



The Washington New Church School
Quick Reference Guide for
POLICIES & PROCEDURES
2015-2016

The Washington New Church School

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

This document is designed as a brief, quick reference tool for parents. *Please keep this for review throughout the year!* Our complete student handbook is available on request from the front office (hard copy or electronic). In this pamphlet

- **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**
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PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

The faculty values parental input. The Principal is always available to help if a parent and teacher are having difficulty reaching an understanding, but it is better to start with direct communication, verbal preferred over email. If the Principal also happens to be the teacher involved, you may consult Kim Maxwell (teacher liaison) or any member of the School Board. The names of the members are listed at the back of this book (p. 16). Generally speaking it is best to discuss school matters during the school week or in a special appointment.

Written reports are another important form of parent-teacher communication. The most common methods of communication are email and hard copy notes or forms sent with the children. In the

lower grades homework forms come home daily. Please be on the lookout for daily communication and confirm receipt when requested. In September we have a Back to School Night when parents come to the school to meet with their child's teacher, learn specifics about what they will be learning and have an opportunity to visit the classrooms.

Each week we send out an "e-News" with important school information, coming events and reports on fun activities. These usually will arrive in your e-mail Thursday evenings.

We use a semester system (two terms). In the middle of each semester you will get a brief written mid-term report detailing your child's academic progress and in-person parent-teacher conference.

At the end of each term (January and June) we send out formal report cards. In addition to the academic grades, we prepare comprehensive written comments to accompany the reports. As a faculty, we feel that the comments are the most important part of the report. Please note, however, that they are written as private communications between the teachers and the parents, and are *not intended to be read by the children*. If you plan to allow your child to read the comments, PLEASE let the teachers know in advance so that the comments can be composed accordingly.

Parent Service Program

1. **Parent Service Program (PSP):** WNCS is asking each parent to volunteer 10 hours in support of the school each school year. This is a fun way to get to know other parents while making a big difference in helping the operation of the school.
2. **PSP rules:** Sign up for volunteer opportunities that interest you (11 Service Areas below), contact the Service Area Leader to get a task, perform the task, and report back to that leader to get credit.
3. **Service Areas:**
 - a. **School Grounds and Landscape Maintenance** (Outdoors)
 - b. **School Building Maintenance, Repair and Improvement** (Indoor and Outdoor)

- c. **Classroom Help** (academic and administrative)
 - d. **School-day Support:** Supervise end of school day chores performed by students
 - e. **Activities/Events:** Support the set-up/break down and logistics for any school function
 - f. **Library Support:** Assist librarian per her direction
 - g. **Uniforms:** Managing uniform consignment
 - h. **Administrative Support**
 - i. **New Parent Support:** Mentor parents new to the school to ensure they feel plugged into how things work.
 - j. **School Board or Committee Support**
 - k. **Attend Intro Classes, Worship**
4. How to sign up: The easiest way is to look for Becca Smith, one of our school mom's wearing a crazy hard hat! (beccalek@yahoo.com, [202-834-0343](tel:202-834-0343)) You can also sign up at Back to School Night.

MEDICAL POLICIES

The School considers the safety and well-being of the students a top priority. To that end we have the following rules.

Health Forms: Health Inventory forms **must be filled out for each student**, signed by a parent, dated, and returned to the School office by August 15th. This information will help us be prepared to reach you or your alternate in case of an emergency.

Medication: The Washington New Church School must comply with Maryland State law which states "All persons other than registered nurses (RNs) or licensed practical nurses (LPNs) who administer medication in schools... do so under supervision of the RN." What this means is that any medication - prescription and over the counter medicine (OTC) may **only** be administered at the school by a certified medical technician (in our case, secretary Bonnie Cowley) after submission of a completed "Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form" (form is available upon request) and providing the prescribed or OTC medication *in a*

bottle with the child's name on it. NO medication of ANY kind can be given without this documentation.

