



2026 – 2027

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

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DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF COMMON BELIEF

The elementary schools of the Diocese of Charleston offer learning communities that are formed by the Catholic faith and deeply rooted in an appreciation for the dignity of the human person as “created in the image and likeness of God”.

This foundational belief informs the schools’ mission, visions, and approaches.

Similarly, all the schools deeply appreciate the infinite value of human life from life’s very beginning to its natural end, in all. This foundational belief impacts the approach to everything that the schools do.

“Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person – among which is inviolable right of every innocent being.”

Based upon this belief in human life, the elementary schools of the Diocese of Charleston are led to be fully welcoming communities. They welcome families of diverse backgrounds that seek a Catholic education for their children. They value all students, acknowledge their unique gifts, and believe diversity and inclusion are blessings that enrich their communities. (See <https://sites.google.com/stanneschool.net/doc-teacher-toolbox/catholic-identity-and-inclusion>. **Their missions direct them to help students rise above cultural insensitivity and to teach them to treat all men and women, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or political background, with the utmost respect and dignity that every child of God deserves.** Each empowers and encourages students to act for justice and to become Christ-like leaders filled with empathy and respect for all –both within their own schools as well as within the greater global society.

“Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the fourfold purpose of Christian education, namely, to provide an atmosphere in which the Gospel message is proclaimed, community in Christ is experienced, service to our sisters and brothers is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of our God is cultivated.” (US Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005).

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

“To prepare young people for their future
life in Church and society.”

This mission is attained as it encompasses:

- Educational activities which allow every student to reach his/her potential.
- Formal instructions and formation in which the students develop the beliefs, values, and traditions of Catholic Christianity.

More distinctly, Catholic schools of the Diocese of Charleston are educational centers where faith is part of the school’s culture and in which all members of the school community share this Christian vision. The Catholic schools are asked to “integrate all aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught in the light of the Gospel.”

-The Catholic School, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome, 19 March 1977.

THE DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS GOALS

- To ensure the proclamation of the message of the Gospel in every elementary and secondary school of the Diocese of Charleston.
- To encourage the building of a faith community among students, faculty, administration, parent(s)/guardian(s) and parishioners.
- To instill the importance of service to one another as an obligation of living in a Christian community
- To develop in students the Christian principles of peace and justice.
- To assist and support the schools in their endeavors to be educational institutions of academic excellence and centers for moral formation.
- To ensure quality Catholic education by maintaining high standards in teaching and learning.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ,
which will prepare us for outstanding achievements in all aspects of life.
Our education will enable us to realize spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social growth in a
safe, disciplined, family-oriented environment.

† Virtue †
† Academic Excellence †
† Discipleship †

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL OBJECTIVES

- To assist parent(s)/guardian(s) in fulfilling their role as primary educators of their children.
- To nurture sound relationships between home and school.
- To recognize and respect the dignity of everyone.
- To provide academic programs that will promote continuous student growth in building competence in critical analysis, inquiry, problem solving, and creative thinking that will prepare them for the future.
- To teach moral and spiritual values to instill a spirit of service to Christ and His Church at school, in the parish, at home, and community.
- To provide experiences which develop leadership, initiative, dependability, and self-discipline.
- To develop technological proficiency and awareness of global and environmental concerns.
- To introduce students to the Fine Arts and to provide opportunities for creative activities that will inspire an appreciation for the good, the true, and the beautiful in God's world.
- To create a nurturing school community that fosters the development of a positive self-image and independent learners with appropriate social interactions.

(Revised August 2023)

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL GOALS

Goal #1 – Catholic Identity

St. Joseph Catholic School will engage the clergy, school families, faculty, staff, parishioners, and community at large in active participation in the mission of our school.

Goal #2 – Ownership/Governance

The governance and ownership of the administration and operation of St. Joseph Catholic School involves closely linked relationships between the Diocese, School Board, Parish Counsel, Financial Advisory Board, and Parent Teacher Organization.

Goal #3 – Enrollment

St. Joseph Catholic School will attract new students while retaining existing students through market awareness of our academic excellence and enhancing interpersonal relationships with school families.

Goal #4 – Curriculum

St. Joseph Catholic School will maintain academic excellence by supporting teachers and staff and ensuring that the teachers are provided with adequate resources, texts and teaching materials.

Goal #5 – Staffing

St. Joseph Catholic School will maintain and support the highest quality teaching staff to empower the students to strive toward their maximum potential academically and spiritually.

Goal #6 – Facilities

St. Joseph Catholic School will develop and implement a facility master plan to address the school's current and future needs.

Goal #7 – Finances

St. Joseph Catholic School shall establish, coordinate, and maintain, through the School Advisory Board, an integrated plan for the oversight of financial activities that includes internal financial control procedures and a process of reporting the results regularly to the entire School Board, Principal, and Pastor.

Goal #8 – Development

St. Joseph Catholic School will lead marketing, development, and fundraising to support the continued operation and growth of the school, as well as the goals and objectives set by the School Advisory Board.

Goal #9 – School in the Community

St. Joseph Catholic School will increase awareness through specific marketing, community service-learning programs and a direct communication process with the parish, neighboring parishes, area churches, and the community at large.

POLICY ON LITERATURE AND ARTS

Catholic life, theology, and education are oriented to the pursuit of the good, the true, and the beautiful. Works of literature and art are creative endeavors that reflect the creator God. Good, true, and beautiful literature and art should point, implicitly or explicitly, to the Triune God. The goal of literature and art should be to draw those engaging with it into a deeper understanding of or a deeper relationship with God. Literature and art are essential components of any Catholic education as demonstrated by the Church's history as well as the Church's (or its members') production of the world's finest literature and art. Sacred literature, art, and music play pivotal roles in liturgy and the furnishing of sacred spaces. Classical literature and sacred art help people explore human struggles and probe divine mysteries. Therefore, St. Joseph Catholic School actively integrates classical literature and sacred art/music into the curriculum as well as the extracurricular life of our students, using the litmus test of goodness, truth, and beauty as our guide. Literature and art should never harm faith, piety, nor scandalize the faithful in any way.

POLICY ON HUMAN SEXUALITY PROGRAMS

Sexual education is, in the Catholic view, the fundamental right and duty of parents, not of schools. The home and family, as demonstrated by the Holy Family, is the domestic church. It serves students best to encounter the meaning of sexuality within their domestic church under the indispensable guidance of their parents informed by Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church.

Therefore, St. Joseph Catholic School does not provide nor administer any formal or comprehensive human sexuality programs. However, adjacent elements of human sexuality may be taught in age and developmentally appropriate ways within the curriculum. For example, marriage is taught as a sacrament and chastity as a virtue.

POLICY ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

St. Joseph Catholic School aligns fully with the teachings of both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition on the issue of human sexuality (Gen. 1:27; CCC para 355, 356, & 357). In acknowledging that God is perfect and lovingly knit each person together in his/her mother's womb (Psalm 139:13-14), and in accordance with truth, SJCS recognizes that biological sex and gender identity are not fluid or changeable—they are in fact inseparable from one another. Because God created human male and female, SJCS only recognizes these two distinct biological categories. Students will be identified by their biological sex in the admissions process, in all official school records and correspondence, interpersonally, and in conversations with or about the student. A student's biological sex also pre-determines which restrooms, locker rooms, and athletic teams a student may access. Pronouns that do not align with a student's biological sex will not be used. Students must adhere to the dress code assigned to their biological sex.

SJCS views marriage as a sacrament between one man and one woman for life and ordered for the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children (CCC para 1601). Further, SJCS holds to the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* on issues of marriage, artificial contraception, abortion, and sterilization. SJCS promotes and upholds the virtue of chastity according to one's vocation. The school also teaches and promotes the virtues of temperance, modesty, self-control, abstinence, and fortitude, which equip students to live chastely in their vocations.

SJCS prohibits any education materials or activities that conflict with the above policy. SJCS will also not hire or retain any employee nor approve or retain any volunteer in outward conflict with this policy.

POLICY ON THE ROLE OF SPORTS IN HUMAN FORMATION

At St. Joseph Catholic School, we view the role of sports in human formation as linking the body to the soul. Humans are created in the image of God and given a flesh and blood body. The body has something to do with the soul, and the soul has something to do with the body. While distinct, they cannot be separated. Scripture refers to the body as being a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) and the Incarnation shows God indwelling human flesh. Appropriate and ordered human athletic activity can glorify God and develop virtue in people (e.g. humility, courage, fortitude). Athletics should always firstly be ordered to human spiritual formation instead of sheer competition, personal glory and reputation, and/or profit. Therefore, SJCS encourages athletic pursuits as a means of glorifying God through care of the body and the pursuit of the full physical faculties and skills of which the human body is capable, with an eye toward prioritizing the spiritual benefits over the physical.

ADMISSIONS

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

In fidelity to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and the philosophy of the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Charleston, which is based on the Christian social principles of the gospel message to love and respect the rights of all people and recognize that all human beings are created in the divine image with inalienable dignity, it is the policy of this member school, St. Joseph Catholic School, to ensure that no applicant or student be discriminated against based on race, color, sex, ethnicity, and/or national origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship, athletics, or other school administered programs.

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

All Applicants:

- Health Records
- Immunization records
- Birth certificate
- Report cards
- Standardized Test Results
- Record of IEP or SAP

Catholic Applicants Only:

- Requirements listed above
- Baptism Certificate
- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Use of weekly envelopes or automatic deposit

AIDS POLICY

Students will not be denied admission nor be expelled solely based on HIV infection. The Universal Blood and Body Fluid Precautions will be consistently used on campus.

ADMISSION GUIDELINES

The education of a child is a partnership between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and St. Joseph Catholic School. Just as the parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to withdraw their child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken. The following are our guidelines:

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) who seek to enroll their children in St. Joseph Catholic School must embrace and support the philosophy and values of the school. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are required to sign all the necessary compliance documents prior to their child's admission to the school.
- A child must be four years of age by September 1st of the school year to be admitted into 4K.
- A child must be five years of age by September 1st of the school year to be admitted into Kindergarten.
- A child must be six years of age by September 1st of the school year to be admitted into First Grade.
- Students applying for admission in grades 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Joseph Catholic School will meet the educational needs of the student(s).
- Once an application is approved, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must present an original birth certificate, a baptismal certificate (for Catholic children), a SC immunization document, and pay the current school registration fee.

- All new students will be given a trial period of not less than 60 days in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically a fit in St. Joseph Catholic School's educational setting. This probationary period is to ensure that St. Joseph Catholic School and your family can have a mutually beneficial relationship.
- If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Joseph Catholic School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final.
- Current students will be offered an opportunity to pre-register for the following academic year before registration is open to the public. Students who are **not pre-registered** will be admitted on a space-available basis with the same priority as the public.

All families are expected to support the school by giving their time, talents, and financial support.

All Catholic families receiving a Catholic rate are required to attend Mass regularly and contribute using weekly envelopes or the online giving platform.

ADMISSION GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- When a special needs child applies for enrollment, the administration and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet to define the child's special needs and the school's ability to meet those needs. This meeting may include a conference and/or a shadow day with the child.
- St. Joseph Catholic School is limited in its human capital resources and will make **reasonable** accommodations for learning differences when possible. St. Joseph Catholic School cannot accommodate students who have **extraordinary** learning differences.
- If after admission, the educational and/or behavioral needs of a student exceed what would be considered **reasonable**, it may be in the best interest of the student to discontinue attendance at St. Joseph Catholic School. This decision will be made in dialogue with the principal, teachers involved, and the parent(s)/guardian(s). This will be done for the benefit of the student for the student's educational and/or behavioral needs to be fully met in another more suitable educational setting.

ADMISSIONS PLACEMENT

Acceptance and placement may be based on the results of St. Joseph Catholic School entrance testing and records from previous years.

As previously stated, new students are on probation for 60 days of the school year to determine if they are in the most appropriate educational setting. Student academic performance, attitude, effort, conduct, parental support, and interaction are factors under consideration. The administration, in consultation with the teacher and parent(s)/guardian(s), will make the final decision.

