



Kempton New Church School

Handbook

Kempton New Church
Kempton New Church School
583 Hawk Mountain Road
P.O. Box 140
Kempton, PA 19529
(610) 756-6140
www.kncs.org

Rev. Brett D. Buick, Pastor and Principal
Dale R. Smith, Assistant Principal

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About the Kempton New Church School

OVERVIEW

The Kempton New Church School (KNCS) is a rural K-12 school located in northern Berks County, Pennsylvania. Founded by parents, it serves children who are baptized in the New Church. The enrollment average is 75-80, and the staff comprises full- and part-time teachers. It is one of nine schools in the international school system of the General Church of the New Jerusalem (GCNJ)*, which is based in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

** The GCNJ, often simply called the General Church, is the name of the denomination's incorporated governing body.*

THE NEW CHURCH

The Kempton New Church School exists to support parents in teaching their children the doctrines of the New Church. The New Church is based on the theological writings given through Emanuel Swedenborg, thirty-five volumes written between the years 1745 and 1772, which are considered to be Divine Revelation, the Lord's Second Coming. These works—called the Heavenly Doctrine (or the Writings)—explain the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture (also called the Word), the nature of God, the life of religion, and the nature of life after death. They describe a New Church, truly Christian.

At this day a New Church is being established by the Lord, which is meant by 'the New Jerusalem' in the Apocalypse. In it there will be the worship of the Lord alone, as it is in heaven. Thus everything which is contained in the Lord's Prayer from beginning to end will be fulfilled.

Apocalypse Revealed 839:7

The faith of the New Heaven and the New Church in universal terms is as follows: The Lord from eternity, who is Jehovah, came into the world to subdue the hells and to glorify His Human. Without this no mortal could have been saved, and those are saved who believe in Him.

True Christian Religion 2

The particulars of faith on man's part are these:

- God is one, in whom is the Divine Trinity, and He is the Lord God the Savior Jesus Christ.
- A saving faith is to believe in Him.
- Evil things must not be done because they are of the devil and from the devil.
- Good things must be done because they are of God and from God.
- These things must be done by man as if they were done by himself, but he must believe they are from the Lord working with him and through him.

True Christian Religion 3

THE PURPOSE OF THE KEMPTON NEW CHURCH SCHOOL

The focus of the Kempton New Church School is to help children develop into good neighbors and good citizens who know and care about what the Lord teaches, and who can be useful and happy members of society both in this life and the world to come. The primary aim is to teach them how to love the Lord and others, as in *Matthew 22:37*:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God in thy whole heart, and in thy whole soul, and in thy whole thought. This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Also, in *Arcana Coelestia* (8988:3):

Love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor are the very being of heaven and of the church.

These loves are the central theme and main purpose of New Church education. They are its life. Teachers and parents should always keep in mind that everything done in the school is meant to relate to them. Academic achievement, while useful, is not the highest thing in the end. Education is one of the means toward the end, which is living a useful life of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor. We therefore emphasize the following:

WORSHIP

Worship of the Lord is part of every day. It includes prayer, singing, reading from the Word, and instruction.

THE WORD

To make religion the true core of the school, all curriculum is continually developing to come more and more from a truly New Church perspective. The Sacred Scripture and Heavenly Doctrine should form the basis for teaching methods, teacher and student behavior, values, attitudes, work ethic, and respect for property. Students are taught the truths of the Word in morning worship, in regular religion classes, and their other classes as well. They memorize scriptural passages regularly. In addition, teachers and parents can grow their own knowledge, by attending church and doctrinal classes and studying the Word independently.

CHARITY

Students are taught to treat each other well, by both example and instruction. The emphasis is on maintaining a sphere of charity and good will in all relationships—among the students, among the adults, and between the adults and students—founded on obedience to the Lord's Word. Evils, which oppose charity, are to be shunned, as fleeing from evils is the primary way of gaining spiritual life. From *Apocalypse Explained* 1027:

Spiritual life is acquired solely by a life according to the commandments in the WORD. These commandments are given in a summary in the Decalogue, namely, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not murder, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet the goods of others. These commandments are the commandments that are to be done, for when a man does these, his works are good and his life is spiritual, because so far as a man shuns evils and hates them, so far he wills and loves goods.

A USEFUL LIFE

A key to the practice of charity is to learn to be useful both to oneself and to others. This is primarily taught at home, but at the school, too. The students are taught the importance of self-discipline, making an effort, taking initiative, and being cooperative and responsible. In addition to doing their schoolwork, they participate in chores and work parties that help maintain the school and grounds.