Notice of any changes must be made directly to the secretary and be accompanied by a new, signed physician form.

Emergencies:

- 1) If an illness or injury appears to be serious or life-threatening, the School will use the 911 service to summon emergency care. The parents will be informed immediately of any emergency.
- 2) The parents will be expected to pay any costs incurred for emergency treatment.

Non-emergency Illness or Injury:

- 1) Playground bumps or scrapes will be cleaned and bandaged and/or treated with ice packs, as appropriate.
- 2) If a student reports feeling ill, the teacher will send the student to the office with a note. Appropriate action will be taken according to the preferences indicated on the Health Inventory form. If nonprescription painkillers or other remedies are needed, they will be administered **only according to the Medical Care Forms on file**. If the student has a fever or symptoms of a reportable or contagious illness, the parents will be asked to take the student home.
- 3) Students should not return to school if signs of contagion remain or they are running a fever the previous evening.

Notification: Parents will be notified of any serious injury or illness, and all such incidents will be noted in the student's health records.

School Trip Procedure:

- 1) When groups of students leave the immediate area of the school building for official School functions, all teachers will carry cell phones for security and medical emergency reasons.

The teacher or designated chaperone carrying emergency medication for a student will travel in the same vehicle, and stay in the same tour group as the affected student.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Absence: Absence (other than illness) from required evening or weekend events will be noted in the students' records. Please notify the school by phone for any needed absence.

We require that a signed note be provided by the parents for *every day of absence, explaining the cause*. This note must be given to the homeroom teacher when first returning to school. To simplify this requirement, the absentee homework form has a space at the bottom to explain the absence. Please fill out and return. *Verbal notification alone is **not sufficient**.*

A student may be reviewed for possible retention (to repeat a grade) if he or she misses 20% or more school days, or if there is a pattern of absences not obviously related to illness.

Appointments: Please try to schedule outside appointments for your child after school hours, particularly when WNCS is giving standardized tests or during the end of grading periods. Please notify the homeroom teacher and the secretary in writing as soon as you know of an expected absence (e.g. medical appointments).

Family Trips during School: Parents must evaluate the usefulness of family trips relative to the challenges involved in their child(ren) missing school and the extra demands it puts on them and the teachers.

If you must take your child(ren) from school, here are some reminders to make it easier for all concerned:

- Please submit a **written** request well in advance to the Principal explaining the circumstances of the child's expected absence.
- Allocate some extra time when you return to help your child(ren) make up missed material.

Tardiness: The entry door will be unlocked at 7:50 a.m. each school day. Students are expected to arrive between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m.; the earlier the better. A student who has not greeted the roll taker by 8:15 a.m. will be marked tardy.

Students will receive:

- One excused tardy per quarter for any reason at all;
- Three excused tardies for legitimate reasons (traffic, parent's or baby's fault etc.);
- Any tardies not excused will result in the student sitting in the assembly room during lunch recess.

Parents should notify the school any day that their child will be late or absent, telephoning the school office before 8:15 AM. This is necessary to avoid undue concern about a child's safety.

STUDENT PICK UP

Parents must provide a pick up schedule for their children, a note that they are permitted to walk home or whether they are attending WNCS aftercare and what days. A dismissal form outlining the details of pickup/aftercare/etc. is to be filled out and returned to the office before school starts. Each day a staff member on duty will ensure the safe pick up of every student.

Please call the office if you are running late for pick up, so we know that your child will need extended supervision. ***If a child is not picked up by 3:15pm, he/she will be sent to Aftercare and the parents will be charged the \$20 drop-in fee.*** (Full information about aftercare program options and fees available from the office)

If there is any change (either someone else is picking up or your child is to walk to a neighbor's home) you ***must*** call the office and inform us – again, for the safety of the child.

Also for safety, the parking area closest to the school entrance will be blocked off at pick up time, except on rainy days when students will be kept in the assembly room until their rides arrive.

