Catholic Homeschool Resource & Support Ministry (CHRSM)
Policies & Procedures

"If you learn everything except Christ, you learn nothing. If you learn nothing but Christ, you learn everything."
-Saint Bonaventure

Our Vision

Our ministry motto comes from the wise words of St. Bonaventure. With this insight, we seek to focus our ministry on the opportunity to come together as Christians and to encourage each other on our path toward Heaven.

While academic classes play a significant role in the ministry's offering, they are but a single element of our mission. We hope and pray that CHRSM serves as a sanctuary of sorts for us all: a place where our children can learn and grow together in a community of faith… a home where a group of amazing mothers and fathers can go for inspiration and support… and where our love for each other becomes a light to our community. We aim to accomplish that vision through a multidimensional ministry that offers the following benefits:

- A community of families who celebrate the liturgical year together through the sacraments of Mass and Penance, observing feast days and solemnities, and recognizing and learning more about the lives of the saints.
- A support network that endeavors to "wash each other's feet," just as our Savior once did. Through service and fellowship, we routinely come together for efforts like providing meals for new moms and for the sick, sharing prayer intentions, Rosary walks, social time, forming book clubs, and planning retreats, etc.
- A comprehensive offering of supplemental classes that both honor and align with our core values to promote homeschooling – beginning with preschool and continuing all the way through high school, during the most formative and critical years of a child's life.
- A social calendar with frequent opportunities for fellowship and to connect with our community, such as daily lunches, high school swing dances, Autumn Hoedown, other special events for parents, and other occasional events to celebrate the liturgical year, etc.

We have put many long hours of prayerful consideration into our *Policies & Procedures*, *Code of Conduct*, and other guidelines listed here, and they are not arbitrary or open to interpretation. All participants – including students, parents, and teachers – are required to read, sign, and agree to abide by the CHRSM *Policies & Procedures*. If you do not understand something or require clarification, please contact a staff member before joining our community.

Academic Calendar

CHRSM meets primarily on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the academic year, with occasional schedules requiring specific classes on other days as well. There will be no classes during Thanksgiving week. We generally take three weeks for a Christmas/New Year break and two weeks for an Easter break. The full calendar and specific dates are available at sfchrsm.com. Class periods are generally 60 minutes long with lunch lasting around 40 minutes.

Please note that we do NOT follow LCPS for calendar days off.

Punctuality

Students should not be late to class at any time, including following the lunch break. These disruptions compromise quality instruction for all students. It is the responsibility of parents to send their student(s) to class on time!

Inclement Weather

The CHRSM Officers will monitor any inclement weather and take into consideration the decision of LCPS regarding inclement weather:

- If LCPS has a two-hour delay, CHRSM will begin **ON TIME.**
- If LCPS is closed, **we will make a decision by 7am** regarding CHRSM.

No Drop-Off Policy

CHRSM is unique in that it is not a "drop off" program for any students enrolled in pre-K through 8th grade classes.

There are several reasons for this:

- Being together helps to foster the sense of community which is a primary focus of our ministry.
- It gives the children a visible familiarity and recognition not only with peers but with other parents as well.
- It helps maintain order.
- It gives parents the chance to participate in opportunities we may rarely get otherwise—time for working, personal prayer, book studies, building friendships, tutoring other children without interruptions, etc.

If you would like your child to participate in CHRSM but you cannot be physically present on an ongoing basis due to a special family circumstance or full-time employment, you must request approval prior to the start of classes for another adult* to be responsible for your child. The ***Plan for Responsible Adult*** form must be completed and signed by both the parent and the designated responsible adult, approved by the CHRSM Officers, and kept on file. That person must be on-site and present at all times while your child is participating in CHRSM. This person should be familiar to you and your family and should be willing and able to step in if disciplinary measures with your child should become necessary. If you cannot be physically present at CHRSM due to a one-time event, illness, or family emergency, you must designate another adult prior to the start of classes, who will be responsible for your child and must contact the CHRSM Officers by email to sfchrsm@gmail.com to communicate who your Responsible Adult will be for that day.