The four primary avenues just listed—worship, the WORD, charity, and a useful life—have many branches, but they all relate to our central purpose: to assist parents in encouraging the love for these things in their children. The promise of the New Church is that people can be led to a true worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, a life of uses, and conjugal (true marriage) love, and therefore to heaven, through the understanding and practice of the truths of the Lord's Second Coming.

OTHER IMPORTANT THEMES

PROTECTING INNOCENCE

One of the most precious qualities of childhood is innocence, which is defined in the Heavenly Doctrine as the willingness to be led by the Lord. Every effort is made to preserve that innocence and to use materials and methods that are appropriate to each age. We also have chaperone policies and rules about teacher-student relationships to protect everyone against the attacks of the hells. (See *Protection of Children* under *Organization*.)

SUPPORT FOR A NEW CHURCH APPROACH TO MARRIAGE

A truly New Church school will exhibit a love and support for what the Lord teaches about marriage. This includes support for providing appropriate male and female spheres for the different developmental needs of boys and girls through distinctly masculine and feminine activities and assignments. This sphere in regard to marriage cannot be maintained without the full support of the parents.

LEADING BY DELIGHT, USING THE POWER OF ULTIMATES

While discipline and obedience are essential, students' freedom is guarded carefully because freedom allows children to be led to understanding by means of delights. Leading by delights is promoted especially through *ultimates*, by which are meant the things which affect the five senses; the things of the three kingdoms of nature; the concrete rather than the abstract; and *doing* rather than simply listening and watching. Hands-on activities, being a form of ultimates, have the power to induce a love of learning. For this reason, we teach art, music, and handwork, for instance. The performing arts is also an area of focus: every student participates in at least one play or similar activity during the school year. Also appealing to the senses is the landscape in which the school sits; the surrounding farms, mountains, and woodlands make our science studies, which emphasize the wonders of the Lord's creation, especially delightful.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

The school was begun by parents, and its strength rests on their support and that of other members in the community. This is born out in several ways:

The Physical Plant: Parents and other congregants help maintain the buildings, keep the gardens, and do repairs and additions.

Volunteer Teaching and Tutoring: Parents and others spend hours in the school sometimes assist teachers, sometimes teaching whole courses. This is a tremendous asset to the school and is greatly appreciated.

Counsel: Important decisions are reached by discussion with faculty and parents. Major decisions, such as whether to build a new facility or whether to add a new grade, are made by a vote of the whole society.

Committees: Parents are also involved with others in committees for hiring, planning, building, etc. Maintaining and encouraging these activities keeps the ownership of the school in the hands of parents.

School Council: The school council exists to provide input to the school administration regarding important decisions such as hiring, school policies, and long-term planning. The school council will also be informed regularly on curriculum changes, event planning and other developments in the school for their input as they come up. The school council should feel free to pass on input from parents on these kinds of topics but should encourage parents to approach the administration directly on other more individual concerns

The Primacy of the Home: We recognize parents as the primary child-raising agency. In practical terms this means, among others things:

A Shorter School Day: Our day goes from 8:00 A.M. to 12:45 P.M., five days a week, 180 days a year, for 1st through 6th grades, with kindergarten having fewer days and hours, and older students having additional hours in certain afternoons. With this schedule, the majority of students can be home for lunch and free to spend the afternoons with their families.

These are some of the practices KNCS follows. The essential, however, is to keep the two great commandments—to love the Lord above all things, and our neighbors as ourselves.

A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1979, some members of the New Church living in Kempton decided they wanted their children to have a New Church education. In September of that year, under the leadership of Pastor Arne Bau-Madsen, they formed a school with ten students—from 1st through 4th grade—in a room rented from a local church. One of the parents, Yorvar Synnestvedt, an educator, was the head teacher, and the others taught alongside him. The next year, the group was given some property with two barns; one barn the parents converted into classrooms (one of the classrooms served as a church for the congregation on Sundays), and the other was used as a gym. The following year they hired another teacher.

Eventually more New Church families moved to the area. Around 1987, with a second gift to the group of more land and an additional barn, the whole plant underwent further conversions, accomplished partly by the parents, this time incorporating a separate dedicated church sanctuary, as well as more classrooms. By 1989, KNCS had over 60 students from kindergarten through 10th grade. In 2015, the 11th grade was added and, in 2016, the 12th grade. This expansion led to the construction of an altogether new addition to the facilities, which was ready for the 2019-2020 school year.

