



Divine Savior
S C H O O L

V_08_25

SCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK

DIVINE SAVIOR SCHOOL AND DS THERAPIES DAY PROGRAM

Dear Parents,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you and your child(ren) to Divine Savior School! As a Christian center, Divine Savior School exists to serve children with developmental delays with therapy services and an educational setting to support their holistic development in a natural setting while sharing the love of Christ.

We trust this handbook will help you to better understand our program at Divine Savior School.

Divine Savior School and DS Therapies work together to support your child(ren). This handbook is to answer questions that you may have about the program. Because the school and therapy center work together collaboratively, the terms school and clinic as well as student and client may be used interchangeably.

We welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you might have after reading. Please contact our office to schedule a time to sit down with the administrators from either the school or clinic to answer questions relevant to their professional areas.

In Christ's Service,

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A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

The Divine Savior School and DS Therapies is part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) church body. The WELS has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its preschool through grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years. Currently, WELS churches and associations operate 398 early childhood centers, 337 elementary schools, and 25 high schools across the nation.

The Wisconsin Synod has provided excellent instructors to these schools by training its own teachers since 1884. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS schools annually tend to outperform their peers by a considerable margin on national achievement tests. We humbly thank God for His blessings upon our schools.

Divine Savior School is proud to continue this rich tradition of academic excellence in the Doral community!

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MISSION STATEMENT

Divine Savior School and DS Therapies are dedicated to serving children with developmental delays by providing integrated educational and therapeutic services that support their holistic growth in a nurturing, natural learning environment.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

EDUCATING THE MIND..... Divine Savior School and DS Therapies are dedicated to providing excellence in education for all its students. Our degreed teachers and certified therapists are committed to achieving this excellence by maintaining high developmental standards, a safe, disciplined, nurturing environment, and proactive home-school communication.

Divine Savior offers a comprehensive and varied curriculum, with all subjects being taught from a distinctively Christian perspective geared toward each student's need. The ultimate goal is to cultivate and maximize each student's unique talents and abilities so that he/she will be best equipped to serve as a valuable member of today's society.

Divine Savior pushes its students to grow as scholars, musicians, artists, athletes, leaders, citizens – and most certainly as Christians – all to God's glory.

ENLIGHTENING THE HEART..... Faith...wisdom...confidence...perseverance...joy...strength of character – such are the inner qualities gleaned from an education that touches not only the mind, but also the heart. Divine Savior is dedicated to enlightening the hearts of its children. Our commitment, parents, is to assist you in your God-given responsibility to “...bring up children in the training and instruction of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4) Christian education is Christ-centered education. The Savior and His love for us are at the heart of all we think, do, and say. Parents and teachers alike have confidence in the Lord's command and promise which says, “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)

Divine Savior is a place where children learn to fold their hands and bow their heads and talk to God. It's a place where the Bible serves as the framework for absolute guidance and truth. It's a place where love for God and His Word are instilled and nurtured in our precious children. It's a place to learn Bible stories and apply them to everyday life. It's a place to mold and shape the hearts and minds of impressionable children for a life of faith. In short, DS is a place where children grow in their relationship with the Lord on their journey toward Christian maturity.

INTAKE AND ATTENDANCE

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Divine Savior School and DS Therapies prohibits harassment and/or discrimination against a student on the basis of sex, race, color, disability, linguistic preference, ethnic or natural origin, and guarantees all the rights, privileges, programs, policies, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We further abide by the laws of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

INTAKE POLICY

Divine Savior School and DS Therapies practice a non-discrimination enrollment policy and admits clients of any race, color, religious, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of our center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national, or ethnic origin in its administration of policies, admissions policies, or other center-administered programs.

In order for a student to be admitted to the program, the following must take place:

- Schedule a meeting with the School Director to schedule a tour to learn more about the programs and expectations.
- DS Therapies will verify in network participation for ABA, speech, and OT services
- Submit an application packet and the application fee.
- Review the programs offered for your child and pay the screening fee.
- After initial assessment, complete the intake paperwork agreeing to the policies of DS Therapies as well as Divine Savior School parental financial responsibilities.

FEE PAYMENT POLICY

Divine Savior School and DS Therapies are non-profit organizations, 501(c)3. Our tuition and therapy fees are needed to offer the programming made available to our students and clients.

Divine Savior School accepts the Family Empowerment Scholarship to defray the tuition cost.

DS Therapies will work with insurance providers when able. If an insurance provider fails to cover provided services, the cost of the services are the responsibility of the parent. DS Therapies will attempt to bill the insurance company three times before billing the parents.

A \$50 fee will be assessed for NSF or Non-sufficient funds reported to DSS or DST for payments.

