



# *Blessed Trinity Catholic School*



**Inspiring a lifelong pursuit of learning and *living* the Catholic Faith**

**2023-2024 Reminders/Updates to School Policy**

Dear Blessed Trinity Families,

I hope that you all are having a wonderful summer! We look forward to seeing you all back here in August and we want to extend a special welcome to all of our new families! We hope that you will love Blessed Trinity as much as we do. We know that you have many different choices of where to send your children and we are so honored that you have chosen to share your most precious gifts with us. We do not take this honor lightly and we know we have an awesome responsibility to help each child discover their unique gift and talent and help them learn to use that gift and share it with the world.

Our First Day of School is Wednesday, August 9, 2023, and we cannot wait to see you all here! With just a few weeks left, I wanted to send out a reminder of some basic policies on Attendance and Dress Code. As we have each year, we had a committee look at these policies and make recommendations for changes. There are no major changes with regard to dress code, but we have made some changes with our attendance policy. Missing school and tardiness were a real issue over the last two years. We are required to attend school for a certain number of hours throughout the year. Starting this year, students who miss too much school or are late too many times, will have to attend an Academic Make-Up Session to make up for this lost time. That information is highlighted in the Attendance Section of this packet. All this information can be found in the handbook, which will be updated by August 1<sup>st</sup>, but I also know that not everyone reads the entire handbook. We wanted to make sure that you were aware of these rules and policies, so I have included them in this packet.

These policies are some of the fundamentals that make Blessed Trinity stand out and help make it such a special place to learn and grow. None of this is new – it's just a return to what we have said we were going to do, and we will be enforcing it. In registering your student for the first time, or re-registering your student for another year, all parents and guardians agreed to support the school policies. All these policies and decisions have been made with the goal of what is best for the students, and I believe that you have chosen Blessed Trinity for your children because you believe that we will always look out for the best interest of your them. Please know that we feel so honored to be able to be a part of their lives and help them all become saints here on Earth.

Peace be with you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan M. Losito". The signature is written in a cursive style with a loop at the end of the last name.

Megan M. Losito,  
Principal, Blessed Trinity Catholic School

# Attendance



## Attendance

Regular Attendance is an important part of school. So much of what is done in class cannot be duplicated at home or just by meeting after school with the teacher. We know that illnesses will happen and if your child is sick, they should stay home and not feel badly about that. However, if your child is out, you need to email both the teacher and our attendance office at: [attendance@btschool.org](mailto:attendance@btschool.org). Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to ask for make-up work or make arrangements to take quizzes and/or tests when he or she returns.

While we do understand absences, a larger problem over the past two years is Tardiness. The number of children arriving late to school each day grew over the year and this is terribly disruptive to the rest of the class. Not only does your child not get the benefit of a smooth arrival and less stress in the morning, but the rest of the class must stop while the teacher helps the late student get settled. In some classes there were as many as 10 children arriving well after 8:00 am, so that meant that the teacher had to stop 10 times. That is not fair to the rest of the class and is not in the best interest of our children.

The information below is taken directly from the 2022-2023 Parent/Student Handbook. I have highlighted changes and/or policies that have been in place but will be enforced this year. These updates will also appear in the 2023-2024 Handbook:

## Absence

There are 181 school days. Each one is important to the total educational program and a student's absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress.

- I. Policy
  - A. Attendance in school is a major predictor of student academic success. Students must attend school punctually and regularly, and conform to the attendance policies of the school, the Diocese of Orlando, and the laws of the State of Florida.
  - B. It is the shared responsibility of the school and the home to assist students in developing desirable habits of punctuality and attendance.
  - C. Schools shall maintain accurate attendance records for all students and follow the Diocesan Record Retention Policy for archival purposes. No paper attendance registers are required if electronic attendance is taken.
  - D. The Diocese of Orlando requires all schools to develop a calendar which represents 181 instructional days per school year and meets or exceeds Florida Statute A-1, 09512. See Links and Supporting Documents.