Students in high school-level classes do not need to be accompanied by their parent while at CHRSM. All students are supervised by adult volunteers during the CHRSM day.

No student should ever be left unsupervised. All students should be in one of three places:

1. With their parent or responsible adult
2. In their scheduled class
3. In an adult-supervised study hall or the adult-supervised gym/patio

If you are on-site at CHRSM, but an unforeseen event or family emergency requires you to leave temporarily, you may designate a temporary Responsible Adult by writing their name and cell phone number next to your child(ren)'s name(s) on the sign-in sheet at the front desk and making your children, your Responsible Adult, CHRSM Officers, and the front door greeter aware of your departure. **Failure to do so puts the entire ministry at risk and may result in immediate dismissal from the program.** CHRSM is not a school and cannot accept the legal ramifications of being responsible for minor children who are not capable of handling themselves in the event of an emergency situation. We appreciate your understanding and your cooperation.

**Please note that CHRSM Officers and On-Site Administrators have specific duties in the event of an emergency and cannot serve as anyone's Responsible Adult.*

Sign-In and Sign-Out

All teachers, parents, and students must sign in as they arrive and sign out when they are leaving the church grounds. This is important to ensure we know who is in the building at any given time in case of a fire or another emergency in which all CHRSM members would need to be accounted for. Parents/Responsible Adults are free to utilize the property by visiting the chapel, going for a walk, sitting in the car, etc. We ask that you please sign out and note your location on the sign-in sheet so we are aware that you are present at CHRSM but are not actually in the building or on the patio.

With the exception of lunch time when students and parents may use the gym exit door to go to and from the patio, all entry and exit should be through the front main doors of the building. The side hallway doors are not to be used except in the event of an emergency. No child should ever be outside the building without supervision nor should they be allowed to play outdoors without an adult present. This is especially important at times when things around the parish facilities are being serviced by large trucks that have limited visibility for small children. Please do not send students out to retrieve things from the parking area.

Dress Code

In order to promote an environment of mutual respect for ourselves and others, we require students to adhere to a dress code:

- All students are required to wear a solid navy blue or white polo shirt. Gentlemen may wear their polo with solid colored slacks, khakis, chinos, or shorts. Ladies may wear their polo with solid colored slacks, khakis, chinos, shorts, or skirts, or they may choose to wear a solid color navy blue or white polo dress. No leggings, jeggings, yoga pants, short skirts, sweatpants, blue jeans, or athletic wear may be worn. (Ladies may wear solid-colored leggings under a skirt or dress that meets dress code.)

- **On Spirit Days:** Students participating in the spirit theme are excused from the day's dress code. Jeans and athletic pants may be worn along with the spirit day theme, but they must be free of rips and holes. Students not participating in the spirit theme are asked to adhere to dress code or CHRSM spiritwear.

Modesty Requirements:

- **Tops may not be tightly fitted, low cut, or cropped. Ladies' midriffs must not be visible.**
- Bottoms must be of a modest length (no shorter than near the knee) and have no writing across the seat.
- During the colder months, students are allowed to wear solid colored sweaters, fleeces, or lightweight jackets in the classrooms as long as the student's shirt collar is still visible. Students are welcome to wear CHRSM spiritwear crewneck sweatshirts and half-zip pullovers. **No hooded sweatshirts are allowed.**
- Students participating in PE may change clothes for PE, but must change immediately after class back into dress code (except for 5th Block). If PE is immediately after lunch, the student may not change clothes for PE until the end of lunch.

Parents, we understand that our dress code may cause issues at home. However, we ask that you as the parent ensure your student abides by it. This teaches children respect and obedience for policies. If a child is not in dress code, the student and family will be notified and the student will be sent home to change. Repeated and blatant disregard for the dress code may result in dismissal from the CHRSM program.