Guidelines are as follows:

- Application and assessment fees are non-refundable.
- Before the student can receive services in the day program, families are required to sign a financial contract which demonstrates a family's consent to pay.
- The cost of extended care, lunch, uniforms, and transportation are not covered by the therapy fees. Some extracurricular programs may be offered and will be the responsibility of the parent.
- Payments are due within two weeks of billing. Billing will be done on the 10th of each month. The bills will cover services provided from the previous billing cycle through the first week of the month.
- If a student withdraws, the family is still responsible for outstanding therapy services that were provided. The tuition for the month during which a child withdraws is the parent's responsibility.
- Students whose accounts fall into arrears will not be permitted to re-enroll for the following academic year. Re-enrollment payments will be utilized to pay back payments. Students will not be permitted to take exams in the middle or high school Bridge programs and report cards will reflect Incomplete grades until the account is brought back to 0.

STUDENT RECORDS

Divine Savior School adheres to the regulations established by FERPA. Upon request, with a 24 hour notice, parents may receive copies of their student records or made available in a timely manner to another academic entity.

DS Therapies adheres to the regulations set forth by HIPAA. Upon request to DS Therapies, with a 24-hour notice, parents (or legal guardians) of students have a right to inspect and receive copies of their children's records, or have them made available for another service provider.

REPORT CARDS

Student progress is graded and officially recorded on a quarterly report card. Subsequent report cards are emailed to parents after the conclusion of each quarter.

Grading Standards

At Divine Savior School, grading is designed to reflect each student's journey toward mastery of the skills and concepts presented within their individualized curriculum. Our goal is to help students use their God-given gifts and abilities to meet challenges with confidence, applying the skills they build through the dedicated support of teachers and therapists.

Each student's curriculum is tailored to their developmental level, as determined through a comprehensive evaluation process that includes assessments in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), occupational therapy, and speech-language therapy. These developmental profiles are documented in the student's **Educational Support Plan (ESP)**.

The grading system is aligned with the ESP, ensuring that progress reports reflect the student's current abilities, instructional goals, and growth over time. The gradebook tracks the specific skills and concepts taught, while **quarterly report cards** provide a summary of the student's development, based on:

- Progress toward ESP goals
- Performance relative to curriculum standards
- Teacher and therapist professional observations

This approach allows us to meaningfully measure progress and provide families with a clear picture of their child's educational growth within a supportive, faith-centered environment.

Developing, Emerging, Mastering, and Exceeding

Grade	Descriptor	Criteria
D-Developing	Initial Engagement with Significant Support	The student is beginning to access learning with high levels of support. They may attend to people or materials briefly and respond to lessons through imitation, prompted actions, or basic engagement using their preferred communication method (e.g., eye gaze, gestures, AAC).
E-Emerging	Increased Participation with Moderate Support	The student shows growth in active participation. They engage more consistently, attempt task components, and begin to express understanding with reduced prompting. Responses are often approximated or partially complete but show progress toward targeted skills
M-Mastering	Skill Demonstration with Minimal Support	The student shows growth in active participation. They engage more consistently, attempt task components, and begin to express understanding with reduced prompting. Responses are often approximated or partially complete but show progress toward targeted skills
X-Exceeding	Independent Performance with Little or No Support	The student consistently engages in tasks independently and accurately demonstrates understanding across settings. They generalize skills, self-initiate activities, and use problem-solving strategies with minimal assistance

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

- DSS office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Parents should pull into the receiving line outside of the school where their assigned therapist will receive them for the day. If the therapist isn't promptly available, please pull into a parking space for pickup.
- At the end of your child's program day, under RBT supervision, students will be brought to their parents' vehicle.
- DSS School maintains a closed campus. Children may not leave the school grounds without parental approval at any time during the school day. School policy and the safety of our children dictate that the teachers/staff know where the children are at all times.

BEFORE AND AFTER PROGRAM CARE

For an additional fee, DS Therapies may provide supervised care for clients before their programs start for the day as well as after their program ends at 2:30pm. Arrangements must be made ahead of time with DS Therapies to ensure staff is available. Scheduled time will be billed according to the services provided.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

DSS Program Policy

Regular school attendance is both a right and responsibility of the parent and student. Divine Savior School and DS Therapies recognizes that consistent school attendance is essential for academic success and that all absences affect learning and may delay development. Additionally, staff is hired to serve your child. When your child is absent from school, DS Therapies is not able to bill for the service providers. In order to support the therapy providers, they are guaranteed full time work at DS Therapies. For this reason, we ask for the parents' cooperation in ensuring that your child is in attendance when scheduled.

Therefore, a comprehensive student attendance policy has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- To raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance
- To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts
- To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons
- To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance

According to Florida Law and Miami-Dade County requirements, 20 full-day absences during the course of a school year will result in a mandatory review by the administration, School Counselor, and classroom teacher to determine possible repetition of the class or the grade. An elementary student who accumulates 10 full-day absences during a semester will not be issued a report card. Chronic illness and family emergencies that extend beyond the total number of absences allowed will be considered on an individual basis by the administration.

