
Directory

If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact the Divine Peace faculty or board using the listed contact information.

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Purpose

Divine Peace Lutheran School exists for the purpose of giving the children in its care a thorough Christ-centered education of the highest standards. Our goal is in keeping with the Biblical

principle that *“Knowledge begins with respect for the Lord.”* (Proverbs 1:7) At Divine Peace, God’s Word permeates every subject and motivates all the teaching, learning, and activities of our school.

It is our primary concern to provide children with training that will give them a Christian perspective on their lives and world and will assure them of their place in God’s family through faith in Jesus Christ. We seek to prepare them not only to be productive citizens in this world, but, above all, to prepare them for the life to come. *Divine Peace Lutheran School* seeks to assist parents in carrying out God’s command to bring up their children *“in the training and instruction of the Lord.”* (Ephesians 6:4)

We consider it a privilege and a part of our calling to help all children come to know their Savior. Children and their parents will be encouraged to grow in their love for and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Admissions

To begin kindergarten, children are expected to be five years of age by September 1st. Children will be admitted to other grades with presentation of records showing satisfactory completion of previous grades. In addition, an entrance examination will be given to determine the child’s instructional level in the various subject areas.

We will do everything in our power to meet the needs of every child and family that wishes to attend Divine Peace. However, we are unable to accept children with severe behavioral problems, learning disabilities, or physical handicaps. We regret we do not have the personnel, facilities, or equipment necessary for these special situations.

Parents who are not members of our Congregation and who desire to enroll their children may request a meeting with the Pastor to learn about the Biblical training their child will receive as students at Divine Peace. We offer this opportunity because we have found that when parents understand the kind of religious instruction their child is receiving and how this affects their child for good, not only does their appreciation for our school increase, but our working relationship becomes more harmonious.

Administration

Divine Peace Evangelical Lutheran School is always under the control and supervision of *Divine Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church*, which is responsible for its management and maintenance. The school is under the supervision of the Board of Education, which is elected from the Congregation, and which will act by authority of the Congregation in accordance with its Constitution. Full and final control, however, is always vested in the Church Council and the Congregation’s Voters’ Assembly.

Rich Tradition

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has a rich tradition of academic training in its pre-school through Grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years.

Currently, WELS churches and associations operate nearly 400 early childhood centers, over 300 elementary schools, and 27 high schools across the nation. Divine Peace is a part of the fourth largest private school system in America.

The Wisconsin Synod has provided excellent instructors to these schools by training its own teachers since 1884. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS school annually tend to outperform their peers by a significant margin on national achievement tests.

We humbly thank God for his blessings on our school. Divine Peace is proud to continue this rich tradition of academic excellence in Prince George's County.

Tuition and Fees

Parents and guardians of our students are required to fulfill their financial commitment to our school by promptly paying tuition and fees, such as after-care fees, as specified by the Board of Education.

Tuition for the 2023-2024 School Year will be \$9,995. Tuition is payable over a 10-month period. There is a 20% discount for a second child. In addition, there is a nonrefundable registration fee of \$350 which covers all textbooks, workbooks, teaching materials, and a portion of field trip costs. A \$25 per month technology fee will also be added to the monthly tuition payments.

Blackbaud Tuition Management offers several options for paying your child's tuition. You will be contacted by *Blackbaud Tuition Management* by email. It will be possible for you at that time to adjust the due date assigned to you for each of your ten monthly payments. If tuition is not paid in one sum of \$9,995 at the beginning of the year, or half that amount at the beginning of each semester, it will be necessary for you to use one of a number of payment plans available through *Blackbaud Tuition Management*. *Blackbaud Tuition Management* keeps detailed records of payments and will assist the DPLS faculty and staff in focusing our attention on your child. See <https://www.blackbaud.school> for additional information on the tuition management plan.

Home/School Cooperation

We want your child's Christian training at Divine Peace to be a positive and encouraging experience. For this to be so, it is important that there be strong, close cooperation between home and school. We seek to work together with our parents in love, respect, and concern for their children. It is assumed that in enrolling your child you agree to abide by all the rules and policies set forth in this handbook. Your child will be most successful when parents and teachers agree and are committed to the same guiding principles.

If any disagreement with school policies or feelings of discontent should arise, we want you to bring that to our attention. It is important to us that these concerns be dealt with in a spirit of love and respect and in keeping with our Lord's direction in *Matthew 18:15-18*. Please take the following steps if there are disagreements or matters of discontent:

- 1) Speak privately with your child's classroom teacher.
- 2) If the matter still is not resolved to your satisfaction, please speak with the Pastor.
- 3) If a problem or concern still exists, you may contact any member of the Divine Peace Board of Education, who may in turn seek recommendations from the Church Council.