THE SCHOOL EMBLEM

The KNCS emblem is an eagle flying in front of the Pinnacle, the mountain peak which overlooks the school. The Writings say an eagle represents spiritual intelligence and freedom and the Lord watching over His children. The wings especially represent the Lord's power to lift us up to see the truths of the WORD. The mountain represents the strong, sure presence of His love.

“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place.” This signifies the Divine circumspection over that church, and its protection, which is as yet among a few.”

Revelation 12:14; Apocalypse Revealed 561

Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings as eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31

He found him in a desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness;
He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the pupil of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, flutters over its young, spreads abroad its wings, takes them, bears them on its wings, [so] Jehovah alone led him, and [there was] no strange god with him.

Deuteronomy 32: 10-12

Policies

ADMISSIONS¹

RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENT

Admission is open to children baptized into the New Church. Any child may be baptized whose parents believe in the teachings of the New Church. Concerning the importance of baptism, we read in *True Christian Religion 677*:

[Children] are introduced by baptism into the Christian heaven, and angels are there assigned to them to take care of them, by whom they are kept in a state of receiving faith in the Lord... Everyone is inserted among societies and congregations in the spiritual world according to the quality of the Christianity in him or around him.

¹ KNCS does not discriminate against individuals by reason of race, ethnic background, color, nationality, or sex.

Occasional exceptions to the above rule may be made in cases where the parents are not active in another church or religion and have demonstrated a sincere interest in looking toward baptism and inquiring affirmatively into the Heavenly Doctrine by reading; attending church and doctrinal classes; and welcoming regular pastoral visits for about a year before their child is enrolled. Admission is at the discretion of the pastor and the assistant principal. Re-enrollment from year to year is not automatic but is reviewed annually, and especially before entry into the middle school and high school.

The religious requirement for the Kempton New Church School also includes that the parents of the students fully support what the church teaches regarding marriage as outlined here:

The Lord created us male and female, and in so doing blessed us, so that we may be fruitful and multiply, both spiritually and naturally (Genesis 1:27-28). The Lord created the masculine and feminine to be complementary, completing each other in marriage. The masculine cannot be changed into the feminine, nor the feminine into the masculine, and therefore after death the male is male and the female is female (Conjugal Love 32). “In the male, the masculine is masculine in every part of his body, even the most minute, and also in every idea of his thought, and in every least impulse of his affection. And so is the feminine in the female” (Conjugal Love 33).

Marriage is the Lord’s institution, and He has designed it to be between one man and one woman. “The conjugal [or marriage] of one man with one wife is the precious jewel of human life, and the repository of the Christian religion” (Conjugal Love 457). “It is according to a law of Divine order that it is not marriage unless it is that of one man and one wife” (Arcana Coelestia 1907). “And He answering said to them, Have you not read that He who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, On this account shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What, therefore, God has joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4-6).

Marriage is to last at least until the end of life in this world and ideally to eternity (CL 216, 276). Adultery is the only just cause for divorce, and remarriage after a divorce is only permissible for the innocent spouse whose marriage ended due to adultery (Matthew 19:3-10; CL 276). Sexual relations are reserved for married partners. Outside of marriage they are acts against the order inscribed on conjugal love (CL 305). The sixth commandment, “thou shalt not commit adultery” was given to protect the holiness of marriage. For a married person, sexual relations with a person other than one’s spouse is adultery. The practice of homosexuality is a form of adultery as well, opposed to the sixth commandment (see e.g. Lev. 18:22; AC 6348.2 AE 434.16; 410.11). Adultery is defined more broadly in *True Christian Religion* as “willing and doing obscene things and thinking and speaking about lascivious things” (TCR 313).

Respect and love for these teachings is essential in order for the school to be New Church. The Lord teaches in *Conjugal Love* 80:2 that “the human conjugal and religion go together at every step” and in *Conjugal Love* 130 that “conjugal love is according to the state of the Church, because it is according to the state of wisdom with man.”

While students are encouraged to affirmatively inquire about and even affirmatively question the teachings of the church (see AC 2568)², students are expected to demonstrate respect for the holiness of marriage and be open to correction if necessary (see the applicable section in the code of conduct for more specifics). A New Church sphere in regard to marriage cannot be maintained without the full teamwork, collaboration and mutual support of the parents and school.

AGE REQUIREMENT

Children entering kindergarten should be five years old by the first of June in the spring before they enter kindergarten. Children entering first grade should be six years old by the first of June in the spring before they enter first grade.