In the event of illness or an emergency arising during the school day, parents will be notified by the school requesting the student to be picked up. It must be recognized that the school is responsible for the student's whereabouts from the time he or she enters school until he or she departs and, unless otherwise notified, the school assumes the student is attending classes as scheduled.

HALF-DAY ABSENCE

Students who arrive at school more than 30 minutes after their start time (or leave early more than 30 minutes before their end time) will be issued a half-day absence.

FULL-DAY ABSENCE

Students leaving school before 11:30 a.m. or arriving at school after 11:30 a.m. are charged with a full-day absence. Students must be in school the entire day to participate in extracurricular activities. Exceptions are made for pre approved scheduled appointments. If a student has 10 absences in any semester, they may not be allowed to enroll for the following school year and the seat that your child holds may be reassigned to another student.

REPORTING ABSENCES

The school office must be notified no later than 9:00 a.m. if your child will be absent from school. When a student returns to school after an absence, parents must notify the school office citing the reason for the absence.

Please note that absences are not defined as “excused” or “unexcused”.

DSS must report student attendance to state scholarship programs on a quarterly basis for students who receive a state scholarship. Per state scholarship program guidelines, students who receive a state scholarship cannot miss more than 10% of the school year including a combination of tardies, leaving early, half absences, and full absences. Students with more than five absences per quarter may be in danger of losing their scholarship.

The DSS attendance policy is approved by the state of Florida and student attendance records are reported to the state of Florida. Students who do not comply with DSA attendance policy may not be eligible for future scholarships from the state of Florida.

TARDINESS

Students are expected to be on time and have transportation arrangements that will guarantee their punctuality. Excessive tardies (more than 10) will require a meeting with the administration, and an out of school suspension. Every two tardies beyond the 10 will result in an out of school suspension. Out of school suspensions count as days of absence. Continued tardiness after a suspension may lead to a student’s dismissal from school.

LEAVING EARLY

Whenever possible, the school requests that every effort be made to schedule appointments during non-school hours or on days when school is not in session. Parents should consider the educational, social, and psychological pros and cons of habitually removing their children from school early. (Please see the policies above for half-day and full-day absences.)

DSS and DSA Bridge Program Policy

Bridge MS and HS school students who accumulate 10 absences from any one class during a semester will not receive credit for that class and an Incomplete (I) will be issued on the report card and/or transcript.

TARDY POLICY

Students late up to 5 minutes for any class during the school day are considered tardy for that period. Students arriving more than 5 minutes after the start of any class period without an excused pass from the office will be marked as absent. Every five tardies in a semester will be counted as one full day’s absence applied to the re-enrollment policy .

A detention is assigned whenever a student accumulates 5 tardies in a quarter. A detention will be given for the 5th through 9th tardies. A suspension will be given for the 10th tardy. Additional consequences will be given at the

administration's discretion after the 10th tardy. The administration reserves the right to create an individual attendance policy and plan for students who are struggling with tardies and absences.

If a student has 10 absences in any semester, they may not be allowed to enroll for the following school year and the seat that your child holds may be reassigned to another student.

PROGRAMMING POLICIES

PROGRAM

The program at Divine Savior School seeks to encourage positive holistic development to include social, academic, functional living skills, etc. As a Christian school and therapy center, we will work to reflect the love of Christ for us in all that we do.

At Divine Savior School, academics are the foundation of every student's individualized program. Each educational plan is developed based on the student's unique needs, with a strong focus on promoting academic growth, skill acquisition, and long-term learning success.

Comprehensive assessments are conducted to identify strengths and areas for development across academic, social, and functional domains. The results directly inform instruction and goal setting, ensuring that students receive the targeted support they need to thrive in the classroom.

We work in close collaboration with DST Therapies to ensure a whole-child approach that addresses all aspects of each student's development. This partnership allows us to align educational strategies with therapeutic recommendations, creating a coordinated plan that supports academic progress while also fostering social, emotional, and functional growth.

Input from classroom teachers and therapists is integrated into each student's plan, ensuring that interventions are cohesive, personalized, and centered on student success.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

At the beginning of the year, all families will be provided with login and password information to PowerSchool, our School Information System. This allows real-time access to grades and attendance.

INTERDISCIPLINARY UPDATES

Parents are invited to participate in interdisciplinary team meetings at least twice per year to review their child's educational goals, discuss progress, and collaborate with all service providers involved in their child's development.

COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTION (CBI)

Community-Based Instructional (CBI) trips are thoughtfully planned as part of our educational program to support students' academic, social, and functional development in real-world settings. Each trip is carefully designed to provide meaningful, age-appropriate learning experiences while ensuring the safety and well-being of all students. Examples of CBI experiences include visits to grocery stores, theaters, farms, museums, local libraries, and other community-based events that enhance classroom instruction.

As CBI is an integral component of our curriculum, all students are expected to participate in these trips as part of their regular school day. These experiences serve as valuable extensions of classroom learning, promoting independence, communication, and practical life skills.

