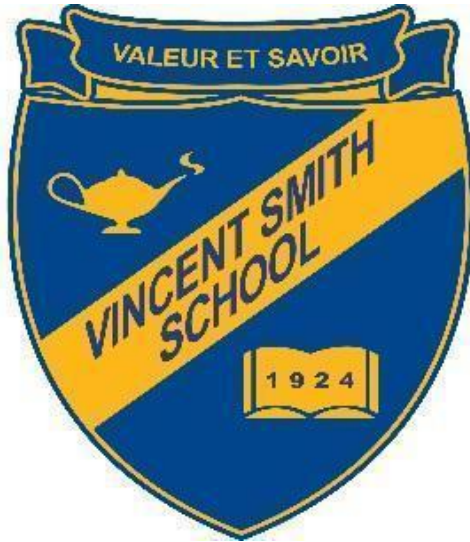


# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025



VINCENT SMITH SCHOOL  
322 PORT WASHINGTON BLVD  
PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK 11050

Tel (516) 365-4900

[www.vincent-smith-school.org](http://www.vincent-smith-school.org)

**The following policies and procedures apply to all school activities,  
whether via in-person (on campus) or remote learning.**

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### **OVERVIEW**

### **Mission Statement**

The Vincent Smith School is dedicated to providing a small, nurturing, and supportive setting for all our students. We are committed to the belief that "We Teach Differently Because Every Child Learns Differently," enabling each student to reach their highest potential and personal goals.

### **Educational Climate**

The Vincent Smith School is a small learning community that provides an individualized, supportive and structured environment for our student population. Through integrated programs and a multi-sensory curriculum, students explore, learn, and meet New York State's approved curriculum. In addition to academic pursuits, students also learn essential social and emotional skills in an environment that encourages self-awareness, self-discipline and self-advocacy. With the guidance and support of the administrators and faculty, students are empowered to set personal and academic goals that will reflect their personal growth and their individual best.

### **School History and Accreditation**

In 1923, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Elliott, Miss Adelaide V. Smith, and Miss Nellora A. Reeder founded the Harbor School on Bayview Avenue in Port Washington. In 1924, at the suggestion of Mr. Elliott, the name of the school was changed to the Vincent Smith School in honor of Miss Smith and relocated to 25 Main Street. In 1927, Mr. and Mrs. Elliott purchased a plot of land on Port Washington Boulevard and had the original two-story building erected. The school operated on a provisional charter in the beginning. Christopher Morley, Jr. was among the first eighth grade graduating class of the junior high department in 1931. In 1951, a permanent charter was granted by the Board of Regents of the State of New York. The first high school senior class graduated in June of 1974, and the Regents registered (accredited) the School on September 5, 1980. In 1989, the Vincent Smith School received accreditation from the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS).

### **Educational Objectives**

Faculty, trustees and administrators affirm the following educational objectives for the Vincent Smith School:

- To integrate our mission into the daily culture of the school by meeting the needs of the student with learning disabilities throughout the social and intellectual process of education. We endeavor to make learning, for all our students, a positive and engaging experience.
- To create a school-wide and classroom environment where all students can reach their highest potential. Some examples of making this environment are: scaffolding of lessons to ensure all students' understanding and engagement; extra help available during 9<sup>th</sup> period for students who need additional support; modeling of appropriate social and academic processes; multi-sensory approach to learning to align with our mission and offer students the best method of instruction coordinated to their specific needs and learning styles; faculty training in special education practices of methodology and pedagogy.
- To align with our mission statement, students will learn self-advocacy skills through facilitation of self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-acceptance.
- To maintain small class sizes in order to optimize a student's ability to gain the knowledge, skill-sets and attitudes needed to cope with the changing world and the transition into a global community.

