months of August, September, October, April, May and June.
- No sandals, boots or shoes with open heels or toes.
- Only appropriate sayings and logos on clothing. No words on the backside of pants, shorts, or skirts.
- Clothing should not have any rips, tears or holes.
- Clothing should not be too tight.

If a student fails to wear the proper dress code, he/she may face disciplinary action and the parents may be called to bring the proper clothing items to school.

**Spirit Wear Days** – The first Wednesday of each month is set aside as a spirit wear day. Students may wear their SCPTO spirit wear shirt that is provided early in the school year in place of their regular uniform shirt. Regular uniform pants, skirts and jumpers will be worn.



## **ATTENDANCE**

If your child will be absent from school for an illness or another reason, parents must notify the school receptionist by 9:00 AM at 363-4314. Missed work for any student who is absent will be left on the reception counter to be picked up between 2:15 and 3:00 PM. Parents may request work to be sent home with another student. These requests should be made by 11:00 AM.

A child should not attend school when it might be detrimental to his/her health or to the health of others. Students who have a fever, diarrhea, or have vomited, should be free from these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. Frequent or long-term illnesses may require a note from a physician.

### **Excused Absences**

Excused absences include illness, funerals, and other emergency absences as determined by the Principal.

If a student has an excused absence, it is his/her responsibility to make up any work missed. The student will be allowed to make up the work upon return to school. Students will have one school day for each day absent to make up the missed assignments.

### **Unexcused Absences**

All other absences not listed above, including vacations, are considered unexcused absences. Unexcused absences can be detrimental to a child's educational progress and should be avoided. The parents must assume full responsibility for such absences, including the makeup of missed teaching concepts.

If a parent chooses to remove his/her child from school for an unexcused absence, the parents must notify the teachers, receptionist and the school principal in advance of the student's departure. No work will be sent ahead of time for an unexcused absence. Students are responsible for making up any missed work during this absence. If the student neglects to turn in the work, no credit will be given. If a student experiences trouble with work missed during an unexcused absence, it is the parent's responsibility to provide the extra instruction needed.

### **Tardiness/Absences**

According to 702 KAR 7:125 – Pupil Attendance:

- A tardy shall be recorded for a student who is absent up to 2 hours of the regularly scheduled school day.
- One-half (1/2) day attendance shall be recorded for a student who is absent 2-5 hours of the regularly scheduled school day.
- A full-day absence shall be recorded for a student who is absent 5 or more hours of the regularly scheduled school day.

Students who use Kenton County buses for transportation will not be counted tardy if they arrive late due to a bus delay.

According to KRS 159.150, a student who has been absent from school without a valid excuse for three or more days or is tardy without a valid excuse on three or more days is considered truant. Truancy will result in disciplinary action.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication between the school and home is essential for student success. The following means will be used to keep the lines of communication open. Families must notify the school office if their contact information, such as home address, phone numbers, and email addresses change. This will ensure that all families receive timely school updates and information.

### **Newsletter**

A weekly newsletter will be published each Wednesday. The newsletter will be sent via email to parents and posted on the school website. Any family that does not have computer access must notify the school and request a hard copy to be sent home each Wednesday.

If you have school information that needs to be communicated through the weekly newsletter, it should be sent to the school receptionist no later than 12:00 PM on Tuesday's.

### **Website**

The school website is updated frequently and has information regarding all aspects of the school. School forms, calendars, the latest news and links can be found on the website.

### **Classroom**

Teachers will post weekly class objectives on Ascend SMS. They will also post assignments and other information related to their classroom. Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate via notes, email, or phone calls. Teachers are available for conferences (at a prearranged time) throughout the school year. Please allow 24 hours for a response to a phone message, email or note.

### **Email**

St. Cecilia School uses email to keep families informed. An email reminder will be sent each Wednesday with a link to the online newsletter. Emails may also be sent for other important events or reminders. Families are asked to provide an active email account to remain informed throughout the school year. As part of our student management system, Ascend, a daily email will be sent to all active parent accounts with the latest information regarding your child including grades, discipline, attendance, and homework.

### **Phone**

St. Cecilia School uses a computerized phone system to contact families on their home phone and/or cell phone. This type of communication will be used for school closings and delays. It may also be used when the school needs to communicate something very quickly to our families.

