

Bishop Miles Classical Academy

Student and Parent Handbook

Introduction

As a Catholic hybrid program, we strive to cultivate a high-trust, engaging, faithful, and focused environment. We aim to be flexible in many ways to best support all of our families' various needs. We have policies in place to protect this environment and allow for such flexibility.

Those policies are all outlined herein. We are always willing to talk with families, so if you have any questions please reach out to us at info@bishopmiles.org or 615-747-2140.

MISSION AND VISION

Culture

Childhood is a precious time, and it is to be treated with the utmost care. Bishop Miles Classical Academy (BMCA) takes childhood very seriously. While we are primarily an academic program, every moment spent engaging with students is also a moment of formation. We are always pointing these children towards what is good, true, and beautiful. Children are instructed to be prayerful in all they do, from their academic endeavors to their conduct with classmates.

BMCA forms children to live out all of the virtues of a Catholic life: faith, hope, charity, prudence, fortitude, justice, humility, and chastity. All on-campus behavior is expected to reflect these virtues.

Profession of Faith

BMCA holds to the official Profession of Faith offered by the Vatican:

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

With firm faith, I also believe everything contained in the word of God, whether written or handed down in Tradition, which the Church, either by a solemn judgment or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, sets forth to be believed as divinely revealed.

I also firmly accept and hold each and everything definitively proposed by the Church regarding teaching on faith and morals.

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.

Affiliations

BMCA is a faithfully Catholic institution. We are not sponsored by or under the direction of the diocese. We are not sponsored by or under the direction of St. Martha's Catholic Church. We are accredited by Kolbe Academy. By enrolling your child in BMCA, you will receive all privileges associated with Kolbe Academy membership.

Charitable Community Contributions

As our families pour into our school community, our school community will also pour into our wider community. We believe that community enhancement, generosity, and financial charity are crucial to living an authentic Catholic life. It is our duty to lead our children by example.

As such, we have two funds established for this cause:

1. General Operations
2. Nashville Sacred Worship fund
3. BMCA Scholarship

Our Nashville Sacred Worship Fund encourages priests to make sacred worship restorations by providing funding for various church building, including but not limiting to:

- Moving tabernacles to center of altar
- Installation of communion rails, high altars, sacred art, and pipe organs
- Implementing beeswax candles and Lumen Christi missals

The BMCA Scholarship fund supports current families with tuition, books, and uniforms, and supports BMCA graduates attending college or trade schools.

Both our Nashville Sacred Worship Fund and BMCA Scholarship Fund are endowments. Growth, dividends, and capital gains are used for the funds' missionary goals and administrative costs. Our goal is a 10% annualized return to be used towards the funds' missions.

Financial transparency is essential to the vision of BMCA. Our board of directors will make all financial goals, movements, and structures known to all families.

Board of Directors

BMCA is governed by a board of directors and administration. There are five distinct board roles:

- Director of Education
 - Administrator of center days
 - Manages all operations and logistics

- Oversees implementation of curriculum
- Supervises grade entry
- Conducts student formation visits
- Assists with hiring and releasing tutors
- Director of Formation
 - Assistant administrator on center days
 - Develops overall plan for student formation
 - Conducts student formation visits
- Director of Community
 - Oversees Nashville Sacred Worship Fund
 - Oversees marketing
 - Manages social media and communications
 - Oversees all fundraising efforts
 - Develops community service opportunities for students
- Director of Admissions
 - Kolbe Academy liaison
 - Manages transcript requests
 - Reviews scholarship applications
- Director of Administration
 - Oversees all finances
 - Manages annual statements
 - Writes bylaws for board approval
 - Handles 501c3 compliance

Our board approves all administrative and curriculum changes, oversees and approves financial decisions, gives consent for hiring and releasing employees, and receives and reviews all complaints and recommendations. If a complaint is lodged against a board member, that member will excuse themselves from the room during negotiations and will abstain from voting.

