

GUARDIAN ANGELS CENTRAL CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2023 – 2024

PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK



408 E. Walnut Street
West Point, Nebraska 68788
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www.gaccbluejays.org

Guardian Angels School has been a landmark in West Point for over 125 years, providing academic excellence within a caring community since March 5, 1885. We continue that endeavor as we meet the educational, spiritual and developmental needs of our children in the 21st century. Guardian Angels Central Catholic School is accredited by the State of Nebraska.

Our parents and parishioners have reached out to the community of West Point as they have supported Catholic education at Guardian Angels School over the last century. Ours is a proud heritage and one we do not take lightly. We are proud of our past and we look forward with hope to a future that will continue to offer our families a choice in quality Catholic education.

We invite you to come and learn more about our school and the educational opportunities we provide.

WELCOME STUDENTS!

The teachers, staff and administration would like to say thank you for choosing Guardian Angels Central Catholic School (GACC). The mission statement of GACC is to prepare all students to reach their fullest potential by learning and leading through Christ. We are committed to providing you with a challenging and rewarding education that allows you to grow both academically and spiritually.

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide for students, parents, and teachers in the everyday workings of our school. The handbook contains general information as well as specific policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. The school calendar is available on Sycamore and the activities calendar is available at www.gaccbluejays.org.

We encourage you to maximize your school experience at GACC by becoming an active participant in the school. GACC offers various academic, extracurricular, and spiritual opportunities that will allow you as the student to become involved in your school, Church, and community.

The teachers, staff, and administration are looking forward to a great 2023-2024 school year.

Paula Peatrowsky, Elementary Principal

The policies and procedures put forth in this document reflect the policies and procedures as approved by the Archdiocese of Omaha School Board, and Guardian Angels School. Any and/or all school policies of the Archdiocese of Omaha which are not directly or indirectly covered in this document are addressed in the Policy Book of the Archdiocese of Omaha Board of Education, and are applicable to all Guardian Angels School situations and needs.

This handbook is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contractual agreement between Guardian Angels School and any student or parent of any student. The information in this Handbook provides a general description of rules and regulations. The school reserves the right to add to, to modify or abolish any of the Handbook provisions without notice. Non-enforcement of any of the rules or regulations does not serve as a waiver of their future enforcement.

This handbook does not create any restriction upon Guardian Angels School's right to institute any course of disciplinary action, which, in Guardian Angels School's discretion, it believes is necessary and consistent with its Catholic educational mission.

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I. VISION, MISSION, BELIEFS AND GOALS OF GUARDIAN ANGELS SCHOOL¹

Guardian Angels Central Catholic provides a faith-based community which fosters the acceptance and achievement of all students. We, in partnership with parents, parish, and community establish and enrich the students' faith and knowledge of Catholic tradition.

The mission of Guardian Angels Central Catholic School is to prepare all students to reach their fullest potential by learning and leading through Christ.

Guardian Angels Central Catholic School believes:

1. Each person has a dignity and sacred value, which is immeasurable.
2. Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children.
3. Teachers nurture and promote the abilities of each student through the implementation and assessment of the Archdiocesan standards.
4. All students can learn and are responsible for their learning.
5. Parents, teachers, and students live the message of Jesus through service to the school community, church community and civic community.

The goals of Guardian Angels Central Catholic School are to:

1. Improve reading comprehension test scores.
2. Improve math computation test scores.
3. Create a plan for the academic and spiritual growth of Guardian Angels Central Catholic.
4. Put in place a plan for professional development and teacher retention.

II. SCHOOL PERSONNEL

A. ADMINISTRATIVE

The **pastor** of St. Mary's Parish is the chief administrator of the school. The Guardian Angels/Central Catholic **School Board** is an advisory group concerned with the formulation of policies to govern operations of the school. All policies must be in accordance with those set by the Archdiocesan School Board. The specific direction of the school is delegated to the **principal**.

B. INSTRUCTIONAL

Each K-6 faculty member holds a Bachelor's or Master's Degree and a Nebraska Teaching License as well as a Safe Environment certification from the Omaha Archdiocese. The faculty directs the instruction of the curriculum in their grade or subject area.

¹ Vision, Mission, Beliefs and Goals statement adopted Jan. 2011

The **media and technology coordinators** keep the library and computer lab in operating condition, supervise those under their charge, assist the children and provide students and staff with library and computer skills.

Teacher aides and **tutors** supplement and reinforce the work of teachers. They are under the immediate supervision and direction of the principal and/or classroom teacher.

Coaches are responsible to the principal and athletic director. They supervise the children participating in sports. They should be role models for young athletes to imitate.

C. **NON-INSTRUCTIONAL**

The **school secretary** is responsible to the principal for the efficient operation of the school office. The school secretary is on duty throughout the school day. In her absence, an authorized person will be on duty. Both individuals should be thoroughly briefed regarding all emergency procedures. The principal shall explain the professional ethics governing any information acquired when serving in this capacity.

The **hot lunch cooks** are directly responsible to the pastor. They provide good nutritious meals for students in grades PreK – 6.

The **maintenance staff** maintains the school facility in a safe, clean, and attractive condition. This should be accomplished according to all pertinent regulations of the health and safety code.

D. **COOPERATIVE ROLES IN THE STUDENTS' FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

The school provides for all students:

- † formal instruction in the Catholic faith
- † opportunities for prayer and worship,
- † community-building and service activities,
- † knowledge and understanding of Catholic moral values
- † encouragement to grow in virtue
- † encouragement to live as disciples of Christ.

All that the school provides is meant to complement the efforts of parents in providing similar faith development experiences at home. Both the family and the school community make continuous efforts to assist students in the formation and commitment to their faith.