## **AscendSMS**

St. Cecilia School uses the student information system known as Ascend. Each parent who provides an email address will be given a login to the site. The login information will be provided within the first few days of school. Student grades, teacher objectives, missing assignments, important school forms, and much more can be found on the site. Teachers will update grades weekly and parents will receive a daily email with the latest information regarding their child's progress. If a parent has any concerns regarding their child's grades, he or she should communicate these to the teacher.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Administering Medication**

Per Diocesan and School policy, no medication, including over the counter medicine such as Tylenol, will be administered unless a medication form is on file and signed by the child's parents and physician. This form may be obtained from the school office or the website. It can be sent to school or faxed to 363-4315.

All medication must be kept in the school office. In order to dispense the medication to a student, a medication form must be on file and the medication should be in the original packaging with the child's name on the container. These forms must be updated each school year.

### **Emergency Forms**

Each family must have a current emergency form on file in the school office. This form lists information regarding allergies and has family contact numbers in case of an emergency.

### **Immunizations**

Kentucky law requires that immunization records be up to date and on file in the child's permanent record. These records must be obtained by the child's doctor and sent to school office. Qualified personnel in conjunction with the school and Health Department review student records to ensure that every child is in compliance with the state regulations. Per Kentucky state law, students who do not have current immunization certificates on file will not be permitted to attend school.

### **Medical Examinations**

Kentucky law requires a medical examination form be up to date and on file in the child's permanent record. This form must be completed by the family physician and turned in to the school office.

Students new to St. Cecilia must turn in a current immunization certificate and medical examination form. All students entering preschool, kindergarten and sixth grade must also obtain a current immunization certificate and medical examination form from their family physician prior to entering school.

## **Safety Drills and Procedures**

St. Cecilia School maintains safety procedures for students and staff in all aspects of potential school safety issues. The school staff reviews the procedures often and practice drills are conducted periodically with the students to ensure preparedness. Questions or information concerning our safety procedures should be directed to the school principal.

Safety Officer - The city of Independence provides a School Resource Officer to St. Cecilia School. The officer will do periodic walk-throughs of the school to ensure safety procedures are being followed and to identify potential concerns. The SRO is also here to educate and assist in the daily operation of the school whenever needed.

First Aid – All school staff participates in First Aid, CPR, and AED training. This certification/training is held every other school year.

Fire – Fire drills will be conducted monthly throughout the school year. At the sound of a fire alarm, students should immediately stop and move quickly to the assigned exit. The exits are posted near the door of each room. Students should exit the school and remain silent throughout the fire drill. When the all clear signal is given, students may return to their classrooms.

Tornado – Tornado drills will be held twice during the school year. At the sound of a tornado warning, students should immediately stop and move quickly to their assigned shelter area. Maps are posted near each room's door. Students are to remain silent throughout the tornado drill. When the all clear signal is given, students may return to their classrooms.

Earthquake Drills and Lock Downs – Earthquake drills and lockdown drills are conducted at least once each school year. Students are to follow the teacher's instructions during these drills.

## **School Closing Procedures**

St. Cecilia will always follow Kenton County for winter weather school delays. If Kenton County closes, St. Cecilia may close or may choose to keep school in session. If school is in session on these days, each parent must make their own decision as to the hazards involved in getting to and from school. If a parent feels it is too hazardous to attempt getting to school, they should not make the attempt. However, absences from school will be recorded as absences in the attendance register.

When it becomes necessary to close or delay school, the following procedures will be followed:

1. An announcement will be made using the phone calling system.
2. The local news stations will be notified. Parents should look for St. Cecilia – Independence and the status.
3. If the decision to dismiss early is made by Kenton County, parents will be notified via email and the phone calling system.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

St. Cecilia invites all parents to become involved in the school program. The Diocese of

Covington requires the following information for anyone who would like to volunteer at St. Cecilia:

1. VIRTUS training
2. Read and sign the form for the Diocesan Policies and Procedures for Addressing Sexual Misconduct
3. Background check

Once a person completes these three steps, you will be able to volunteer in the school. All volunteers must remain current on their VIRTUS bulletins. Failure to complete the monthly bulletins will result in a VIRTUS suspension – which means you cannot volunteer. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the Virtus coordinator for more information. Her name is Karen Lipscomb and contact information is [klipscomb@stcindependence.org](mailto:klipscomb@stcindependence.org).