For our inaugural academic year 2025-2026, we have three active board members:

- Director of Education: Katie Stonehouse
- Director of Formation: Father Butler
- Director of Community: Erika Vinett

Non-Discrimination

BMCA admits students of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies; admissions policies; scholarship, grant, or loan programs; or any other school-administered programs.

GETTING STARTED

Enrollment

BMCA welcomes all Catholic families looking for homeschooling support. You may enroll your child on our website.

Admissions

Upon enrollment, you will be contacted by BMCA staff. An interview will be scheduled for parents to meet staff and for staff to meet children. This interview helps ensure that families are prepared for the structure of our hybrid program, and gives us a chance to understand the specific needs of each child that enters our program.

After the interview, onboarding is a very simple process that we are excited to guide you through.

Tuition

Enrollment in Bishop Miles costs \$100 per month, or \$900 per full nine month academic year.

Monthly tuition is expected on the first session of each month. At this time we are only able to accept checks. All checks must be made out to “Bishop Miles Classical Academy” with the exact amount required. Checks may be directly handed to any member of staff or placed in the drop box in the narthex before Mass at the start of the day. For yearly tuition, 50% is due on the first session of the fall semester, with the remaining 50% due on the first session of the spring semester.

Each family's tuition caps out at \$3,600. Additional children are free.

Teachers receive tuition discounts for their family; details may be found in teacher applications.

At BMCA we strive to make education accessible to all families. We know that homeschooling children often comes with financial sacrifices. Accordingly, our goal is to keep tuition rates as low as possible. We are always accepting donations to put towards our charitable funds, tuition scholarships, or future fundraisers to support the costs necessary to grow our school.

It is important to us that finances do not prohibit families from attending our academy. As such, financial assistance may be available. Please contact our office with any tuition concerns.

Kolbe Academy Integration

Enrollment in BMCA includes automatic enrollment in Kolbe Academy's integration program. Details for grade reporting and academic communication can be found further down in this handbook.

Immediately upon enrolling your child you will receive information on how to navigate this system.

ACADEMICS AND ATTENDANCE

Homework

As a hybrid academy, on-campus instruction happens two days a week. During school days your students will complete some of their required work; the rest of their work is to be completed at home, under the supervision of the primary homeschool parent.

Parents are the primary teachers of our students. Parents are to assist their children in areas of particular difficulty, further explore areas of particular interest, and ensure that children are maintaining the required pace to keep up with their curriculum both in class and at home.

Academic Communication

Teachers keep track of grades and report them to BMCA administrators. Each reporting period, administration will submit a Grade Submission Form for each child to Kolbe Academy including work samples per subject for review. Parents will receive login information to Kolbe Academy's parent portal; all academic correspondence will go through BMCA administrators.

BMCA works directly with upper grade families to build transcripts aligned with each child's trajectory. Transcripts will be handled via BMCA with a Kolbe Academy advisor to ensure all Tennessee State graduation requirements are met.

Absences and Tardies

Students may be dropped off in front of the sanctuary for Mass at St. Martha's at 7:45 a.m. Parents are welcome to join their child for Mass. Any child arriving after 8am must sit at the back of the church until Mass is over. Any child arriving after 9am must be dropped off in Hutton Hall and signed in by a parent or guardian.

Arriving after 11 a.m. constitutes an absence for the day. Leaving before 11 a.m. and not returning for the day is an absence for the day. Absences are divided into two categories:

1. Excused absences include most absences with advance notice by the parents (such as pre-planned trips and doctor appointments), as well as emergencies (such as sickness and funerals).
2. Unexcused absences include absences for any other reason.

Regardless of the type of absence, your child must keep up with their required schoolwork. Anything required by their teacher may be brought in the following on-campus day.

As soon as you know your child will be absent, please contact us {here}.