ADMISSION PRIORITY

St. Joseph Catholic School admits qualified students with first preference given to Catholic children of St. Joseph Catholic Church parishioners and then to all children, in the following order of priority:

1. Currently enrolled students
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students
3. Catholic students from St. Joseph Catholic Church
4. Catholic students from parishes other than St. Joseph Catholic Church
5. Children of other faiths from within the community

REENROLLMENT

All current K5-7th grade students will automatically be reenrolled for the next school year at the end of January. The Special Discount rate will be charged to FACTS, or invoiced, unless **written notification** of student withdrawal is received. Current PreK student (K3 and K4) reenrollment will be on a first come, first served. You must notify the office to secure a spot.

At that time, any family seeking financial assistance will need to apply for Grant & Aid through the FACTS Family Portal. Only students that are enrolled will be eligible to receive financial assistance. After the application period ends for Grant & Aid, financial aid will be distributed, and tuition contracts will be ready for signatures in May.

TUITION & FUNDRAISING POLICIES

St. Joseph Catholic Church has established a tuition policy at our parish school designed to give the opportunity for all Catholic parent(s)/guardian(s) desiring a Catholic education for their children. The current tuition amounts are listed on the Tuition Fee sheet. Parish status will determine your tuition rate.

The tuition and fees account for approximately 60% of the school operating budget. The other 40% comes from donations, fundraisers, and the parish subsidy. The pastor and the principal work together to ensure that families are not overburdened with a constant stream of fundraising events.

It is not fair to other parent(s)/guardian(s) in our school to carry delinquent tuition liabilities past a reasonable amount of time. We encourage all our families to plan carefully to meet their financial responsibilities to their school. **All financial obligations from previous school years must be paid in full before a student can begin the current school year.**

TUITION RATE STATUS

The tuition policy about parishioner status may be changed at any time, at the individual discretion of the pastor. Before the beginning of each school year, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will get their **VERIFICATION OF PARISHIONER STATUS** from the church office using the Parish Participation Form. Any parent(s)/guardian(s) disagreeing with the parish's determination may discuss this with the pastor. The school and principal are not responsible for making a status determination, nor may they change the status without approval of the parish office.

For the primary purpose of determining the appropriate tuition rate according to the tuition policy, the following list will be utilized to ascertain the status of the family:

- **Active Catholic member of St. Joseph Catholic Church:** Active membership in a parish is understood to mean that the family worships regularly in that parish and contributes to the support of the parish with time, talent, and financial resources. At St. Joseph Catholic School, this is verified through the church office with the Parish Participation Form. These families pay the Active Parishioner tuition rate.
- **Active Catholic member of other Catholic parishes:** These families should contact their pastor and ask their parish to subsidize the difference for the Active Catholic member of St. Joseph tuition rate. If your parish does not wish to subsidize your student's tuition, you are responsible for the non-parishioner tuition rate.
- **Other Catholic families who are not active in any Catholic parish or members of other faiths:** These families are required to pay the non-parishioner tuition rate.

TUITION PAYMENT OPTIONS

Tuition payment options are sent out with the tuition agreement contracts. All families must sign the tuition agreement contract to complete enrollment.

DELINQUENT TUITION AND FEES PAYMENT POLICY

The success of St. Joseph Catholic School relies upon the commitment of families to:

- Make Catholic education a financial priority.
- Be involved in their children's education.
- Make their tuition and fees payments on a timely basis.

The school relies upon tuition and fee payments to provide an excellent spiritual and educational program operating on a balanced budget. Therefore, when tuition and fee payments become delinquent, it is a serious matter. If the family's financial circumstances change to such a degree that it warrants re-evaluation of the tuition and fees commitment, it is the responsibility of the family to contact the principal as soon as possible. Some examples of such circumstances may be a family emergency, such as illness or loss of employment. Failure to comply may impact your family's ability to get tuition assistance at a future date.

When payments are not made in accordance with the agreement the party responsible in the FACTS program, the following steps will take place:

RETURNED PAYMENT:

When a payment is returned in FACTS, A fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) will be charged for all checks returned by their financial institutions for insufficient funds. The payment will be re-attempted within two business days of the return. If the payment is successful upon re-attempt and the account becomes current, no further action is necessary. If the payment is returned for a second time, the family must make a payment either online or by bringing in a payment within the next five business days. If this does not occur, then the 30 days past due policy will apply.

PLEASE NOTE: A valid payment account must be always set up in the FACTS agreement. If a family is notified that their account is invalid, a new payment source must be set up within 5 business days. Once a payment source is selected, it cannot be changed unless there are extenuating circumstances: for example, if a credit card is lost or stolen, a bank account is compromised, there is a new financially responsible party, etc.

20 DAYS PAST DUE:

- When an account becomes 20 days past due under the established agreement, the financially responsible party will receive a notification from FACTS. They will also receive an email from the finance manager. It is the responsibility of the family to contact the principal to work out an agreement to correct the situation or make an acceptable alternative plan for payment.
- If the family does not contact the principal to correct the situation, then the following will take place:
 - Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until the balance is paid in full, or an alternative plan has been approved.
 - Student(s) will not be allowed to participate in clubs or organized trips.
 - Student(s) will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities.
 - Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will no longer be able to charge items to FACTS – this includes lunches, merchandise, Extended Care, etc.
 - Students(s) will not be permitted to pre-register or to return for the following year until the balance is paid in full.

45 DAYS PAST DUE:

- When an account becomes 45 days past due under the established agreement, the party responsible will receive written notice from the Finance Manager by email explaining the commitment and require immediate attention to the matter. In addition to this notification, the following will also take place:
 - Student(s) will be withdrawn from St. Joseph Catholic School.
 - Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until full payment is made.
 - The School Board will be informed of the past due account information.

- In conjunction with this delinquency, a collection agency may be used to collect the past-due amount.
- The finance office of the Archdiocese of Charleston will be informed of the account delinquency.

St. Joseph Catholic School encourages all responsible parties to maintain open communication with principal to ensure a complete understanding of each family's financial circumstances. The goal of St. Joseph Catholic School is to provide a Catholic education to every student that desires one. By working together, we can make sure this goal is met.

Policy is subject to change after annual review.

FUNDRAISING

As previously stated, tuition and fees account for approximately 60% of the school's operating budget. It is the responsibility of every family to do its part for the fundraisers. The school and church work to ensure that families are not overburdened with overlapping fundraising events.

The biggest fundraiser of the year is the St. Joseph Catholic School GALA. School families are asked to assist with the planning and operation of the event through the direction of the Planning Committee, provide items for the auction, and/or to purchase tickets to the event.

Any support given to our program, SOS - Support our Scholars and Saints, is only used for tuitions assistance and scholarships. St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to providing the promise of a Catholic education for all who seek it. Tuition assistance is awarded to qualifying families. Your gift will provide partial or full scholarships for families who cannot meet the cost of sending their children to St. Joseph Catholic School.

Knights of Columbus Council #8295 sponsor an annual Golf Tournament held in October at a local Golf Club to benefit St. Joseph Catholic School. All are welcome to participate.

St. Joseph Catholic School participates in Many Gifts, One Nation: A Day of Giving to Catholic Schools. This online giving event allows donors to directly support the faith-filled and academically excellent education that is only found in Catholic schools. This event only runs for 24 hours so when you make your gift, your generosity is made at the same time a national community of thousands are saying thank you to Catholic schools.

St. Joseph Catholic School hosts own our celebration/fundraising events one or two times a year. These events are open to school and parish families, and we welcome parent involvement to help plan and orchestrate the events. These events may involve live and silent auctions, games, or an opportunity for fellowship.

One such event is The Taste of St. Joseph. All school and parish families are invited to bring a dish from their heritage and share with all. Proceeds from ticket sales are used to fund various projects for the school or building. This is a wonderful opportunity for the school and parish families to build community and support the school.

Our PTO runs the Elves' Workshop at Christmas. This gives the children an opportunity to purchase gifts for their family and friends, at very reasonable prices.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Charleston provide meaningful, engaging learning experiences and faith formation through relevant and rigorous curriculum. All curriculum developed in the Diocese is based on competitive standards, as well as current curricular research and draws on the expertise of our teachers and administrators. Teachers and school administrators from across the Diocese come together to review, update, and restructure the academically rigorous standards of one subject each year. These standards serve as expectations for all students in the Diocese of Charleston, so they are prepared for college, career, and life. From these standards, curriculum guides are created which are infused with faith and outline key concepts, clarifying questions, and differentiated instruction. Each school in the Diocese is unique and tailors the curriculum, “how the students are taught,” based on the individual needs of the school/students.

Through the curriculum development process, the following National Catholic Standards and Benchmarks for Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools (NSBECS) are used to ensure our curriculum is faith infused and focuses on the mission of our Catholic Schools:

1. The curriculum adheres to appropriate, delineated standards, and is vertically aligned to ensure that every student successfully completes a rigorous and coherent sequence of academic courses based on the standards and rooted in Catholic values.
2. Standards are adopted across the curriculum, and include integration of the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions of learning in all subjects.
3. Understanding and skills to become creative, reflective, literate, critical, and moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and socially responsible global citizens.
4. Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning prepares students to become expert users of technology, able to create, publish, and critique digital products that reflect their understanding of the content and their technological skills.

CURRICULUM

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the state of South Carolina guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. Complete diocesan curriculum is posted on the diocesan website <http://charlestdiocese.org/schools/>.

St. Joseph Catholic School offer students the opportunity for growth in these subjects.

Religion

Catholic doctrine and tradition, Bible study, Social Justice, preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, and Eucharist. Liturgical services are held on Friday of each week and on Holy days of Obligation for the entire school community. Students in Grade 5 take the ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis of Religious Education) test in May.

All students and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be participating in the Virtues in Practice – <http://www.nashvilledominican.org/apostolate/evangelization-and-catechesis/virtues-in-practice/>

Computer Literacy

We cover keyboarding, word processing, databases, spreadsheets, effective use of social media, appropriate and ethical use of e-devices, coding, and integration with curricular subjects.

Fine Arts

Music, Art, and Art Club are offered. Choir or Music Appreciation is mandatory for grades 4th through 8th.

Handwriting

Students in Grades 3rd through 8th are expected to submit all handwritten work in cursive. However, cursive is introduced to younger grades in preparation.

Language Arts

Reading, English, spelling, vocabulary, composition, and appreciation of literature are covered in our program.

Mathematics

The Sadlier curriculum is used in Mathematics Skills, Pre-Algebra, and Algebra.

Physical Education

Physical fitness programs are appropriate for each grade level.

Earth, Life, and Physical Science

Students experience general sciences and laboratory experiments.

Social Studies

State and general history, geography, economics, and Current Events are covered.

Spanish

Students will learn vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, and culture.

Latin

Students will learn vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, and culture.

Stream

Students develop key skills such as problem solving and creativity by integrating areas of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, art, and religion.

ACADEMIC EVALUATION/REPORT CARDS

The Report Card is a formal mode of communication from St. Joseph Catholic School to the parent(s)/guardian(s). The school year is divided into four marking quarters. For grades K5-8, progress reports are published on FACTS at the midpoint of each quarter. Homework, quizzes, tests, and participation grades will be updated on FACTS each week by 3:30pm Friday. Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter, including end of year report cards.

Parent-teacher conferences are to be held twice annually, once in October and again in March. If additional concerns arise, such as failing grades or disciplinary issues, conferences may be scheduled outside of the regular meeting time by the parent or teacher.

Conferences may be held in person, by phone, or via video conferencing, depending on family preferences and availability.

Special area teachers do not need to schedule conferences unless the need arises.

GRADING SYSTEM

- At the beginning of the school year, the classroom teacher will send home your child's individual schedule for all subject areas.
- Each teacher will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of his/her evaluation process at the beginning of the school year. Class participation, homework, and test marks, as well as credit for class projects, may be combined to obtain grades.
- Progress reports are sent home in the mid-grading period. Report Cards are sent home every nine weeks.
- It is a parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to contact the teacher if they feel they are not clear about their child's progress.
- The teacher will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) if a student's work consistently shows failing marks to schedule a conference to develop a remediation plan. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the teacher must stay in constant communication until academic progress is made.