STUDENT CARE AND SAFETY

STAFF

The dedication, professionalism, and training of any school's faculty are determining factors in assessing the degree of excellence of that educational institution. In order to facilitate the exceptional academic quality for which Divine Savior School was established, Divine Savior School's core classroom teachers possess at minimum a bachelor's degree and are required to pursue certification in the State of Florida and the Wisconsin Synod. Additionally, in order to ensure staff expertise in a broad sphere of disciplines, teachers are encouraged to earn advanced specialist degrees in areas of interest, attend professional development seminars and workshops, or seek enrollment in a post-graduate program at an accredited university.

THERAPY ENVIRONMENT

Respect and developmental purpose characterize the environment promoted within Divine Savior. The Divine Savior code of conduct promotes responsibility, respect, civility and excellence in a safe and supportive environment.

FIRST AID AND CPR CERTIFICATION

CPR is a skill that can be the difference between life and death. All Divine Savior faculty and staff are CPR and First Aid certified and meet American Red Cross and American Heart Association recommendations. Knowledge obtained through these courses permits Divine Savior faculty and staff to be ready to handle emergencies due to sudden illness or injury to students.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH FORMS

Florida law requires that all students have the necessary forms on file by the first day of class. Students cannot begin classes at Divine Savior Academy without a current, completed physical exam form and proper documentation of up-to-date immunizations. Forms are available from your doctor. Physical exams are valid for two years. An emergency card, filled out at registration time, is also required of each student.

Additionally, we require an updated immunization form when your child is entering Kindergarten and 7th grade. A scoliosis check up is also required once your child completes their 5th grade year and before entering 6th grade.

EMERGENCIES

Medical emergencies may, on occasion, occur at any time. In the event of a life-threatening situation (i.e., unconsciousness), Divine Savior may need to contact the appropriate emergency medical service first, before calling the parents. In the case of an accident or illness where immediate emergency care is not deemed necessary, but where a child is unable to remain at Divine Savior, an administrator will contact the parents to arrange transportation home. Likewise, if a child shows symptoms of illness during the day, the child will be taken care of while the parents are contacted.

Parents, please remember that Divine Savior must be able to reach you at all times. If neither parent can be reached at home, work, or cell, emergency contacts provided to the school may be contacted.

CRISIS

Divine Savior and DS Therapies staff are trained in Professional Crisis Management (PCM). This is a system that works to build relationships and build skills with students to avoid crisis behavior. When crises do happen as defined by PCM: Continuous high magnitude aggression, self-injury, and or environmental disruptions, intervention strategies are employed to stop the crisis behavior for the safety of the client and those in the environment. When students are able to self-regulate through assistance, a return to activities will take place to ensure re-enforcement of maladaptive behaviors is avoided.

If indicators of infection or physical unwellness are observed by the ABA team and/or DSS staff **AND** crisis behaviors (i.e. meeting PCM criteria) are exhibited more than once in the school day, the student's parent(s) will be called and early pick up will be recommended. If a student goes home early, or completes their day meeting the above criteria, he or she must stay home for a minimum of 24 hours.

Indicators of infection/physical unwellness may include but are not limited to:

- Cough
- Runny nose/Congestion
- Fever
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Open wounds or mouth sores
- Necessity of crisis intervention which exceeds three or more times in a school day

ASSISTANCE WITH PERSONAL CARE & TOILETING POLICY

At DSS, the safety, dignity, and well-being of all students is our highest priority. We understand that some students may require assistance with personal care routines, including toileting and diaper changes. Our staff follows strict procedures to ensure every child is treated with respect and care, while maintaining transparency and accountability at all times.

Two-Staff Policy

- **Two trained staff members** will always be present during any form of **personal care**, including:
 - Toileting assistance
 - Diaper changes
 - Changing clothes
- This policy ensures **student safety**, protects staff and students, and provides **accountability** for all care-related procedures.

Documentation

- For students who require diapering or regular toileting assistance, staff will maintain **accurate records**, including:
 - **Time** of the care provided
 - **Names of the two staff members** present
 - **Any observations** (e.g., skin irritation, unusual behavior, etc.)

- Parents will be informed of any **significant observations or concerns** noted during personal care routines.

We are committed to providing a respectful, supportive, and hygienic environment where all students can feel safe and cared for. If you have questions or need to update your child's care plan, please contact the administrative team.

MINOR ACCIDENTS

All minor accidents – cuts, scratches, bumps, and insect bites are given First Aid treatment and are recorded with the office. Administration is informed and parents or an emergency contact person (if needed) is notified of the injury.

SERIOUS INJURY

If your child suffers a serious injury, appropriate procedures will be implemented. This includes the school calling 911, followed by a telephone call to the parents. In addition, the school will provide First Aid until help arrives, and the administration will determine who should accompany the injured student to the hospital. An incident report form will be completed describing the nature and extent of the injury. All head injuries will be reported to parents.

MEDICATIONS

Divine Savior School will only facilitate the administration of prescribed medication to students in the front office. Medications must be dropped off with an administrator or the office manager. Prior arrangements must be made with the school if there is a need for assistance for anything other than oral medication.