Cell Phones and Electronics

Students in PreK through 8th grade should not bring cell phones, laptops, tablets, smart watches, or other internet accessible electronic devices to CHRSM at any time. Their use is not permitted within the Parish Education Center, **including in the bathrooms.**

High School students may bring cell phones to CHRSM but must turn in all cell phones (including "dumb" phones) to the greeter in the morning when they arrive. They may claim them when they sign out of CHRSM. All High School students are responsible for turning their cell phones into the greeter upon their arrival and for retrieving them when they leave CHRSM for the day. **The cell phones should be locked and turned off when they are turned in to the greeter.**

If you are concerned that your student may forget to turn in his or her cell phone, please have your student leave the device at home.

Laptops may not be used by students at CHRSM unless requested by a teacher/advisor for a specific class/event or in **direct supervision of the child's parent**. If a student needs to bring a laptop to CHRSM for one of these purposes, it needs to be turned off and remain stowed away in his/her backpack at all other times. A high school student may not use a laptop or other internet accessible device at CHRSM for any other reason without express written permission from the CHRSM Officers.

Once students sign out of CHRSM for the day, they may use their cell phones in front of the building for communication purposes only. For example, students may call or text their parents but they may not watch videos on YouTube.

Any parent who sees a student using a device outside these parameters is encouraged to take the device from the student and turn it into the CHRSM Officers. If you feel uncomfortable doing so, then please immediately report it to the CHRSM Officers.

If a student is observed with a cell phone, laptop, or other internet accessible device, the device will be taken, the parent will be notified of the violation, and an incident report will be filed. The student's device will be returned at the end of the day when the incident report is signed by both student and parent. If a situation arises in which the device cannot be taken from the student, the policy will still apply. **Repeated violations of this policy are in violation of the CHRSM *Code of Conduct* that families have agreed to when they joined CHRSM and may result in dismissal from the CHRSM program.**

For a thoughtful explanation of the dangers of unsupervised access to internet accessible devices, please see this letter from Mr. Alvaro Vicente, Headmaster at The Heights School.

Parents are asked to please keep their own cell phone usage to a minimum while at CHRSM, particularly in the presence of students and other parents. Ringers should always be in silent mode, especially for parent volunteers who are assisting in a classroom or serving as a greeter or hall monitor.

Classroom Visits

It is our general policy that only students and classroom aides may attend class. Allowing parents to routinely attend or visit classes creates a disruption to the continuity of the class dynamic. Exceptions may be made in certain circumstances and at the discretion of the CHRSM Officers. If you would like to sit in on a class, please contact us and we will make arrangements with the teacher.

Behavioral Expectations

One of the purposes of this ministry is to provide a resource to those who are undertaking the immense responsibility of homeschooling. We recognize that it is extraordinarily helpful to parents to have a classroom setting available, especially for those children who might struggle with attention at home. However, it is a delicate balance to accept students with learning, attention, or disciplinary difficulties. We recognize that within the classroom setting, there are certain situations best handled by professionals with appropriate training. As all families are paying for classes, a certain level of classroom decorum must be maintained for the sake of the teacher and the other students. If your child cannot sit and attend respectfully for the allotted class time, if they have difficulty with peer interactions or any other issue that may be a potential disruption, please prayerfully consider whether academic classes are the best fit for your child. Participating in group lunchtime, PE, prayers, Masses, and liturgical year celebrations are wonderful opportunities for children who might otherwise struggle in the classroom environment.

Additionally, if you have a child with any type of behavioral, cognitive, social, learning, developmental, or other delays or disabilities, please be very frank with us so that we can work with you in full knowledge and cooperation to determine whether CHRSM is the right fit for your child.

Please note that a no-refund policy applies to students who are determined to be a disruption to the classroom beyond what can be reasonably managed.

Respect for Facilities

This is our parish home. We ask that everyone have the same respect for our facility as they would if they were guests in someone's house or in the sanctuary. Students may not climb on upright stowed bleachers, run in hallways or up and down the stairs, or congregate in bathrooms. No student is permitted to use the elevator unless they have an approved handicap. Teachers may utilize the elevator to transport large loads to their upstairs classrooms. Students are not allowed in any of the supply closets, the gym closet, or the kitchen.