It will be helpful to your child for you not to display feelings of discontent and disagreement with the school in front of your child. Teachers at Divine Peace will utilize the same steps when disagreements arise.

Parents do not give up their God-given responsibility when they send their children to a Christian school. Rather, parents and teachers must work together if the child is to receive the maximum benefit from a Christian education.

A Back-to-School Night prior to the start of the school year will provide parents with an overview of classroom and school policies and procedures. Objectives and expectations of parents, the school, and teacher will be discussed so that there is a common understanding and cooperation between home and school.

Special concerns and needs should be brought to the teacher's immediate attention. Such discussions are always welcomed.

School Discipline

Each classroom teacher has a discipline plan for their own classroom. We expect that most – if not all - discipline problems will be taken care of within your child's classroom. Correction by the staff will be administered in Christian love and in keeping with God's Word.

We want to teach children when they err and help them learn from their mistakes. After all, the word *discipline* means "to teach."

Worship and Singing

Parents are encouraged to worship with their children. Their faithfulness in the use of God's Word will go a long way in support of the lessons taught in school.

Singing is one of the most beautiful ways of expressing our faith and of worshipping our God. For this reason, the children of our school are scheduled to sing several times throughout the year in our church worship services. This singing is considered an important part of our curriculum. All children are expected to participate. Parents and family members are invited to attend worship and join in fellowship and food after the service.

Attendance

School hours are 8:00 am to 3:30 pm, five days per week. Students are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance. Students are requested to arrive between 7:15-7:55 am. This allows students to be ready to learn by 8:05 am. We expect all students to be in their desks at 8:05 am. Illness, injury, or a death in the family are recognized as legitimate reasons for absence from school. Absences in attendance for other reasons will be considered unexcused absences. Excellent attendance is vital for academic growth and is critical for grade promotion.

Every effort should be made to schedule medical and dental appointments for non-school hours. Family vacations should be scheduled *only* during school vacation periods. A school calendar will be distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year to assist you in planning accordingly.

In every case of absence, parents should contact their child's teacher to report their child's absence. Arrangements should be made to pick up the student's schoolwork and to make up any missed assignments. Lack of notification will result in the marking of an unexcused absence for the student.

Excessive absences may result in retention or the loss of a student's seat at Divine Peace Lutheran School. Excessive absence is defined as 8 days/quarter, 15 days/semester, and 20 days/year.

Punctuality

Timeliness is very important. The Divine Peace faculty wants to work with families to instill a discipline of punctuality. To ensure a successful start to the day, the following steps will be taken to encourage punctuality.

For each Quarter:

2nd Tardy: Parent receives a notification requiring a signature.

3rd Tardy: Parent receives a notification requiring a signature.

4th Tardy: Teacher phone call to parent.

5th Tardy: Mandatory meeting with school board and Pastor.

Excessive tardy issues may result in retention or the loss of a student's seat at Divine Peace Lutheran School.

Grading and Parent Consultations

Our school reports pupil progress (grades 1-8) using the A, B, C, D, F marking system.

A+	100%
A	93-99%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	64-66%
F	Below 64%

Report cards also report some competencies in terms of S (satisfactory), N (needs improvement), and U (unsatisfactory). Kindergarten report cards are standards based and report competencies in terms of O (outstanding – meets/exceeds standard), G (good – consistent progress toward meeting standard), S (satisfactory – on level, working toward meeting standard), and N (needs improvement – limited/no progress toward meeting standard). Report cards are issued four times a year (grades K-8) at the end of each quarter. Mid-quarter reports are given out in grades 1-8.

Parent-teacher consultations are conducted once a year at school during which your child's teacher discusses his or her progress. These consultations are held at the end of the first quarter. The second consultation is optional. However, parents should feel free to discuss their child's education at any time with their child's teacher.

Homework/Memory Work

There is time during the school day for children to study. Any work not finished at school should be completed at home. It is important for parents to show an interest in the child's work and give assistance when needed. As a student progresses through the grades, the amount of homework will generally increase on a gradual basis.

Memory work is an important part of the child's training in the truths of God's Word. Parents are urged to set aside a time to help their children in this daily work and to hear them recite the assignments before the children go to school. The skill of memorization is critical for future academic success, and the promises of God are vital to have in our hearts and minds.

Assignment notebooks are given to the children at the start of the year. Students in Grades 2 and above are responsible for recording their daily assignments, checking off what they have completed, bringing it home for you to review with them and return the next day. Please be sure to review your student's assignment notebook daily.

Formative Student Testing

To evaluate the progress of our students, and to inform classroom instruction, students in Grades K-8 will take the *NWEA MAP Growth* test. This formative test, administered in the fall, winter, and spring, is meant to identify student learning needs, student skill mastery, and academic growth.