Daily Medications:

Daily medications administered at Divine Savior School require the completion of an authorization to administer medication form – Parental Request for Divine Savior School to Administer Medication form is available in the office. This form needs to be completed annually. When the medication has been discontinued, the parent should pick up the extra medication. Any medication left at Divine Savior will be discarded upon expiration or when its use is discontinued.

Discretionary Medications:

Tylenol (or generic substitutes) may be administered by Divine Savior with written permission from a parent. This permission is given on the Permission to Administer Medication form.

Self-medication:

Self-medication is not allowed. Students that require an EPI-PEN or inhaler may have them readily available with their RBT or personal assistant. Please contact the Divine Savior office or the administration so the procedure may be reviewed and the medication sheet filled out.

STUDENT ILLNESSES AND CONTAGIOUS CONDITIONS

Students who have been diagnosed with illnesses such as the flu, a fever, or any other contagious condition must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to the program. In the event a student misses three or more days with a contagious condition, the student must obtain a doctor's note of clearance to return to the program. With exceptions as provided by law, any student or staff member who suffers an infectious disease (other than an illness) must be removed from the premises until certified by a physician or a healthcare professional to be non-infectious and able to return to school.

LICE

In the event that lice and/or lice nits (eggs) are suspected or discovered on any student, the student will be immediately removed from the program and sent home. While we understand how difficult it is to rid the hair and scalp of all the eggs related to lice, we also must recognize how easily lice can be spread. For this reason, an e-mail will be sent home to parents in the classroom or therapy group where lice or nits have been suspected or discovered.

When the child is sent home with lice and/or nits, they will be allowed to return to school when a verbal or written confirmation is given to the school that a treatment plan is in place and has started.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

A Divine Savior School and DS Therapies Crisis Management Plan (CMP) has been formulated in the event of any threat to its student, staff, and or physical plant. This multi-hazard management plan shall encompass, but not be limited to, evacuations for fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and other hazardous storms or disasters in which serious bodily injury might occur (hostage siege, terrorist activities, bomb threats, etc.) The plan for lockdowns, sheltering-in-place, and evacuations shall be reviewed annually by staff. The Crisis Management Plan shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed. The Crisis Management Plan will assist in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergency incidents on school grounds.

SEVERE WEATHER

Whenever a severe weather warning is made and the weather service announces a severe weather watch for the area, safety precautions will be taken following the CMP. Weather service radios are located on the campus. Designated shelter locations are revised annually and posted throughout the facility. Unless otherwise notified by Divine Savior School and DS Therapies or the media, DS Therapies will follow the Miami-Dade Schools' announcement regarding school closure and openings for emergency weather conditions. Following a shutdown for a hurricane, Divine Savior may reopen sooner than the public schools. Families will also be notified.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS AND REPORTING

In compliance with state regulations, evacuation fire drills are performed once a month. Tornado and lockdown drills are practiced a minimum of once per year or at administrative discretion. For the safety of all, detailed drill procedures are shared and periodically reviewed in each therapy room.

DRESS CODE

The following dress code has been developed in accordance with Divine Savior commitment to character education. We have worked toward developing standards of dress that are conducive to a positive learning climate and reflect pride in our program. Students must wear the approved uniform at all times unless directed otherwise. School uniform purchases are made through the school office for DSS polos. The rest of the uniform items may be ordered with All Uniform Wear following the guidelines here.

The administration reserves the right to interpret and make changes. The following guidelines indicate appropriate dress.

DSS Core Girls' School Uniform

- Gray pants or shorts with a black belt or approved sash
- Approved skirts or skorts no more than 2 inches above the knee
- A polo with logo
- Approved dress blouse
- White turtle neck during cooler weather
- Sweaters or jackets with logos
- Black or white socks or full-length tights
- All black athletic shoes with non-marking soles
- Ties and dress blouse should be worn on days when students attend chapel

DSS Core Boys' School Uniform

- Gray pants or shorts with a black belt (for pants with loops)

- A polo with logo
- An oxford shirt with logo
- White turtle neck during cooler weather
- Sweaters or jackets with logos
- Black or white socks
- All black athletic shoes with non-marking soles
- Ties and an oxford shirt should be worn on days when students attend chapel

General Guidelines

- Skirts, skorts, and shorts are to be worn no shorter than 2 inches above the knees.
- A black belt is to be worn in pants and shorts that have belt loops.
- No jeans, oversized clothing, hats, or caps may be worn.
- Shirts are to be worn tucked in at all times.
- Shoes must be the approved black dress shoe.
- Socks must be below the knee and without brand name logos.
- All articles of clothing should be marked with the child's name.
- All clothes must be neat, clean, and in good repair.
- For safety reasons, excessive jewelry is not allowed. Boys are not to wear earrings.
- Hair is to be neatly combed and conservatively styled. Dyed, treated, shaved designs, or faddish hairstyles are not permitted.
- Boys' hair may be worn no longer than the top of the shirt collar or below the eyebrows.
- Good hygiene is an important part of a child's growth and development.
- Parental cooperation is appreciated.