- To provide students with a program of academic rigor whose pace is brisk but not pressured, and one that is sympathetic to each students' educational needs.
- To help students apply critical thinking skills and ethical standards to learning, living and problem-solving. This is evident by adopting the Six Pillars of Character, by following the Code of Conduct in the Student/Parent Handbook, and by fostering altruistic and community minded endeavors.
- To assist students in the mastery of basic skills aligned with the New York State curriculum so that students will have the necessary proficiency for transition to post-secondary education or the workplace.
- To promote self-discipline, self-motivation, self-esteem, and self-efficacy in all students, through formal and informal learning.

### **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees, as the policy-making body, promotes the welfare of the school, especially in the areas of finance, fundraising, and public relations. The Board is composed of parents, former parents, and selected members of the community. The Board calendar is set yearly by the Board and traditionally meets during the third week of the month, at the school. For the 2024-2025 school year, the members of the Board of Trustees are as follows: Ms. Lauren Rothchild (Chair), Mrs. Vanessa Blackwood, Dr. Peter Lewis, Dr. Lauren Schwartz, Mrs. Christine Marquino, and Mr. John Baldi (Ex Officio).

### **Administration**

The administrators for the 2024-2025 school year are as follows: Mr. John Baldi, Head of School, Mrs. Lois Dierlam, Dean of Students, Mrs. Carla Preston, School Psychologist; Mrs. Peggy Spacek, Executive Assistant to the Head of School; Mr. Martell Young, Director of Facilities; Ms. Lynda Bekore, Director of Communications & Admissions.

### **Faculty**

The Vincent Smith School is staffed by New York State certified Special Education and content area specialized teachers and therapists, with 100% holding advanced degrees. All our faculty and staff are highly trained and dedicated to the mission and philosophy of the school.

### **School Hours**

The Vincent Smith School is open weekdays from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. All students are expected to be in attendance from 8:30 A.M. to 3:10 P.M. **Please call or email the main office prior to 8:30 A.M. if your child will not be attending school or will be late and indicate the reason. If your child is returning after 3 or more days of illness, a doctor's note is required.**

### **Policy of Nondiscrimination**

The Vincent Smith School admits students of any actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, weight, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability who have all rights to the privileges, programs, and activities of the school. The Vincent Smith School welcomes students of all ethnic groups and recognizes their valuable contributions to the life and character of the school.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

### **Programs of Study**

Students in the Lower School carry the normal required courses under programs set forth by New York State, with emphasis placed on English Language Arts and Math. Students also take at least two periods per week of Physical Education and Art, and at least one period per week of Music, Social Skills and Computers.

High School students must meet the following criteria for graduation:

1. A minimum of 22 credits, including the following units:
  - 4 credits in English
  - 4 credits in Social Studies
  - 4 credits in Mathematics
  - 4 credits in Science
  - 2 credits Physical Education
  - 1 ½ credits in Art
  - 1 credit in Foreign Language
  - 1 credit in an Elective/VEEP
  - ½ credit in Health
2. A passing score on the ELA and Mathematics Exit Exams

Credit requirements of transfer students will be evaluated upon admission.

### **Reading Program**

The remedial reading program is an integral part of the school curriculum. This program is guided by our reading specialists and assisted by classroom teachers. To assure continued growth and progress in reading, students are given explicit and systematic instruction using the Wilson Reading and Orton-Gillingham programs or research based reading strategies. Students tend to become eager and able readers when reading is enjoyed and respected in the home. It is essential that parents encourage their children to engage in recreational reading outside of the school requirements.

Our remedial reading program is available for those students who are found to be in need of reading assistance. Students work individually and/or in small groups of up to three students. Each period is forty minutes in length. In addition, classroom and core subject teachers coordinate their efforts to reinforce these skills. In grades one through eight, teachers further aid students by utilizing the SPIRE Reading Program™, an Orton-Gillingham based intervention program.