Continue to model for your children:

- † the discipleship of Christ,
- † your commitment to prayer, the Eucharistic liturgy, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation,
- † commitment to service of others and compassion and assistance to those in need,
- † the Church is strengthened in its mission of proclaiming the Gospel by your efforts in all of the above areas.

E. COOPERATIVE ROLES IN THE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The school's curriculum guides identify the knowledge and skills which students are expected to master. Teachers provide instructional experiences to assist the students in their mastery. Teachers assess each student's level of performance on annual norm-referenced tests and curriculum assessments. Teachers encourage each student to achieve to the maximum of his or her potential.

Teachers also know that hard work and self-discipline are essential to academic success and the full realization of each student's potential. Parents, who require development of good study habits, well-done assignments, and supplementary reading, greatly enable the academic achievement of their student.

F. CONCERNS

Parents are asked to contact the appropriate teacher about any concerns they have regarding their children or their children's education. If their concerns are not resolved through discussion with the teacher, the principal will meet with both parents and teacher to assist in resolution of the concern. Concerns are most effectively addressed and resolved when parties speak from first-hand knowledge of events, remain open to and respectful of others' viewpoints, and focus their discussion on establishing the factual basis of the concern. Teachers are encouraged to be sensitive to and responsive to the concern parents have for their children. Parents are encouraged to be trusting of the teacher's professional competence and supportive of the teacher's role as an authority essential to effective instruction of groups of students.

The principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, and in accord with that responsibility, has authority to make final decisions relative to resolution of concerns. The principal also addresses concerns of parents relative to programs and operations of the school.

In the event that a parent feels that his/her concern has not been given due attention or that the resolution of the concern is not in accord with the mission, goals, and objectives of the school, he or she may request further discussion from other school authority, that is the pastor.

III. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

A. STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Guardian Angels School does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national/ethnic origin in the enrollment and participation of students or the employment of personnel.

B. ADMISSIONS

Families wishing to enroll a child in Guardian Angels School must demonstrate a desire for the integration of Catholic teaching and moral formation with the education program. This includes:

- † participation in the social and spiritual life of their parish;
- † agreement to assist in the financial support of the school education program;
- † compliance with policies and procedures of the school and the Archdiocese;
- † and a willingness to cooperate with the teachers and administration in the total development of their child.

C. REGISTRATION

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten registration is scheduled in early Spring along with registration for current students. Registration materials are available in the school office. Applications must be returned promptly to assure proper student placement.

Requirements

State law requires that a certified copy of a student's birth certificate be used when enrolling a new student in school. If your child is registering with Guardian Angels School for the first time, you may obtain this document from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state in which your child was born. Assistance in obtaining birth certificates may be obtained from Health Management, P.O. Box 95065, Lincoln, NE 68509-5065. There is a fee per certificate. (Please note: The document parents receive from the hospital at the time of the child's birth looks like a birth certificate, but it is not a certified copy. A certified copy has the raised seal of the state in which the birth occurred and is signed by the director of vital statistics.)

If a birth certificate is unavailable, other reliable proof of a student's identity may be used. These documents include naturalization or immigration documents showing date of birth or official hospital records, a passport, or a translation of a birth certificate from another country. The documents must be accompanied by an affidavit explaining the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.

† *Preschool*

For a child to be admitted to Preschool, the student must be three years old on or before July 31.

† *Pre-Kindergarten.*

For a child to be admitted to Pre-Kindergarten, the student must be four years old on or before July 31.

† *Kindergarten.*

For a child to be admitted to kindergarten, the student must be five years old on or before July 31. A physical exam and vision evaluation are required by the State of Nebraska prior to the first day of school for all kindergarten students.

† *New Students and Transfer Students*

New students may register by contacting the school office. Children registering for the first time must submit a birth certificate, immunization record, and baptismal certificate if not baptized at St. Mary's, St. Boniface, St. Aloysius, or St. Anthony's, and a current physical exam plus vision evaluation. Also required is a list of names and addresses of schools previously attended and a transcript from the last school attended. The student will be placed in the appropriate class as recommended by the previous school.

D. HOME SCHOOLING

Any student seeking admission to GACC who has been previously homeschooled and/or has no formal school records will be subjected to an admissions test. We reserve the right to evaluate all new students and to use the results to place them in an appropriate grade level where we feel they would be most successful. All testing will be discussed with the teacher(s), administration, and parent(s).

E. WITHDRAWALS / TRANSFERS

If a child is withdrawn from GACC during the year, the principal and school office must be informed of this so that proper procedures may be taken. When transferring to another school, records will be issued upon receipt of a written request from the new school.

F. TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition and book fee payments may be paid on various terms: in full, semi-annually, quarterly, or monthly over ten or twelve months of school. A tuition contract agreement must be filled out. The use of Electronic Funds Transfer EFT is encouraged. The Band Fee should be paid on orientation day in August.

G. ATTENDANCE

It is mandatory for students to attend school regularly unless ill or otherwise excused by the principal. Although homework or make-up work must be done, the classroom experiences cannot be made up. Persistent absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for a student and is regarded as a very serious problem. If a student is absent one half of a report card period, teachers may withhold grades for that period. Students who miss thirty (30) days or more may be required to repeat their grade. If absence is due to hospitalization, it is suggested that parents look into tutoring for their child.

H. DAILY SCHEDULE

7:45 am	Student supervision begins
8:00 am	Entry bell for students
8:05 am	Tardy bell
10:15 am	Recess – grades Kdg – 3rd
11:10 am – 12:00 noon	Lunch and recess – grades 4-6
11:40 am – 12:30 pm	Lunch and recess – grades Kdg – 3rd
2:15 pm	Recess – grades Kdg- 3rd
3:35 pm	Dismissal

I. TARDINESS

The first bell rings at 8:00 a.m. to enter the school. Students who arrive after 8:05 a.m. are considered tardy. Between 8:05 and 8:15 the homeroom teacher will note the tardiness before submitting attendance. Students who arrive after 8:15 must report to the office for an admission slip. A student is also tardy if he/she is not in class when they resume after recess or lunch. Students will be considered tardy up to 9:45 a.m. If they arrive after 11:30 a.m., they will be counted as absent for the morning. This will also apply to those going for doctor and dentist appointments. A student excused at lunchtime will be considered tardy up to 1:45 p.m. If they arrive after 1:45 p.m. they will be counted as absent for the afternoon.