MS AND HS BRIDGE PROGRAMS AND DRIVE PROGRAM

- DSA uniforms will be utilized following the DSA dress code
- The DRIVE uniform includes a DRIVE Polo and jacket, DSA pants as well as the remainder of the DSA uniform for high school

DRESS DOWN DAYS

Certain times throughout the year there will be dress down days communicated to the parents. Students may dress down following the guidance given or they may wear their typical school uniform. Participation in dress down days come with an extra cost of \$2 in support of PTU organized school events.

LUNCH

Students should bring lunch from home. The student's RBT or personal assistant will help them make the food and access their snacks at appropriate times. When available, Tammy's Catering provides catered meals and can be ordered. This should begin in late August. Any questions regarding hot lunch should be directed to Tammy's Catering at (305) 962-0146. Purchased meals may not be delivered or dropped off at school. Any student who does not bring a lunch will be required to purchase a lunch from Tammy's Catering or through DS Therapies.

SNACK BREAK

Children will have a snack break during the day. Parents are encouraged to send along nutritious snacks. Students in After Care may also bring along snacks to eat before or after school. Soda and energy drinks are not allowed.

PARTIES

Many parents like to bring refreshments on their child's birthday. This may be done with prior approval. Because of time and space constraints, birthday celebrations at DSS should be kept to a maximum of 30 minutes and cannot be spontaneous. Additionally, if invitations for parties are handed out at school, everyone in the class group must be invited. Invitations will be handed out at the end of the school day or at the staff's discretion.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are to be brought to the front office where the owners may claim their property. The school will try to help students locate lost items, but it cannot be responsible for such losses. Items not claimed after a reasonable amount of time will be removed.

BOOKS

Textbooks are borrowed from DSS. Books found containing answers or unnecessary markings, damaged beyond normal use, or lost, must be replaced at cost by the student. Books are subject to inspection.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

BEHAVIOR CONSIDERATIONS

In keeping with Divine Savior School and DS Therapies's mission to support our student's overall development, our staff members strive to clearly communicate all school expectations. Due to the nature of our student body, goals for behavior and planning will be based upon each child's developmental levels. Behavior programs will be developed with parents as part of the planning team. It is our hope that our team will support our students to meet the expectations made of them out of love for God as well as others.

The staff assumes the role of parent when the children are left under their care each day. The administration and staff use their discretion in order to support our children's development. Parents can rest assured that all behavioral programming is carried out in the spirit of Christian love by our faculty who genuinely care about each child.

No form of physical, corporal, or emotionally abusive disciplinary measures are used at any time. Staff are trained in Professional Crisis Management to prevent and reduce aversive behavior as well as to stop it if necessary due to its self-injurious nature or if it poses a threat to others. In the event that a student must be restrained, to include transportation techniques, parents will be notified of the occurrence. Notification will be immediate if it is more serious in nature.

Parents with questions or concerns about disciplinary actions should address them to the administration. The administration will then decide on the proper course of action, whether that is through counseling or scheduling a meeting with the BCBA.

As disciplinary situations arise, we will approach our concerns with prayer and Christian love, always seeking to arrive at peaceful and proper solutions that are in the best interests of the child.

As we work with each child, a student's development will help to shape the behavioral plan in an ongoing manner.

POLICY FOR REMOVAL FROM PROGRAM

The administration seeks to support students in their development. Unfortunately, there may be situations that arise that prohibit Divine Savior from continuing to support a child and/or their family. DS Therapies may discontinue support if parents are unwilling to work with Divine Savior or work toward agreeable outcomes for their child. If a child's behavior is not able to be controlled by our staff and the child poses a danger that cannot be managed appropriately a child may be removed. Additionally, if a child's account is not kept current a child may be removed from the program.

In each of these circumstances, DSS/DST will clearly communicate with parents to ensure they can make informed decisions about the next step.

BULLYING

- **Definition:** An Imbalance of Power: Parents or Children who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. This behavior is repeated consistently over a period of time. (Bullying is malicious behavior and involves more than joking behavior between friends.)
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:

- On the premises of the program as well as before, during, or after program hours;
- On any vehicle used as part of any program activity; or
- During any program function, extracurricular activity or other program-sponsored event or activity.

Reporting Complaints:

- Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the administration.

Action:

- If a student or parent violates this policy, the administration will meet with the impacted families to ensure that appropriate actions are taken moving forward. This will oftentimes involve the families to support the plan of action decided by the administration to change the behavior moving forward.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitutes a violation of this policy and may result in follow-up action.

ANTI – HARASSMENT POLICY

Divine Savior is committed to providing a positive and productive learning environment free from sexual or racial harassment. Sexual or racial harassment shall not be tolerated in the program. Harassment of students by employees, other students, or others having business or other contact with the school is strictly prohibited.