GRADING SCALE

A+	= 98-100	B+	= 89-91	C+	= 80-82	D	= 70-73
A	= 95-97	B	= 86-88	C	= 77-79	F	= Below 70
A-	= 92-94	B-	= 83-85	C-	= 74-76		

LATE WORK POLICY

To promote student accountability while supporting academic success, the following grade-specific late work policies will be implemented. These guidelines are designed to provide structured support, reinforce responsibility, and ensure consistency across classrooms. All late work must meet the original assignment requirements to receive partial credit.

Grades K5–2

- The first late assignment per subject each quarter will be accepted without penalty to support the development of responsibility.
- After the first late submission, assignments may be submitted up to three (3) school days after the due date with a 10% deduction per day late.
- Beyond three days, late work will not be accepted; however, teachers may allow an in-class opportunity to make up the assignment for a maximum of 50% credit.
- Parents will be notified by the teacher by the second day after an assignment is due if it has not been turned in. For example, if homework is due on Monday and is not submitted by Tuesday, the teacher will inform the parents.

Grades 3–5

- The first late assignment per subject each quarter will be accepted without penalty to support the development of responsibility.
- After the first late submission, assignments may be submitted up to three (3) school days after the due date with a 10% deduction per day late.
- After three days, the highest possible grade is 50% if the work is submitted.
- Parents will be notified by the teacher by the second day after an assignment is due if it has not been turned in. For example, if homework is due on Monday and is not submitted by Tuesday, the teacher will inform the parents.

Grades 6–8

- Assignments submitted one day late will receive a 10% deduction.

- Assignments submitted two days late will receive a 20% deduction.
- Assignments submitted three days late will receive a 50% deduction.
- After three (3) days, no credit will be given, and the assignment will receive a zero (0).
- Students are encouraged to communicate with their teacher in advance if an extension is needed. Teachers may grant one late pass per subject per quarter at their discretion.

TESTING

- Students will not be permitted to retake a quiz or a test to improve their academic standing unless deemed necessary.
- MAP testing is administered in September, January, and May of each year for grades K5-8
- ARK (Religion) testing is administered in May of each year for grades 2-8
- Middle School students (Grades 6 – 8) may be given a maximum of three quizzes or tests per day.
- Middle school students may be involved in Final Exams at the discretion of the teacher in accordance with the principal, to assess the cumulative knowledge of subject matter taught during the academic year. Final Exams will help students be more fully prepared for the assessment challenges and expectations of high school.

RETENTION POLICY

If the state required minimum of attendance days is not met, then absence in itself is not cause for retention if the work that has been missed has been made up by the student. A student is promoted if he/she has successfully completed the requirements of the grade they are currently in. No later than March 1, the principal and teacher should discuss **ANY STUDENT IN DANGER OF BEING HELD BACK** and should confer with their parent(s)/guardian(s) about the possibility of retention. The principal makes the final decision regarding retention. Students may be retained if either or both of the following conditions exist:

- The student has not adequately completed the grade work.
- The student is socially, emotionally, or physically immature.

A student may not remain more than two years in the same grade, and he/she may not be retained more than twice. One retention will be allowed in the primary grades (PreK-3) and one retention in the intermediate grades (4-6).

PERMANENT RECORDS

The permanent records sent to other schools contain the information on the student registration form, start and withdrawal dates, average subject grades for each year enrolled, attendance and tardy totals, standardized test results, and a copy of the birth certificate and SC Immunization Form. All other testing, correspondence, behavior notes, and student academic plans are not included, and **CAN ONLY BE RELEASED WITH WRITTEN PERMISSION** of the parent(s)/guardian(s). The parent(s)/guardian(s) may request to see their child's permanent record.

BUCKLEY AMENDMENT

St. Joseph Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding student records and the rights of non-custodial parent. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information determined through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order, to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address.

TECHNOLOGY

St. Joseph Catholic School has a strong commitment to the integration of technology within the curriculum. The school has computers available in each classroom, a laptop cart that teachers can use in their classrooms, and a dedicated research center to further technological instruction. All 4th – 8th grade students will have access to an individual Chromebook. Before students are granted access to computers and the Internet at school, parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the Technology and Device Acceptable Use Policy Agreement and students must sign the Student Technology Pledge Document. The three documents are included for your review.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to the effective use of technology to enhance both the quality of student learning and the staff efficiency of school operations. It also recognizes that safeguards must be established to ensure the protection of our staff and students. These safeguards also protect the school's investment in hardware and software, ensure the benefits of technology, and prevent negative side effects.

The provisions of this policy and agreements are subordinate to school, local state, and federal law. School computers are to be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission and rules of St. Joseph Catholic School. The school reserves the right to investigate any suspected violations of this policy.

The following policy applies to both on-campus and off-campus (including, but not limited to, sporting events, field trips, class trips, academic competitions, etc.):

1. Access to the Internet must be related to a student's class work responsibilities, or for the purpose of education or research, and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Diocese and school.
2. The use of technology is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in a suspension or cancellation of those privileges, disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion), and/or appropriate legal action. Whether the use is considered inappropriate or violates policy is at the discretion of the principal.
3. The school reserves the right to monitor student use of school computers including Internet use and e-mail use and content.

Some examples of **unacceptable** use include, but are not limited to:

- Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or State law.
- Unauthorized downloading of software (i.e., applications, images, music, videos, etc.).
- Accessing any site (games, etc.) or equipment without teacher permission.
- Invading the privacy of individuals or using/sharing another user's password or account or sharing one's own password or account.
- Using pseudonyms or anonymous sign-on.
- Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, gambling, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, illegal material, or other information and/or materials that are inconsistent with objectives and/or teachings of the diocese and/or school.
- Using inappropriate language.
- Use of any proxy sites/servers to access sites that are restricted by the normal course of the network; the school will limit the network using filters and/or additional software to keep inappropriate information away from users, but cannot guarantee this in all situations, particularly given the inappropriate use of proxy sites/servers.

- Damaging or vandalizing computer hardware, computer systems, files, programs, or the property of another individual, including data files or employing the network for commercial purposes.
- **Engaging in online activities occurring outside the school that may be detrimental to the school environment (defamation, threats, harassment, cyber-bullying, etc.).**
- Students may not post any photograph, image, likeness, video or personally identifiable information regarding any employee, student, parent, or parishioner on any Internet or web-based site, or in any electronic communication without his/her knowledge and approval.
- Creating a website or social media presence (i.e., Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) that represents the school or transmits the likeness, image, photograph, video or personally identifiable information about any employee, student, parent, or parishioner is prohibited, except with the express permission of the principal.
- Students may not allow a non-employee or non-student to use a school computer, account, or other equipment unless the principal has specifically authorized to do so.

DEVICE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The focus of incorporating Chromebooks in St. Joseph Catholic School is to provide tools and resources to the 21st century learner. Excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. The individual use of Chromebooks is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for high school and beyond. Effective teaching and learning with Chromebooks integrate technology into the curriculum anytime, anyplace. The policies, procedures, and information within this document apply to all devices used at St. Joseph Catholic School. Teachers may set additional requirements for use in their specific classroom(s).

1. CHROMEBOOK DEVICE

1.1 RECEIVING YOUR CHROMEBOOK

- i Each student, grades 4-8, will be assigned a Chromebook and power cord. The Chromebook and the power card are the property of St. Joseph Catholic School. **Each student is responsible for purchasing a carrying case** during the first month of the school year. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must sign and return the Technology and Device Acceptable Use Policy Agreement and agree to replace or repair any device if damaged or lost.
- ii Student Chromebook serial numbers, including the power cord serial number, are recorded by school administration, and tracked to the student. Students are not allowed to loan out or borrow another student's Chromebook.
- iii The Chromebooks will be distributed to the students each morning during homeroom. Special situations will be at the discretion of the principal. Only with teacher permission will students be able to take the Chromebook home.

1.2 CHROMEBOOK STORAGE

- i Chromebooks will be stored in the cart in the assigned classroom under teacher supervision at the end of each school day. Each child is responsible for charging their Chromebook. No other Chromebook will be assigned for the day if they forget to charge the night before.

1.3 CHROMEBOOK RETURN

i All Chromebooks must be returned before the end of the academic year or upon the principal's request. Students are responsible for returning their assigned Chromebook and power cord, ensuring both items match the provided serial number and are in good working condition.

ii Teachers will visually inspect returned Chromebooks and power cords for any damage. Prior to submission, students must ensure all markings, such as fingerprints on screens or stickers/marks on the device, are thoroughly cleaned. Devices returned in an uncleaned state will be classified as "damaged" and referred to the principal for disciplinary action.

iii Students who transfer, withdraw, or are asked to leave St. Joseph Catholic School must return the Chromebook and power cord with the correct serial number assigned to them, in good working condition, upon termination of enrollment.

iv Failure to return the Chromebook will result in a theft report being filed with the local police department. If a student fails to return the Chromebook at the end of the school year or upon termination of enrollment at St. Joseph Catholic School, that student will be subject to criminal prosecution or civil liability. The student will also pay the replacement cost of the Chromebook (estimated \$350.00). Furthermore, the student will be charged a fee for any needed repairs, not covered by the insurance policy, not to exceed the replacement cost of the Chromebook.

1.4 GENERAL CARE

i Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the Chromebook to prevent damage.

ii Chromebooks must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not the property of St. Joseph Catholic School.

iii Chromebooks must never be left in any unsupervised area, hallways, gym, bathrooms, etc. Chromebooks repeatedly left in unsupervised locations may be subject to disciplinary action.

iv Do not have any food or drinks near the Chromebook.

v Do not touch the screen with pens, pencils, erasers, etc. that could scratch the screen.

vi Do not disassemble any part of the Chromebook or power cord.

vii Do not remove or deface the serial number or other identification on any Chromebook.

viii Students must log into their Chromebook following the instructions given by the teachers.

ix Chromebooks that malfunction or are damaged must be reported to the school office. Chromebooks that have been damaged from student misuse, neglect, or accident will be repaired or replaced. Parents will be billed for the cost of repair or replacement.

1.5 CARRYING THE CHROMEBOOK

i The students will provide a case to protect their Chromebook.

ii Chromebooks should always be in their case when not in use.

iii Chromebook lids should always be closed and tightly secured when moving.

iv Do not carry your Chromebook while the screen is open.

- v Do not move the Chromebook by lifting it from the screen.
- vi Avoid placing too much pressure and/or weight (such as folders and books) on the Chromebook.
- vii Be sure the prongs on the charger are not pressed on the screen.
- viii Do not place anything else in the carrying case.

2. CHROMEBOOK SETTINGS

2.1 Passwords to students' email **MUST** be shared with the parent/guardian. Students will not share passwords with other students.

2.2 SCREENSAVERS/BACKGROUND PHOTOS

- i The student may change their screensaver and background only with the approval of the teacher to a school appropriate image.

2.3 PHOTOS

- i Image storage on the Chromebook will be for school projects only. Storage of student personal photos or downloaded images that are not for school projects is not allowed. Photos may not be taken with a school Chromebook and posted on the Internet or any social media site including, but not limited to, Facebook, Tik-Tok, Instagram, Snap Chat without written permission of the school principal.

2.4 SOUND, MUSIC, GAMES, OR PROGRAMS

- i Students may not download music from iTunes or any other music sharing site unless directed by or with the permission of a teacher.
- ii Music is only allowed on the Chromebook if provided by the teacher for educational use.
- iii Speakers are to be always muted unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. Earbuds must be provided by the student.

2.5 PRINTING

- i No printing will be allowed from the student Chromebook. The student should always send any document that needs to be printed to the teacher.

3. MANAGING YOUR FILES & SAVING YOUR WORK

3.1 All work is to be saved to the St. Joseph Catholic School Google domain.

- i It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to mechanical failure or accidental deletion. Chromebook malfunctions are not an acceptable excuse for not submitting work; therefore, students should keep their work in their school provided Google Account.

3.2 NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

- i Although St. Joseph Catholic School provides a wireless network for student use, it makes no guarantee that the school wireless network will be up and running 100% of the time.

4. SOFTWARE ON CHROMEBOOK

4.1 INSTALLED APPS/EXTENSIONS

- i St. Joseph Catholic School will provide a list of approved Apps and Extensions. Only the Apps/Extensions approved by the teachers should be installed on the Chromebook. Periodic checks of Chromebooks will be made to ensure that students have not removed required Apps/Extensions and/or added additional Apps/Extensions.

4.2 INSPECTION

- i Students may be selected at any time to provide their Chromebook for inspection with or without reason.