II. Procedures/Guidelines

- A. All absences must be recorded through an automated student attendance recordkeeping system approved by the Diocese of Orlando. For students in grades K–8, attendance must be taken at the start of the day. For students in grades 9-12, attendance should be taken by instructional period. Students in K-12 are considered absent when more than 50% of the school day is missed.
- B. A student is considered absent when he/she is not in the school building. Whether or not the absence is excused or unexcused is determined by administration.
- C. Attendance expectations are for all students and must be clearly delineated in the school's handbook to include:
- i. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact the school if their child will be absent and to state the reason for the absence. The principal is authorized to require satisfactory explanation from the legal/custodial parent or guardian for the absence of a pupil for all or any part of the school day. The explanation must be obtained in writing and retained as documentation. Failure to provide this will result in an automatic, unexcused absence. A physician's note is needed when the student:
    1. Has been absent for three or more consecutive days;
    2. Has had surgery;
    3. Is returning to school after a hospitalization;
    4. Has been under a doctor's care for a significant illness; or
    5. Is returning to school after being excluded because of a communicable disease.
  - ii. Policy and Procedures for defining and tracking excused or unexcused absences must be stated in the school's handbook:
    1. Excused absences include the following:
      - a. Illness or injury to the student;
      - b. Serious illness or death in the student's family;
      - c. Scheduled medical appointment;
      - d. Required court appearance or supervised visitation;
      - e. Having or being suspected of having a communicable disease or infestation including but not limited to: head lice, ringworm, impetigo, and scabies;
      - f. Approved school-sponsored events, school athletic events, retreats;
      - g. College visit; or
      - h. Special event, excused at the principal's discretion with permission from the principal in writing five days prior to the scheduled event, including pre-arranged event of educational value.
    2. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following:
      - a. Vacations or pleasure trips;
      - b. Suspension from school;
      - c. Truancy; or
      - d. Other avoidable absences not included on the "Excused Absence" list above.

- iii. Process for communication of attendance concerns with parent(s) or guardian(s).
  - iv. Plan corrective action to address attendance concerns to include prevention and intervention strategies, and written plan for academic remediation.
  - v. Students are required to complete missed assignments and/or class work.
  - vi. Conditions for notification to appropriate office and/or agency for habitual non-attendance.
- D. For long-term or extensive absences due to medical conditions, parents should enroll student in the applicable county public school district for home instruction or make an arrangement with the school administrator for continued academic progress.
- E. Students whose absences exceed 5 unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar day period shall be referred to the principal for a conference to be held with the student, his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and the school administration. Principals must document this meeting to include date, time, attendees, and the corrective action plan decided upon to improve the student's attendance and academic performance. It must be clearly communicated that continued excessive absences may result in retention, the loss of scholarship and/or withdrawal from the school. Attendance is reported quarterly to the School Choice Office.
- F. The teacher must verify attendance records at the end of the year. These records must be retained as dictated by the Records Retention Policy.
- G. Students who do not comply with the school's published attendance policy may be retained, lose class credit, be suspended, be asked to withdraw, or be expelled. Students enrolled in the Florida School Choice Scholarship Program who are out of compliance with Diocesan attendance requirements risk the loss of the scholarship.
- H. In case of emergency, teachers must have access to classroom rosters in either electronic or paper format. This roster should contain each period attendance list as well as list of student medications and must be made available as part of plans/directions for substitute teachers.

**Please note that family vacations are not excused absences. Even when filling out an Advanced Absence Form and/or writing a note, per the Diocese Policy, these will not be excused.**

Students may not attend extracurricular activities if they are absent the day the activity is being held. They must be in school by 10:00 am. Administration will run a daily attendance report each day at noon and that will be emailed to all coaches so that our off campus coaches will be able to help enforce this policy.

Students who are unexcused absent 5 times within a trimester will have to attend an Academic Make-up Session. This will be held on either Wednesday or Friday until 4:00 PM. Attendance

will be mandatory as we have a certain number of hours that we must meet, and students need to make up the time that they have missed.

### **Early Dismissal**

Withdrawing students early from school disrupts the learning process of all students in the class. We realize that there are times when students must be picked up early. We ask that parents please minimize withdrawing students from school before the end of the school day. When students are picked up early, a parent/guardian must sign the student out at the school office. Students may not wait outside for pick up. If the student returns to school, the parent/guardian must sign the student back in at the school office.

### **Classwork/Homework Requests**

Please call the office or e-mail your child's homeroom teacher before 9:00 a.m. of the day you will be picking up the homework. The homework may be picked up in the office at a mutually agreed upon time. Work missed during the absence is the student's responsibility and may be made up according to the number of days missed: for example, absence of one day -- work is due one day after the student's return to school; absence of two days -- work is due two days after return to school; etc. Many times, work will be posted on-line. Please check.