During the designated reading block, students are further supported by flexible grouping in age-appropriate groups. The reading program at the Vincent Smith School uses a multi-sensory approach, which provides help in the following areas:

Reading comprehension  
Decoding skills  
Study skills

Written expression  
Phonological skills

Oral expression  
Spelling

### **Social Emotional Learning Program**

Social Emotional Learning is an integral part of development and well-being. In every grade, a Social Emotional Learning Program (e.g. *Overcoming Obstacles*) is guided by our School Psychologist and Social Workers. The program focuses on communication, coping, decision-making, problem solving and organizational skills while promoting self-regulation, safety, and support for our students.

### **Related Services**

Students receive related services, including but not limited to speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, and resource room, as warranted by the needs of the student during the school day. Related services are provided by the school and are included in tuition for all students who require them. These service providers are employees of the school and services are scheduled into the school day.

### **Physical Education Program**

Physical Education and athletics are required for graduation, and all students are required to participate in gym class unless excused by a doctor's note. Physical activity is essential to healthy physical, social, and emotional growth. Students at the Vincent Smith School are required to attend at least two periods of physical education per cycle.

### **Art Program**

Art is offered to all students at the Vincent Smith School. The aim of the program is to contribute to the development of skills, appreciation, and personal enjoyment by our students. At times, the classroom teacher integrates the art program with other subject areas. A competitive Student Art Show is held every Spring. Both faculty and staff judge the work by category and prizes are awarded. Every attempt is made to schedule all students at least two periods of Art per week.

### **Music Program**

As research continues to show the correlation between music and speech and language development, the Vincent Smith School music program will help students develop and appreciate music. Through listening and movement, students will explore the many aspects of music. Every attempt is made to schedule all students at least one period of music per week.

### **Testing**

All students are given the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test annually to establish a baseline and progress in reading. They are also administered benchmark testing three times per year in Math for the same purpose. Data is also collected on a regular basis to monitor progress towards student goals and to remediate or change to inform instruction as necessary.

### **Homework Policy**

At the Vincent Smith School, homework is assigned at the teachers' discretion. (If homework conflicts with a religious observance and the school has received a letter to that effect from a parent/guardian, the student may

make up the homework at the conclusion of the religious observance.) If a parent is in doubt as to the homework, please log onto Google Classroom for additional information. All homework is posted on Google classroom, which is used to communicate with parents and students daily. The preparation of homework is a shared responsibility – student-parent-teacher. Please contact the specific teacher as soon as possible with any problem concerning the homework. If homework is not completed or inadequately prepared, parents will be notified by the teacher. Continued failure to prepare and turn in homework will be considered a deficiency, which can lead to detention and affect a student’s final grade.

### **Grading Policy and System**

In order to achieve academic success, students must be aware of the criteria for grading all work. Each academic grade has been tabulated based on the following schedule:

Tests and Quizzes.....	60%
Classwork/Projects/Participation....	20%
Homework.....	20%

The academic year is divided into three terms or trimesters. Achievement grades are awarded at the end of each term and a report card is emailed to the student’s home. The three term grades comprise the final grade. Finals are given in the Upper School during the last week of classes. That grade counts as two test grades in the third trimester grade. In the Upper School, a numeric scale has been adopted for the achievement grade, providing greater accuracy and flexibility in the evaluations. The passing grade is 65. An effort (1-4) is also given. In the Lower School, students earn ratings of one through four, which are described on the report card.

### **Academic Honors**

Honor Roll status is determined by averaging all grades received in all academic courses, in which the student was enrolled, at the end of each trimester. Students who meet the following criteria are placed on the Honor Roll. Honor Roll students receive letters of recognition.

- High Honors - at least a 95 average with no grade below an 80
- Honors - at least a 90 average with no grade below an 80
- Trimester Exams - no grade below a 70

### **Academic Remediation**

Grades are continuously monitored for remediation and tutorial services. When a student is not performing up to academic standards, demonstrates poor understanding of a concept being taught, or when grades drop significantly from term to term, students are required to attend tutorial services during club period. Students can voluntarily attend a tutorial at any time.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The Vincent Smith School is a drug and gun-free zone.