4.3 PROCEDURE FOR REINSTALLING OS AND APPS/EXTENSIONS

- i If technical difficulties occur or illegal Apps/Extensions are discovered, the Chromebook will be restored from the factory default. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss of any documents deleted due to the process. In this event, the student may lose the privilege of Chromebook use.

4.4 SOFTWARE UPGRADES

- i Update releases of Apps/Extensions are available from time to time.

5. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

If a student violates any part of the above policy, he/she will be put on the following disciplinary steps for that class. The teacher in charge will enforce disciplinary action at the time the infraction incurs. Any disciplinary action and/or demerits assigned is at the discretion of the principal and will be reported to the parent/guardian.

- 1st Offense – Student(s) will receive a verbal warning, and the student will continue to use the Chromebook
- 2nd Offense – The Chromebook privilege is removed for the remainder of the day. Students will still be responsible for all required work
- 3rd Offense– Student will lose Chromebook privileges for one week. Students will still be responsible for all required work

6. OTHER DEVICES – TABLETS, LAPTOPS, DESKTOPS

While these items are not individually assigned for student use, all students must exercise caution with these devices. Students will be responsible for any device in their care that needs repair or replacement caused by misuse, neglect, or accident. In addition, while using these devices, the student will follow all procedures and policies for acceptable use.

7. LIABILITY

I hereby release from liability and agree to indemnify and hold harmless St. Joseph Catholic School, and any of its employees for any liability in connection with the use or possession of the equipment. This release is for all liability for personal injuries and property losses or damage in connection with the possession or use of the equipment.

Additional Information:

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are expected to discuss the Technology and Device Acceptable Use Policies with their student(s). In addition, a Student Pledge Document will be discussed with students in 1st – 8th grades at the beginning of the school year by their teacher. This document allows the student to individually agree to the responsibility and acceptable uses of their assigned device.

A copy of the Technology and Device Acceptable Use Policy can be found in the Parent/Student Handbook.

TECHNOLOGY and DEVICE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AGREEMENT

As a parent/guardian of the student(s) listed below, I understand that my child(ren) will be responsible for abiding by the 20xx-20xx **Technology Acceptable Use Policy** and **Device Acceptable Use Policy**. I have received a copy of the above policies, I have read and discussed these policies in their entirety with my student(s), and I understand the responsibility my student(s) have in using their devices.

I acknowledge that I am responsible if my student's device needs repair or replacement due to misuse, neglect, or accident.

List all your enrolled students for the 20xx-20xx school year:

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Student: _____ Grade: _____

_____ Date: _____

Parent Signature

Parent Name Printed

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY PLEDGE DOCUMENT

I, _____, pledge to abide by the stipulations set forth below:

1. I will use my device in ways that are appropriate, educational, and meet expectations of St. Joseph Catholic School.
2. I understand that my device is property of St. Joseph Catholic School and is subject to inspection at any time without notice.
3. I will follow all policies and procedures outlined in the Technology and Device Acceptable Use Policy.
4. I will take appropriate care of my device by not placing any decorations on it or using food or beverage around it. I will transport it by the carrying case and charge it daily.
5. I will never leave my device unattended, and I will always know where my device is.
6. I will never loan out my device to other individuals or give my password to other individuals except for my parent(s)/guardian(s) and designated school staff appointed by the principal.
7. I will only use my device when allowed by my teacher and I will not take my device home unless I am given special permission.
8. I will not disassemble any part of my device or remove or deface the serial number or other identifications on any device.
9. I will be responsible for all damage or loss to my device or power cord caused by neglect, misuse, or accident.
10. I agree to return my device and power cord in good working condition or be subject to repair or replacement costs.

Student Signature

Date

Teacher Reviewing Policy

Date

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

THE OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:

- The best interest of the child is the first consideration in administrative procedures, practices, and decisions.
- Our innovative, energetic, and learned teaching faculty provides each student with an academically challenging curriculum focusing on the whole child.
- The high standard of education is maintained by continuous evaluation and revision of the curriculum and organizational structure based on the latest valid research, changing goals in society and school objectives. Close communications should be maintained among the pastor, principal, teachers, parents, and the community.

HONERABLE CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

At St. Joseph Catholic School, honorable and virtuous behavior begins with the desire to be a positive contributing member of the School and Parish community. Members of our community recognize their responsibility to support and live by the values of our Catholic faith. The students are expected to engage in a loving and respectful relationship with themselves and others by practicing the virtues of compassion and responsibility, dignity and integrity, and peace and justice. The integration of these values allows each student to grow and thrive as a whole person, achieving a life-long commitment to their faith, family, and country. Students accept responsibility for their own actions, and support others in their efforts to live by the values of our school and the virtues of the Roman Catholic faith. Students and faculty alike are expected to take pride in and always demonstrate this common moral and academic integrity.

ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

St. Joseph Catholic School is SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) accredited through AdvancEd® and Cognia. Additionally, we are STEM Certified through Cognia.

All members of our professional teaching staff hold state certifications, and/or endorsements and are CPR trained.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

We at St. Joseph Catholic School consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life - physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Once you have chosen to enter a partnership with us at St. Joseph Catholic School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment.

Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest for challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the educational process at St. Joseph Catholic School, we ask parents:

- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.
- To ensure the student gets to bed early on school nights.
- To have the student arrive at school on time and picked up on time at the end of the day.
- To have the student dressed according to the school dress code.

- To have the student complete assignments on time.
- To provide/order nutritional snacks or lunch every day.
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences and the PTO.
- To see that the student pays for any damage to schoolbooks or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student.
- To notify the school with a written note or e-mail when the student has been absent or tardy (these notes will be kept for one year).
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers.
- To meet all financial obligations to the school.
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly.
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education.
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school, including completing the home virtue packet.
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.
- To not post negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration in social media.

CLASSROOM WORK PAPERS

At the beginning of the school year, the classroom teacher will send home your child's individual academic class schedule.

- Teachers will keep a representative sample of a student's work papers and tests in a folder for review by parent(s)/guardian(s) and the principal and for reference during Parent-Teacher Conferences.
- Teachers at each grade level will implement a method for sharing children's papers and workbooks with parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should know the teacher's method and should review papers on a regular basis. This will be given at the Open House in the first month of school.
- At all grade levels, test papers with a grade below 70 should be signed by parent(s)/guardian(s) and returned to the teacher.
- Teachers at all grade levels encourage neatness and proper penmanship.

HOMEWORK

Limited homework is an important ingredient in learning. St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to the philosophy that students have spent the greater part of five hours working on academics and reinforcing this learning at home is important to achieving mastery. Generally, each student from K – 8th may be assigned some type of homework each night.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Responsibility:

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are expected to establish discipline for regular study at home, provide quiet time for study, and reinforce good study habits with encouragement and limited distractions.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are requested to check on the quality of homework that is finished at home by asking your child if that is his or her "best work?" Are they proud to turn it in? Let them be responsible for the work.

Student Responsibility:

- It is the responsibility of the student to complete the assigned work completely and to the best of his/her ability.
- Work must be completed neatly and turned in on time to receive full credit. Your teacher can inform you what percentage of the student's final grade is attributed to homework.

- Students should review their daily work, even when written assignments are not given.

Teacher Obligations to the Students:

- Daily assignments, as well as long term projects, are given to reinforce the lessons taught in the classroom.
- In special areas, teachers will plan a sensible calendar for assigning daily work, book reports, long-range projects, and tests which coordinate with classroom teachers and other special teachers.
- Formal testing and quizzes will be scheduled throughout the school week. Every possible effort is made not to schedule more than two tests on the same day.
- The school provides study time in Extended Care, Monday through Friday.
- For K through 5th grade, no homework will be assigned over the weekend. Reports and projects may cover a period of more than one week, at which time a weekend may be included.
- Middle school students will have occasional weekend homework assignments to prepare for the workload of future studies.
- No tests will be scheduled on Mondays or on the first day back after a break.

Time Allotments for Homework Assignments:

- Time allotments for homework assignments will vary and should be suitable to the grade level of the student.
- The following time allotments are suggested as a guide:

Kinder: 5-10 minutes	Grade 4: 40-50 minutes
Grade 1: 10-15 minutes	Grade 5: 50-60 minutes
Grade 2: 20-30 minutes	Grade 6-8: 60-120 minutes
Grade 3: 30-40 minutes	

If your child is spending more than the suggested time on homework, first check to see if the workspace is free from distractions. Then, check to see if your child understands the assignments. After these are checked, ask your child to do the assignments for a certain amount of time. If the assignments are still too long, contact the teacher. He/she may need your input to see if the assignments are appropriate for your child's ability.

Your children should go to bed at their regular bedtime even if they have not finished homework. Your evening should not be a battlefield especially if you have followed the guidelines above.

It is important that we work together to teach the students the importance of completing work, and to have realistic expectations of ourselves, and realistic expectations of the quality of our work. Let their homework be their work. Nothing brings down a child's confidence more than when a parent/guardian completes the work for them.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

St. Joseph Catholic School tries to notify our parent(s)/guardian(s) of our concerns, events, and other pertinent information in various ways, including:

- Calendars will be posted on FACTS Family Portal, website, and information will be in the newsletter.
- Weekly "Thursday Folders" containing the student tests, papers, and other school correspondence. Please sign and return this folder the next day.
- Weekly School Newsletter is emailed to parent(s)/guardian(s) every Friday.
- Email: Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to give the school their email addresses for the purpose of communication. Teachers' email addresses are given to parent(s)/guardian(s) at the beginning of the school year.
- Throughout the year, the school may have special student days (free dress days, student appreciation day, etc.). You will be notified in advance of these days through the Thursday Folder, the Friday newsletter, or email.

- The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) will sponsor several activities for the entire family throughout the year. Look for these in the Friday newsletter, on the calendar of events, parish bulletin, email, or on the school's website.

COMMUNICATION TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are requested to notify the school office in writing of any change of address, custody, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up to date.

CONTACTING THE TEACHER

St. Joseph Catholic School encourages you to communicate with your child's teachers. In fact, when either you or your child has a classroom-related issue, we ask that you contact the teacher directly involved first. Cooperation between parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers is most imperative for the well-being of each student. Open communication and respect for confidentiality are the foundations of a healthy, happy, and productive school community. Exchanges are generally effective when they are descriptive, constructive, and point to solutions thus avoiding blame and preserving individual integrity. The following guidelines can serve as useful tools in solving problems that may exist so that in most cases, the problem may be resolved with little difficulty:

- It is a good policy to withhold judgment on what appears to be criticism until you get all the facts.
- Request an appointment with the teacher before discussing the problem with others or calling the principal.
- Please make every effort to reach teachers at the school during school hours by school phone or email. If a teacher is in class, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Do not text.
- Discuss the problem or situation and try to come to a common ground of understanding.
- Contact the principal only if you have discussed the situation with the teacher, and you feel the problem has not been resolved. The principal will then arrange a meeting with the teacher and the parent(s)/guardian(s) to mediate a solution consistent with the school's mission, policies, and procedures.

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and in the spring. If a parent-teacher conference seems necessary at other times, parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to contact the teacher to schedule an appointment. Regular office hours are from 7:30am – 3:30pm.

CONTACTING THE PRINCIPAL

The principal welcomes all communication with parent(s)/guardian(s), informally and by appointment. He/she is most able to respond directly to school-wide issues and will join a conversation **after initial** communication with the teacher. In such a case, a telephone conversation or meeting would likely result in a joint discussion with those directly involved or affected by the situation.

The principal is available to listen, solve problems, and to act. In addition, he/she will be communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s) through regular and special school publications, at school events, and during informal meetings designed to discuss such issues as curriculum, parent(s)/guardian(s) involvement, child development, etc.

GRIEVANCES

Conflicts may occur among students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and school staff, and all parties are encouraged to resolve these conflicts when they occur. All parties to the grievance are responsible for striving toward reconciliation and acting in good faith in the spirit of the Gospels. It is always best to go to the person directly and voice your concern in a positive manner. Ninety-nine percent of all grievances can be cleared up in this way. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, please call the principal for further assistance and clarification. If the principal is unable to resolve the

conflict (or if the principal is the subject of the complaint) the pastor will be brought into the process as deemed appropriate.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Since the Christian spirit is one of peace, brotherhood, love, patience, and respect for others, the challenge of a Catholic student is to explore ways in which he/she, together with fellow students, can learn of the needs of one another, the community, and the world, and respond to these needs with Christian understanding and service.