We have a state-of-the-art gym facility, which we are welcome to continue using under certain conditions:

- No students are allowed entry into the gym supply closet or kitchen areas.
- No student may ever raise/lower the basketball hoop mechanism. Only parish staff or CHRSM staff may adjust hoop heights.
- Absolutely no hanging from the rims of the basketball hoops or pulling on the nets will be tolerated. The glass backboard is very heavy and the electronic mechanism is very costly. If it came down, it could cause serious injury or worse. **Any student seen pulling on the nets or hanging from the rim may be immediately removed from the CHRSM program with no refunds. The parish is very serious about this issue—please make it clear to your teens.**

Any student found vandalizing church property will be required to reimburse the parish for any damages. In addition, and depending on the circumstances, the child may be immediately and permanently removed from the CHRSM program with no refunds.

Child Protection & Discipline

All CHRSM staff members and teachers are background-checked and required to participate in the diocesan Child Protection program called VIRTUS, which requires a four-hour training seminar on keeping children safe. In order to provide the highest level of safety, we must all make certain that students are never alone with a non-parent adult. Please be assured that the protection of your child is our greatest concern.

Our teachers all subscribe to the belief that our children are beautiful blessings, but they are not saints… yet. As such, our children are in need of patient molding and loving direction. Therefore, our teachers will follow Biblical advice for handling correction. Initially, they will use a firm but kind attempt at addressing the behavior directly. If the misbehavior continues, the teacher may remove the child to the hallway monitor, who will locate the child's parent. A second occurrence will require a discussion between the teacher and parent as to how best to move forward with the child in the classroom. **Further difficulties may result in the child being removed from the class roster with no refunds.**

Corporal punishment of a child is prohibited. For a discussion of this prohibition, see Section 2.5 (2) of the Diocesan Child Protection Policy.

Safety Drills

In order to be compliant with diocesan requirements, we may be asked to participate in periodic emergency/safety drills, including evacuation/fire drills, lock-down drills, or lock-out drills (evacuation to another location). Parents will be notified of upcoming drills with plenty of time to discuss them with and prepare their children.

Medication

Absolutely no medication will be administered to a minor child by any person other than the child's parent or or legal guardian, except in cases of imminent life-threatening emergency. If any student requires medication while on site, CHRSM staff must be made aware of this via the ***Family Medical/Emergency Contact Form***, and an arrangement made for the medication to be safely stored during CHRSM hours.

Required Forms

Statement of Faith
Family Medical/Emergency Contact Form
Liability Waiver Form
Policies & Procedures Acknowledgement
Code of Conduct Agreement
The **above forms are** required for all participants. Families may not participate until these forms are completed and on file.

Volunteer Hours

You are critical to achieving our vision and program goals. As part of CHRSM membership, all families make a commitment to volunteer a gift of their time or talent to ensure this ministry continues to be fruitful, safe, and fun. These roles within the ministry include welcome desk, classroom aide, lunch monitor, Study Hall monitor, clean up staff, as well as many other roles.

The volunteer requirement varies per family based on the family's total class enrollment. The requirement is as follows: If your family is enrolled in 1-5 class hours, a commitment of 1 hour of volunteer service per week is required. For 6-15 hours, the requirement is 2 hours minimum per week, for 16+ hours, the requirement is 3 hours of service.

For example, if you have 2 children in 3 hours of CHRSM classes (6 total hours), you will volunteer for a minimum of 2 hours of time per week.

If your situation makes it difficult to help during CHRSM hours, there are some jobs that can be done at home on your own time. We trust that you will be as generous with your time and assistance as you are able. By doing so, you help to build our vision of a family-oriented community. We will utilize SignUpGenius to post the available positions. Any family that does not communicate their inability to volunteer for an on-site role and does not sign up for a job, may be assigned one.