All forms of harassment are prohibited at Divine Savior. Harassment may result from verbal or physical conduct or written or graphic material. Harassment may include, but is not limited to: verbal harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person, with sexual, discriminating or demeaning implication; unwelcome touching; or suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning a student's grades, participation in extracurricular activities, etc.

All victims of harassment and witnesses of such harassment are encouraged to report the incident immediately. Reports should be made to the administration. An investigation by the administration is required in order to resolve the problem. If a person's alleged behavior is found to be harassment, that person will be subject to discipline under the employee or student code of conduct.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In today's connected world, Divine Savior recognizes the necessity for students to learn and build skills using technology. For that reason, DSS provides students access to a variety of devices, use of network resources, and Internet connectivity. Responsible use of these technological tools will be taught and fostered among students.

RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGY USE

As responsible users of Divine Savior's technology resources, students will:

- refrain from using iPads for non-developmental purposes during the school day (i.e. social media, messaging, games, videos, etc.).
- use devices, network and Internet resources as directed by DS Therapies staff.
- take care of the physical devices provided by the program.
- refrain from eating and drinking while using program devices.
- protect personal accounts, passwords, and information.
- visit websites that have an identified educational value.
- interact with others online in a polite and positive manner.

RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

When using devices, network resources, and Internet access provided by Divine Savior, the following activities are not allowed:

- Use of devices in non-classroom areas, such as bathrooms, locker rooms, gymnasiums, etc.
- Downloading software or applications without express teacher permission
- Participating in any form of bullying
- Viewing, downloading, publishing, or transmitting material that is derogatory, profane, or obscene in nature, as determined by school administration
- Use of camera and video settings without prior staff approval
- Use of the device to commit dishonest acts
- Unauthorized access of network or other files
- Any hacking, circumventing security procedures, or transmission of viruses, spyware, adware, or SPAM
- Unauthorized use of copyrighted material
- Any activity which violates local, state, or federal law

PRIVACY

Students should expect that all network and Internet activity and use of Divine Savior owned devices will be filtered and monitored in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Student files on the network, program activated online accounts, or digital storage devices may be inspected at any time. Student activity may be disclosed to school administration when necessary and local law enforcement as required by law. In accordance with the Children's

Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), DSS will plan online activities for students under the age of thirteen that ensures no personally identifiable information is collected. Every reasonable effort will be made to protect all students when they use the Internet.

VIOLATIONS

Divine Savior reserves the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges in the program for violations of this policy.

Divine Savior shall not be held liable for the actions of individuals who choose to violate the acceptable uses of DS Therapies' technology resources. In addition, each user and user's parent(s) or guardian(s) shall indemnify DS Therapies and hold it harmless from and against any damage, liability, loss, or deficiency arising out of or resulting from the user's use or misuse of such resources.

Divine Savior will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of its provided technology resources.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones brought to school must be turned in to the assigned teacher before the program day begins and will be sent home when the child leaves for the day. In the event a student's cell phone is seen or rings during the program day, it will be confiscated and given to the parents. If it happens a second time it will be confiscated and given to the administration. On the third offense, the cell phone will be confiscated and held indefinitely by the administration until a meeting can take place to make a plan to remove the distraction from the program.

A behavior plan may make an exception to this rule if technology use is needed for a developmental program.

PARENTS AND VISITORS

PARENT CONDUCT CODE

There will be times when parents have concerns or even disagreements either with program policies or the way they are implemented (or not implemented). Divine Savior is always willing, and desirous, to listen to constructive criticism that is shared in an appropriate manner. The following section describes how these concerns are to be handled.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS

APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Divine Savior administration and staff work very hard to maintain an environment that nurtures excellence for our students. Differences of opinions need not create a divisive relationship between the therapy program and home. For the sake of the children, there is a mutual benefit if these differences can be resolved through communication and understanding.

To work towards this common goal, the following procedures are recommended:

- Maintain a calm and respectful attitude that will set a tone where real listening can occur and understanding can emerge.
- The first attempt to deal with a concern related to a situation should be between the student and the staff member if possible.
- If the matter remains unresolved or the child is unable to appropriately handle the situation, parents should set up a meeting with the staff member to discuss the concern. If the staff member is an RBT, this should be done with the behavior analyst over the RBT.

- Parents or students with grievances or concerns regarding general program policies or procedures should set up a meeting with the administration to discuss these items of concern. The administration will then decide on the proper course of action, whether that is through counseling, scheduling a meeting with staff, or further referral to the board.
- If the matter is between the home and the administration, a conference with the administration is the appropriate starting point. If satisfaction is not accomplished, then the matter may then be referred to the Board of DS Ministries.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS TO THE BOARD of Divine Savior School or DS Therapies

When issues or concerns about the operation or policies of Divine Savior School or DS Therapies arise and you have not received a satisfactory resolution after following the steps listed above, we ask that you follow these steps:

1. Contact the administrator with your concerns.
2. If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the President of the Board and discuss the issue.
3. Petition the Board of Divine Savior School or DS Therapies through the Head of Schools, Dr. Tim Biesterfeld. This should be done in writing ten days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting of the board.