In fulfilling these goals, a St. Joseph Catholic School student will:

- Treat others as Jesus would treat him/her.
- Show respect for parents, teachers, school personnel, and fellow students.
- Develop good study habits and work to the best of his/her ability.
- Honor the work of others.
- Show respect for school property and the property of others.

CLASSROOM MANNERS

To conduct himself/herself according to Christian principles so as not to disturb the academic atmosphere of the classroom or school, a St. Joseph Catholic School student will:

- Be on time.
- Upon entering the classroom, go directly and quietly to their assigned seat and prepare for work.
- Always be courteous.
- Share the responsibility for keeping the classroom clean.
- Respect all materials.
- Respect work and work time.
- Be safe at work and play.

APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an integral part of healthy childhood growth and development. Discipline positively prepares the maturing child for his/her role as an active member of civil society and good citizenship. Within the St. Joseph school and parish community, discipline is focused on building student-to-student conflict resolution skills within a school culture of individual accountability. St. Joseph Catholic School's standard of appropriate conduct, the expectation of respectful behavior to others, and the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith must be upheld and supported consistently by all faculty members and students. This is essential to ensure the best possible environment for the academic, spiritual, social, moral, and physical growth of each St. Joseph student.

DISCIPLINE REGULATIONS

Students at St. Joseph Catholic School are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects favorably on themselves, their families, and their school by showing respect and consideration to others. Students are to recognize their individual responsibilities as a condition for their remaining at the school. Students are expected to conduct themselves inside and outside of school and at school-sponsored activities in a manner that reflects the moral teaching of the Catholic Church. Failure to do this may result in disciplinary action, including expulsion. The discipline system was designed to safeguard the rights of others and make each student responsible for his or her own actions. Any student who verbally, physically, or in any way threatens a teacher or another student is subject to dismissal.

DISCIPLINE TERMINOLOGY

A Demerit System is a system of rules and regulations that will be enforced by a system of guidelines administered by a Disciplinarian. A Disciplinarian is the person responsible for administering and interpreting the Demerit System. A Demerit is a mark against a student's conduct record. Demerits are cumulative during the school year. Detention is the punishment that accompanies a deed of misconduct and/or demerits.

When a student receives 3 demerits, an in-school lunch/recess detention is assigned. An email from the Administration is sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s). A conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be requested. When a student receives 5-10 demerits, the Pastor is officially informed; a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and School Administration is held and suspension is possible. When a student receives 25 demerits, the Pastor is officially informed; a conference with the Pastor, parent(s)/guardian(s), and School Administration is held and expulsion is possible.

Depending on the severity of the behavior an after-school detention will be assigned to be held for one hour on the day determined by the Disciplinarian after notification of the parent(s)/guardian(s). Students are to report to detention immediately after dismissal. Detention takes priority over any other commitment. If a student is unable to attend an assigned detention because of extenuating circumstances, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must contact the Disciplinarian prior to the detention to be served, and the detention will be rescheduled.

Detention will be charged at the current extended care rate since a staff member will have to supervise. If parents are late to pick up after detention, the student will be placed in extended care and rates will continue to accrue until picked up.

Suspension is the removal of a student for a specific time from St. Joseph Catholic School. If a student fails to correct his/her behavior following suspension, he/she may be requested to withdraw. Probation is a trial period to correct inappropriate behaviors. Expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from St. Joseph Catholic School.

An infraction is the failure to observe the rules of St. Joseph Catholic School. For every infraction, there will be consequences. These consequences are at the discretion of the principal and may consist of detention and/or demerits, suspension, expulsion, notification of proper authorities, or legal action.

DEMERITS

The number of demerits for each offense is at the discretion of the school's Administration and Disciplinarian. The number of demerits for a violation may vary from the list below because of mitigating or aggravating circumstances and may include suspension.

An infraction of the following rules will ordinarily carry one (1) demerit:

- Improper uniform without permission.
- Chewing gum.
- Eating in class without permission.
- Throwing objects without permission.
- Hitting/shoving another student (not to be confused with fighting).
- Excessive talking in class or when walking in line from building to building.
- Playing in bathrooms and/or leaving a mess in the bathroom.
- Running/pushing in any classroom, hallways, stairs, or portables.
- Creating a disturbance of any kind (excessive noise).

An infraction of the following rules will ordinarily carry three (3) demerits:

- Bullying; conference with the student, and a phone call to parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Cutting detention.
- Obscene literature or obscene and/or inappropriate words, gestures, and/or actions.
- Destroying or defacing school property.
- Being put out of class by a teacher.
- Defacing school and/or other students' property (writing on desks and minor graffiti).
- Failure to report to any individual teacher when requested to do so.
- Use of cell phone without teacher permission.
- Improper use of school, Chromebooks, or computers in violation of the Technology and Device Policy.
- Rudeness/disobedience to a teacher.

An infraction of the following rules will ordinarily carry five to ten (5-10) demerits:

- Possession of cigarettes, lighted or unlighted, or other tobacco products on their person.
- Fighting, major disturbances.
- Leaving the school grounds without permission.
- Truancy: Any student guilty of cutting class or school.
- Cheating: All cheating offenses, including plagiarism.
- Stealing.
- Lying: Includes forgery, etc.
- Sexual harassment.
- Bullying (Second or more offenses).

Demerits will be given for these offenses, and the student will be eligible for suspension or expulsion by the Principal or Pastor. These are considered serious infractions and will be dealt with on an individual basis:

- Possession of any illegal substance on school property or school-sponsored activity.
- Coming to school intoxicated from any illegal substance.
- Hitting/striking a teacher.
- Vandalism to a teacher's property.
- Disrespect to a teacher and/or teacher's property.
- Possession of any kind of knife or illegal weapon on school grounds.
- Accumulation of 25 demerits.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Any activity that causes disorder is unacceptable. Whenever a student becomes a source of disorder, he/she interferes with the general good of the school. If, in the judgment of the Administration, a student is a constant source of disorder, he/she will be asked to leave school.

A student accused of serious wrongdoing can be placed on home study until the matter is resolved.

BULLYING POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to protecting our students from damaging types of behaviors and is committed to the development of an environment of mutual respect for all its members.

Bully shall mean repeated unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the intent of or effect of:

- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm.
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage or loss of personal property.

- Creating an intimidating or hostile and unsafe environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

Sexual harassment, the unwanted and unwelcome sexual behavior toward another person, is unacceptable. Behavior considered sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following: touching, grabbing, or pinching in a sexual manner, spreading sexual rumors, referring to sexual anatomy, name calling, graffiti, pressure for sexual favors, indecent exposure, sexual messages either spoken, written, or electronically conveyed and asking for inappropriate pictures.

If the sexual harassment is not stopped immediately upon request, then a report is to be made to the principal with appropriate consultation by administrators or counseling staff as necessary.

Cyber bullying includes but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, or employee of the school by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or social media postings.

All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable, and offenders are subject to appropriate discipline. Students are responsible for reporting all types of bullying incidents to a teacher, administrator, or faculty members, all of whom are required to report all types of incidents to the principal.

Students are instructed to do the following if bullying behaviors are done to them:

- Tell the person to stop in a calm, confident manner and then walk away.
- Stay calm and do not show feelings of being upset until they are in a safe place.
- Talk to a trusted adult – parent, teacher, or counselor – about bullying behaviors.
- Stay with friends and do not be alone with a person who exhibits bullying behaviors towards them.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION POLICY

A student accused of bullying can be placed on home study until the matter is resolved. All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated by the principal. All reports of bullying will remain confidential to ensure the freedom to come forward to report incidents. Investigations may include, but are not limited to:

- Interviews with all involved students including witnesses, bystanders, and adults with potential knowledge of the reported incident.
- Written statements from all parties having pertinent information and/or the collection and review of any evidence such as notes, recordings, images, or affected properties.
- Notification of law enforcement when requested by the target or parent(s)/guardian(s), or when there is sufficient reason to believe it is essential to maintaining a safe and orderly environment.
- Periodic updates to parent(s)/guardian(s) of the targeted student(s) and the alleged bully(s).
- Updates and contacts included in investigative reports with the parent(s)/guardians(s) of all affected parties notified, as appropriate to circumstances, of the findings and determination related to the report of bullying. A summary of findings indicating the report of bullying was either "Substantiated," "Unsubstantiated," "Reclassified," or "Unfounded."

Serious offenses could result in out-of-school suspension, mandatory counseling, and possible expulsion from school. During all school suspensions, students will receive a "0" for all missed work projects or test/quizzes. Students are responsible for completing all missed content material while under suspension. The principal will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) before the student is suspended or expelled. This policy is based on the principles of fairness, common sense, and professional discretion. **Disciplinary action will be issued as deemed necessary.**

DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS

It is highly recommended to label uniform cardigans, V-neck pullovers, and sweatshirts so they may be easily identified when lost.

The purpose of uniforms is to teach students appropriate dress and to avoid the conflicts of “status” dressing. It also lessens the time and effort spent on what to wear in the morning.

Wearing a school uniform is required from the first day of school until the last day of school at St. Joseph Catholic School. Optional uniform days will occur during the school year, and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of these special days in advance. “Free Dress” passes cannot be redeemed on Fridays or on any Holy Day of Obligation.

Regular uniforms will be worn at the beginning of the school year. Winter uniforms typically begin after Thanksgiving Break and are worn through Easter Break. In case of hot weather, **the school** may decide to start the “summer” uniform earlier. The school will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the exact dates for uniform changes.

UNIFORM PURCHASING

Uniforms may be purchased at:

- Lands’ End - www.landsend.com. School Code: 900182130
- Tommy Hilfiger - www.globalschoolwear.com/GSWSearch School Code: STJO28
- Boys Ties and Bowties – available for purchase in the school office for \$15

Scrubs Outlet is a local option for the embroidery of items purchased from other vendors. To inquire about cost and turnaround times, please contact Scrubs Outlet at 864-231-5999.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- Any device that can send/receive calls or messages is not permitted.
- All students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly and cleanly every day. Shirts must be tucked into pants, shorts, or skirts/skorts. Solid black or brown belts are to be worn with pants and shorts – required in 3rd grade and up. Boys - black belt is to be worn on Fridays with the Mass uniform.
- “No-show” socks are not permitted, and shoes should be appropriate for school. Shoelaces should be white or black, no trendy laces. Open-toed or open-heeled shoes, shoes with lights, roller shoes, multi-colored shoes, crocs, and boots are not permitted.
- Students are not permitted to wear makeup. For girls, only light, natural colored nail polish is allowed.
- “Fad” haircuts or color-altered hair, clip-in extensions for either boys or girls is not permitted. Boy’s hair should be above and not touching the shirt collar and trimmed around the ears.
- Christian jewelry is allowed - short necklaces, bracelets, and rings - only if they do not create a distraction or safety issue. Girls with pierced ears may wear one stud only in each ear lobe. No dangling earrings or hoops. Boys are not permitted to wear any type of earring.
- iPhone watches or Fitbits are not permitted. Any watch that is a “fad” or “trendy” is not permitted. A basic watch is all students need at school.
- Hair ribbons and barrettes must be simple and are to be limited to the uniform colors (plaid, navy blue, green, or white.) Holiday bows/pins will be permitted on designated days only.
- Uniform pieces must be replaced as they become outgrown, worn out, or stained.
- Any jackets or outerwear that a student wants to wear for the whole day must be navy. Heavy coats worn on cold winter days do not have to match the school colors but shall not be worn in the building.

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

K3 – 5th Grade Girls

Mon – Wed Option 1: White, green, or navy polo shirt with embroidered logo (short or long sleeve) with navy or khaki pants or knee length shorts. Ankle length white or navy socks with solid white, solid black, or solid navy shoes. Winter uniform prohibits shorts. Black or brown belts are required for grade 3rd and above.

Mon – Wed Option 2: White, green, or navy polo shirt with embroidered logo (short or long sleeve) under jumper (white plaid pattern). No-show shorts are encouraged. Knee length plaid skorts are allowed. Ankle length or knee high white or navy socks (white or navy tights permitted) with solid white, solid black, or solid navy shoes.