J. ABSENTEE PROCEDURE

Nebraska State Law mandates school attendance. All students are expected to attend school daily and to be on time for classes and other required programs.

A student who is not present at the appointed time is designated absent. Generally accepted excuses for school absences without advance notification include: 1) personal illness 2) family illness 3) death in the family.

In the event an absence is unavoidable the following guidelines should be followed:

1. A parent is expected to **call or send a Pass-A-Note to the School Office by 8:15 a.m. to report a student's absence.** Student's name, grade, room number and reason for absence should be given. If a call is not received by 8:15 a.m., the school will contact the parent. A written excuse is required upon return of the student.
2. The school office must be notified in advance if absence is necessary for a family trip.
3. The teacher sets the terms for make-up work and tests due to absence.

K. TRUANCY

The administrator of GACC will carefully review all student absences and communicate with parents whenever absences for reasons other than serious illness occur. When a student's absences (excused or unexcused) exceed five days or equivalent hours per quarter, or twenty days or equivalent hours for a given year, the school shall:

1. Notify parents of the potential for charges of truancy;
2. Work with the parents in documenting a plan to obviate excessive absences.

If the student fails to meet the conditions of the documented plan, Guardian Angels School will serve written notice to the parent or guardian, warning him or her to comply with the Nebraska Compulsory Attendance Law and advising him or her that failure to do so will be reported to the county attorney.

Upon the next failure to meet the conditions of the plan, Guardian Angels School shall file a report with the county attorney.

L. CONTAGIOUS OR INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Students showing signs or symptoms of a contagious or infectious disease are required by law to be sent home immediately or as soon as safe and proper conveyance can be found. (NDE Rule 55)

M. MAKE-UP WORK

Classroom teachers require make-up work for absences. Special arrangements should be made for students who have an anticipated excused absence. Failure to complete the work missed may lower the student's grade. Students who are absent due to illness should use the time at home to get well. Homework sheets will be in the homeroom for the student when he/she returns. The students will be given one day for each day absent to turn in make-up-work. No school work will be sent home to children having a contagious or infectious disease (*chicken pox, pink eye, etc.*)

N. FAMILY VACATIONS

We encourage parents or guardians to plan vacations when school is not in session. However, realizing that this is not always possible, we request that if a vacation requires a child's absence from school, the matter should be discussed with the principal and the child's teachers well in advance of departure. It is not sufficient just to notify the classroom teacher because attendance is verified in the school office. **A written note must be sent to the office prior to departure.** Every attempt will be made to give the student their missing work before departure. However, the student should check with the teacher when they return.

O. DOCTOR/DENTIST APPOINTMENTS

Parents or guardians are expected to schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours. When this is not possible, students will be excused for these appointments. A written note or phone call should be logged in the office prior to the event. **Parents or guardians must report to the school office to sign out their child/children.**

P. ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Parents delivering or picking up students should drive cautiously. When delivering students in the morning please pull up in front of Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School; **do not park by the Activity Center and ask your children to cross Walnut Street. At dismissal time parents are urged to park in the designated areas.** Teachers supervise the area around school from 7:45 – 8:00 a.m. and from 3:35 – 3:40 p.m.

Q. LOITERING

Students should leave the school and school grounds promptly after classes or activities are dismissed. Students will only be supervised until 3:35 each day unless attending the after school program.

R. RELEASE FROM SCHOOL

No student may leave the grounds without the permission of the principal. A student leaving the grounds for any reason must contact the office. This includes doctors/dentist appointments and any other reason a student may need to leave during school hours. If a student becomes ill or injured at school, a parent or designated relative/neighbor will be notified immediately. Parents please know that if you text the teacher you must also contact the office.

S. SAFETY / SECURITY

Students should not arrive at school before 7:45 a.m., as there is no supervision.

Parents and visitors are always to report to the school office before going elsewhere in the building during the school day. When a child is to be dismissed during school hours, he/she will wait in the office for a parent or an authorized person. All parties picking up children for any reason during school hours should report directly to the office to meet their child. A parent request is required for a student to leave school early.

For security the front and back doors of school are locked. **To enter the building, visitors are required to press the intercom button located to the right of the door.** Security cameras will allow school personnel to monitor the entrances and electronically unlock the doors to authorized visitors.

T. EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency every student is required to provide the school office the following information:

1. Parent(s) or guardian(s) name(s).
2. Complete up-to-date address.
3. Home phone and parent(s) or guardian(s) work phone.
4. Emergency phone number of relative or friend.
5. Physician's and Dentist's name and phone.
6. Medical alert information.

Note: Parents or guardians may indicate the names of persons to whom their child/children will be released. No other person will be given the right without the parent/guardian changing the form.

U. **ILLNESS OR INJURY**

In case of illness or injury a child will be cared for temporarily by a member of the school staff and parents or guardians will be notified. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary the school will call 911 and will immediately inform parents or guardians of the situation.

V. **MEDICINE**

School personnel are not permitted to administer any medication including cough drops and aspirin/Tylenol without a "Request of Giving Medicine at School" form signed by parents. Forms are available in the school office and on Sycamore. All medicines will be kept in the school office. **In order to dispense any medication at school, the following requirements must be met:**

1. *Prescription Drugs*

If a request is made to dispense a prescription drug, it must be brought to the school in the original, properly labeled prescription bottle with the name of the child, doctor, drug, dosage, and directions for administering. Written permission from the parent is required.