Conduct

Students are expected to always conduct themselves as children of God. Love for Christ and obedience to His Word are essentials in the training children receive. Students are expected to display consideration for their fellow students and to treat all those placed over them with the honor and respect God asks in the Fourth Commandment.

If a child is repeatedly disruptive or disrespectful of the teacher, other students, or school property, the child's parents will be notified. The final responsibility of the child's conduct rests with the parents. Upon the recommendation of the teacher and the approval of the Board of Education, a student may be suspended or expelled for recurring incidents of misconduct. Suspension and expulsion are the last resorts after every other intervention has been exhausted.

School Uniforms

School uniforms are required dress for all class days and school field trips. Certain uniform items require our school logo and must be purchased from the *Lands' End* catalog or at the *Flynn and O'Hara* store in Lanham, MD. The *Lands' End* order department and *Flynn and O'Hara* will assist you in meeting the standards for all our school uniform wear.

The school uniform dress includes the following: red or white polo shirts with the school logo, navy dress pants, jumpers, skorts, and skirts. A fuller description of the many uniform options is available to you in the school office. To assist parents in dressing their students for success, teachers will notify parents if uniform issues arise.

Please make sure that all clothing is neat and clean. Children should also be dressed appropriately for the weather. Please send along a jacket to be worn outside as necessary and a sweater or sweatshirt with school logo to be worn as necessary. You may order long-sleeved polo shirts with the school logo for wearing during the cooler months. Proper shoes should always be worn.

Students are allowed to bring a pre-approved set of PE clothing. This includes a Divine Peace t-shirt and shorts/athletic pants. However, students are not required to change for physical education classes. A separate pair of gym shoes should be kept at school for gym use only.

Before School/After School Care

Our School provides a Before Care Program for our students. Students must be signed in before they receive care. Adult supervision begins at 7:15 am every day. This supervision is free of charge. Our goal is to meet your morning routine needs, and we want to make sure every student is ready to begin learning by 8:05 am every school day.

Our School also provides an Aftercare Program for our students. The school day ends at 3:30 pm, with a 15-minute pick-up period. After 3:45 pm, a student will be signed into the Aftercare program. Afterschool care is provided for students from 3:45-6:00 pm. Children will have playtime, snack time, and homework time until their ride arrives. The monthly rate for the Aftercare program is \$250. There is an additional \$50.00 charge for a second child. Parents may also make use of the program on an as-needed basis, with \$20 assessed for each day used. A late fee of \$25.00 is assessed after 6:05 p.m., plus \$1.00 per minute for each additional late minute.

Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to have cell phones turned on at school, school events, or on field trips. Cell phones and other electronic devices found in use at school during class, lunch, or recess hours will be held and returned to parents. Students may use school phones or a teacher's phone if contacting parents becomes necessary.

Field Trips

Field trips are very valuable learning experiences and pleasant diversions from classroom work. Trips to points of educational interest will be undertaken when possible. Written consent from the parents will be needed for each child on each trip. There will also be a need for adult volunteers to help with the transportation and the supervision of the children on the field trip. Field trip behavioral expectations will be received and reviewed by teachers, parents, and students prior to travel. Our goal is to represent our Savior, school, and selves to the best of our ability both inside and outside of the classroom.

Health Care

All children entering our school must have evidence of the necessary immunizations. Medical histories and immunization records will be kept up to date in each child's permanent file.

The school will not administer any medications.

Children who are ill should not be sent to school. If a child becomes ill during the day, parents will be notified to come and pick up their child from school. Children who are ill must be fever and/or vomit free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

First Aid

First aid will be administered by the staff for minor injuries which may occur on the playground or in the classroom. If an injury is of a more serious nature, parents will immediately be notified. If necessary, children will be taken to the emergency room of a local hospital or clinic.

School Closings

In cases of inclement weather, parents are advised to check the public service announcements for the decision of the Prince George's County Public Schools. If the County schools close, we also will close. If the County schools have an extended closure and we are equipped and prepared to open, parents will be notified.

Divine Peace School will **not** follow the County school system for delayed openings but will open at the regularly scheduled time. Divine Peace will also **not** close on those occasions when the County schools have an early dismissal.

School Lunches

Catered lunches can be ordered at the beginning of each month for those days desired. Students may also bring their own lunches.

Payment Collection Policy

The Board of Education receives a monthly report regarding the tuition payments of each family. Families that fail to make a tuition payment will be contacted. Missing one (1) tuition payment places a temporary suspension on a student's enrollment at Divine Peace until the missing payment **and** late fees are paid. Any suspension(s) totaling more than ten (10) school days will result in a recommendation of removal from Divine Peace Lutheran School.

Students with delinquent accounts or a history of suspensions will not be considered as returning students, but rather placed on the wait list as new students.

Nondiscriminatory Policy

Divine Peace Evangelical Lutheran School admits students of any sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered programs.