Thurs PE: Gray moisture wicking t-shirt with screen print logo and navy moisture wicking knee length shorts. Ankle-length white or navy socks with solid white or solid black running shoes. Winter uniform will require a navy sweatshirt with screen print logo and sweatpants (no logo required).

Fri Mass: White Peter pan blouse with plaid jumper (white plaid pattern). No-show shorts are encouraged under jumpers. Navy button up cardigan sweater with embroidered logo. Ankle length or knee high white or navy socks (white or navy tights permitted) with solid black or solid navy dress shoes – no boots.

6th - 8th Grade Girls

Mon – Wed Option 1: White, green, or navy polo shirt with embroidered logo (short or long sleeve) with navy or khaki pants or knee length shorts and black or brown belt. Ankle length white or navy socks with solid white, solid black, or solid navy shoes. Winter uniform prohibits shorts.

Mon – Wed Option 2: White, green, or navy polo shirt with embroidered logo (short or long sleeve) with navy or khaki knee length skort or skirt. No show shorts are encouraged under skirts. Ankle length or knee high white or navy socks (white or navy tights permitted) with solid white, solid black, or solid navy shoes.

Thurs PE: Gray moisture wicking t-shirt with screen print logo and knee length navy moisture wicking shorts. Ankle-length white or navy socks with solid white or solid black running shoes. Winter uniform will require a navy sweatshirt with screen print logo and sweatpants (no logo required).

Fri Mass: White oxford shirt with navy cross tie and navy knee length skort or skirt. No show shorts are encouraged under skirts. Navy button up cardigan sweater with embroidered logo. Ankle length or knee high white or navy socks (white or navy tights permitted) with solid black or solid navy dress shoes – no boots.

K3 – 8th Grade Boys

Mon – Wed: White, green, or navy polo shirt with embroidered logo (short or long sleeve) with navy or khaki pants or knee length shorts. Ankle length white or black socks with solid white, solid black, or solid brown shoes. Winter uniform prohibits shorts. Black or brown belts are required for grade 3rd and above.

Thurs PE: Gray moisture wicking t-shirt with screen print logo and navy moisture wicking knee length shorts. Ankle length white or black socks with solid white or solid black running shoes. Winter uniform will require a navy sweatshirt with screen print logo and sweatpants (no logo required).

Fri Mass: White oxford shirt (short or long sleeve) with Navy pullover sweater or sweater vest with embroidered logo. Navy pants with ankle length black socks and sold black dress shoes – no boots. Black belt required for grade 3rd and above.

All grades: striped bowtie or long tie required. Available in the office.

CONSEQUENCES

All students at St. Joseph Catholic School are expected to comply with the Dress Code. Noncompliance may result in, but not be limited to, the following:

- **1st Offense:** Student will receive a written warning, and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be sent a reminder.
- **2nd Offense:** Student will receive a demerit and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes.

- **3rd Offense:** Student will receive 2 demerits. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes.
- **4th Offense:** Student will receive 3 demerits. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be called to discuss the Dress Code and problem solve the non-compliance issue.
- **Additional Offenses:** At the Principal's Discretion

In addition, to maintain the integrity and respect for Mass, St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to not allow students to exit the vehicle during drop off if they are not in the proper uniform and requiring the parent to return home for the student to change into the proper uniform.

Please note: If parent/guardian shows proof that a replacement uniform item has been ordered – consequences will be suspended during the shipping timeframe.

DRESS DOWN DAY GUIDELINES

Students may wear:

- tennis shoes
- jeans (with no holes or fraying)
- short socks
- shorts - no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skirts - no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skorts - no shorter than three inches above the knee
- dresses - no shorter than three inches above the knee
- sweatshirts
- jogging suits
- natural or light pink nail polish
- jewelry
- slacks

Students may not wear:

- flip-flop sandals
- boots
- Crocs
- no open back shoes
- no hats
- tank tops, spaghetti straps, or crop tops
- T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- tennis shoes that convert to roller skates
- biker shorts
- leggings
- pajama pants
- make-up
- low cut blouses/tops
- clothing that is extremely tight or short

Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't.

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Diocese of Charleston Catholic schools follow the South Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law. “South Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law requires that a parent or guardian shall require his child to attend regularly a public or private school or kindergarten of this State which has been approved by the State Board of Education, a member school of the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, or similar organization, or a parochial, denominational, or church-related school, or other programs with have been approved by the State Board of Education from the school year in which the child is five years of age before September first until the child attains is seventeenth birthday or graduates from high school.”

Attendance at parochial, denominational, and church -related schools also satisfies the compulsory attendance requirements. S.C. Code §59-65-10(A).

South Carolina State Law requires 170 of 180 days of attendance. **If a child misses over 10 days of school without a medical excuse, the school has the right to retain the child for the next school year. Students missing more than 10 days (unexcused) are considered truant.** Students (ages 5-17) are required by compulsory attendance laws to be in school and therefore the school will refer truancy to DSS/legal authorities.

Lawful Absences (Excused):

- Absences caused by a student’s own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others,
- Absences due to an illness or death in the student’s immediate family,
- Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student’s faith,
- Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal, and
- Absences due to medical appointments.

Unlawful Absences (Unexcused):

- Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents,
- Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents, and
- Absences of a student (other than illness or family illness/death) that is not pre-approved by school administration.

All absences will be considered unexcused unless written documentation of an excused absence is provided to the school. Suspension is *not* to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

Regular attendance and punctuality are important in developing habits and attitudes of responsible behavior. Students must attend school for at least half of the school day (3 ½ hours) to be counted “present” for the day. Students leaving school before 11:35am or students arriving after 11:35am will be counted as “absent” for the day.

When a student is absent from school, a parent/guardian should call the office by 9:00am each day of absence. If the office does not receive a call, a parent/guardian will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of the St. Joseph students and is aligned with the state statutes of the state of South Carolina.

Students who have been absent or leave school before the end of the day may not attend or participate in school functions in the afternoon or evening. This includes clubs, practices, or school events.

Morning Drop Off	7:30am - 7:55am	On Time
Arriving Before	11:35am	Tardy
Arriving After	11:35am	Absent ½ Day
Leaving Before	11:35am	Absent All Day
Leaving After	11:35am	Absent ½ Day
Leaving After	2:00pm	Early Out

ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS

The school reserves the right to require that a parent/guardian come to sign a sick student out of school. A fever is considered 100.4° F (37.9° C) or higher, and these students are required to be sent home. Students should be fever free 24 hours before returning to school (without the use of fever reducer). Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever will not be allowed to return to school the next day as this would not allow for the 24-hour protection of the entire school community.

APPOINTMENTS

Medical and Dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. For an absence or early dismissal to be medically excused, the student must also present a doctor's note stating the date and time the student left the office. Any student requesting early dismissal for a medical appointment must present a dated note signed by a parent or guardian to the school office before the day begins. The note must state the time to be dismissed and a contact number for the parent or guardian. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office.

Students who are away from school for an appointment for 3 ½ hours or more will be counted as absent for ½ day. The school holds the right to count every five early sign outs as an absence from school. The absence will be unexcused if the appropriate documentation (in line with absentee documentation) is not provided.

A parent or guardian must sign out any student leaving early during the school day. Dismissal during the last 30 minutes of the day should be avoided if possible. It becomes a disruption to the class as teachers are closing instructional activities for the day, making important school announcements, and ending with prayer.

Arrangements for regular classroom tests missed because of an absence are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests must be taken within one week of the original test date.

TARDY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Regular attendance is imperative for a student to maintain progress in school. Undue absence and tardiness interfere with learning. It is the **duty of the parent(s)/guardian(s)** to see that their child **is present and on time** each day. The drop off begins at 7:30am and the school day starts at 7:55am. Student(s) will be marked tardy if arriving after 7:55 am. The school holds the right to count 10 unexcused tardies as one unexcused absence.

Tardiness is a serious issue. It puts your child(ren) behind on daily instruction, interrupts classroom procedures, and does not teach the importance of punctuality and responsibility.

School **BEGINS AT 7:55am**, at which time all students must be in their respective classrooms to attend the morning announcement and prayer service. Please note the following procedures:

- Any student **not in** their classroom by 7:55 A.M. is tardy.
- No staff members will be present in the drop-off area after 7:55am. At that time, the parent/guardian **must** physically sign-in the student with the front office.

- All students will be allowed **five unexcused tardies per quarter**. Our FACTS system will inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of all absences and tardies. Only a doctor, dentist, or court appointment is considered an excused tardy.
- The principal will contact the parent/guardian to help with a constructive plan if unexcused tardies exceed the allowed total per quarter.
- The total number of times a student is tardy will be entered into the student's permanent record.
- For students enrolled with the SC First Steps program – after 10 consecutive absences (excused or unexcused), the student will be dropped from the program. If dropped, parents will become financially responsible for all future costs, including tuition, food costs, and student fees.
- **Excessive tardies are considered educational neglect by the State of South Carolina and are reportable to the Department of Social Services. Therefore, students who are tardy more than 40 times will be charged an administrative fee of \$10 per tardy or early withdrawal due to the excessive time and paperwork involved, as per Diocesan policies. ***

HOMEWORK POLICY DUE TO ILLNESS

St. Joseph Catholic School must follow DPH regulations concerning illness and readmission to school. To minimize the spread of illness parent(s)/guardian(s) should keep their child(ren) home when they are sick. In the case of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, **PLEASE WAIT 24 HOURS AFTER THE LAST EPISODE** (without the use of a fever reducer) before sending your child back to school.

For short absences, students should make arrangements with classmates regarding assignments. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school. Students will be allowed one day for each day of absence due to illness. For example, a student who was absent three days should be given three school days to complete the missed work.

When a student is absent for three or more days due to illness, a parent/guardian may call the school office before 9:30 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 2:45pm – 3:15pm.

A written statement, or doctor's note, giving reasons for the absence or tardiness must be brought to the front office upon the student's return. All tardies and absences will be marked as unexcused if a written note is not received. These notes/letters will be retained in the office for one year.

***If symptoms persist longer than 3 days, a doctor's note will be required for the student to return to school.**

HOMEWORK DUE TO VACATIONS/PLANNED ABSENCES

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missing assignments are the student's responsibility.

If planning an unexcused absence of more than three (3) days, school assignments will **only** be given out if there is a written request to the principal by the parent/guardian at least one week prior. Materials will be ready on the last day before leaving. Teachers are not required to give tests or quizzes in advance for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of an unexcused absence without a written request to the principal from the parent/guardian and without a minimum of one week's notice.

GENERAL RELEASE

A student will never be sent home alone. A teacher will **never** send a student on an errand off the school grounds. If a student leaves the school property the teacher will immediately notify the principal who will, in turn, notify the parent(s)/guardian(s). For the **safety** of your child, **NO STUDENT MAY LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS WITHOUT THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S).**

If possible, please arrange for medical, optical, and dental appointments to be after the school day. If you cannot, please use the following release procedure:

- For the principal to allow a student to leave the school for a legitimate reason before the regular dismissal time a note/email must be sent to the principal at least **one day in advance**.
- Students who are to be dismissed early will report to the school office so they can be picked up.
- If you have arranged for someone else to pick up your child(ren) during the school day or after school, please notify the school office.
- The school office will release the student only to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or a person authorized by the parent(s)/guardian(s) as listed in FACTS. The person picking up the student must sign the student out in the school office. A picture ID may be required to verify identity.

EMERGENCY RELEASE

- If an emergency call comes to the school office for a student to be released from school, the school's administrative assistant will contact the principal, and then the classroom teacher will be notified.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) must come to the school office to sign the student out.

SUBPOENAED RELEASE

1. In accordance with state law, St. Joseph Catholic School must release students to DSS Officials when presented with appropriate identification and a warrant. The student's parent(s) /guardian(s) will be notified.
2. The principal will release a student to Police Officers only if a warrant is issued and upon notification of parent(s)/guardian(s).
3. If they have a warrant, DSS personnel or the Police may question students only in the presence of the principal.