2. *Over-the-counter Drugs*

If a request is made to dispense an over-the-counter drug, it must be brought to the school in the original, properly labeled container. Written permission is required from the parent together with instructions, dosage, time and date the medication is to be given. The school will not provide aspirin/Tylenol or cough drops. If your child is in need of these medications please complete a REQUEST FOR GIVING MEDICINE form and provide the school with a supply of these medications. A copy of this form is provided in the APPENDIX section of the handbook.

W. **ASTHMA AND ANAPHYLAXIS**

Guardian Angels School has in place Asthma and Anaphylaxis protocol plus the medications needed to help a student with a severe Asthma or allergic reaction. Portable nebulizers are available for emergency use.

X. **IMMUNIZATIONS**

An immunization record must accompany initial registration. Immunizations are necessary in order to be enrolled in any school in the State of Nebraska. **Without these immunizations a child may not come to school.** An immunization list is posted on Sycamore. **NOTE: A second Varicella immunization is required by the State of Nebraska for the 2012-2013 school year for ALL students PS-12th Grade.**

Y. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency procedures for fire, tornado, bomb threat, crisis situations and hazardous spills are on file in the office and in every teacher's Faculty Handbook. Evacuation procedures and routes are posted in every classroom.

Z. USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY AND GROUNDS

Those wishing to use the cafeteria must make reservations at the St. Mary's Rectory. Those wishing to use the gyms must make reservations at the Guardian Angels High School Office. Those wishing to reserve the use of Guardian Angels School building must make reservations with the principal.

AA. NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT POLICY

Non-custodial parents have rights to receive the same information from school as custodial parents, unless such rights are restricted by a legally binding instrument or court order. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: 1) student records; 2) general school notices; 3) conferences with teachers.

Guardian Angels Central Catholic, however, declines the responsibility to communicate between parents. The school places responsibility of sharing information on the custodial parent and will not be responsible for collection of payments from the non-custodial parent.

The non-custodial parent does not have right to pick up the child during the school day or make any contact with the child during the school day unless: 1) the school receives written permission from the custodial parent specifying the arrangements, time, and date, or 2) the school has a court order or other legally binding instrument giving permission to the non-custodial parent. In this instance the school must be given advance notification to afford time for legal verification of such documents.

If the parents have joint custody, each parent shall be afforded all parental rights, unless restricted in some way by a legally binding instrument or court order.

If the parents are separated and neither is the primary custodian of the child, the school may release the child to either parent unless restricted by a legally binding document to the contrary.

The school may require custodial and non-custodial parents to provide a court certified copy of the court document in effect that sets forth the rights and restrictions pertaining to the parent's rights.

So that we know the rights of the non-custodial parent, we are asking the custodial parent to provide a copy of the custody segment of the divorce decree for the child's records.

BB. EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Guardian Angels Central Catholic Schools may close for inclement weather. Decisions to close early will be announced on the KTIC radio station and through the Beacon.

CC. ADDRESS CHANGE

It is imperative that the school has an up-to-date address, phone number and email for the family as well as names and phone numbers of persons to contact in case of an emergency. The school office needs to be notified as changes occur.

DD. COMMUNICATIONS

A weekly newsletter, containing items of interest to parents and students, will be sent home with the oldest child in the family or you may find them posted on the Sycamore website for GACC. These newsletters are sent home every Tuesday. If you have any materials for the monthly newsletter, please send them to the office by Monday morning. All enclosures in the newsletter are reviewed and must be approved by the principal. Other written announcements to be posted are made with the consent of the principal.

EE. CALENDAR

GACC publishes a yearly calendar, which remains unchanged unless advance notification is sent to the parents. All unnecessary changes are avoided but feasible alterations are made known to parents. A monthly school calendar is sent home with the newsletter.

FF. EARLY DISMISSALS

Faculty meetings are scheduled about once a month. Students may be dismissed early on these days. Please check the annual calendar for exact dates and times.

GG. TELEPHONE MESSAGES

For Faculty

Communications with the principal and teachers are encouraged. However, teachers are teaching between 8:00 a.m. and 3:35 p.m. You may call the school and leave a message for the teacher. The teachers will make every effort to return your call at their convenience.

For Students

Only extremely important messages may be delivered to a pupil during the school hours otherwise messages are given after 3:15 p.m. each day. Students will be allowed to use the telephone only if it is extremely important. Students must have the permission of their teacher and the principal or office personnel for use of the office phone.

HH. LOST AND FOUND

The school will not be held accountable for items lost or stolen. Children are therefore encouraged not to bring anything of value to school. Clothing items should be labeled with the child's name. Students or parents may claim lost articles in the lost and found barrel on the first floor or in the box in the gym lobby. After a reasonable period of time, articles not claimed will be given to charity.

II. DESKS/LOCKERS

Students are expected to keep their desks/lockers orderly. Desks/lockers are the property of the school, students are considered co-tenants of their desks/lockers; therefore, the school reserves the right to search this property when an occasion to do so becomes necessary. The school cannot be responsible for valuables left in desks/lockers.

JJ. EQUIPMENT USAGE

Our school has a variety of educational, safety and janitorial maintenance equipment. Students are not permitted to handle equipment, unless they have official permission to do so. If school equipment is damaged because of negligence or unauthorized use, the person at fault is held financially responsible.

KK. RECESS

Students will have an opportunity to enjoy outdoor recess each day unless the temperature drops below 10 degrees or the wind chill factor is 10 degrees or less. Students will need to dress appropriately with coats, hats and gloves.

IV. CURRICULUM & SCHOLASTIC INFORMATION

Guardian Angels School strives to give students a quality education in all the basic skills. The spiritual formation of the student receives special emphasis.