### **Student Discipline Code**



In conjunction with prevention and intervention support services, a student may be subjected to the following disciplinary actions when the student engages in specific behaviors that are uncooperative/noncompliant, disorderly, disruptive, aggressive or injurious/harmful, and/or excessive/intensive:

- A. Verbal warning from school staff
- B. Student/teacher conference
- C. Student/administrator (e.g. Head of School, Dean of Students, etc.) conference
- D. Student/parent/administrator (e.g. Head of School, Dean of Students, etc.) conference
- E. In-school disciplinary action (e.g., exclusion from club activities or lunchtime, and in-house detention or suspension)
- F. Head of School's suspension that results in student's immediate removal from school
- G. Suspension for 1-5 days
- H. Expulsion – When a student application for entrance to the Vincent Smith School is accepted, s/he thereby understands and agrees that the school reserves the right to expel him/her at any time if his/her conduct or academic standing is regarded by the Head of School or Administrative Staff as undesirable. The Student Contract and Statement of Policy explicitly set forth this condition.

#### **Uncooperative/Noncompliant Behavior**

- 1. Unexcused absence from school
- 2. Excessive lateness
- 3. Bringing items to or using items in school in violation of school policy
- 4. Behaving in a manner which disrupts the educational process (e.g., making excessive noise in a classroom, library, or hallway)
- 5. Engaging in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior
- 6. Posting or distributing material on school premises in violation of school rules
- 7. Using School computers, fax machines, telephones or other electronic equipment or devices without appropriate permission

#### **Disorderly Behavior**

- 8. Smoking and/or use of electronic cigarettes and/or possession of matches or lighters
- 9. Gambling
- 10. Using profane, obscene, vulgar, or lewd language, gestures, or behavior
- 11. Lying to, giving false information to, and/or misleading school personnel
- 12. Misusing property belonging to others
- 13. Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus
- 14. Leaving class or school premises without permission of supervising school personnel
- 15. Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact
- 16. Use of the Internet and/or computing system for non-educational purposes, and/or security/privacy violations
- 17. Engaging in dishonesty, scholastic or otherwise which includes but is not limited to: Cheating, Plagiarizing
- 18. Inappropriate use of electronic technology (e.g., unauthorized audio/video recording, inappropriate websites)
- 19. Defying or disobeying the lawful authority or directive of school personnel in a way that substantially disrupts the educational process and/or poses a danger to the school community.

20. Using slurs based upon actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, national origin, citizenship and/or immigration status, weight, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability.
21. Shoving, pushing, or engaging in a minor altercation or similar physical confrontational behavior towards students or School personnel (e.g., pushing past another person), or throwing an object (e.g., chalk) or spitting at another person (for more serious physically aggressive behavior, see #30.).
22. Bringing unauthorized persons to school or allowing unauthorized visitors to enter school in violation of written school rules.
23. Knowingly possessing property belonging to another without authorization.
24. Tampering with, changing, or altering a record or document of a school by any method, including, but not limited to, computer access or other electronic means.
25. Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact or touching someone in a private part of the body.
26. Engaging in vandalism, graffiti or other intentional damage to School property or property belonging to staff, students or others.
27. Posting or distributing libelous material or literature (including posting such material on the Internet).

**Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior**

28. Posting or distributing, displaying, or sharing literature or material containing a threat of violence, injury or harm, or depicting violent actions against or obscene, vulgar or lewd pictures of students or staff (including posting such material on the Internet).
29. Engaging in physically aggressive behavior other than minor altercations.
30. Engaging in an act of coercion or threatening or instigating violence, injury or harm to another or others.
31. Engaging in behavior on the school bus which creates a substantial risk of or results in injury.
32. Engaging in harassing, intimidating, and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying); such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass.
33. Engaging in harassing, intimidating and/or bullying behavior, including using electronic communication to engage in such behavior (cyber-bullying) based on an individual's actual or perceived race, weight, religion, religious practices, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or disability; such behavior includes, but is not limited to: physical violence; stalking; verbal, written, or physical conduct that threatens another with harm; seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; hazing; taunting; exclusion from peer groups designed to humiliate or isolate; using derogatory language or making derogatory jokes or name calling to humiliate or harass.
34. Making sexually suggestive comments, innuendoes, propositions or similar remarks, or engaging in nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (e.g. touching, patting, pinching, lewd or indecent public behavior, or sending or posting sexually suggestive messages or images).
35. Possessing controlled substances or prescription medications (without appropriate authorization) illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, and/or alcohol.