HEALTH INFORMATION AND STUDENT CARE

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING/ INCLEMENT WEATHER

- In the event of snow or other inclement weather, St. Joseph Catholic School will announce closures by FACTS, Class Dojo, social media, and television. Check Channel 4 WYFF or online at www.carolinachannel.com for St. Joseph Catholic School.
- In the event of an emergency or any outstanding public occurrence, schools will be closed on the Diocesan level, by the Secretary of Education. Check Channel 4 or online at www.carolinachannel.com.
- In the event of a local circumstance of any unusual nature, the decision to close the school will be made on a local level by appropriate personnel. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified by email, social media, and Class Dojo. Please make sure your emergency card is up to date, and that we have your cell phone numbers and email. St. Joseph Catholic School personnel will stay with students until they are all picked up by their parent(s)/guardian(s) or another designated person.

SAFETY DRILLS

- **Fire Drills** - Fire drills are held frequently during the school year to ensure that each student is aware of fire and alternate exits. Exit routes are posted in each room and students are instructed in proper procedures so that they can leave the building in a quiet and orderly manner.
- **Tornado Drills, Earthquake Drills, and Lockdown Drills** - Drills are done at the beginning of the year and two other times during the year. Each room has the procedure posted, and students are instructed on this procedure.
- **Crisis Plan** - St. Joseph Catholic School has implemented a “crisis plan” in case of a lockdown emergency.

All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated, and students will be moved to one of two secure designated locations:

1. Shook Center – Church Office
2. Off Campus – across the street at McCants Middle School

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS OBJECTS

According to Diocesan policy #5053.1, there are two specific situations which may call for immediate expulsion:

1. When the moral or physical well-being of the student body or faculty is endangered (such as by bringing any firearm or other weapon to school or a serious threat is given).
2. When there is any positive promotion against religion or faith.

To ensure the physical safety of the students, faculty and staff, students are not to bring toys, materials, or weapons to school that appear to be or are dangerous to themselves or others. Should an incident occur that involves the above-mentioned items, the following directives will be followed:

- The principal will be notified.
- The principal or teacher will remove the toy, material, or weapon from the student’s possession.
- The student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.
- An incident report will be filed in the student’s school record.
- The student will receive an in-school or out-of-school suspension until a conference is held with the student, parent/guardian, teacher, principal, and pastor.

If the weapon is a firearm, the police will be called (as firearms must be legally licensed) and the student will be placed on an immediate suspension pending expulsion.

RIGHT TO SEARCH

The school reserves the right to search through anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

ALLERGY POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes that an allergy is a serious condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all children with allergies.

To instill good healthy habits in children and to further protect students with asthma symptoms, St. Joseph Catholic School and Church is committed as of August 2020 to provide a tobacco-free campus. No tobacco use of any kind is allowed in and around the buildings or in the parking lot.

This school encourages children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff and pupils. Teachers and new staff should also be made aware of the policy. All staff who encounter students with allergies are provided with training on allergies through certified first aid training. Training is updated as needed.

ASTHMA MEDICATION

Immediate access to reliever inhalers is vital. Please fill out the Diocesan Medication Form for the inhaler or other medication. Children are permitted to carry their reliever inhaler only if the proper medical documentation is on file in the office and the documentation states that the student has received adequate training and demonstrates proper use and is allowed to carry. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are asked to ensure that the school is provided with a labeled spare reliever inhaler. All inhalers must be labeled with the child's name by the parent/guardian. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to replace inhalers when they expire.

RECORD KEEPING

At the beginning of each school year, or when a child joins St. Joseph Catholic School, parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to submit a list of the child's allergies. From this information the school keeps its allergy register which is available for all school staff. If medication changes in between times, parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to inform the school and submit a new Diocesan Medication Form.

THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is safe and favorable to children with asthma or allergies. As far as possible, the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma.

FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. To minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, St. Joseph Catholic School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent(s)/guardian(s), and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life-threatening allergy.

CLASSROOMS

Teachers must be familiar with the Emergency Action Plan of students in their classes and respond to emergencies as per the emergency protocol documented in the Emergency Action Plan. In the event of a suspected allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history), the school office will be called, and the school's Emergency Response Plan

activated. The classrooms have communication with the school office. The emergency medical services will be called immediately.

Information will be kept about students' food allergies in the classroom and in the substitute emergency folder, accessible by teachers, substitutes or other responsible adults. All teachers and substitutes will be educated about the risk of food allergies.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent/guardian.

Tables will be washed with soap and water following any food related events held in the classroom. Proper hand cleaning techniques will be taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food. **St. Joseph Catholic School makes no claim to be a peanut-free school.**

MEDICATION POLICY

Medication may be administered to students during school hours by school staff, the administrative assistant, or the principal only if the medication is needed for the student to remain in school. In addition, the following guidelines must be met:

- A Medication Permit Form must be **COMPLETED** by the parent(s)/guardian(s), **SIGNED** by the physician, and **RETURNED** with the medication to the school office. A copy of this Medication Permit Form is posted on FACTS under announcements.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) must bring all medications to the school office at the beginning of the day.
- All medicine, including "over the counter," must be prescribed by a doctor or a dentist and must be in the original, unopened container, and labeled with a current pharmacy prescription label.
- Medications sent in baggies or unlabeled containers or previously opened **WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED.**
- **ANTIBIOTICS WILL NOT** be given at school by personnel. If the antibiotic must be given during the school day the parent/guardian may come to the school office and administer it.
- Under no circumstances will students be allowed to keep medication with them during the day. Exceptions for inhalers and epi-pens will be made, but only if we have **A DOCTOR'S STATEMENT** that the student is trained to use them properly.
- It is extremely difficult to track down students to remind them about their medicine so students should be made aware of the need to report to the office to take their medicine. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of our youngest students need to send a note to the teacher or Extended Care personnel if the student should forget to come to the office.
- Only a parent/guardian may perform nebulizer treatments in school unless we have a **DOCTOR'S STATEMENT** that the child is trained to use this properly. Non-medical school personnel are not permitted to administer this treatment.
- **Parent(s)/ guardian(s) must pick up any unused medicine at the end of the school year or it will be destroyed.**

ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

St. Joseph Catholic School is not responsible for loss or damage to any items brought to school by a student. This includes, but is not limited to, all electronic devices. Please have lunch boxes, backpacks, calculators, uniforms labeled with first and last names.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

St. Joseph Parent Teacher Organization works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. The goals of this organization include fundraising, parent education, and community building. We need all

parents/guardians to be involved in this very valuable organization that benefits the entire school community. Please consider attending these meetings.

Each classroom needs one or more parents/guardians to serve as a room helper to coordinate holiday parties and other school events. Please consider helping your child's teacher this year. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated.

VIRTUS

Information for Volunteers serving the children of St. Joseph Catholic School

- As of July 2024, the VIRTUS program needs to be completed before becoming a school volunteer. Instructions on how to follow this online class are available by visiting the school office, church office, or on our website.
- An obvious first step in assuring the safety of our children is verifying the suitability of those adults who are in contact with the youth of our parish community. All teachers, employees and volunteers must undergo background checks.
- Diocesan policy recognizes that volunteers are often entrusted with the responsibility for the well-being of our children. Volunteers involved with the youth of our Church & School should view these new requirements not as a personal affront, but as a way in which our Church & School demonstrates its desire to protect our children and honor the trust their parents/guardians place in us.

We expect all parents/guardians to donate their time and talents to our school. Please see your tuition agreement for the number of expected hours. Volunteering helps you stay involved with all the events of the school, demonstrates moral virtue to your child(ren), and can be a mutually beneficial relationship between you and the school. The background check may take up to two weeks. Please make the effort to start paperwork now, so you can be ready to serve when the Holy Spirit moves you.

POLICY OF THE DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON CONCERNING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE BY CHURCH PERSONNEL

The Policy of the Diocese of Charleston Concerning Allegations of Sexual Misconduct or Abuse of a Minor by Church personnel as well as the Diocese of Charleston Child Sexual Abuse Prevention program are handled by the Office of Child Protection Services. The Supervisor of Screening and Education can be contacted at (843) 853-2130 ext. 209.

The Policy of the Diocese of Charleston Code of Conduct was adopted on February 21, 2022 and was given to each employee at the time of hire. Each employee must complete the VIRTUS course and submit the certificate of completion to the school for safe keeping. For all background screening information, please contact the Supervisor of Screening at (843) 853-2130 ext. 209 at Child Protection Services.

CHILD ABUSE LAWS

St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of South Carolina. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to Child Protective Services.

GENERAL INFORMATION

FOOD POLICY

To stem the spread of germs and viruses and to minimize potential allergic reactions, St. Joseph Catholic School has a “no sharing of food” policy. Also, this policy helps to ensure that the food choices you make for your child are honored. Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with lunch monitors are always in place.

HEALTHY SNACKS/HEALTHY LUNCHES

As temples of the Holy Spirit and good stewards of God’s creation, we are committed to teaching our students about good nutrition. High sugar, caffeinated, and fatty foods can negatively affect your child’s ability to concentrate in school and to behave in an appropriate manner. **Help us to teach them that eating healthy is a good way of thanking God for our life.** The teacher reserves the right to prohibit or limit the choice and amount of snack/lunch if the student’s snack/lunch is not from the healthy list. Students are to bring a water bottle every day. **Milk and water are the only approved beverages for snacks and lunch.**

LUNCH

PreK students will have lunch in their classrooms. All other students will eat their lunch in Fr. Friend Hall and students are responsible for carrying their own lunch. Please pack a healthy lunch for your student(s) and do not include a toy.

Lunch procedures:

- Glass bottles, jars, and cans are not allowed.
- All lunch boxes or bags should be marked with the student’s name and grade on each item.
- We cannot offer refrigeration or heating of food.

Hot Lunch Procedures:

- Lunches must be ordered through Facts Family Portal (Select Lunch under the Student Tab) each week.
- We will not accept late orders.
- A calendar of lunches is posted in FACTS.

If your child is without lunch, he/she will be given side items, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be billed for a full lunch.

White or chocolate milk is available daily and must be ordered for the entire school year in advance. We will not be able to refund any money due to student absence, but you may ask for the milk to take home if your student is absent for several days.

MORNING DROP OFF PROCEDURES

- **DROP-OFF PRIOR TO 7:30am IS PROHIBITED.** Leaving students prior to the arrival of the adult in charge of the early morning supervision is not permitted since there is no supervision and St. Joseph Catholic School cannot be responsible for the safety of the children.
- Students who arrive between 7:30 and 7:55am will go to their assigned area where the teacher will meet him/her.
- Students will be dropped off using the Cornelia Road driveway. Pull up to where the adults and patrols are standing. They will open the car door and help your child out of the car.
- Please have your student ready to exit (shoes on, breakfast eaten, bookbag ready)

- If you require more time for unloading – please park in the church parking lot and escort your student. This will help alleviate traffic during drop off.
- **Always** drop off your child when the staff and patrols are present to take them into the school. For our students' safety and protection, please wait for patrols to unload your child. Do not leave your child unattended.
- If there are no adults present, you must park in the church lot and escort your child into the school building. Students arriving after 7:55am are late and **must be escorted into the school by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and signed in** as tardy.
- Students are to be dropped off according to the above procedure. Parents/guardians are not allowed to walk students to the classrooms.

END OF DAY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

PICK UP PROCEDURES FOR PREK- 5TH GRADE

Dismissal will begin at 3:00pm.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

- Please have your Name Sign clearly visible to help facilitate dismissal. Follow the instructions of the teachers in the parking lot.
- Teachers will bring the students out to their car. Parents will be required to properly strap in the PreK students. Teachers will not be responsible for buckling in any student.
- Once students are loaded and the cars exit, the next set of cars will move forward.
- Please keep your place in line after your child(ren) has been put in the car and wait until the car in front of you has pulled away before exiting. **DO NOT DRIVE AROUND OTHER CARS.**
- Always be alert and cautious while in the parking lots.
- **If you need to pick up a Middle School student at 3:15pm, please circle exit and reenter the car line.**

***Students that are not picked up by 3:15pm will be sent to Extended Care – nominal fees will apply.**

PICK UP PROCEDURES FOR GRADES 6TH – 8TH

Dismissal will begin at 3:15pm.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

- Please have your Name Sign clearly visible to help facilitate dismissal. Follow the instructions of the teachers in the parking lot.
- Teachers will bring the students out to their car. Teachers will not be responsible for buckling in any student.
- Once students are loaded and the cars exit, the next set of cars will move forward.
- Please keep your place in line after your child(ren) has been put in the car and wait until the car in front of you has pulled away before exiting. **DO NOT DRIVE AROUND OTHER CARS.**
- Always be alert and cautious while in the parking lots.