A. CORE CURRICULUM

The overall curriculum for Kindergarten through 6th grade complies with the recommendations of the State Department of Public Instruction and the Diocesan Department of Education guidelines. It includes:

Religion	Reading	Language Arts	Music
Spelling	Mathematics	Science	Art
Social Studies	Handwriting	STEAM	P.E.

Spanish is offered to our students K – 6.

Band is available for students in grades 4 – 6.

B. PRESCHOOL

Guardian Angels School offers a Preschool program for children who are 3 years old by July 31. Parents have the option of either half days on Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday. The morning session is from 8:00 – 11:15 a.m. The preschool children do not wear a school uniform and may participate in the Hot Lunch Program if attending full days. Preschool students also have the option to attend the Early Childhood Education Center.

C. PRE-KINDERGARTEN

A Pre-Kindergarten program is offered for children who are 4 years old by July 31. This class is held Monday-Friday, half days. Morning session is from 8:00 - 11:30 a.m. Pre-Kindergarten children do not wear a school uniform and may participate in the Hot Lunch Program if attending full days. Pre-Kindergarten students also have the option to attend ECEC.

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten children must be toilet trained. In accordance with Safe Environment recommendations, if a child has an accident, parents will be called to bring a change of clothing and to help the child change. A child with an inordinate number of accidents may be asked to withdraw until the next school term.

D. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER

Guardian Angels School offers an Early Childhood Education Center for all Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students. The Early Childhood Education Center is open five days a week, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:35 p.m. The Early Childhood Education Center students can participate in the Hot Lunch Program offered at the school. Price information is mailed out before school starts.

E. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Report Cards are issued quarterly for all students. Grades are based upon daily work, participation, homework, tests and quizzes.

F. PROMOTIONS / RETENTIONS

Promotions and retention are based on each student's academic, physical, social and emotional growth and involve consultation with parents, teachers, principal, and any other personnel involved with students.

Students who are failing to perform at their grade level in at least three or more of their core curriculum subject areas (Religion, Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies) will be eligible for retention in the particular grade level. Failure will be verified by an average of the four quarters that would result in a U or an F. Academic readiness, social maturity, or any other related concerns are taken into consideration. Some students may be PLACED in the following grade level rather than promoted. **Conferencing for this will take place at the issuing of the third quarter report card.**

G. **ADJUSTED CURRICULUM / ADJUSTED GRADING**

Guardian Angels School strives to meet the academic needs of all students. At times it will be to the advantage of the student to have their curriculum and/or grades adjusted in order to be successful in the classroom and to have a good self-concept. When there is a need for either an adjusted curriculum and/or adjusted grading scale the parents or teacher(s) may initiate the request. A meeting will be set up with the parents and teachers involved to work up an acceptable plan. The adjusted curriculum and/or grading scale will be noted on the report card and in the student's permanent file. The plan agreed upon should be reviewed periodically throughout the year and revised as needed. If a student is consistently scoring high grades he/she may be ready to drop the plan.

H. **HOMEWORK**

Each teacher will communicate their homework policy at the beginning of the school year. The elementary school's general rule regarding homework is the following:

1st Grade - up to 10 minutes of homework

2nd Grade - up to 20 minutes of homework

3rd Grade - up to 30 minutes of homework

4th Grade - up to 40 minutes of homework

5th Grade - up to 50 minutes of homework

6th Grade - up to 60 minutes of homework

Parents are encouraged to help with homework by the following:

1. Check your child's backpack each night
2. Check Sycamore for missing assignments and current grades
3. Communicate with the classroom teacher if needed.

I. **TESTING**

Students in grades K-6 take the **Star Test** each year. The testing schedule complies with the State Statute and Archdiocesan regulations regarding testing. The school, in evaluating and planning curriculum, uses the tests as one tool of assessing student's ability and progress. Individual student results are sent home to parents.

Students in grades 1 – 6 participate in Curriculum Standards Assessments throughout the year. Standards describe what students should know and be able to do at certain stages in their education. An assessment is an evaluation or an appraisal used to determine a student's progress toward meeting the standards. These assessments are written as part of the Curriculum guides from the Archdiocese of Omaha.

J. **ACCESSIBILITY TO STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents have a legal right to view their child's school records under the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. The school office requires a twenty-four hour notice.

K. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences are scheduled during the first and third quarters. Parents are also encouraged to confer with teachers whenever a need arises. It is encouraged that parents set an appointment first with the teacher.

L. RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Religion is taught in each classroom. Students plan and participate in the liturgy.

The second grade teachers dedicate a portion of their instructional year to the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. Sacramental preparation is a parish responsibility and is coordinated with the parish religious education administrator.

M. LITURGIES

As liturgy is central to our faith, students in grades K-6 have an opportunity to attend Mass each week. K-6 students will attend Mass each week. Please note the monthly calendar for the Mass schedule. Family members are invited and encouraged to participate in the scheduled liturgy with their children.

The students are given the opportunity to celebrate Reconciliation during the year and to celebrate different devotions such as the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, etc.

N. ASSEMBLIES/GUEST SPEAKERS/GUEST PROGRAMS

Assemblies are planned periodically as special events on the school calendar. Some typical assembly themes include athletics, cultural presentations, and professional speakers. There is often a significant investment in time and money in preparation for an assembly program. Special attention to proper behavior and good manners is expected of all students.

Guest speakers and programs enhance the curriculum of Guardian Angels School as well as expand horizons, opportunities, and experiences. All guest speakers and programs must be arranged in consultation with the administration. Calendar dates must be approved by the office and cleared with the master calendar.

O. CLASSROOM VISITS

Classroom visits are welcome, but please contact the school first to set up a convenient time. This cuts down on disruptions of teaching time. It also ensures that the children are in the classroom. Please report to the office before going to the classroom so that we know you are in the building. This is for the safety of all in our school.