TUITION AND EXPENSES

The Kempton New Church (KNC) congregation provides substantial support for the school. Tuition rates are set by the KNC Board of Trustees and represent about 20% of the actual cost per student. We want the school to be available to all New Church families in the area and do not want tuition to discourage parents from having children.

Students supply some of their own notebooks, pens, and pencils. The children are also occasionally asked to bring money for a special class or school trip, since the school does not normally pay for field trip admissions. Requests of this sort are communicated to parents directly.

HEALTH RECORDS

Pennsylvania law requires us to maintain certain medical records. We provide parents with the forms that need to be filled out and returned to us. Students may not be admitted without the following:

- *Report of a Dental Examination:* Required for new students and those entering Kindergarten, 3rd grade, and 7th grade.
- *Report of a Physician's Examination:* Required for new students and those entering Kindergarten, 6th grade, and 11th grade.
- *Record of Immunization:* A print-out of the vaccinations the student has received. Acquired by parents from the physician's office. Required for new students and those entering Kindergarten, 7th grade, and 12th grade. (Pennsylvania law allows parents to claim a philosophical/religious exemption to immunizations for their children.)
- *KNCS Health Information and Consent for Emergency Treatment form:* Provides the school with emergency contact information for students, among other things.

² *Arcana Coelestia* 2568 states, "There are therefore two principles; one of which leads to all folly and insanity, and the other to all intelligence and wisdom. The former principle is to deny all things, or to say in the heart that we cannot believe them until we are convinced by what we can apprehend, or perceive by the senses; this is the principle that leads to all folly and insanity, and is to be called the negative principle. The other principle is to affirm the things which are of doctrine from the Word, or to think and believe within ourselves that they are true because the Lord has said them: this is the principle that leads to all intelligence and wisdom, and is to be called the affirmative principle....Moreover there are some who are in doubt before they deny, and there are some who are in doubt before they affirm. They who are in doubt before they deny are they who incline to a life of evil; and when this life carries them away, then insofar as they think of the matters in question they deny them. But they who are in doubt before they affirm are they who incline to a life of good; and when they suffer themselves to be bent to this by the Lord, then insofar as they think about those things so far they affirm."

ORGANIZATION

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Our first responsibility is to keep the children in our care safe from abuse by adults or other children, and protected from being allowed to get into damaging habits. In a safe, orderly environment, children can grow up well.

In our denomination as well as in others, there have been instances of abuse of children by priests and teachers. We must be on guard to protect the innocence of children. Here are some ways we are trying to be careful at the Kempton New Church and KNCS:

- In sermons and classes, we discuss the protection of innocence as one of the chief duties of parents and of all adults. We also discuss the state of the fallen Christian Church within us and around us, and the desire of the hells to destroy innocence.
- The chaperones for KNCS and church young people's overnight co-ed trips ideally include at least one married couple (husband and wife).
- From time to time, we have discussions in faculty meetings—male and female faculty separately and together—about potential issues at the school and how to protect the children and the faculty.
- Informally, there is much discussion among parents about appropriate behavior and monitoring.
- We comply with the law by obtaining for every teacher a Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check, Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, and FBI fingerprint clearance.
- School personnel are bound by Pennsylvania law to report whenever there exists reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected. We follow the General Church Child Protection Policy—Guarding Against Sexual Abuse. The General Church Abuse Committee may be informed of allegations involving church members or students. Teachers and administrators are not permitted to investigate any case. Civil authorities decide whether to investigate and conduct an investigation. Judgment is necessary to determine reasonable cause, but the reporting standard has been intentionally set at a low level by the state to encourage reporting.

STUDENT SUPPORT LIMITATIONS

We know that parents of children with special needs are as eager for them to enjoy the benefits of a New Church education as any parents in the church. When learning disabilities or special needs are identified, we determine what support we are able to offer within our budgetary and personnel constraints. We do not have a separate special education program, and we may not be able to accommodate children with serious behavioral or emotional problems. We do, however, have a special-education coordinator on the staff and have been able to modify curriculum and requirements to suit certain students. Sometimes a special-needs student will take courses at home or elsewhere while attending some of our regular classes. We are pleased to do what we can.