## **PARENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

The vitality and effectiveness of St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School depends upon the commitment of parents. In order to promote family involvement, parents are required to be involved in the life of the school and parish. St. Cecilia Roman Catholic School's emphasis on our mission is not only for our students, but also for parents.

As part of the school support program, all families are required to perform 20 hours of service. There are a variety of ways this obligation can be fulfilled. If a family is unable to fulfill its obligation with service, a \$5.00 fee will be assessed for each hour not worked. This program is considered part of tuition, and report cards or school transcripts will be withheld if the obligation is not met.

Any activity that assists our school to enhance the education of the students or parish community is acceptable and considered Parent Partnership. (A maximum of 10 hrs. for non-school parish activities can be submitted.) If you are a non-parishioner, all 20 parent partnership hours are still required. Hours are based on the time spent in the activity only.

Parents are urged to volunteer their time in obtaining their required school support hours. However, relatives may assist by volunteering for school activities – this should be noted on the service hour form. Hours may not be donated from one family to another.

Some examples of Parent Partnership hours that would enhance the education of the students include:

- Working in the cafeteria
- Working an SCPTO fundraising event
- Working at the parish festival
- Coaching or working for the sports committee
- Assisting in the classroom
- Working the Book Fair
- Computer class assistant

- Media Center Assistants (volunteers are needed to assist the media specialist in daily activities such as shelving books, checking out books, storytelling, etc.)
- Room Mothers-(or assisting the room mother)
- Box Tops/Campbell's Labels for Education - (assist school staff with cutting and preparing for mailing)

Each family is required to keep a record of their service hours. The logs will be given to each family in the beginning of the school year. The record should include the date, number of hours, type of service and be signed off by the person coordinating the activity. As soon as the twenty hours have been accumulated, the log may be submitted to the school office. Service logs are due by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Failure to participate will result in a fee of \$5.00 per service hour, not to exceed \$100.00 (billed in May).

## **CAFETERIA**

St. Cecilia School's cafeteria serves hot lunches each day school is in session. A menu for each month is sent home to each family and is posted on the school website. Students have the option of choosing 3-5 food items each day. The cost of a student's lunch (including milk) is \$2.50 per day. Milk may be purchased separately for 50¢.

Students who do not purchase a lunch at school must bring a lunch. Fast food lunches and soft drinks are not acceptable at any time.

The Diocese of Covington has established a policy regarding the charging of school lunches. The school will limit students to five charged lunches, not to exceed \$15. The cafeteria manager will communicate to the parents when the child has charged. After five lunches are charged, a student will not receive the published lunch. These students will be charged a full lunch price, but will receive a peanut butter & jelly sandwich or cheese sandwich, fruit and milk. Once the account is paid and current, normal lunches will resume. If at any time a family faces a financial hardship, a Free & Reduced Lunch Form should be completed.

Each student will have an account in the cafeteria computer system. You can register online at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) to view your child's lunch balance, have email alerts sent when the account is low, and have the option to load the account online. There is a small fee to pay online. You may also send a check or cash to the school to load your child's account.

In order to keep lunch prices low, it is important to have volunteers assisting in the cafeteria. Volunteering in the cafeteria will count towards Parent Partnership hours. To volunteer, families should contact the cafeteria manager.

St. Cecilia School participates in the Federal Lunch Program. In order to qualify for free or reduced lunches, families should complete the Free and Reduced Lunch forms. This can be done online at [www.lunchapplication.com](http://www.lunchapplication.com).

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

The educational program of St. Cecilia School meets the requirements set by the Diocese of Covington and the Kentucky Department of Education. St. Cecilia School is accredited by the Kentucky Non-Public School Commission.

### **Curriculum**

#### **Religion**

The most important part of our curriculum is the religious and moral training of our students. We strive to help the students grow in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and also help students to put their faith into practice. St. Cecilia puts our Catholic faith first and it is part of all of our classes and activities.

The religion classes are taught using the curriculum guidelines established by the Diocese of Covington. All teachers of religion must earn their Basic and Advanced Religious Education Certification through the courses provided by the Diocese of Covington Department of Catechesis and Formation.