P. FIELD TRIPS

Parents are to sign a permission form for their child to attend school-sponsored field trips and activities with his/her class as they arise during the school year. A new form must be signed for each trip. Only the form issued by the school will be accepted. A written note by the parent is acceptable. Oral telephone permissions cannot be accepted. Parents who want to chaperone a field trip must be Safe Environment certified. There will be no exceptions to that rule. Field trips are a privilege and can be denied for appropriate reasons.

Q. TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET CONSENT FORM

The Internet is available to teachers and students. A filter has been installed for the Internet. Parents must sign a Internet Consent Form at the beginning of the year for their children to be able to use the Internet. Students must receive instruction on the proper use and responsibilities before being able to access the Internet. Those students who violate the established procedures will have their license of use revoked.

Parents will also need to sign a Photo & Student Work Consent Form for student's work and/or student photos to be published.

R. MEDIA CENTER

Students in Preschool through grade six have a weekly library class. During this time the students learn and practice new library skills and check out books.

S. SCHOOL SUPPLIES

A supply list is provided at the end of the school year in preparation for the following year. Copies of these lists can be found on Sycamore.

Students are encouraged to bring supplies on the day they come for benchmarking or during PreS/PreK Open House in preparation for the first day of school. Items of value should be labeled. Students are required to bring all necessary books, paper, pens, pencils, or other needed supplies to class at the proper time.

V. SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

A. DISCIPLINE POLICY

The staff at Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary believes that discipline is an ongoing teaching process that fosters respect and dignity for all individual students. It stresses growth in social skills, individual responsibility, and problem solving in a collaborative effort among students, parents, educators and the community.

A positive and successful learning environment can only be accomplished if parents, students and educators work cooperatively. The following responsibilities and rules have been developed to promote a positive school environment that is learning-centered.

The student has the responsibility to:

1. Participate in learning and complete classroom assignments on time.
2. Respect the rights and feelings of others with regard to and concern for learning, property and safety
3. Follow the directions of all teachers, substitute teachers and guests.
4. Settle conflicts using problem solving skills.
5. Be courteous to schoolmates and staff.
6. Read and understand the Student Handbook.

The staff has the responsibility to:

1. Maintain a positive and nurturing learning environment.
2. Teach, model, review and post academic and behavioral expectations of the school and individual classrooms.
3. Teach, model and monitor student progress in social skills and problem solving techniques.
4. Implement and document intervention actions: to include problem solving, classroom consequences, curriculum modifications, notifying parents and notification to the office.
5. Request for Student Assistance Team (SAT) meeting when the above interventions prove unsuccessful.

The principal has the responsibility to:

1. Ensure that all staff members work together in a safe learning environment.
2. Review and approve all teacher's classroom rules.
3. Provide preventive counseling to all students in large/small groups or individually.
4. Provide consistent and timely feedback to staff and parents.
5. Assist staff when severe behavior situations exist.
6. Select and administer appropriate consequences.

The parent has the responsibility to:

1. Read and understand the Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook and know what behavior is expected of students.
2. Discuss expected school behavior with children and what consequences can occur if student behavior is inappropriate.
3. Support and reinforce school rules and policies with consequences at home.
4. Maintain communication with teachers and other staff members regarding children's behavior and academic progress.
5. Assist in teaching of specific skills such as being responsible for assignments, communications, and personal and school property.
6. Make sure children arrive on time, properly attired, in good health, and with proper rest and nourishment.

Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary Expectations

- Be Safe
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School Rules

- Keep hands, feet, objects and mouth to self (*Our Hands Off Rule*)
- Listen and follow directions
- Stay in seat upon request
- Raise hand and speak with permission
- Be friendly, respectful and caring to all

Cafeteria

1. Enter and exit the cafeteria in a quiet, orderly line, following the instructions from supervising adults.
2. Talk quietly in the cafeteria (remembering voice levels).
3. Use good table manners and sit facing forward with feet under the table.
4. Remain at your assigned table until you are given permission to leave.
5. Be courteous to cafeteria staff and supervising adults and other students.
6. Do not remove food from the cafeteria without permission, unless it is in a cold lunch container. No sharing of food is allowed.

Halls and Restrooms

1. Students are expected to walk quietly and go directly to their destination.
2. Students will open and close lockers quietly and keep them clean and free of stickers and posters.
3. Students will use the restroom during supervised restroom breaks or with staff permission only.
4. Students are to use restrooms appropriately and leave them clean and litter free.

School Grounds

1. Enter and leave school grounds using the sidewalks and crosswalks.
2. Arrive at school no earlier than 7:45.
3. Office permission is needed to leave school grounds during the school day.
4. Keep grounds free of paper and other litter.
5. Use and care for P.E./ Playground equipment as instructed by school staff.

(Grades K-3) Behavior Management Plan

Step 1: Verbal warning with reteaching of expectation

Step 2: Time out is a classroom “safe seat” with reteaching of expectation

Step 3: Time out in a buddy room - student will complete a think sheet (ticket given)

Step 4 Ticket with reteaching of expectation (Think time which includes walking at recess or think sheet)

(Tickets will be kept on file in the classroom.)

5 tickets: Students will write a letter to their parents explaining what happened and what they could do to improve.

10 tickets: Parents will be called by the teacher to inform them of the problem.

15 tickets: Students will be sent to the office for a conference with the principal.

(At the end of the month, the ticket count will start over.)

Students who follow school rules and consistently follow school expectations will be rewarded with reward recess.

(Grades 4th - 6th) Behavior Management Plan

Step 1: Verbal warning with reteaching of expectation

Step 2: Time out in classroom “safe seat” with reteaching of expectation

Step 3: Time out in buddy room - student will complete a think sheet (demerit given)

Step 4: Parent phone call, time out in buddy room with a think sheet (demerit given)

Step 5: Office visit (demerit given) - parent phone call - when a student returns to the classroom they will be expected to sit in the safe seat until the teacher can visit with them and re-invite them back to join the class.