### **Excessive/Intensive: Aggressive or Injurious/Harmful Behavior**

36. Taking or attempting to take property belonging to another or belonging to the School without authorization, without using force or intimidating behavior.
37. Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm.
38. Making a bomb threat.
39. Creating a substantial risk of serious injury by either recklessly engaging in behavior, and/or using an object that appears capable of causing physical injury (e.g., lighter, belt buckle, umbrella, or laser pointer).
40. Causing a serious injury by either recklessly engaging in behavior, and/or using an object that appears capable of causing physical injury (e.g., lighter, belt buckle, umbrella, or laser pointer).
41. Inciting/causing misbehavior; false claims.
42. Possessing or selling any weapon.
43. Using controlled substances or prescription medication without appropriate authorization, or using illegal drugs, synthetic hallucinogens, and/or alcohol.
44. Refusal to follow directions/requests from teacher or administrator; arguing with teacher or administrator.

### **Prevention and Intervention Support Services**

To promote positive behavior, the Vincent Smith School provides a range of prevention and intervention support services for students during school hours throughout the school year. When a student engages in misconduct, various interventions must be considered based on the student and the type of behavior displayed.

The Vincent Smith School will provide support services at all stages of the disciplinary process, including during or returning from suspension, to maximize students' ability to meet social and academic standards within the school community. When used consistently and appropriately, counseling interventions help improve student behavior, lower the incidence of repeated misbehavior, and contribute to a more positive school environment. Support services may include any of the following, or a combination of the following, to best meet the needs of the individual student:

- Parent outreach
- Intervention by counseling staff
- Referral for services (counseling, both in or outside of school)
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Individual/group counseling
- Peer mediation/conflict resolution
- Mentoring program
- Development of individual behavior contract/chart
- Short-term behavioral progress reports
- Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)
- In-school community service (with parental/guardian consent)
- Supports for students transitioning from suspension

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Accidents**

First aid is administered by the school nurse in case of accidents or sudden illness occurring at school. Parents are contacted if an accident of a serious nature occurs. Arrangements are made for the student to go home, to the family doctor, to the nearest physician, or to the emergency centers of local hospitals. In the event a student must be transported via ambulance to the hospital, a school administrator or designated school official will accompany and remain with the student until a parent or adult guardian arrives.

### **Attendance**

Every student enrolled in the Vincent Smith School should attend school on a regular basis with no unexcused absences or latenesses. Good attendance and punctuality are life-long habits that are essential for success that will benefit students throughout their entire lives. Attendance is mandatory whether attending school on campus or via remote learning.

An excused absence or tardiness is one for which work may be made up, such as death or severe illness in the student's immediate family, sickness, and religious holidays/practices. **Please call or email the main office ([pspacek@vincentsmithschool.org](mailto:pspacek@vincentsmithschool.org)) PRIOR to 8:30 A.M. if your child will not be attending school or will be late and indicate the reason for their absence or lateness.** If a student is absent for more than three consecutive days with non-COVID symptoms, a doctor's note will be required.

### **Cellular Phones/ Electronic Devices**

Cellular phones and electronic devices are to be collected in the morning and stored in the student's homeroom. However, there are times when cell phones are useful tools in a child's education. Unless being used for academic reasons as per teacher request, students are prohibited from using their cell phones. If a cell phone is visible being used inappropriately during school hours, it will be confiscated and held until the end of the day. Parents wishing to reach their child may do so by calling the school's main office. Should a student need to contact a parent in an emergency, he or she may do so by using the phone in the main office with permission.