SNOW DAYS

- In the event of a winter storm, WNCS will follow the plan for Prince George's County. (PG County delays and closings can be found on your local news, WTOP radio 103.5 FM or on the PG County web-site). You can also sign up for e-notifications <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/PGCPS/subscriber/new>. *However, if we feel that safety is not an issue for our students we may re-open earlier than PGCPS. In this case, parents will be notified by telephone, text or e-mail by 6pm the day before.*

Uniform Policy

The Uniform: While in school, students are required to wear their choice of one uniform top, one uniform bottom, with appropriate socks, leggings, tights or black spandex shorts, and have available one piece of uniform outerwear clothing to be purchased from our website at:

<http://customers.aluniforms.com/alcart/Customers/Washington-NCS.aspx>.

1. The uniform must be worn as designed.
2. The uniform should be clean, well-fitting and neat. It should be in good condition, not stained, frayed, torn, or have holes.
3. Clothes layered under the uniform should not be visible.
4. Black, white or gray tights or leggings, or black spandex shorts must be worn under skirts, skorts and jumpers. Footless tights and leggings must come to the ankle and be worn with matching socks that cover the bottom hem.
5. Oxford shirts must be tucked in. Brown or black belts must be worn when shirt is tucked in.
6. Shoes are to be clean, in good condition and provide proper foot support. Shoes with laces must be laced and tied securely. Sandals must have a heel strap for the sake of safety. Flip-flops and slides are not allowed.
7. Shoes or accessories should not be distracting to others.
8. Socks are to be a solid black, grey or white.

9. Hats may not be worn by any student during school hours except outside or for special events. This includes hoods.
10. If wearing a white shirt, a white t-shirt or camisole should be worn underneath.

The **PE uniform requirements** are as follows:

Grades JK-2: Students should wear a well-fitting school uniform and running or athletic shoes only - no boots!

Grades 3-10: Students should wear a well-fitting PE uniform and running or athletic shoes only - no boots!

- WNCS T-shirt to be purchased from A1
- black athletic shorts, available from A1
- Running or athletic shoes - no treadless, rugged tread, slip-ons, elevated soles, boots and no ripped or worn-out shoes.
- white or black athletic socks
- Solid-colored sweatpants (Solid-colored sweatshirt is optional; uniform outerwear may be worn in PE classes, except the hood jacket - for safety reasons.)
- No dangling jewelry is allowed in PE class (earrings, bracelets, anklets etc.

Recent Changes to the Uniform:

- We have added black pants to our list of choices.
- We have added two new acceptable venues for the purchase of uniform bottoms, mostly pants and shorts.
 - We highly recommend A1 Uniform as our first choice due to the durability and uniformity of their clothing, but we understand that cost or ease of purchase may be a factor and so are offering alternatives.
- A1 Uniform will now be the source for our PE uniform shirt and they will be offering black shorts and plain sweats as well.
- We are in our second year of three phasing out our old school uniform. This means that the old school uniform pieces are still acceptable for one more year.

The Vendors:

- **A1** (Logoed clothes, and plaid)(email above)
- Kids for Less
<http://www.kidsforlessstores.com/>
- **Land's End**
<http://www.landsend.com/>

GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Homework: Parents can best help their children with homework by providing a suitable place in the home and a consistent schedule for work. Parents can check their child's homework form or assignment book to determine each day's work. We encourage parents to let the children complete homework on their own so that the teacher does not get a false message about the mastery of a subject. Help, yes, of course, but don't do it for them! *Note: students are not permitted to return to school after regular hours to retrieve forgotten work.*

Our general policy is that grades 1-2 may get about 20 - 30 minutes of homework per night, grades 3-4 about 45 minutes, grades 5-6 about 1 hour, grades 7-8 1 ½ hours and grades 9-10 up to 2 ½ hours per night. Please let us know if your child regularly spends more (or less!) than the target time on homework or has regular difficulty completing his/her homework in any course.