Students are permitted a maximum of 3 excused absences per semester for necessary absences. These absences require a note from the parent. After 3 absences, all absences will require a doctor's note or will be unexcused. If a student accumulates 6 tardies, he will be given an excused absence on his record. If a student is absent more than 5 times during a semester, parents will be contacted by our academic chair to create a plan to get the child back on track. Your child's education and participation in our program require consistent attendance and intentional effort by the child and primary homeschooling parent.

We highly encourage parents to plan any trips or outings on non-campus days. We will not have school during Holy Days in order to observe the liturgical year.

LOGISTICS

Dismissal

Students will be dismissed to their homerooms each day. Their responsible guardian may pick them directly from their homeroom. Any information regarding a change in your child's pickup arrangements need to be communicated directly to their homeroom teacher.

Communication

The best way of communicating non-urgent information to teachers or administration is through email. Urgent messages should pass through the office, as teachers will not have the opportunity to check their messages regularly throughout the school day.

Lunch

Students should bring lunch each school day. Parents are always welcome to join us for lunch. Please contact the teacher to let us know to expect you. Because of a risk of allergies, we ask that students do not exchange food. Please only send water for your children to drink during the day.

Supplies

BMCA strives to provide basic supplies on campus, including loose paper, pencils, and pens.

The course plan for each grade lists the books necessary for the class. Parents will also need to have basic supplies their child will need at home.

Donations are appreciated for basic student on-campus supplies as well as supplies for teachers, including dry erase markers, disinfectant wipes, and tissues.

Students will need access at home to a laptop or computer with internet for research and typing papers. Papers can be printed and brought into school or emailed to teachers.

No smart devices are permitted unless they serve a medical need.

Assembly

School wide assembly happens every morning in Hutton Hall immediately after Mass. Parents and community members are most welcome to join us for a scripture reading or recitation, a song, and prayer.

DISCIPLINE

Cultural Expectations

As Paul writes to the Ephesians, all students are to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

We expect students to adhere to a culture of respect for both teachers and fellow students. We strive to bring glory to God in everything we do. In order to see this through, students will adhere to basic behavioral expectations including:

- No cursing.
- Immediate compliance with staff instruction.
- No bullying, teasing, or mistreating other students.
- Referring to teachers by their appropriate names.
- No contraband items.

We also encourage a culture of demonstrating kindness, respect, charity, and love to one another, and developing habits of decorum and consideration for others. Examples of encouraged behavior may look like:

- Opening the door for all ladies.
- In the hallways, men are courteous and defer to the ladies by allowing them to go first.
- Students in the upper school are expected to stand and be silent when class is ready to begin.
- Students should address their teachers by their appropriate titles.
- Students should respond by saying "yes" or "no", not "yeah." "Sir" and "Ma'am" are also encouraged as a part of our regional custom.
- Students should stand when an adult enters the room.

Ten Commandments

One of the ways we honor our commitment to raising virtuous children in an environment that brings glory to our Lord is by respecting the commandments given to us through holy scripture on how to love both God and our neighbor:

1. Have no gods before the true Lord.
2. Do not take the Lord's name in vain.
3. Keep holy the Sabbath.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. Do not kill.
6. Do not commit adultery.
7. Do not steal.
8. Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. Do not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. Do not envy.

Children, staff, and parents are expected to live a life congruent with these commandments both on and off campus.

Electronics

Using a phone or electronic device or keeping a device on one's person without the permission of a teacher or administrator at any point during school hours will result in the confiscation of the phone

or device. The phone will be stored in the campus office until the end of the school day. The electronic device will be returned directly to the parent at pick-up.

Minor and Major Infractions

Students misbehaving in a classroom will be sent to the staff office for disciplinary measures. All disciplinary issues will be communicated to parents. Minor infractions will be dealt with on campus; Major infractions will require parents to come pick up their children.