CARE OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Our paid maintenance staff is minimal. Teachers are responsible for keeping their own

classroom clean, and students do regular chores in school as part of their learning (see *The School Day*). Volunteers take care of the gardens and contribute to upkeep in other ways as well. We have work parties in which all members of the congregation—adults and children—are invited to participate, to help keep our facilities clean and orderly. The lawns are mowed by a professional service.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and teachers about school matters is important, whether it happens in person or by other means. In addition to individual student reports, organized ways of communicating include:

- *The KNC Note Home* – published weekly during the school year
- *The KNC Newsletter* – published monthly
- Class meetings for parents, especially at the beginning of the year
- Parent-Teacher conferences
- Report Cards

ACADEMICS

CURRICULUM

In a broad sense, curriculum includes all the experiences children have at school. We try to integrate our courses to help students see the connections between the things they learn. KNCS generally follows the curriculum suggested for use in all General Church schools.

We have two grades in each classroom, which are generally treated as a unit, following a curriculum that alternates year by year. The first and second grade classroom, for example, follows the first-grade curriculum one year and the second-grade curriculum the next. In subjects where the material taught in one year is prerequisite to that taught the following year, such as with math and foreign language, the grades are taught separately.

ATTENDANCE

Absence and lateness are impediments to any school program. Instances of these are recorded on report cards. If a child is sick, parents must let his or her teachers know as soon as possible. If he or she misses three consecutive days of school or has frequent absences, the school may request a doctor's note.

Exams: High school students are expected to attend all of their classes during mid-semester exam week and final exam week. In the event of illness or an emergency, a make-up exam is permitted after being approved by the teacher.

EVALUATIONS AND RECORDS

We meet with parents and also maintain a student's written records—as listed below—throughout his or her schooling. Records are confidential, but parents are free to inspect those of their own child at any time (adult alumni may have access to their own records). Parents can expect:

- Parent-teacher mid-semester conferences in fall and spring. These are required for K-7th in the fall, K-6th in the spring, and for any other student whose parent or teacher requests a conference.

- A mid-semester report of grades for 7th-12th in fall and spring
- Full report card for all students at the end of each semester.
- Standardized tests: The Iowa Assessments tests are given to the 3rd-8th grade yearly. They measure how well students perform in certain basic areas in relation to students throughout the United States and in the General Church school system.
- Medical records: See above.
- Results of any special testing (health, academic, psychological, etc.)

GRADING SYSTEM

Excellent	90 - 100	A
Good	80 - 89	B
Fair	70 - 79	C
Fail	0 - 69	F

HOMEWORK

Homework serves multiple purposes. Any given assignment may provide

- reinforcement and extension of what has been covered in school;
- an opportunity to be creative; and
- practice in responsibility and independent work.

Homework guidelines are given below, though more or less time may be required on any given day. The guidelines do not assume a particular skill level as much as they do good habits, which parents can do much to help their children develop. Establishing a routine and having a reasonably quiet place in which to do homework saves students time and frustration. We hope their time at home will not be dominated by homework and that they will have time to play, follow their own interests, and do things with their family.

1 st & 2 nd grade	15 min, 3 days/week
3 rd & 4 th grade	30-45 min/day
5 th & 6 th grade	45-75 min/day
7 th & 8 th grade	75-120 min/day
9 th - 12 th grade	100-180 min/day

TAKING AND GIVING TESTS AT HOME

Often the need arises for the administration of a test or quiz at home—as make-up from an absence or for a failed grade. Staying after school sometimes presents problems for students and parents as well as for teachers, so parental willingness to help with this is appreciated.

Guidelines: A test should be administered by a parent (or other adult) only, not a sibling. The adult should be present for the time the student is taking the test, making sure all books and papers have been put away before the student begins. The test comes in a sealed envelope. Also provided is an envelope in which to seal the completed test, with a place for the adult's signature. By signing, the adult confirms that the test arrived in a sealed envelope, that the test was given according to the guidelines, and that he or she sealed the envelope after the test was completed.

THE SCHOOL DAY

ARRIVAL

1st-12th grade (Monday-Friday)

- 7:45 A.M. Homeroom time begins (students may not arrive before 7:45 A.M.).
- 8:00 A.M. First bell. Signals quiet time for 1st-8th grade and start of classes for 9th-12th grade.
- 8:03 A.M. Second bell. Signals the end of quiet time and the beginning of the school day for 1st-8th grade.

Kindergarten (Monday-Thursday)

- 9:15 A.M. Homeroom time begins (students may not arrive before 9:15 A.M.).
- 9:30 A.M. Class begins.

WORSHIP

Worship of the Lord is part of every day. Students gather for this in different configurations depending on their grade level and the day of the week. The services take place either in the church sanctuary, classrooms, or the Commons.

