

Academic Program

Instructional Program

The instructional program at Cathedral School reflects its belief in Catholic education. The following subjects are taught: Religion; Language Arts including Reading, Spelling, Writing, Handwriting, and Grammar; Mathematics (including Algebra for qualifying 8th graders – policies regarding accelerated math will be given under separate cover to those students to which it applies); Social Studies; Science. Subjects taught weekly include: Art; Music; Physical Education. Students visit the library and computer lab in a variety of ways depending on their grade level. All subjects are taught according to the guidelines of the Diocese of Raleigh, the State of North Carolina and the needs of Cathedral students. An overview of the Diocesan curriculum by subject and grade level is available on our web site.

Students can be required to attend religious retreats/activities as part of the diocesan religious curriculum. This includes weekly school Mass. Parents are welcome to join us for school Mass. They are reminded that no photos should be taken during Mass. Also, the Eucharistic bread and wine given during Mass have great significance for Catholics: they are the Body and Blood of Christ, our Lord and God. We invite those who do not share our Catholic faith to come forward to receive a blessing.

Classroom and resource teachers will develop their own requirements and procedures based on the grade level/subject they teach. The following are guidelines under which they base their decisions.

Homework

At Cathedral, homework is not an option! Teachers assign appropriate home study to reinforce and supplement the lessons presented in class. All written work is to be neat and accurate, as well as complete. Homework is the responsibility of each student. We ask that parents check homework and provide assistance while allowing the child to accept responsibility for the task. By the time a student reaches grades 6, 7, 8, he/she should not need much parental involvement with homework.

Students will be provided with either an assignment book or a homework folder.

The “10 minute” rule should be used to gauge time spent on homework.

Multiply the grade level of the student by 10 and that should be the approximate time (in minutes) spent on written assignments each night. Projects and practice reading would be in addition to the regular homework. The “10 minute” rule is only a guideline. Students work at different rates using different learning styles and strategies.

Assignments are due on the assigned due date. If a student is absent on the due date, the assignment is due on the first day they return to class. In cases of illness of more than a day, teachers will work out a schedule to make up missed work.

Consequences for incomplete assignments will be handled according to policies set forth by individual teachers in grades K-5. Teachers in grades 6-8 will all apply the same consequences. **Forgotten homework will not be delivered to the student.**

Interim Report Cards and Quarterly Report Cards

Quarterly Report cards are issued in Grades K-8 according to the dates on the school calendar. Parents will receive information regarding how to regularly check your child's academic performance via RenWeb.

Different grade levels require different methods of reporting progress to parents. Your child's teachers will give you grade specific information. It should be noted that students in grades PK-2 will not be graded in "specials".

Grading Scale

Teachers in grades 4-8 will follow this scale:

A = 93-100 B = 85-92 C = 78-84 D = 70-77 F = 69-0

Awards and Honors

Academic achievement will be rewarded formally in grades 4-8 and informally in grades Pre-K - 3. All fourth graders and all new students in grades 5-8 will receive a Cathedral pennant on which to hang pins they earn for high honors, honors and merit.

The following criteria must be met for formal recognition:

High Honors: All grades A, Outstanding, Good, Satisfactory

Honors: All grades A, B, O, G, S

Merit: All grades A, B, 1 C, O, G, S

Students receiving D, F, Improvement needed or Unsatisfactory in any subject (including "specials") will not receive recognition and may need to complete a Student Improvement Plan. This is designed to improve communication between home and school and to help students raise grades in the affected area(s).

Attendance: Perfect attendance will be awarded to students who:

1. Have not been marked absent.
2. Have no more than 10 tardies.

Retention

Students failing two major subject areas will be considered as candidates for retention. Retention is considered an appropriate intervention, especially if done in grades PK-2. Teachers will make numerous parent contacts if retention is being considered. By May 1st, a letter will be sent to the parents from the teacher and principal informing parents if the retention is being recommended, but final decisions may not be able to be made until fourth quarter and final grades are calculated.