Electronic devices, such as Apple Watches and video games, are not to be used during the school day, including lunch. Electronic devices, audible or visible to school staff, will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the day.

### **Clubs**

During 9th period, all students sign up for and attend clubs. This provides students with an opportunity to engage in social and academic activities. Club offerings vary during the school year. Club options might include sports, art, computers, cooking, meditation, circuit training, gardening, yearbook, homework, Zumba, music, games, and many more. If the school is required to go remote, clubs will be replaced by tutorials.

### **College and Career Planning**

College and career guidance is provided through a program overseen by the Dean of Students. Students will engage in classes geared towards college and career planning. A College and Career Night is usually offered to students and parents in the Fall. Students in grade 11 are advised to take the Preliminary College Board Test (PSAT) in October. Students planning to attend a two- or four-year college are suggested to take the SAT in November of their junior year and again in May. In addition, students are able to take the SAT in November of

their senior year. The student can also choose to take the American College Testing test (ACT). If students are eligible as determined by the testing company, accommodations are offered for both tests.

### **Distribution of Parent-Generated Materials**

It is the policy of the Vincent Smith School to prohibit the distribution of personal invitations, sales materials, etc., in school. Distribution of any educational surveys or references for students that need to be completed by faculty members must be sent to the main office for distribution.

### **Dress Code**

The Vincent Smith School dress code is designed to set appropriate standards for a non-distracting school environment. Appropriate dress for school is a shared responsibility between the parent and the student.

The school uniform consists of blue or white shirts and khaki or blue pants/skirts. No graphic tees, hats, sweatpants, or jeans are allowed, except when announced for certain activities like theme or dress-down days. While any color sweatshirt may be worn, please ensure that it is a **solid color** and free of graphic design. Absolutely **No Political or offensive language** shirts/sweatshirt may be worn or exhibited at any time. **Coats may not be worn in the classrooms.**

We do understand that regulation of room temperature is difficult, as every student's preference does vary. If the student needs a sweatshirt in school, s/he should leave a non-graphic, solid color garment or the Vincent Smith School sweatshirt in his/her locker for easy access. Students are expected to always abide by the dress code, unless specifically permitted by the school otherwise. Exceptions to the dress code for certain activities like field trips, and dress down or themed days, will be announced.

Guidelines for school attire are outlined below:

#### *Boy's Attire*

Chino or cotton/twill pants – khaki or classic navy (no cargo pants, sweatpants, or jeans)

Solid color shirt (with or without collar; long- or short-sleeved) – white, light blue, classic navy

#### *Girl's Attire*

Chino or cotton/twill pants or skirt/dress 3" above the knee or lower – khaki or classic navy (no jeans)

Solid color shirt (with or without collar; long- or short-sleeved) – white, light blue, classic navy

Any adornment that could be distracting or inappropriate will not be permitted. Students in violation of the dress code will be given a warning. In severe cases, at the discretion of the school, parents will be required to remove the student from school and/or bring proper attire to the school for the student. Any schoolwork missed because of a dress code violation must be made up.

### **Early Dismissal**

All students must obtain official approval for any early dismissal that may be necessary. Doctor, dental, and personal business appointments should be made after school hours, whenever possible. Except in extreme emergencies, permission for early dismissal may not be granted. When such dismissal is necessary, the parent must call the main office and/or the student must give the main office a note bearing the signature of the parent/guardian, stating the reason for the request and giving the exact time of dismissal. Parents must sign the

child out at the security booth when picking them up early. Ninth period offerings are just as important as regular classes.