CLASS SCHEDULES

These are available from teachers or the school secretary.

CHORES

Students help take care of their classrooms and the buildings as part of their education. For twenty minutes twice a week they do such things as empty wastebaskets, sweep, wash windows, and clean the art room.

FITNESS

Daily, kindergarten through 6th grade play supervised active games for between 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the day. 7th-12th grade P.E. classes are held less often than this during the week, but for longer periods.

DISMISSAL

12:45 P.M.	Kindergarten	Monday—Thursday
	1 st - 6 th	Monday—Friday
	7 th - 8 th	Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
	9 th - 12 th	Monday—Friday
2:45 P.M.	7 th - 8 th	Tuesday and Thursday
	9 th - 12 th	Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

THE SCHOOL YEAR

The school year is 180 days. It usually begins in early September and ends in early June, depending on snow days and holidays.

SNOW DAYS AND DELAYS

When school needs to be called off due to weather, or we have a delay, parents receive an automated phone call or a call from a teacher (ideally between 6:00 and 6:30 A.M.).

POWER OUTAGES

If we lose electricity during the day, we contact parents and ask them to pick up their children.

TRIPS

SCHOOL TRIPS

Teachers are encouraged to organize field trips to reinforce classroom studies and inspire student interest. Permission slips, seat belts for all travelers, and chaperones are required for all trips.

FAMILY TRIPS WHEN SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

Sometimes children miss several days of school to go on a family trip. Parents must evaluate the usefulness of such trips relative to the challenges of their child(ren) missing school and the extra demands it puts on them and the teachers. If you are planning to remove your child(ren) from school for travel, here are some reminders of what will make it easier for them and for KNCS:

- First, notify the assistant principal as soon as you know your child(ren) will be absent.
- Contact each of your child(ren)'s teachers to find out what he or she will miss and how to make it up.
- Allocate some extra time when they return to help your child(ren) with learning new material. Expect them to spend additional time either after school or on homework when they return. With enough warning, homework can sometimes be assigned and completed in advance.
- Course credit may be affected by absence in the high school.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Word—and especially the Ten Commandments—forms the basis for KNCS's standards of behavior. The faculty together sets guidelines that apply to the whole school, and the classroom teachers make policies for their own classrooms.

CHARITABLE BEHAVIOR

The moral development of a child is the foundation of his or her spiritual development. Students learn about virtues such as honesty, industry, modesty, courtesy, and friendship in school—in the classroom, on the sports field, and during social times. It is essential that we maintain an atmosphere of charity and order that promotes learning on all levels.

To this end, our teachers outline the behavior expected of students both inside and outside the classroom. Students are guided in their relationships with each other as well as with adults, the staff seeking a good-natured relationship with them that builds their trust and encourages their willingness to be led. They are chaperoned and supported in moral behavior overall, while being given an appropriate level of freedom to help them begin to develop their own moral compass. All students are required to exercise common courtesy at all times, everywhere. To support them in establishing good habits, KNCS has certain expectations for behavior.

COURTESY

We require students to exercise civility, which means –

- maintaining reverence during worship to honor our Lord.
- demonstrating respect during flag salutes, whether in an assembly or in a classroom, to show love for our country.
- showing respect and care for all adults and peers, which acknowledges that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- addressing adults as “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” or “Miss” and using polite expressions such as "please" and "thank you" with everyone.
- no hitting, kicking, or taunting anyone. Badgering, ridiculing, physical- or cyber-bullying, or other abuse of fellow students or teachers is not tolerated.
- respecting the belongings of others, which includes school property. No littering, or mutilating, defacing, or otherwise harming our buildings and their contents, including textbooks.

DISCIPLINE

KNCS works closely with parents to support their children in amending their behavior if needed. Teachers may employ both rewards and punitive consequences to maintain order in their classrooms. It may sometimes be necessary for students to be kept in the classroom during recess or lunch or even after school.

Warning

A student who commits an offense that is problematic enough to warrant him or her being sent to the assistant principal will receive a warning.

1. First time: The assistant principal will counsel the student, fill out a discipline card for the incident, and will contact the parents.