In general if a student has an excused absence, a two day extension is given on an assignment that was due or assigned on a day that was missed. In the case of extended absences a make-up plan will be generated by the homeroom teacher in consultation with other subject teachers.

NEW - Students who fail to turn in a homework assignment will be required to stay and complete the assignment on the day it was due. Parents will be notified by text before dismissal.

After School Study Hall: In order to help students stay on track academically we have developed the following plan. Students in 5th through 10th grades who have a grade lower than 70% in any subject for any grading period (i.e. progress reports, mid-term, or

full term) will be required to attend after-school study hall until grades improve. A grade of 60-69% will result in ½ hour per week for each course. A grade below 60% will result in one hour per week for each course.

A student's progress is reassessed regularly by the faculty. The WNCS Progress Report form is used to inform parents of any issues and may include recommendation for extra help.

Students who receive an "incomplete" as a grade for any course will be required to attend after-school study hall until the work is completed.

Students who have been absent, especially for prolonged periods, may need to attend study hall to complete missed assignments.

Study hall begins at 3:00 p.m. on a mutually agreed day. Students should report promptly to the teacher in charge.

Office Hours: In addition, homeroom teachers may offer "office hours" for those students who would like extra help.

Retention: A student will be reviewed by the faculty for possible retention in his or her current grade if he or she has earned a failing average (less than 60%) in one or more of the core subjects, or if he or she has an average of 60%-69% in two or more core subjects.

The core subjects in Grades 1 - 8 are: Religion, Composition, Grammar, Literature, Mathematics, Reading, Science, Spelling, and Social Studies/History.

The core subjects in Grades 9 and 10 are: Religion, English, Foreign Language, History, Mathematics, and Science.

Academic Probation: A student who is unable to achieve a passing average in any core course may be placed on academic probation. This involves developing a student action plan or contract with designated outcomes. If outcomes are not achieved, alternative school placement may be recommended. A student may begin the school year on probation based on his or her report at the end of the previous year.

STUDENT CONDUCT

We expect that our students will act with courtesy and kindness toward others and observe all rules for good school behavior and safety.

General Rules:

- 1) No bullying (emotional or physical) will be tolerated. We have a detailed policy about this, which is available on request.
- 2) Roughhousing and running are not permitted in the building.
- 3) Students must have permission from a teacher to leave the campus for any reason during school or aftercare hours.
- 4) Students are not permitted to use either church or school equipment without permission. This includes, but is not limited to: copiers, phones, and PE or kitchen equipment.
- 5) Any use of school computers at any time outside of school hours without a teacher's permission will result in one hour of detention.
- 6) Church and school property broken through negligence is the responsibility of the student(s) and parents to repair or replace. The school will notify the parents promptly when such an incident occurs. Children are not permitted inside the building before or after regular school hours except under the direct, onsite supervision of an adult.
- 7) Once the students are dismissed, they become the responsibility of the parents.
- 8) Students are not permitted to bring weapons of any type to school. Special permission may be granted for students to bring items related to a course of study.
- 9) Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices during school hours. Telephones brought to school must be stored in the school office and will be returned at dismissal. WNCS is not responsible for any damage caused to personal electronic devices.

- 10) In accordance with Maryland State Law, helmets are required on all public property for children under 16 using bicycles, scooters and in-line skates. ***In addition, WNCS includes all wheeled vehicles (rip sticks, skate boards etc.) under this requirement.*** We require that children wear proper helmets when riding any wheeled apparatus on the WNCS campus.
- 11) All wheeled apparatus should be parked in the bike rack when not in use and taken home each day. The school is not responsible for bicycles or other equipment left on the property.

Obscenities: We take the use of the Lord's name, profane, crude or obscene language very seriously. Such language destroys the sphere we are trying to establish, and distracts from the educational process. In the first instance our response will be to instruct and correct. If the situation is repeated, punishments may be given. If the problem is habitual, the parents will be consulted in the search for a lasting solution.