Students in grades K-8 attend Mass every Monday and Friday. Each Thursday, students spend time in Eucharistic Adoration. During Advent and Lent, students participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion are celebrated in the second grade. The Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in the eighth grade. Preparation for reception of these sacraments is completed through the students' daily religion courses.

Other opportunities for faith development include daily prayer (Rosary, Angelus, Prayer before meals, morning and afternoon prayer, and prayer before classes), Saint of the day, and service work.

#### **Other Academic Areas**

In addition to Religion, the students of St. Cecilia School receive a solid program of academic subjects that include: Reading, Spelling/Vocabulary, Grammar, Writing, Literature, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, Spanish, Library and Computers.

#### **Reading Specialist**

St. Cecilia School has a part-time Reading Specialist for grades K-4. Students may be referred to the reading teacher through the classroom teachers. This reading teacher works with individual students, group instruction and in the classroom as the need arises.

#### **Counselor**

St. Cecilia School has a school counselor who is available one day per week to work with students in various ways. The counselor will meet with students at the request of the principal, teachers, staff, students, and/or parents. The purpose of meeting with students varies from

behavioral changes to a child's academic performance or even just concerns about a child's well-being. After the initial meeting, it will be determined whether or not future meetings would benefit the student. Parent permission is not required for an initial meeting, but parents must consent to future visits if that is deemed helpful or necessary.

The counselor also teaches lessons in the classroom on topics such as conflict resolution, bullying, and decision-making skills. Overall, the counselor is part of the services available to ensure a safe environment for all students.

### Testing Referral

Students at St. Cecilia School who are experiencing academic or psychological difficulties can receive testing through Kenton County or through a private practice. This process creates communication between parents, the school, and psychologists and provides insightful information and recommendations that enable the school personnel to better structure instruction to meet the needs of the student. Parents that are seeking testing should contact the classroom teacher and resource teacher to discuss their concerns and begin the testing process.

### Standardized Testing

St. Cecilia School follows the program set up by the Diocese of Covington Department of Catholic Education. Students will be tested at the required grade levels in late spring. The Diocese has chosen the Terra Nova test for this annual assessment.

MAP testing is also conducted 2-3 times per year in grades K-8. Results of each child tested are reported to parents and the data is used to make informed curriculum decisions for classes and individual students.

St. Cecilia 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students also participate in the ACRE Assessment for religious education. Students are tested in February of each year. Individual results of these tests are not reported. Instead, the results are classroom based and used to assess the effectiveness of our religion curriculum and teaching methods/strategies.

### **Homework**

The purpose of homework is to develop habits of independent, useful study. Homework assignments supplement the daily work of the classroom. Homework strengthens and reinforces skills learned in class. Homework may broaden experience, introduce new questions and interests and extend knowledge. It is the responsibility of the student to complete all homework assignments on time. The amount of time spent on homework each evening should be approximately:

- Grades K-2                      10-20 minutes
- Grades 3-4                      20-40 minutes
- Grades 5-6                      40-60 minutes
- Grades 7-8                      60-80 minutes

Consideration must be given to the fact that children work at different paces and may take a longer or shorter time to complete their work. Long term assignments require students to pace



their work to prevent the need to spend a large amount of time completing the assignment just before it is due.

Students in grades K-8 are required to have a student planner (which is included in school fees) and to write down assignments daily. This standard book will be used by ALL students daily and signed by parents each night. Failure to turn in assignments may result in a lowering of the grade. It is the student's responsibility to record and track his/her daily assignments.

### **Assessment**

The grading scales listed below are used at St. Cecilia School. The A-F/numeric scale is used for grades 1-8. Kindergarten and the special classes in first and second grade use the E-P scale.

A = 93-100	E = Excellent Progress
B = 85-92	G = Good Progress
C = 75-84	S = Satisfactory Progress
D = 70-74	P = Problem Area
F = 69 or below	

The school year is divided into trimesters. At the end of each trimester, report cards are issued. Parents must look over report cards and sign or notify teachers that they have seen the report card. If a parent has concerns over student performance, they should request a conference with their child's teacher to work together on an improvement plan. Parents may request a conference at any time during the school year. For students in grades 6-8, students should be present for a portion of the requested conference to begin taking ownership of his/her learning.