Repeated Offenses

2. Second time: The assistant principal will counsel the student, fill out a discipline card for the incident, contact the parents, and assign detention to the student.
3. Third time: In addition to #2, the teacher and assistant principal will ask the parents to come in for a conference. The student will be given detention and may be put on behavioral probation. (See *The Consequences of Repeated or Serious Offenses.*)

Serious Offenses

There are occasions that require direct consequences. Serious offenses include:

1. PHYSICAL CONTACT THAT INTENTIONALLY CAUSES BODILY HARM
Examples: hitting, biting, scratching, kicking, spitting, shoving.
2. INTENTIONALLY CAUSING EMOTIONAL OR PHYSICAL DISTRESS;
PUSHING BEYOND THE LIMITS OF RESPECT BY USING ABUSIVE LANGUAGE OR ACTIONS; THREATENING, INSULTING, TAUNTING, OR BULLYING OTHERS
Examples: saying "I'll kill you!", "I'll hurt you if you tell", "You're fat", or "You're ugly"; making racial or sexual slurs or disrespectful nonverbal gestures; bullying.

Definition of bullying: Any intentionally hostile or offensive verbal, written, graphic, demonstrative, or physical act that has the purpose of exerting domination over another student through the act of intimidating, frightening, hazing, oppressing, or adversely affecting the student, or that is disruptive to the educational process. This may include, but is not limited to, verbal, graphic, or written activities such as name-calling, taunting, writing derogatory notes, blackmailing, inciting to fight, terrorizing, or physical activities such as poking, blocking or impeding, following, hair-pulling, mock-hitting, motions, intentionally bumping, tripping, and damaging clothing.

Obscene or profane language: Matthew 15:11 says, “Not that which enters into the mouth defiles the man, but that which comes out of the mouth, this defiles the man.” Therefore, a student who uses obscene or profane language, either in jest, in anger, or absent-mindedly, will be subject to school discipline. Suggestive remarks or actions will be treated similarly.

3. DISRESPECT FOR NEW CHURCH TEACHINGS ON MARRIAGE

Examples: gender expression inconsistent with biological sex; inappropriate touching, caressing, and other physical contact between students of the same sex or complementary sex; sexual innuendo of any sort; obscene language as identified above; pornography; displaying of LGBTQIA+ symbols or promotional material; disparagement of others for espousing New Church teachings on marriage.

4. GROSS RUDENESS OR DISRESPECT TO ANYONE

Examples: blatant refusal to cooperate, sassing a teacher, mocking, lying, disrespect in general.

5. VIOLATIONS OF THE CIVIL LAW

Examples: battery, theft, vandalism, slander, substance abuse.

6. FAILURE TO ATTEND CLASSES OR OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Examples: truancy, going off campus without permission.

7. ABUSE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Examples: deliberate computer file corruption; bullying via social media; inappropriate usage, content, or images.

8. CHEATING

Examples:

On homework - Asking for help from teachers and parents when stuck on homework is very useful. Working on homework with a friend is sometimes permissible, depending on the teacher and the subject (ask the individual instructor). However, a student must hand in only his or her own work. Students must not lend their papers or homework to another student or copy each other's work. Both the lender and the copier are guilty of cheating. Classroom policies will be more specific.

On tests and exams - Looking at a neighbor's paper, whispering, or otherwise supplying the answers during a test, quiz, or exam is cheating. Using Google or the internet to search for answers during a test is also cheating. Discussing questions or answers with someone who was absent and has not yet taken the test is also cheating.

Plagiarism – The University of Oxford defines plagiarism as, “...presenting someone

else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement..."³ Plagiarism is a form of stealing and is considered cheating.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Contract Cheating – using AI tools to complete assignments is considered cheating. Contract cheating is using "...a third party to do work, such as writing an essay or taking an exam, on a student's behalf."⁴ Using another party to complete an assignment and then handing it in as if it is your own work is considered cheating.

The Consequences of Repeated or Serious Offenses

1. **DETENTION:** A student will receive 30 minutes of detention for lighter offenses, 60 minutes for worse offenses, and 90 minutes for still worse offenses.
2. **BEHAVIORAL PROBATION:** Any student who receives 120 minutes of detention in a semester will go into behavioral probation. A student involved in a serious offense may go into probation. Behavioral probation lasts for eight weeks. It involves a family meeting with the assistant principal, and a behavior card. If a student on probation receives an additional detention during the probationary period, he or she will be subject to suspension. Any student on probation will not be allowed to participate in field trips and any other activities mentioned in the behavior card, effective immediately.
3. **SUSPENSION:** A student will be suspended from school for a minimum of one day when other means of discipline fail, when further disciplinary action is needed, or when the offense is quite serious. A student is responsible for making up any missed work. A student may not be able to make up certain class work.
4. **EXPULSION:** The last resort is expulsion, when other disciplinary methods have failed to help a student amend his or her behavior or when the behavior is too serious for other methods to be appropriate. Expulsion can be from a class or classes, or from school altogether.