### **Vacation Absences**

Family vacations should be planned to coincide with school holiday periods. All students in grades K-8 need the continuity of the learning experiences provided through teacher presentations and student interaction. Vacations will NOT be considered an Excused Absence. Family trips such as weddings, graduations, etc., must be requested five days prior to the trip on an Advanced Absence Form and must be approved by the School Administration in order for it to be considered an excused absence. Approval is based on factors including but not limited to record of absences, need for absence, timing, etc. We understand that there are emergencies and funerals that may come up without five days' notice, but there should still be written communication to the school administration and our BT Attendance at: [attendance@btschool.org](mailto:attendance@btschool.org) .

Same day requests for assignments will not be honored. Assignments are due on the day the student returns to class.

### **Tardiness**

Tardiness on the part of a student interrupts the instructional process, indicates a lack of respect for school regulations, sets a poor example for other students and may affect eligibility for our state scholarship programs. Tardiness of one student disrupts the learning environment of the entire classroom. Repeated lateness is unacceptable. Parents must make every effort to be punctual each day. Parents must sign students in whenever they are tardy. Please do not put your child in the position of being penalized for a situation of which he/she has no control.

Students are expected to arrive at school in time to be in their homerooms by 8:00 am, which is the final bell. To allow students time to make it to class by 8:00 am, the carline will end at 7:57. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the student is punctual. Parents arriving after 7:57 must park and walk their students into the office to sign in as we will not remain outside to supervise.

Students who arrive late are required to go first to the school office to receive a tardy pass before reporting to class. In the event of a valid emergency or unexpected situation, a student who arrives late must have an explanatory note from the parent stating the reason for being

late. If the reason is accepted as valid, the tardy will be excused. Otherwise, the tardy will be unexcused.

*Legal reasons for excused absence or tardiness are: illness of student with parental or guardian note, attendance at a funeral, medical or dental appointments. Traffic, weather delays, unauthorized vacations, transportation malfunctions, oversleeping, or any other reason other than the legal reasons, are considered unexcused. The student may be put on probation or be asked to leave if further lack of cooperation with the rules set forth in this Handbook continues.*

School begins at 8:00 am. Students arriving in their homerooms after 8:00 am are considered tardy.

Students are marked tardy if they are not in their classrooms by the bell at 8:00 am. Students will be marked tardy if they arrive at school after the bell (8:00 am) and before 12 noon.

Students will be marked absent if they arrive at school after 12 noon.

Students will be marked absent if they leave school before 10 am.

Students leaving school after 10 am will be marked as an early release.

Students who are unexcused tardy 6 times within a trimester will have to attend an Academic Make-up Session. This will be held on either Wednesday or Friday until 4:00 PM. Attendance will be mandatory as we have a certain number of hours that we must meet, and students need to make up the time that they have missed.

If chronic tardiness exists, the parent will be required to meet with the principal to provide an immediate solution to the problem.



# Dress Code and Hair

## Dress Code and Hair Guidelines

Blessed Trinity Catholic School has uniform guidelines in an effort to ensure an environment that is free from distractions and conducive to learning. We believe that our uniform is an important part of what makes us Blessed Trinity. Many people may wonder why we care so much about what we are wearing and may think that we need to change as society and the times are changing, but we feel that wearing a uniform is important to our Catholic Mission for many reasons.

The first is that we are taught that each one of us is created in God's image and likeness. Peter Shaughnessy, in his article, "Why do Catholic School Students Wear Uniforms?" wrote, "Human dignity transcends all differences, and this most certainly includes the clothes you wear...what is happening in our heart, mind and soul is what truly matters most, and we make a profound mistake when we judge people based on their external appearance." He goes on to say that the way we wear our uniform can reflect a self-respect rooted in dignity and reverence for the God who created you.

School uniforms also help create a culture of order within the school. We all see that our children are a little more antsy on dress out days. I really do believe that our clothes reflect our attitude, and our behavior does change with our attire. There's a reason we don't go to church in cut-off shorts and flip flops. Having a culture of order helps bring everyone together and creates a positive learning environment.

Our BT uniform should help create a sense of school spirit and pride. With everyone wearing the same uniform each day, it should create unity and not divisions. Students should be proud wearing their uniform to school and outside of school. My own children love it when we stop at the store after school, and someone asks them about their school because they notice their uniform.

Your compliance is expected in respect and support of our school environment. Please make every effort to see that your child comes to school properly groomed and wearing the correct uniform. Please label all clothing that will be worn to school with your child's name.