After accumulation of 5 demerits: student will serve a detention/phone call home

After accumulation of 10 demerits: parent conference

B. CLASSROOM/GENERAL RULES

Each classroom sets its classroom procedures, rules and consequences. Students are expected to follow the procedures and consequences. Repeated disregard of these procedures is referred to the principal. These procedures, rules and consequences are posted in the classrooms or in the building.

C. BULLYING

Any intentional ongoing pattern of written or verbal expression, electronic abuse, physical acts, or gestures intended to cause distress/harm upon one or more students and includes an imbalance of power is a serious issue and may result in the following consequences:

1st Offense – Conference with parents and one day of In-School Suspension

2nd Offense – Conference with parents and one day of Out-of-School Suspension

3 or more Offenses – Possible term suspension or expulsion

Bullying disrupts a school's ability to educate students; and bullying threatens public safety by creating an atmosphere in which such behavior can escalate into violence.

Forms of Bullying include:

- Physical Bullying - hitting, kicking, hair pulling, pushing, or any physical aggression.
- Verbal Bullying - Teasing, name calling, put-downs, or other behavior that would deliberately hurt others' feelings.
- Emotional or Exclusion Bullying - Starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone, eye rolling, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends or intentionally left out.
- Cyber-bullying - Using electronic devices such as computers, statements, or pictures on blogs or websites, text messaging, instant messaging, and email.

D. USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phone use and text messaging are prohibited during school hours. This includes passing times between classes and in the bathrooms. Students are asked to keep cell phones off while in school and in their backpacks. Students who are caught using cell phones during school hours will have their phone taken away and a parent will need to pick it up from the office.

VI. DRESS CODE

Teachers are expected to enforce all dress code regulations. The principal will make judgments when there is doubt about a violation.

A. GIRLS

- School uniform plaid jumper, navy jumper, plaid skirt or navy skirt/skort are acceptable. These can be purchased from the Dennis Uniform Company. Navy shorts or capris are also acceptable. Black or navy shorts should be worn under skirts. Leggings can be worn underneath jumpers, skirts/skort. Leggings must be black or navy in color. Leggings must be plain with no logos.

- Solid navy slacks, simple in design, with two or four pockets.
 - Pockets must be in the front and/or the back.
 - Pockets down the sides of the legs are not permitted.
 - Patch pockets and pockets with a flap may be worn.
 - Rivets on any part of the slacks are not permitted.
 - A designer label may appear on the slacks above the pocket near the waist.
 - Designer labels or logos are not permitted on the pockets of the slacks.
 - Low-rise slacks are not permitted.
- 2nd Semester 6th Grade can wear khaki pants.
- Solid white/ light blue polo shirt. Can be short or long sleeve.
 - All shirts must be tucked in
- Any shirt worn under the polo, must be solid white with no design or print.
- Socks must be worn.
- Belts can be worn but are not required. Belts should fit through the loops and should be a solid color with no excessive bling.
- Cosmetics are prohibited.
- Only post earrings: no dangling or large hooped earrings.
- No flip-flops or sandals.
- ¼ zip pullover royal blue jacket with a school logo may be worn over a school approved polo.

B. BOYS

- Solid navy pants or shorts, simple in design, with two or four pockets.
 - Pockets must be in the front and/or the back.
 - Pockets down the sides of the legs are not permitted.
 - Patch pockets and pockets with a flap may be worn.
 - Rivets on any part of the pants are not permitted
 - A designer label may appear on the pants above the pocket near the waist.
 - Designer labels or logos are not permitted on the pockets of the pants.
- 2nd Semester 6th Grade can wear khaki pants.
- Solid white / light blue knit polo shirt. Can be short or long sleeve.
 - All shirts must be tucked in
- Any shirt worn under the polo, must be solid white with no design or print.
- Socks must be worn
- Belts can be worn but are not required. Belts should fit through the loops and should be a solid color with no excessive bling.
- Hair should be neat and clean and may not reach below the collar, ears or the eyebrows.
- No earrings of any kind.
- No flip-flops or sandals.
- ¼ zip pullover royal blue jacket with a school logo may be worn over a school approved polo.

C. SHORTS/CAPRI PANTS

Shorts/capri season ends October 31 and begins April 1. The shorts should be uniform solid navy walking shorts with at least a 6-inch inseam. The capris should be solid navy in color. Same regulations for slacks/pants apply for shorts/capris. 6th grade girls and boys may wear khaki colored shorts in the Spring.

D. WINTER CLOTHING

- A school-approved gray or navy sweatshirt with the school logo on it. A uniform polo must be worn underneath the sweatshirt. Contact school for businesses who supply the school approved sweatshirts.

E. PHYSICAL EDUCATION DRESS CODE

- Grades K-6: tennis shoes with non-marking soles.
- Grades 4-6: t-shirts and gym shorts.
- Grades K-6: All students must keep their P.E. shoes in school at all times in case of a change in the P.E. schedule.
- There are not specific shorts or shirts that need to be purchased for PE. There are not specific colors that need to be worn.

F. OUT OF UNIFORM DAY

Non uniform days will be scheduled periodically throughout the school year.

Each month there is an out of uniform day for students who had their birthday that month. The date will be communicated through the family newsletter. On these days students can wear jeans, sweatpants, warm-up/wind pants etc with a t-shirt/sweatshirt of their choice.

VII. SCHOOL SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

A. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Parents with financial difficulties are urged to apply for the Children's Scholarship Fund and to our own local Family Tuition Assistance grant. All information is kept confidential.

B. HEALTH SERVICES

All required health screenings are scheduled during the year.