Plagiarism: The use of someone else's words or ideas without proper citation of the source is a very serious offense. It includes lying and stealing in order to pass off copied work as one's own.

At the lower elementary levels (1st-4th) the students will learn to gather information and put it into their own words. In the middle grades (5-8) the students will be taught specific rules of appropriate computer use format and crediting. In the High School, emphasis will be placed on ethical use of sources, including a full introduction to and understanding of how to avoid close paraphrasing.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated at any level. A paper or project deemed to contain plagiarized material will not receive credit. Further consequences will be imposed at the discretion of the teacher and the principal.

Detention: Students may be required to perform useful chores for the school in consequence of rule infractions or disorders. A verbal warning and a small, immediate consequence will result from minor infractions.

Face-it and Fix-it: Certain actions may lead to instant detention. When one of these incidents occurs, the student(s) involved will complete a Face-It and Fix-It procedure. This entails phoning a parent immediately to explain the circumstances, followed by filling out the form at home, signing and returning it, and completing appropriate consequences.

Disciplinary Suspension: In circumstances involving a single instance of a serious offense, in consultation with the parents, the Principal may place a student on either an in-school suspension or home suspension for a stated period. If the student shows flagrant repetition of the original offense or an equally serious offense, a full suspension from WNCS may be necessary.

A student who receives 10 or more hours of detention in a single semester may be placed on disciplinary suspension.

THE LIBRARY

WNCS Overdue Library Book Policy: If a student has an overdue book, a *first* notice from the librarian will be given to the child by his/her homeroom teacher. The student will have one week to return the book. If the book is not returned a *second* notice is sent to the parent by way of the child. If the book is returned, no further action is required. If the book is determined by the parent to be lost, then replacement procedures must be implemented. If the book cannot be located for eight weeks past the book's due date, the student/parent is responsible for replacement. The librarian will purchase the book using the librarian's discount rate. The parent is responsible to pay up to \$10.00 of the cost. If the parents are able or if they decide the student should pay for the replacement, we would gratefully have them cover the full cost of the missing book.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Although our curriculum is not regulated by the state, it is important to know that we are preparing our students to succeed in any school system. For this reason, each spring the students in grades 3 through 8 are given the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (IOWAS). Our tests are included with those from other New

Church schools for evaluation so that we can compare ourselves both to other schools like our own, and to national standards. We also administer the Cognitive Abilities Test (CATs) to grades 3 and 7 every year.

IOWA Test results are usually received by the end of May and the results are available to parents at that time. If you would like to see and fully understand your child's scores, please make arrangements to meet with Erin Stillman.

STUDENT SPECIAL SUPPORT

We want every child to succeed, and we do our best to promote this in every case. However, when learning disabilities or special needs are identified, the school will determine the support we are able to offer. In order to create the best program for a student, within budgetary and personnel constraints, we need the understanding and affirmative cooperation of parents. We do not have a separate special education program. We are not able to accommodate children with serious emotional or behavioral problems.

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The guidelines set forth in this handbook are not intended as promises of specific treatment but serve to provide a foundation for the orderly administration of the school. Obviously, every situation cannot be anticipated. And likewise, rules cannot govern every situation that might arise. Should a situation arise that is not covered by this Handbook, WNCS is not limited or otherwise precluded from taking appropriate measures to resolve the matter. To promote the orderly administration of the school, WNCS will make decisions it deems appropriate but take into consideration the interests of the students, their parents, the School Board, and the WCNJ.

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD
For 2015-2016

Principal: Brian D. Smith
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Board of Trustees Representative: Bob Newkirk
Ra.newkirk@verizon.net

John Croft – school treasurer (term expires 2016) School Treasurer
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David Glenn (term expires 2017) School Board Chairman
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Wanda Moore (term expires 2016)
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