### **Emergency Closing Procedures**

News12 Long Island will broadcast school closings due to inclement weather. In addition, every parent will receive a pre-recorded phone message from the Head of School or a school designee. The school website will be updated accordingly. The school will make every effort to announce a snow day as early as possible. Because of the difficulty and confusion delayed openings cause, the school will make every effort, under suitable and safe travel conditions, to avoid delayed openings whenever possible. Parents of those students traveling via bus should communicate with their bus companies to understand their regulations for emergency closings/delayed openings.

If it is deemed advisable to dismiss school prior to the regular dismissal time, the school will act accordingly and attempt to alert parents of all emergency or early school closings. Parents of bus students should know or make alternative arrangements in the event of an early or emergency closing. A telephone call will be placed to the emergency contact number provided to the school by the parent. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure all contact numbers are current.

Emergency evacuation procedures, as required by law, are on file at the school and are reviewed by the administration, faculty and staff at the beginning of each school year.

### **Field Day**

The annual Blue and Gold Field Day competition is held at the end of each year. This includes a full day of field events for all students and lunch is provided.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills and lockdown drills are necessary to ensure the safe exit of students and staff in the case of an actual emergency. Students must leave the room silently in a single file and go quickly to the designated exit, following the directions of their teacher. In the event that the classroom door cannot be used to exit the room, exit through the emergency window/door and proceed to the area designated for each class.

### **Google Classroom**

Every student receives a Google account (email address). This account enables students to access Google Classroom. Google Classroom allows teachers and students to communicate, share work/homework, ask questions, or simply view posted classwork/activities/homework. Using the student's account, parents are able to view homework and classwork.

### **Grievances**

If questions arise regarding school policy or disciplinary matters, an appeal may be made to the Head of School.

### **Health Office**

The health office, staffed by a certified school nurse, is available to students during the school day. Students must obtain a pass before going to the nurse's office, except for those students receiving daily medication. Students will be examined, and if leaving school is warranted, a parent will be contacted. Those students who remain in school will be sent back to class.

If a student exhibits COVID-like symptoms while in school, they will be sent directly to the nurse and await pick-up by parent or guardian. Masks are always available at any time in the main office or nurse's office.

### **Impartial Hearings**

In the event of an impartial hearing, records of school attendance, affidavits attesting to payment of tuition and faculty/staff participation in the hearing are provided without fee.

### **Insurance**

Student accident insurance is provided by the Vincent Smith School without any premium cost to parents. Parents are responsible for all medical costs, which go beyond the limits of the accident policy. Protection is provided for students while they are in school or engaged in school-sponsored activities. This policy is meant to cover out-of-pocket expenses that are not covered by the parent's or guardian's primary insurance.

### **Internet Use**

Students must adhere to the guidelines below governing the use of school resources. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, beginning with a suspension of privileges. Guidelines for general use include:

- Material that may visually offend others or promotes hate, racism, etc., is not permitted.
- Students are prohibited from using artificial intelligence (AI) tools to generate essays, reports, solve problems, or complete assignments in class or home, unless otherwise directed by a teacher. Any submission found to be AI-generated will be considered plagiarism and a violation of school policy, and can result in grade reduction, detention, or more serious consequences.
- Students will report any use of the Internet that contains inappropriate or offensive material.
- Material obtained and used in a manner that violates copyright law is prohibited.
- All material obtained from the Internet must be properly cited.
- Participation in "chat" groups is prohibited.
- Students will not give out any personal information.
- Additional rules, as stated by the administration and the computer room teacher, may apply as needed.
- Posting inappropriate, hurtful, offensive or disparaging remarks toward any student/staff member/administrator or anyone connected with the school on the Internet is not permitted.

### **Lunch**

Appropriate student behavior is always required in the cafeteria. Any questions or issues should be reported to the teachers on lunch duty.

Lunch must be sent in from home each day though small, hot items will also be available for sale. Proper hand hygiene will be enforced before and after eating. Signage will be displayed to remind all persons not to share food and drink.

Recess is held for 20 minutes of each lunch period. Students should have the appropriate outerwear when necessary.