C. CHILD ABUSE

When any school staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect, or observes such person being subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect, he/she is required by law to report such incident to the proper law enforcement agency.

Abuse or neglect shall mean knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to be:

1. placed in a situation that may endanger his or her life or physical or mental health;
2. tortured, cruelly confined, or cruelly punished;
3. deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care;
4. left unattended in a motor vehicle, if the person is 6 years of age or younger;
5. sexually abused.

D. SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Students may eat either hot or cold lunch at school. Hot nutritious lunches are part of the federally funded Hot Lunch program. Menus are published monthly. Information on advance lunch payment by the semester or by the month is distributed at the beginning of the school year. Students in grades 4–6 may order salads and/or purchase seconds.

Parents with financial difficulties are urged to sign up for free or reduced lunch. The forms are attached to the lunch letter sent home with Parent Orientation Materials.

In Accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

E. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), passed in 1987, requires all public and private schools to inventory and inspect all buildings for asbestos containing materials. This first inspection was completed at Guardian Angels School in 1985. The latest inspection was the summer of 2015. All asbestos areas will continue to be inspected on a regular basis and procedures implemented to assure no health hazards are present. The state health office has approved the asbestos management plan for Guardian Angels School. The plan is available for public inspection during office hours. Copies of the management plan will be provided to requesting parties for the cost of reproduction. Requests for copies of the plan should be sent to Guardian Angels School.

F. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Speech and testing services are available through the local West Point Public School District. Title I services are available at Guardian Angels School through the resource room.

G. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of our learning program. GACC is most fortunate and grateful to have people who volunteer in the school. These people are necessary to enable the teachers to work with small groups of students, take care of clerical duties, and a wide variety of other tasks. It is perhaps the best way to give parents and other adults first-hand information regarding the school program.

To become a volunteer aide, tutor, or helper, please contact the school office. The principal is responsible for training volunteers. All volunteers who work with children are required to complete the Archdiocesan 'Safe Environment' training.

H. FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a part of GACC's financial picture. Each year fundraising is necessary to continue the offering of Catholic education. Information on each of these events is available through the Tuesday newsletter.

Additionally, the Guardian Angels parent organization – Supportive Parents Association conducts fundraising. Please consider supporting these activities.

I. BAND PROGRAM

Students in Grades 5th & 6th are offered an opportunity to take class instrumental lessons and perform in a school band. Lessons are scheduled over the lunch recess during the regular school day.

J. ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

We strive to recognize the gifts of each student. Therefore, a variety of enrichment programs are provided to all students during the summer.

K. OUTREACH

The students of Guardian Angels Central Catholic are taught to care for others. Projects throughout the year offer the students the opportunity to donate money or supplies for various local, state, national and international organizations who assist those in need.

L. PETS

Pets of any kind are ordinarily not allowed at school. Teachers may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special program or activity providing that no child's health is endangered by the presence of pets (allergies, etc.). Under no circumstances is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school.

M. PICTURES

Individual student pictures will be taken in the Fall by a photography studio with whom the school contracts. Further information as to date and prices is sent home in the Tuesday newsletter.

VIII. ORGANIZATIONS

A. NEBRASKA FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENTS

Parents are encouraged to join the Nebraska Federation of Catholic School Parents, which is a Nebraska Catholic Conference Affiliate. The goals of the NFCSP are to:

1. Unite Catholic school parents in Nebraska.
2. Promote Catholic education statewide.
3. Inform all Catholic school parents of their rights and the rights of their children with regard to educational programs.
4. Foster legislation that will support parental choice in education.

Parents may join by sending their name, address, phone number, school affiliation and \$3 fee to: Nebraska Federation of Catholic School Parents, P.O. Box 94872, Lincoln, NE 68509-4872

B. GUARDIAN ANGELS CENTRAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD

Guardian Angels School Board is a policy-formulating body focused on the operation of the educational facilities of Guardian Angels School. The Board consists of the Pastor and Associate Pastor of St. Mary's, representatives from St. Mary's, St. Boniface, St. Aloysius, St. Anthony's, Holy Cross, and Ex officio members are: the pastors, the Principal and the S.P.A. President.

The term of membership is three years. Each parish determines the method of selecting representatives. Meetings are held each month, August – May, the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

C. SUPPORTIVE PARENTS ASSOCIATION (S.P.A.)

The Supportive Parents Association (S.P.A.) is an organization of parents of students in Guardian Angels Central Catholic School who meet monthly to plan and coordinate activities that enhance their children's education and environment of the school.

A spring luncheon, aluminum can collection, paper drives, and annual fundraisers are the means of gathering funds to provide activities and purchase items needed for the school. SPA provides bowling for K-6 grade students, contributes toward presenters for high school students, and donates towards classroom and field trip budgets, in addition to special activities and projects as needed.

The Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School Parent/Student handbook addresses the daily operational routines of Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School and outlines rules and regulations of the school. The principal reserves the right to add, modify, or abolish handbook provisions without notice. The Handbook is reviewed and revised annually.

Be it known to all who enter here
that Christ is the reason for this school,
the unseen but ever-present teacher in its classes,
the model for its faculty,
the inspiration of its students.

August, 2023

Dear Parents,

The Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary Parent/Student Handbook can be found on our school website and in Sycamore School.

After reading the handbook, return the form below to GA by August 31st.

Thank you,

Mrs. Peatrowsky

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I have had the opportunity to read the 2023-2024 Parent/Student Handbook for Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School. I agree that my child/children will abide by the policies set forth in these handbooks.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

I have had the opportunity to read the 2023-2024 Parent/Student Handbook for Guardian Angels Central Catholic Elementary School. I agree to abide by the policies set forth in this handbook.

Student _____ Date _____

Student _____ Date _____

Student _____ Date _____

Student _____ Date _____

Student _____ Date _____

Student _____ Date _____