The commitments you select are for the full school year and we rely on volunteers to be dependable and present for the positions which they have selected. If you cannot serve in your volunteer position one day due to illness or other reasons, please utilize the Volunteering tab on the CHRSM website to locate the list of available floaters/subs. It is your responsibility to find a replacement for your scheduled shift. Once you have found someone to cover your volunteer shift, please contact the CHRSM Volunteer Coordinator and CHRSM Officers to make us all aware of the change.

Application

In order to register for classes, all interested families must first apply for CHRSM membership and be approved. New applications will be accepted between January 15 and March 15 each school year. New applications may be accepted outside this time frame on a case-by-case basis.

For new families to apply:

- To apply, please visit www.sfchrsm.com and click “Join” in the upper right-hand corner. Please note the “Join” feature is only available between January 15 and March 15.
- Read the *Mission Statement, Statement of Faith, Code of Conduct*, and *Policies & Procedures.*
- Complete the application form and enter data for all children whom you wish to enroll in CHRSM (including infants and toddlers who will accompany your family to CHRSM, even if they will not be taking classes).
- After you submit your online application, it will be reviewed by the CHRSM Officers and you will receive an email inviting you and your children to visit CHRSM for a tour.
- Once our current families register for the upcoming school year, we will determine how many new family memberships we have available and contact all applicants.
- If we are able to offer your family a spot in CHRSM, your application will be accepted and you will have access to the secure side of our website, but your membership will be “parked” until we receive your registration fee in full.
- After your registration fee is received, your membership status will become “Active,” and you may proceed with registering for classes according to your registration tier.

For current families to re-register:

- Update all family information on your sfchrsm.com account family page to reflect your children's ages and grades as of September 1 of the upcoming school year.
- Read the *Mission Statement, Code of Conduct*, and *Policies & Procedures*. **Please sign the box under #1 in "Additional Questions" with your full name as acknowledgement of and agreement to these documents.**
- Please print, sign, and date the *Statement of Faith* and return with your registration fee.
- After your registration fee has been paid and processed, your membership status will become "Active" and you may proceed with registering for classes according to your registration tier.

Registration fees may be paid by check (see **Tuition & Fees** below). **Please note, we can ONLY accept payments in the form of a check.**

Registration

Once you have been approved for membership and your registration fee is received, you will become an Active Member and may proceed to register for classes according to the following registration tiers:

1. CHRSM Administration
2. CHRSM Teachers & Support Team
3. Current Saint Francis de Sales parishioners
4. Current Arlington Diocese & Wheeling-Charleston Diocese families
5. Current CHRSM families
6. New applicants

Tuition & Fees

CHRSM collects payments for three different types of fees: registration fees, tuition fees, and facilities fees. While it may be an inconvenience to write separate checks for these payments, it is a necessary step for CHRSM to process the payments correctly. **All checks should be made out to CHRSM.** *Please note that an Insufficient Funds Fee will be assessed and added to your account for bounced checks.*

Registration Fees:

All families are asked to submit an annual non-refundable registration fee of $50 per child with a maximum of $150 per family. Since CHRSM is entirely self-supported, these funds go toward ministry operating costs such as insurance, supplies, and background check fees.

Registration fees may be paid by check (please write "CHRSM Registration Fee" in the memo line of your check) and submitted by:

1. placing in the CHRSM drop box in the ground-floor hallway of the Parish Education Center

2. mailing to: **Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church**
   ATTN: CHRSM Registrar
   37730 Saint Francis Court
   Purcellville, VA 20132

Tuition Fees:

Tuition is determined by each individual teacher, all of whom recognize that this is a ministry and have priced their classes to be as affordable as possible. Tuition payments will be made in two installments. The first 50% of the tuition balance for the upcoming school year is due May 1 and the second 50% is due by the date of the CHRSM Open House in August. *A $35 late fee will be assessed and added to your account for late tuition payments.*

Tuition fees may be paid by check (please write "CHRSM Tuition" in the memo line of your check) and submitted by:

1. placing in the CHRSM drop box in the ground-floor hallway of the Parish Education Center
2. mailing to: **Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church**
   ATTN: CHRSM Registrar
   37730 Saint Francis Court
   Purcellville, VA 20132

If this schedule poses a financial difficulty such that a family would not otherwise be able to participate, the CHRSM Officers are willing to assist with a payment plan that is manageable. Families must communicate the need for a payment plan **prior to** the deadline for payments.