### **Medications**

Parents are responsible for providing the school nurse with any medication their child must receive during the school day. The guidelines are as follows:

- Students requiring medication at school must have a written statement from a physician, which identifies the type, dosage, and purpose of medication (including over-the-counter medication). Medication must be in its original container/packaging.
- Written permission from the parents requesting the school to administer the medication prescribed by the physician or over-the-counter medications shall be required.
- The parent shall advise the school of any drug being taken by a child.
- All medication must be kept in the nurse's office.
- **Students should NOT be transporting medications to and from school.** Parents are required to bring all necessary medications to school.

Medication for temporary illness involving infections such as colds, coughs, and sore throats must be the responsibility of the parents. If circumstances are such that oral medication is required during the school day, parents should consider keeping them home, as sick students do not belong in school.

### **Parent/Students' Rights to Review Records**

Within two business days of receipt of a letter requesting a review of student records, arrangements will be made and a meeting will be scheduled with the Head of School.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Two parent conferences are scheduled each year (see school calendar). Ten-minute conferences with each teacher in the Upper School are scheduled at this time to allow parents to discuss their child's academic performance and concerns with the teachers. Similarly, Lower School conferences are 20 minutes in duration. Both parents and teachers may request conferences at other times throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher and the administration, at any time throughout the year, to discuss concerns.

### **Parking**

*Seniors:* Seniors who register their vehicle in advance with the main office, and who have written parental approval to drive to and from school, must park in assigned parking spaces. Student drivers are to always follow the guidelines for proper use of an automobile.

### **Photo, Internet, and Video Policy**

From time to time, the opportunity may arise for your child to be photographed for use in local media, VSS promotional publications, on the school website, or in any other school medium. A photo release is included as part of the contract. In the event you do not wish your child to be photographed, please initial that section of the



contract appropriately. Photographs covered in this release form are intended to only refer to identifiable (front facing) photos of your child.

### **Release of Records**

Prior to the release of student records, the parent/guardian must obtain from the Vincent Smith School a Request for the Release of Records form. This form must be completed and submitted to the school. Only then will records be released to the person(s) or organizations listed on the form.

### **Senior Privileges**

Seniors are afforded the following privileges:

- Driving and parking on campus (see Parking section for rules)
- Leaving campus for lunch (with written permission from parents)
- Eating lunch in the library or outside (see Library section for rules)
- Cell phone usage during lunch, outside of the cafeteria

Should any privilege be abused, it will be revoked.

### **Books, School Supplies and Furniture**

It is expected that students will take responsible care of the classroom desks, their books and other items supplied by the local school districts and the Vincent Smith School. If such materials are damaged or lost, the school sets the price for such articles and assesses the parents. Each student is given **one** set of binders or notebooks per school year and replacements can be purchased through the main office. The school will collect all Vincent Smith School books at the appropriate final exam (Upper School) or the last day of classes (Lower School).

### **Transportation**

Riding the bus is a privilege and a convenience. It is the student's responsibility to comply with the directions of the bus driver and bus matron. Acts of inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to, smoking, vandalism, use of vulgar language, rudeness, etc., may result in the revocation of transportation privileges.

Buses and parent drop-offs will be individually unloaded. Parents should not exit their cars or enter the building.

Students are required to take their assigned bus to and from school and are not permitted to go home on a different school bus. If a student would like to go home with a classmate, written notes from both parents must be given to the office, containing a detailed explanation of transportation. The school should be given as much notice as possible to avoid dismissal confusion. If a request for alternate transportation arrangements is not received by the office, students will be placed on their regular bus and sent home.

Students will not be allowed to enter the school until 8:15 each day.

### **Vincent Smith Merchandise**

Vincent Smith apparel can be purchased through [landsend.com/school](https://landsend.com/school), using the Vincent Smith school code **900064023**. Items available for purchase include polo shirts and sweatshirts, along with chinos pants and skirts. All Vincent Smith apparel can be worn as part of the school uniform.