Risse Brothers School Uniforms is our school uniform provider. Create your account at [rissebrothers.com](http://rissebrothers.com) to begin shopping. Uniform pieces (except for shoes, belts, and socks) must be purchased from our uniform supplier or Blessed Trinity School via our Used Uniform Sales. **Only items purchased at Risse Brothers or the Used Uniform sale will be allowed to be worn at school.**

Risse Brothers  
1401 Beulah Rd., Suite 11  
Winter Garden, FL 34787  
[www.Rissebrothers.com](http://www.Rissebrothers.com)



We were better at enforcing this last year and you all were very supportive of that change. There will be no additional changes this year, but we have included a reminder of our uniform policy. We have highlighted the parts that we had the most “issues” with last year. That is listed here:

*All students are to arrive on campus properly dressed. Shirts must be tucked in completely. Boy’s belts and girl’s belts/waistbands are to be visible. Boy’s belts are to secure their pants at the waist. Girl’s skirts, skorts and shorts are to be no shorter than finger-tip length all the way around. Clothing should fit properly, not oversized, too tight, or too revealing. Uniforms should not be worn in a way that displays undergarments.*

## **Uniform Guidelines:**

### **Girls – Grades K-5**

- Plaid jumper, plaid shorts or plaid skort.
- Red polo dress (K-3 only)
  - Skorts, dresses, and shorts should be no shorter than mid thigh, may not be rolled at the waist or at the bottom, and may not be altered in any way.
- White or red uniform golf shirt with LOGO.
- White “Peter Pan” collared shirt that comes with jumper.
- Belts – plain black or brown belt must be worn at all times on uniforms with belt loops.
- **Shirts must be tucked in at all times.**
- Shoes: Leather dress shoes (black or brown) or athletic or gym shoes will be acceptable with the uniform. Brown, white, gray, black or a light neutral color should be the primary color in the gym shoe. Other colors may be present but may not be the dominant color.
  - All shoes must be securely fastened. Velcro must be strapped and shoelaces must be tied at all times.
  - For safety reasons, shoes with wheels are prohibited at school.
  - Shoes may not contain lights.
- Socks: White or black socks only. Violations will not be given for logos on socks.
  - Leggings and tights (red, white, or black) may be worn under the uniform only during cold days.

### **Girls – Grades 6, 7, 8**

- Khaki shorts, skorts, or pants.
  - Skirts, skorts, and shorts should be no shorter than finger-tip length all the way around, may not be rolled at the waist, and may not be altered in any way.
- Shirts: White, red, or black uniform golf polo with LOGO
- **Shirts must be tucked in at all times.**
- Belts – plain black or brown belt must be worn at all times on uniforms with belt loops.
- Shoes: Solid black or brown leather dress shoes (no suede) with rubber soles.
  - **Hey Dude or other canvas shoes will not be allowed. Shoes must be black or brown leather.**
  - No athletic/gym shoes.
  - Athletic shoes are to be brought to school and worn with the PE uniform.
- Socks: White or black socks only. Violations will not be given for logos on socks.
  - Leggings and tights (red, white, or black) may be worn under the uniform only during cold days.

### **Boys – Grades K-5**

- Gray shorts or pants.
- White or red uniform golf shirt with LOGO.
- Belts – plain black or brown belt must be worn at all times on uniforms with belt loops.
- **Shirts must be tucked in at all times.**
- Shoes: Leather dress shoes (black or brown) or athletic or gym shoes will be acceptable with the uniform. Brown, white, gray, black or a light neutral color should be the primary color in the gym shoe. Other colors may be present but may not be the dominant color.
  - All shoes must be securely fastened. Velcro must be strapped and shoelaces must be tied at all times.
  - For safety reasons, shoes with wheels are prohibited at school.
  - Shoes may not contain lights.
- Socks: White or black socks only. Violations will not be given for logos on socks.
  - Boys athletic leggings (black or gray) may be worn under the uniform only during cold days.

### **Boys – Grades 6, 7, 8**

- Khaki shorts or pants.
- Shirts: White, red, or black uniform golf polo with LOGO
- **Shirts must be tucked in at all times.**
- Belts – plain black or brown belt must be worn at all times on uniforms with belt loops.
- Shoes: Solid black or brown leather dress shoes (no suede) with rubber soles.
  - **Hey Dude or other canvas shoes will not be allowed. Shoes must be black or brown leather.**
  - No athletic/gym shoes.
  - Athletic shoes are to be brought to school and worn with the PE uniform.
- Socks: White or black socks only. Violations will not be given for logos on socks.
  - Boys athletic leggings (black or gray) may be worn under the uniform only during cold days.