Facilities Fees:

CHRSM is required to pay an annual fee that covers our use of the building, support staff, supplies, etc. For registered and active Saint Francis de Sales parishioners (who already support the parish with their tithes), the fee is $25 per class, with a maximum of $150 per family. For all others, this fee is $50 per class, with a family minimum of $100 and a maximum of $300. This fee is due by the date of the CHRSM Open House along with the final tuition payment.

Facilities fees may be paid by check (please write "CHRSM Facilities Fee" in the memo line of your check) and submitted by:

1. placing in the CHRSM drop box in the ground-floor hallway of the Parish Education Center
2. mailing to: **Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church**
   ATTN: CHRSM Registrar
   37730 Saint Francis Court
   Purcellville, VA 20132

Limited need-based financial assistance opportunities may be available. If you would like more information, please speak to one of the CHRSM Officers or send them an email to sfchrsm@gmail.com.

Refund Policy

We recognize that there are many extenuating and unforeseen circumstances that can occur. However, we are a ministry of our parish, and must consider the requirements of our Business Office, as well as the needs of our teachers. Our church must maintain absolute transparency with bookkeeping. Teachers prepare and plan for the year based on enrollment numbers, so this policy is a courtesy to all.

We are able to allow limited refunds only under the following circumstances:

1. If an instructor's class minimum is not met and the class is canceled, a full refund of tuition and the facility fee for that class will be given.
2. Prior to the start of the year, if an instructor is no longer able to offer a class, and a replacement cannot be found, a full refund of tuition and the facility fee for that class will be given. If the instructor can no longer teach a class after the course has begun, and no replacement can be found, a prorated refund of tuition will be given and a possible partial refund for the facility fee may be given.
3. **Until July 1**, families may drop classes with no penalty by utilizing the drop feature on the website.
4. **From July 2 until September 14**, all drop requests must be emailed to the Registrar at chrsmregistrar@gmail.com. Each class dropped will be assessed a $25 processing fee. If a class has a standing waitlist with another student willing to take the spot immediately, a full refund of tuition and the class facility fee will be given. If the dropped spot cannot be immediately filled with a waitlisted student, a 50% refund of tuition and a full refund of the facility fee will be given. All drop-related refunds will be processed after September 15.
5. **From September 15 onward, no refunds of tuition or facility fees will be given.**
6. If a family applies for membership and pays the registration fee, but they are unable to secure a spot in any of their desired classes, a full refund of the registration fee will be mailed after September 15. Please note that a Stop Check Fee will be assessed to add to your account for lost checks that need to be re-issued.

Thank you for understanding that we must be firm on these scenarios. We are an all-volunteer organization, and it is tremendously time-consuming to process drop requests, make account updates, and manage refund requests. Teachers prepare and plan for the year based on enrollment numbers, so this policy is a courtesy to all who would be negatively affected by offering refunds beyond this window.

Communication

For questions, comments, or concerns, we encourage you to speak personally with a CHRSM Officer. We are all approachable, discreet, and eager to resolve any issues or concerns you may have. You may also use the CHRSM general mailbox at sfchrsm@gmail.com which is monitored Monday—Friday during business hours.

For questions regarding payments or class registration, please contact the Registrar at chrsmregistrar@gmail.com.

In the spirit of mercy and grace, please remember that ***this is an entirely volunteer run organization***. Please keep in mind that the CHRSM Officers are all homeschooling moms doing the best they can to manage everything for this wonderful ministry in addition to serving their own families at home. Thank you for your kindness and understanding.

MJS 8/1/2026