Conversely, for the welfare of the faculty, administration, and most of all, the students, the following behavior cannot and will not be tolerated by caregivers on our campus:

- Use of profane or vulgar language – verbal abuse
- Defamatory statements directed to others about the administration, faculty, or student body, whether online (chat rooms, social media, websites, etc.), in writing, or in person
- Physical harm, threat of physical harm, intimidating, or aggressive behavior
- Disruption of classroom
- Destruction of property
- Disturbance of peace (angry yelling or screaming)
- Approaching or reprimanding students about behavioral issues

HOME COMMUNICATION

The Divine Savior School desires to build a culture where parents and teachers join hands as partners in providing the finest education possible for the young people entrusted to their care. To that end, the staff of Divine Savior School is truly committed to maintaining open channels of communication with the parents and or guardians of our students. The following list outlines some of the important avenues designed to promote efficient and effective home-school communication.

PARENT ORIENTATION NIGHT

In August, parents are expected to meet with the administration and teachers at a parent orientation night to discuss the school's philosophy, policies, and procedures. Classroom visitation and a question-and-answer session provide parents with helpful insights and information they will need for a successful school year.

SCHOOL INFORMATION SYSTEM

Divine Savior School utilizes an online database called PowerSchool that is offered to parents to track attendance, grades, and behavioral progress. Parents are encouraged to create their accounts at the beginning of the school year and to regularly check their child's progress. Weekly reports can be generated via e-mail through the parent portal.

ESP PARENT-DSS TEAM CONFERENCES

During the 2nd and 4th quarter grading periods, parents are scheduled to meet with the DSS Team for an ESP conference. Discussion items include the child's academic progress, ESP goals, BCBA updates, school disposition, and interaction with teacher and classmates

TEACHER AVAILABILITY

If at any time during the school year parents have questions concerning their child's progress or behavior, they are encouraged to contact the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. The teachers will make every effort to return your call or respond to your email within twenty-four hours.

SCHOOL VISITATION

Parents may participate in classroom activities through field trips, birthday parties, and other special events, so long as it has been communicated to the teacher at least one day in advance. Upon arrival at school, parents will sign in and obtain a guest pass from the school office.

VOLUNTEERING

Parents are welcome to volunteer at Divine Savior School. At all times we keep the safety of our students at the forefront of our minds. Therefore, all volunteers and chaperones must participate in a volunteer orientation meeting as well as submit a set of fingerprints that will be used for a background check. Failure to complete all the necessary requirements will prohibit the volunteer's opportunity. The cost of the fingerprints is the responsibility of the volunteer.

THE ACADEMY DISPATCH AND WEEKLY TEACHER NEWS

The Academy Dispatch is Divine Savior School's way of keeping parents informed. This weekly newsletter is delivered electronically via email. Parents are encouraged to read it to stay informed about scheduled events, upcoming activities, and other informative news. Educational news items, parenting tips, and highlights of student work are also included. Each teacher sends home a weekly update (included with The Academy Dispatch) that informs parents of curriculum units being introduced, projects students are working on, areas of school work where parents can assist their children, or upcoming events. Additionally, student work is saved and sent home at the time specified by your child's teacher, so that parents are aware of their child's overall performance. Parent comments or questions are always welcomed.

SOLICITATION POLICY

Divine Savior maintains a policy of no solicitation by businesses to our students or families. In order to provide an optimal learning environment, free from distractions, no persons will be allowed to distribute flyers or any other types of advertising to students, parents, faculty, or staff while on our campus, unless it is during an approved event. Only program-sponsored events will be marketed through us. Additionally, all directory information is only to be used for program related matters. No email addresses or telephone contacts should be used for advertising or promotional messages.

FACILITIES

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

It is expected that all cooperate in the care of our grounds, building and equipment. There are many opportunities for everyone to help preserve our fine facility. Keeping work surfaces clean, keeping the parking areas and sidewalks free from debris, depositing waste in the proper containers and handling equipment as carefully as possible are a few examples. As such, any student who vandalizes or defaces the buildings or grounds at DSS will be responsible for the cost of repair. Additionally, students responsible for triggering the fire alarm will be responsible for the fine assessed by the Fire Department. Divine Savior maintains a closed circuit recording system for emergency use. Videos and reviews are not made available to parents or the public due to privacy concerns as well as time constraints.

TELEPHONE

A telephone is not available for a student's social use. In the case of an illness or by faculty permission, the office administration will make the necessary arrangements to place a call. All calls must be made from the office telephone during regularly scheduled breaks.

GUM

For building maintenance and sanitation, gum chewing is never allowed within the building during school hours or activities.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Handbook. If you have questions about anything you have read, please contact the administration.