### **P.E. Uniform**

- Red logoed uniform P.E. shorts or red logoed PE sweatpants ONLY
- Gray or White PE T-shirt
  - Students may also wear any BT T-Shirt: FANS club, Boosterthon, Lighthouse School, etc.
  - **PE shirts do NOT have to be tucked in and may be worn out.**
- Athletic shoes
  - All shoes must be securely fastened. Velcro must be strapped and shoelaces must be tied at all times.
- Plain white or black socks.
- P.E. clothes, including sweat pants, may be worn all day by Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade, only, on assigned P.E. days.
- Grades 6-8 will wear their PE uniform to school during the trimester that they have PE and will need to bring their regular school uniform to change into after PE class.

### **Sweaters/Jackets**

- Sweaters and jackets are to be purchased from Risse Brothers or the Used Uniform Sale only.
- Students in K-5 are able to wear the red logoed zip-up fleece, red logoed zip-up sweatshirt with hood, red logoed zip-up nylon jacket, or red logoed button-up cardigan.

- No pullover hoodies are allowed to be worn.
- Students in grades 6-8 are able to wear the black logoed zip-up fleece jacket, or black logoed zip-up sweatshirt with hood.
  - No pullover hoodies are allowed to be worn.
- Students are not to wear hoodies on their head indoors or to have hoodies tied around their waist indoors.

If an undershirt is worn, it must be white or match the color of the uniform shirt.

**Athletic team shirts, jackets, sweatshirts, warmups, etc. may only be worn on gamedays or school approved cold weather alternative uniform days.**

### **Uniform Violations**

Uniform Violations are given by the classroom teacher and will be communicated home through email or posting on the parent portal.

### **Hair**

*Over the past two years, haircuts and hair styles, have become a larger problem than the dress code for students and parents. We have more arguments over hair than anything else. The largest issues we see are the highlighted hair (for boys and girls), shaving designs into the side of the head, and boys with long hair below the eyes and touching the collar of their shirt.*

*Our hair policy is an extension of the uniform policy and we expect that students will comply with this policy:*

- No dyed hair of any kind is allowed. This included natural highlights. Students who come to school with colored hair will be required to make adjustments within a reasonable time period so as to be in compliance with school policy.
- Boys' hair must be short and may not touch the eyebrows, should not cover more than half of the student's ear, and should not touch the collar of the shirt.
- Conservative hairstyle required. No extreme haircuts i.e: no faux mullets, no ponytails for boys, no shaving designs in hair or eyebrows.
- Hair should be styled as if going to a professional job interview.
- If students receive a hair violation, they will be given a written warning the first time and time to correct their hair style.
  - Students' hair cut must be approved by Mrs. Losito or Mr. Starling before returning to school after the stated deadline.
  - Students who continue to have the same hair violation will NOT be allowed to return to school until their hair is in compliance with school policy.

### **Jewelry**

#### **Girls (All Grades):**

- Two stud/post earrings per ear maximum. (no hoops, dangle earrings, etc.)
  - No other body piercing permitted
- No jewelry (a watch and crucifix or religious medal may be worn)
- No tattoos or decals.

#### **Boys, (All Grades):**

- No earrings
- No body piercing
- No jewelry (a watch and crucifix or religious medal may be worn)
- No tattoos or decals.

**Smart watches that can connect to the internet, take phone calls or take or send text messages are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated.**

### **Makeup**

Students grades K-8 - No makeup is permitted.

### **Nails**

Students grades K-8 - May wear clear color nail polish on natural nails only.

### **Out of Uniform Day Guidelines**

Throughout the school year, the school sponsors a number of “Out of Uniform Days”. Although there may be special allowances for each of these days, there are some general guidelines that apply to all Out of Uniform Days.

- Skirts, shorts, and dresses may be no shorter than finger-tip length.
- Athletic type leggings or yoga pants may be worn with a shirt that covers their bottom, (below their butt), and is the same length all the way around.
- All attire must be in good condition, free of holes, rips, and be appropriate for Catholic School.
- Students must wear close-toed shoes. Crocs are not allowed during out of uniform days.

Participation in Out of Uniforms Days is a privilege that may be revoked if the student consistently violates school policy.

Daily school wide uniform inspections will be conducted by school personnel. Parents will be notified of infractions. Repeated infractions will result in disciplinary action.



# Blessed Trinity Catholic School

## VISION:

*Blessed Trinity Catholic School is a faith community that creates the foundation for present and future generations to grow God's Kingdom.*

## MISSION:

*The Mission of Blessed Trinity Catholic School is to inspire a lifelong pursuit of learning and living the Catholic faith.*

## CORE VALUES:

*Faith*

*Character*

*Academics*

*Leadership*

*Stewardship*