### **Promotion/Retention**

Students are promoted to the next level on an annual basis. If a student does not obtain satisfactory achievement, the possibility of retention will be considered. Parents are kept informed of the student's progress through online grades, report cards, communication from the teacher, and parent-teacher conferences. The parents are always consulted about retention to ensure the best decision is made for the good of the student.

## **ST. CECILIA CODE OF CONDUCT**

Jesus gave us the two Greatest Commandments which should guide all of our actions.

*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul,  
and with all your mind. –Mt 22:37*

*You shall love your neighbor as yourself. –Mt 22:38*

As a student at St. Cecilia School . . .

1. I will make decisions that are pleasing to God.

2. I will treat other students, my family, the teachers and staff, and all visitors to our school with love and respect. This means that I will be kind to them and never hurt them with my words or actions.
3. I will be respectful of the learning environment at St. Cecilia School. This means that I will walk quietly in the hallways, I will not disrupt class by talking out or making rude sounds or gestures, and I will follow the classroom rules.
4. I will care for the property of St. Cecilia School and the belongings of others. This means that I will not destroy, steal, or deface their property or belongings. This also means that I will go out of my way to help keep the school property clean and in good condition.
5. I will strive to be the best student I can be. This means that I will be present at school, I will participate in class, and I will complete all of my student responsibilities including homework, service hours, and being prepared for class.

Choosing to behave in a way that does not follow the St. Cecilia Code of Conduct may result in the loss of privileges, a conduct mark, a detention, suspension, and/or expulsion from school. By signing the Handbook Agreement Form, students and parents acknowledge that they have read St. Cecilia's Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures, understand them, and will abide by them.

### **Discipline Procedures**

In order to maintain a safe and appropriate learning environment for our students, St. Cecilia has developed organized discipline procedures to address inappropriate behavior. The goal of this plan is to hold students accountable for their actions, to help them understand when they have made a poor decision, and to help the student make better decisions in the future. The following disciplinary actions may be taken when a student's behavior violates the St. Cecilia Code of Conduct:

### **Conduct Marks:**

Conduct marks are used as a way to call attention to a student's misbehavior. They are designed to be a warning to the student that he/she should stop, think, and make better decisions before they act.

- Conduct marks may be given for, but not limited to, the following behaviors:
  - Dress code violations
  - Not being prepared for class
  - Failing to follow classroom rules
  - Not returning signed communications
  - Being disrespectful of the learning environment
- If a student receives 5 conduct marks, he/she will be assigned a detention.

- Conduct marks will be recorded on a form that is to be kept in the student's folder or planner. Parents are asked to sign the conduct card each time a mark is given. Loss of the conduct card will result in detention and a new card will be issued.

### **Detention:**

When a student's behavior is deemed more severe it may warrant a detention without receiving 5 conduct marks.

- Detentions may be assigned for, but not limited to, the following behaviors:
  - Bullying
  - Cheating/lying
  - Continual disruptive behavior
  - Destruction to school property
  - Disrespectful to authority
  - Inappropriate language/gestures
  - Hitting another student
  - Threatening/unsafe actions
- If a student serves two detentions in a quarter, a conference will be held between the teacher, parents, student, and principal.
- If a child has been issued a detention, a conduct referral form will be sent home and should be signed by the parents acknowledging they have received the information.
- Detentions will be held on Thursday's from 2:15-3:00. Parents must make arrangements to pick their child up.

### **Suspension/Expulsion:**

If a student chooses a behavior that threatens the safety of other students or school personnel, he/she may be suspended. A student may also be suspended if no improvements are made to his/her behavior or if the behavior is deemed severe by the principal and/or pastor.

- Disciplinary action of suspension and/or expulsion may be deemed necessary, but not limited to, the following actions:
  - Blatant disrespect/insubordination toward teachers or staff
  - Bullying
  - Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs on school grounds
  - Possession or use of a weapon on school grounds
  - Vandalism
  - Violence toward students, faculty or staff
  - Use of obscenities
  - Refusal to cooperate with school authorities
- Only the principal or pastor may suspend a student from school. At the discretion of the principal and pastor, students may be asked to withdraw from school. If parents do not willingly cooperate, the student will be expelled.

## **Bullying**

It is St. Cecilia School's intention to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Therefore, St. Cecilia School will not tolerate any form of bullying and/or harassment. Students, parents, and teachers are expected to report bullying behavior to the principal. The principal will investigate all reports of bullying and harassment. Any student that has bullied or harassed another student or staff member will face disciplinary action. The administration reserves the right to use discretion in determining the appropriate consequence(s) in individual situations.