The Purpose and Hope of Discipline

As many as I love, I reprove and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will have supper with him, and he with Me.

Revelation 3:19-20

TECHNOLOGY

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

If a student brings an electronic device to school such as a phone, iPod, or tablet that connects to the internet, the device must remain powered off and in a back pack or locker the whole time the student is at school, unless the student receives special permission from a teacher to get out the device and turn it on. The same is true on field trips.

³ <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>

⁴ <https://academictech.uchicago.edu/2023/01/23/combating-academic-dishonesty-part-6-chatgpt-ai-and-academic-integrity/>

EARBUDS AND HEADPHONES

Students may use earbuds or headphones only in study hall or with teacher permission in a class. During study hall, they may use earbuds or headphones to listen to appropriate music. If any student chooses inappropriate music, music privileges will be revoked for all students.

DRESS CODE

Because we are here to learn, KNCS emphasizes that clothing should reflect this use and not distract from it. In addition, our religious philosophy dictates that dress should be modest and appropriate to the setting, for both boys and girls. Note: These guidelines also apply to clothing worn to school opening, school closing, and on field trips.

- Clothes and shoes need to allow students to participate in a variety of school activities without being distracting.
- Clothing needs to be clean and free of rips, frayed edges, stains, and holes
- No bare feet, hats inside, untied shoe laces, flip-flops, or exposed undergarments, or any garment that looks out of place in school
- If there is writing or imagery on clothing, it needs to be acceptable for a church-school setting.
- In addition, writing on the back needs to be covered up or removed when chapel is held in the church.
- No distracting accessories and hair styles

As children move beyond 6th grade, we find the need for additional rules. Please contact the school office to obtain a copy of those that pertain to the 7th-12th grade.

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS AS ROLE MODELS, TEACHERS, AND MESSENGERS FOR THE NEW CHURCH

The employees and volunteers of the Kempton New Church School are all role models as well as teachers and messengers for the faith and life of the New Church. Therefore, the lifestyles and speech of KNCS paid and volunteer staff are expected to reflect a commitment to living in accordance with what the Lord teaches in the Sacred Scripture and the Heavenly Doctrine, with the Ten Commandments as a primary focus. An important part of being a KNCS staff member includes looking for opportunities to teach the truths of the New Church and lead by example in one's various roles at KNCS. This commitment includes the practice of repentance as we continually fall short.

Because the role of a KNCS staff member differs from employment and volunteer roles in other contexts, it is important to state clearly what it means for a KNCS employee or volunteer to be a role model, teacher and messenger of the faith and life of the New Church. This is particularly important in regard to marriage and sexuality because not all New Church organizations have the same view on these matters. Just as support for these teachings stated on pages 5, 6, and 7 of this handbook is a requirement for admissions, it is also a requirement for employment and volunteer roles at the school.

Because KNCS employees and volunteers are all role models, teachers and messengers for the faith and life of the New Church, it would not be charitable for the Kempton New Church School to employ or receive volunteer help from a person engaging in a homosexual, bisexual, transgender or otherwise adulterous lifestyle. Employees and volunteers are expected to refrain from public support for cohabitation, or any sexual activity outside of the marriage of one man and one woman, as well as from support for homosexual, bisexual or transgender lifestyles. Employees and volunteers are expected to refrain from the use of social media to promote activity that goes against marriage (or could reasonably be understood to do so) or be members of organizations whose missions are incompatible with New Church teachings on marriage.

FROM THE WORD

Hear, O Israel; Jehovah is our God; Jehovah is one. And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy forces. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy sons, and shalt speak of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest in the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt tie them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

And they brought to Him little children, that He should touch them; and the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was indignant, and said to them, Let the little children come to Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen I say to you, whoever shall not accept the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter into it. And having taken them up in His arms, and set His hands upon them, He blessed them.

Mark 10:13-16

All instruction is simply an opening of the way; and as the way is opened, or what is the same, as the vessels are opened, there thus flow in, as before said, in their order, rational things that are from celestial spiritual things; into these flow the celestial spiritual things; and into these, celestial things. These celestial and spiritual things are continually presenting themselves, and are also preparing and forming for themselves the vessels which are being opened; which may also be seen from the fact that in themselves the memory-knowledge and rational are dead, and that it is from the inflowing interior life that they seem to be alive.

Arcana Coelestia 1495