Service Hours

Students in grades K-2 must perform 1 hour of service during each nine weeks. These activities may be performed in and around the home, school, church, and community.

Students in grades 3-5 must perform 2 hours of service during each nine weeks. These activities may be performed in and around the home, school, church, and community.

Students in grades 6-8 must perform 4 hours of service during each nine weeks. These activities may be performed in and around the school, church and community.

Service hours may not be claimed for activities in which the student was paid.

School activities such as choir, hand bells, altar servers, Jr. Altar guild, tutoring and safety patrol will count as service hours. Students should ask their religion teachers for clarification on activities that they are unsure of before turning in their sheets. Summer service hours will count during the first nine weeks only. Participation in class service projects will not count toward the completion of individual hours.

Failure to turn in this sheet on the due date will negatively impact the student's religion grade for the quarter. Religion teachers will specify grade level requirements and due dates.

Testing

Testing is used to determine mastery of material presented. Mastery level will be 85%. Testing will be done as often as the teacher feels is necessary. Students will be given notice of all tests and are expected to be prepared. Quizzes may be unannounced. Retests will be at the discretion of the teacher.

The students in the Diocese of Raleigh participate in a standardized testing program. Test scores are used to measure the growth of each child from year to year and to help teachers diagnose and plan effective instruction for the year. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills, which is an achievement test, is administered in the Fall. It will be given to students in grades 3-8.

The Cognitive Abilities Test, which is a test to measure the child's ability, is administered in the Fall. It will be given to students in grades 2 and 5.

Students in grades 4 and 7 will be given the State of NC Catholic Schools Writing Test in March.

The NC End-of-Course Test in Algebra will be administered in May to those 8th students enrolled in that course.

Results for all tests are sent to parents in sealed envelopes via the Friday envelope.

Parents are encouraged to call the child's teacher for help with score interpretation.

The principal will present school-wide scores yearly in both an oral and written format.

Field Trips

Teachers are encouraged to plan educational field trips to enhance the classroom experience. A blanket permission slip for walking field trips to downtown will be signed and filed in the office. Parents will be notified about the planned activities and will have to write a note to the teacher if their child will not participate. Buses will be hired for trips that are not within walking distance. Separate permission slips will be required when buses are hired unless the students ride the free "downtown circulator" bus. You will provide permission for that via the blanket permission slip. Students are expected to ride the bus not to drive in their parent's car. Occasionally, fees will be charged for field trips. No student will be denied participation for lack of funds. Students can however be denied participation for inappropriate classroom behavior. The teacher in consultation with the principal makes that decision. Uniforms are worn unless the nature of the trip warrants otherwise. Parent volunteers will be used as chaperones. Chaperones may not bring pre-school aged children with them on trips nor may they bring school-age siblings. Chaperones may have to pay admission charges depending upon the destination and the number of chaperones they allow per class.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences

There will be one assigned parent-teacher-student conference each school year. Our goal is to have a face-to-face conference with each family. A good parent-teacher-student relationship enables both to have a better understanding of the child. During the school year, parents are encouraged to keep in touch with the child's teacher as often as necessary. Appointments must be made in advance. **At no time may a parent go to the classroom to speak with a teacher during the school day or during arrival or dismissal.** Contact the teacher by e-mail or call the school office and a message will be given to the teacher.

The principal, faculty, and staff are not to be contacted at home (either by phone or e-mail) unless they specifically give you their permission to do so. Some school personnel have children at Cathedral and have published their numbers in the school directory so that their own children can be contacted by classmates. Please respect their wishes in this regard.

Conflict Resolution

If a problem arises the procedure to follow is:

1. Contact the faculty/staff member involved to discuss and resolve the problem.

If the problem is not resolved . . .

2. Contact the principal to discuss and resolve the problem.

If the problem is not resolved . . .

3. Contact the rector to discuss and resolve the problem.

If the problem is not resolved . . .

4. Contact the superintendent and resolve the problem.

If this procedure is not followed, the problem will be referred back through this “chain of command” before any further efforts at resolution will be made.