Bullying/harassment is defined as any type of action, physical, verbal, and/or nonverbal, that is unwelcome, makes someone feel uncomfortable and unsafe, and prevents students from learning and enjoying school. This includes behavior that threatens the physical, spiritual, and/or psychological well-being of another student, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Name-calling
- Baiting
- Social exclusion
- Put-downs
- Teasing
- Coercion
- Taunting
- Imposing physical harm
- Internet Use/Blogging/Social Media

## **Drugs, Tobacco, and Alcohol**

Students who possess drugs, tobacco, and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face disciplinary action. This will also be reported to the local authorities.

## **STUDENT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

St. Cecilia School develops in each student an understanding of God's call to be good stewards of the environment and of those around us. The goal of student service work is to instill in students the importance of giving of their time and talents to others. Each grade level participates in a service learning project during the school year. Students in grades 4-8 must also begin serving others outside of the school day through student service opportunities.

A service opportunity is when a student volunteers his/her time and talents to help someone else in need. Instead of tracking the number of hours volunteered, students must instead record the type of experience and submit a written review of the service work to his/her religion teacher according to the guidelines the teacher has established.

Students must volunteer in a variety of ways. There are four areas where students need to gain a service opportunity experience. They include volunteering to assist their family, church, school, and community.

Student service opportunities are part of the Religion grade. Students must complete the specified number of service opportunities during the school year and turn in their written review to receive a grade. Students are encouraged to spread out their service work so they do not become overwhelmed late in the year trying to complete the requirements.

Grades 4-5 – 5 opportunities of service  
Grades 6-8 – 10 opportunities of service

Throughout the school year, there may be opportunities for students to volunteer for service work around the church and school. However, it is up to students to find service opportunities and complete the obligation on their own or with the help of their parents. Student service opportunities must be obtained outside of the school day. Students should seek the advice of their Religion teacher if there are any questions.

## **STUDENT RECOGNITION**

At the end of each trimester, the school will hold an awards assembly to recognize students for their outstanding achievements. The following awards will be given during this assembly:

Accelerated Reader Award – Students who have met their point’s goal in the Accelerated Reader program will receive a certificate and a treat from our B.E.S.T. partner, The Bank of Kentucky.

Best Effort Award – Students from each homeroom will be chosen for the best effort award. The student must exhibit excellent work habits and always put forth their best work. This award is based on hard work rather than grade point average.

“A” Honor Roll – Students who have earned an “A” average for all their subject areas combined and have a satisfactory conduct grade will receive a certificate for their achievement.

“B” Honor Roll – Students who have earned a “B” average for all their subject areas combined and have a satisfactory conduct grade will receive a certificate for their achievement.

Crusader Award – One student from each grade level will be chosen for the Crusader Award. The recipient of this award works hard in school, is kind toward their teachers and classmates, is helpful, positive, and has a Christian attitude.

### **8th Grade Graduation Recognition**

Eighth grade students will receive recognition during the promotion ceremony at the end of the school year. At that time, the following awards are given:

Subject Awards – The student is chosen based on overall academic performance, effort, and enthusiasm for the subject.

Good Citizenship Award – The student who exhibits dependability, cooperation, leadership, patriotism, clean speech and habits.

President’s Award for Academic Excellence – The student must have no grade lower than an “A” during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. A score in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher in Math or Reading on standardized tests, and be recommended by their teacher.

President's Award for Academic Achievement – The student must have no grade lower than a “B” during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. They must complete their assignments on time, must work hard in school, and be recommended by their teacher.

Outstanding Student Award – The recipient of this award must excel in all academic areas. The student must be respectful, responsible, and show leadership throughout their time at St. Cecilia.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

St. Cecilia School provides various forms of technology to students for educational purposes. In the beginning of each year, students and parents must consent to the school's guidelines on acceptable use of technology in order for their child(ren) to use the school computers. Any student who violates the acceptable use policy will face disciplinary action and may have their computer privileges revoked. This decision rests with the principal and/or pastor and is final.