Examples of Disciplinary Measures for Minor Infractions

- Email or phone call to parents
- Help clean campus
- Loss of play time
- Pick up trash around campus
- Provide office assistance to school faculty and staff
- Push ups, pull ups, jumping jacks, run laps, or other physical activities
- Send out of class/to hallway
- Silent lunch
- Verbal/Written apology
- Write lines
- Written reflection

Academic Integrity

Of all the disciplinary issues that a school faces, cheating is the one most central to teaching and learning. It is a violation of the very relationship that binds teacher to student. Examples of failure to uphold academic integrity are:

- Plagiarism
- Copying an answer
- Working together on an assignment that was intended to be completed individually
- Looking upon another student's paper during an assessment.

Cheating is a major infraction. When a student is caught cheating, the student will be sent immediately to the staff office. The student will receive at minimum a failing grade on the assignment or portion of the assessment, and up to a zero on the entire assignment. For second offenses, the student will receive a zero on the assignment.

Though we all wish it were otherwise, students who cheat sometimes also lie about cheating, either professing ignorance to the rules or outright denial of the act. A student's denial or appeal to ignorance must therefore be subject to investigation, though we always approach student testimony with charity, assuming the best.

Uniform and Dress Code

BMCA requires all students to wear uniforms on campus during school hours. Uniforms allow for an environment of elevated expectations, help students develop a sense of modesty, and avoid unnecessary distractions related to clothing.

It is very important to us that BMCA remains accessible to all families searching for an excellent option for homeschool education; we therefore strive to keep uniform requirements as simple as possible.

Girls may wear a maroon or white polo, with a navy or plaid skirt reaching below the knees. Girls may also wear navy pants. Young girls may wear a plaid jumper over a white shirt.

Boys may wear a maroon or white polo, with either navy or khaki pants.

Further uniform details as well as links to purchase can be found on our website.

Accessories and supplies:

Students are expected to have a bag in which they keep their personal belongings and a personal lunchbox. These bags must be labeled with the child's last name. No profanity, explicit images, or concerning illusions may be on any of these bags.

Students may bring a hat for outdoor recess. Each hat must be labeled with the child's last name.

Students are expected to have a water bottle with them. Water bottles must be labeled with the child's last name.

Excesses of hairstyle, attire, and adornments can be distracting (including but not limited to tattoos, piercings, or unnatural hair colors). Students are expected to maintain a sense of modesty and decorum in their presentation. Any concerns regarding a student's appearance will be communicated directly to parents.

We ask parents to refrain from sending their children to school with characters on their accessories or supplies, including backpacks and lunchboxes.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illness

We all know that illness is part of having a body in a fallen world. In communities like ours that share close spaces, we want to do our part to minimize the effects of illness. If your child experiences any of the following, they should not attend school:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- Communicable diseases (chicken pox, strep throat, etc.)

Students must be fever free (less than 100°, unmedicated) and diarrhea/ vomiting free for 24 hours before returning to school. “Unmedicated” means that no fever-suppressing drugs such as

Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) have been given to the child. Please notify staff if your student requires either prescription or over-the-counter medication to be kept at school. Please note, we cannot allow any sharing between students of any medication whatsoever. Students sharing medication will be considered in violation of school policy and subject to disciplinary action.

We do not require vaccination. Students who need medication during the day for ongoing medical issues need to contact staff to create an appropriate plan.

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather that brings about school delays or closures, we will notify families via email and text. Please make sure the office has your most current contact information. Notice of closing will always be communicated as immediately as possible. BMCA will close, delay, or remain open independently of any other organizations.

Handgun Carry Policy

No students are allowed to bring any weapon whatsoever on campus, including handguns and pocket knives.

Please refer to the Teacher Handbook if you are a staff member at BMCA for information regarding our weapons policy for teachers.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As a faithfully Catholic school focused on supporting families to raise saints, everything we do is aimed at glorifying God. We expect all of our families to share this goal. The environment we cultivate at BMCA is one of love. In a fallen world, conflict is bound to arise. BMCA expects all families to handle conflict with grace and charity, always returning to our shared principles and purpose.

This guide may be updated as our school expands and further considerations become necessary.