### **Technology Use**

Technology users are responsible for appropriate behavior while using all computer resources at St. Cecilia School. The following guidelines should be followed to ensure acceptable use:

- The computer will be used for educational purposes only.
- The computer will only be used while under the supervision of a faculty or staff member.
- The computer settings may not be changed unless permission from a faculty or staff member is given.
- Transferring, including downloading or uploading files or software to or from a school computer without permission from a faculty or staff member is prohibited.
- Users will not vandalize, or intentionally damage computers, computer systems, or computer resources, including the creation of computer viruses.

### **Internet Use**

The internet is provided by St. Cecilia School and allows users to conduct research and explore the web for information. The internet should only be used to support the educational objectives of St. Cecilia School. St. Cecilia School utilizes programs to prevent inappropriate material from being accessed by users. However, users must use the internet in a respectful manner and their behavior must follow the St. Cecilia Code of Conduct. The following guidelines should be followed to ensure the internet is used properly:

- Social networking sites may not be accessed using school computers.
- Copyright and plagiarism rules and laws must be followed at all times.
- Passwords must be kept private.
- Users should not access sites using another person's password nor should they use the password to take homework, quizzes, or tests for another user.
- In the event that questionable or inappropriate material is accidentally accessed it must be reported to a faculty or staff member immediately.
- Users may not send or view offensive messages or pictures.
- Users may not harass, attack, or bully others.

**Privacy**

St. Cecilia may monitor and access the network, files, messages, and data sent, received, or stored on the network or any device that is connected to the network. All users must keep their information and those of others private. This includes personal information as well as photos.

**Consequences**

Failure to comply with any of the above stated rules and guidelines may result in the loss of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action. If the action violates the law, it will be reported to local authorities. The school may hold students responsible for their actions on the computer and/or internet outside of school if it is impacting the school environment and violates the Student Code of Conduct.

**Equipment**

All users will be held responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged equipment. The user responsible may be required to pay all replacement or repair costs.

**Future Technology**

St. Cecilia School reserves the right to make decisions regarding new forms of technology.

By signing the Handbook Agreement Form, parents and students acknowledge that they have read and understand the rules for technology use at St. Cecilia School and will abide by them.

**MISCELLANEOUS****After School Program**

St. Cecilia School offers an after school program. The program operates from dismissal at 2:15 until 6:00 pm. The after school program is available for a fee Monday through Friday and is organized and supervised by St. Cecilia staff members. To register your child, you must contact the school office. The registration fee and form must be sent to the school office prior to students being permitted to use the aftercare service. Continued use of the aftercare requires families to keep their account balances current and students to abide by the aftercare rules.

**Cell Phones**

Students should not bring cell phones to school. If your child must bring a phone for use after school is dismissed, they must check them in to the office daily before 7:30am. All cell phones must be reclaimed by 2:05pm. Failure to follow this procedure will result in disciplinary actions and could result in the confiscation of cell phones which will then be released only to parents or guardians.

**Grievance/Concern Procedure**

At times, disagreements may occur between parties regarding school matters. In order to voice the concern and seek a resolution the proper chain of command should be followed. Families

should begin with the person directly involved or responsible and work through the chain of command until a satisfactory resolution has occurred. The steps are listed below:

1. Discuss the matter directly with the staff member involved.
2. Schedule an appointment with the Principal.
3. Schedule an appointment with the Pastor.
4. This final step requires that a written grievance be sent to the Board of Total Catholic Education (BOTCE) where it will be reviewed for resolution assistance or referred to the Diocese of Covington. Such requests may be addressed: BOTCE President and sent to the school office for confidential delivery.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips enhance the educational experience. Since field trips have an educational purpose, they are not an optional experience for students. However, students may be denied participation if they fail to meet behavioral requirements.

A permission slip will be sent home prior to the planned trip. The approved form **MUST** be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to school by the specified date. No student will be permitted to go on any field trip without the properly signed permission slip.

Students may be assessed a fee to cover transportation and any entrance cost involved. Should a student be absent/unable to attend, there will be **NO** refunds given.

When school buses are the mode of transportation for the field trip, all students will ride to and from the field trip on the bus.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school receptionist. These items will be placed in the lost and found and kept for 30 days. After 30 days, the items will be donated to St. Vincent de Paul.

### **School Lockers**

Each student in grades 5-8 is assigned a locker to store clothing, textbooks, and school supplies. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect the lockers at any time.