***Students that are not picked up by 3:30pm will be sent to Extended Care – nominal fees will apply.**

EMERGENCY PICK UP PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency or evacuation at school, your students will be taken to a designated area and supervised by teachers. Teachers will contact the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and will share information about the situation. When we receive an all clear to release students, the students will only be released to those individuals that are

authorized to pick them up. Parent(s)/guardian(s) make sure that your emergency contact information and authorized student pick up list in FACTS is updated regularly.

SOUTH CAROLINA CAR SEAT LAWS

St. Joseph Catholic School follows the South Carolina child passenger restraint law. Below is a synopsis of that law.

South Carolina's child passenger restraint law requires that:

- Children from birth to 1 year old, or who weigh less than 20 pounds, must be secured in a rear-facing child safety seat.
- Children 1 through 5 years old, weighing 20 to 40 pounds, must be restrained in a forward-facing child seat.
- Children 1 through 5 years old, weighing 40 to 80 pounds, must be secured in a belt-positioning booster seat.
- Children under the age of 6 are not required to be in booster seats if they weigh more than 80 pounds or if they can sit with their backs against the car's seat and bend their legs over the seat edge without slouching.
- Children under 6 may not sit in the front passenger seat. However, this restriction does not apply if the vehicle has no rear passenger seats or if all other rear passenger seats are occupied by children less than 6 years old.
- **Violators are subject to a \$150 fine.**

St. Joseph teachers and staff will not put any student in a vehicle. Please explain these procedures to anyone authorized to pick up your child.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

EXTENDED CARE

We provide extended care by South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) certified employees to our students in PreK-8th grades from dismissal - 5:30pm for a fee.

Our program provides supervised care at school when parents are unable to pick their students up at school dismissal time. Parents may choose to utilize our program on an everyday, semi-regular, or drop-in basis.

The Extended Care Program only operates when the school term is in session. Therefore, it is not open during school breaks or holidays. Extended Care is not available on Early Dismissal days.

The Extended Care Program is not subsidized by the parish or school and is therefore totally dependent upon fees. The non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 per family is to be paid and submitted with the Extended Care Registration Form. Our current rates can be found in the office and costs will be assessed in 15-minute increments. Billing statements will be issued through FACTS at the beginning of each month for the previous month's usage. \$5 per minute will be assessed for any late pickups.

Please note – only accounts in good standing will be allowed to utilize the Extended Care Program

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS POLICY

Field trips and excursions are designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry and provide opportunities for social growth. A school trip is a privilege extended to each student. If the principal or teacher determines that a student should not attend a field trip due to improper behavior, missing assignments, etc., the child will remain in school. The following policies apply to all field trips and excursions:

- A permission slip will be provided by the teacher and will include information concerning the purpose and destination of the trip, mode of transportation, date and time of departure, uniform specifics, eating

arrangements, estimated time of return, and a detailed itinerary when a field trip will extend beyond the normal school day.

- **A SIGNED PARENTAL PERMISSION SLIP IS REQUIRED FOR EACH STUDENT PARTICIPATING IN THE TRIP.**
- If your child fails to bring his/her permission slip home, print out the blank form posted in FACTS. Call the school for information needed to complete the form. This is the only format that may be used to allow a student to leave school during school hours. A telephone call, email, or fax in lieu of the written, signed permission form is **NOT** acceptable. If the signed permission slip is not submitted, the student will remain at school.
- All monies collected for the field trip are non-refundable.
- Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
- Parents/Guardians who chaperone a field trip are not permitted to bring additional pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip. For extenuating circumstances, contact the principal.
- To help provide adequate supervision for our students' field trips, we must have enough volunteer adult chaperones. All chaperones must be 25 years of age or older. All chaperones must have a background check, appropriate training, and a signed Adult Hold Harmless Form. Drivers must complete a driver screening by the Diocese, present a current driver's license, and proof of auto insurance at 100k/300k level.

BIRTHDAYS

A simple cookie, cupcake, or other small snack is appropriate for your child's birthday. Please call your child's teacher at least a day in advance to find out the exact time for that day. **Remember that this is a treat and not a party.** Please be thoughtful about students in your child's room who may have food allergies or sensitivities. Invitations to private birthdays or other parties may be given out in class, only if there is an invitation for each child in the class. Any other invitation must be mailed directly to the children.

GIFTS

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. Valentines can be distributed at school, only if there is one for every student in the class. Special Valentines for special friends **are not allowed**. Once again this contributes to hurt feelings if someone is left out.

SCHOOL PARTIES

Holy Days: Special holy day activities will be planned for all students, in addition to Mass attendance during the school day. You will be informed through your Friday newsletter and through posts on social media of these special events.

Teacher Birthdays: Each classroom's "room parent" will coordinate a birthday activity and snack for the teacher's birthday. The room parent(s)/guardian(s) will call the classroom parent(s)/guardian(s) to coordinate refreshments and materials.

Classroom Parties: From time to time, various holidays are celebrated in our classrooms. Your room parents, using the information on your volunteer sheet, will coordinate the refreshments and materials needed for the party with you. All classroom parties must take place on campus.

ATHLETIC POLICY: PRE-K THROUGH 8TH GRADE

This athletic policy outlines the principles, guidelines, and expectations for physical activities and sports programs at St. Joseph Catholic School, serving students from PreK through 8th grade. Rooted in the Catholic tradition, our approach views athletics as an integral part of holistic formation, fostering the development of the whole person—body, mind, and spirit—in accordance with Church teachings. Sports are celebrated to build virtues such as loyalty, courage, and endurance, while respecting the dignity of the human body as a temple of the Holy Spirit. Programs

emphasize fun, skill-building, teamwork, and faith integration, avoiding excesses that idolize physical perfection or compromise safety and moral growth. Participation is encouraged for all students to promote physical health, social bonds, and spiritual awareness, with safeguards against abuse, discrimination, and harmful practices.

Section 1: Catholic Vision of Sports and the Human Body

The Catholic Church has long engaged with sports as a positive force for human development, recognizing its roots in ancient traditions and its modern evolution as a global phenomenon that transcends cultures. From the earliest days, Scripture and Church Fathers have used athletic metaphors to illustrate the Christian life, portraying it as a race toward holiness where discipline and perseverance lead to eternal reward. Saint Thomas Aquinas affirmed the virtue in games and recreation, emphasizing moderation to balance work, play, and rest for the soul's well-being.

At St. Joseph Catholic School, athletics embody this vision: physical activity is a pathway to encountering God's creation in our bodies, fostering humility, patience, and community. We reject any trend that disorders or perverts sports, such as doping, excessive competition leading to injury, or discrimination based on origin, ability, or background. Programs align with the Church's educational mission, integrating sports into faith formation to form young people as whole persons capable of facing life's challenges victoriously. This includes honoring the Creator's design of sexual difference, as the body reflects God's complementary plan for male and female, warranting distinct approaches in formation and activities.

Section 2: Program Overview

Our athletic program spans PreK through 8th grade, offering age-appropriate activities that prioritize enjoyment, skill development, and inclusivity over elite competition. Sports are scheduled to respect family time, Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation, ensuring no conflicts with Mass or religious education. Facilities include safe playgrounds, fields, and gyms, with programs running seasonally (fall, winter, spring) for 8-10 weeks each.

Section 3: Participation and Eligibility

Participation is open to all enrolled students, promoting the Catholic value of inclusivity and dignity for every person, regardless of ability. No student shall be excluded due to skill level, body type, or socioeconomic status. In alignment with the Church's recognition of the natural differences between males and females, as ordained by the Creator for complementary roles in family and society, students will only play on sports teams designated by their biological sex. This respects the inherent dignity of each sex while acknowledging physiological distinctions that influence performance and safety in most sports disciplines, where men and women typically do not compete against each other.

- **Eligibility Requirements:**
 - Current enrollment and good standing in academics (grade of C or higher in all subjects/courses) and conduct.
 - Parental consent form, including medical clearance.
- **Inclusivity Measures:** Teams will balance rosters to avoid exclusion; non-competitive roles (e.g., team managers) available. Fees are minimized or subsidized to ensure access. Separate teams or categories will be formed based on biological sex for fairness and to uphold Christian modesty in training and competition.
- **Limitations:** Students with medical conditions must provide doctor approval; excessive absences or disciplinary issues may require review by administration.

Section 4: Coaching and Instruction

Coaches and physical education teachers are role models of Christian virtue, selected for their faith commitment, pedagogical skills, and ability to integrate Gospel values. All undergo background checks, training per diocesan guidelines, and formation on the Church's sports vision.

- **Coach Responsibilities:**
 - Teach skills with emphasis on fun, effort, and respect, using sports as a "school of life" for maturity.
 - Incorporate prayer (e.g., before/after practices) and reflections on stewardship of the body.
 - Promote fair play, rejecting cheating or aggression, model humility in victory or defeat.
- **Training:** Annual workshops on child protection, injury prevention, and Catholic anthropology of the body.

- **Volunteer Parents:** Welcome as assistants but must complete training; no unsupervised contact with children.

Section 5: Safety and Health Guidelines

The dignity of the body demands protection from harm, aligning with Church teachings that reject practices damaging physical or spiritual well-being.

- **Health Protocols:** Mandatory warm-ups, hydration, and rest to prevent overuse; no year-round specialization for young athletes. Equipment checks and certified first-aid on site, immediate reporting of injuries.
- **Prohibited Practices:** Doping, unsafe contact sports without modifications, or pressure leading to eating disorders/body image issues.
- **Mental Health:** Monitor for burnout; encourage breaks and counseling if needed, viewing emotional well-being as part of integral formation.

Section 6: Ethical Standards and Faith Integration

Athletics at St. Joseph Catholic School are an extension of catechesis, weaving faith into every aspect to form disciples who honor God in body and action.

- **Sportsmanship Code:**
 - **Respect:** For opponents, officials, and self; no discrimination or bullying.
 - **Integrity:** Adhere to rules; view competition as pursuing excellence in God's image.
 - **Humility:** Celebrate effort over results; learn from losses as spiritual growth.
- **Faith Elements:** Team prayers, saint inspirations (e.g., St. Sebastian, St. Pier Giorgio Frassati), and end-of-season reflections linking sports to virtues like perseverance (cf. 1 Cor 9:24).
- **Parental Role:** Support without over-involvement; model Christian behavior at events.
- **Discipline:** Violations (e.g., unsportsmanlike conduct) addressed emphasizing repentance and forgiveness.

Section 7: Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by administration, coaches, parents, and diocesan representatives (if necessary) to ensure alignment with evolving Church teachings and best practices. Feedback is welcomed to enhance our mission.

In summary, St. Joseph Catholic School's athletic program embodies the Catholic call to redeem sports for human flourishing, nurturing bodies as sacred gifts while forming spirits for eternal life. By participating, students learn to give the best of themselves in service to God and neighbor, building a community of faith, fitness, and fraternity.

Please sign below indicating you acknowledge the above policy and commit to abide by it in all contexts.

Student Athlete Name (printed) _____

Student Athlete Signature _____

Date _____

Parent Name (Printed) _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

**DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR ABUSE REPORT FORM**

Please print or type, and if possible, use black ink.

1. This report is being submitted by:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Parish/School/Diocesan Office: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: Day _____ Evening _____

2. Date of Report: _____

3. Victim's Name: _____ Age/Date of Birth _____

4. Describe the incident of suspected child abuse, including date, time, and location: _____

5. Accused: _____

Accused's position with the parish/school/diocesan office (cleric, teacher, parent, volunteer, etc.)

6. Notified Diocesan Coordinator/Victim Assistance Minister/General Counsel:

- Diocesan Coordinator - Phone number: 843-853-2130, extension 209
- Victim Assistance Minister - Phone number: 843-416-1050 or 800-204-7955
- General Counsel - Phone number: 843-853-4500

7. Notified Victim's parent/guardian: ____ Yes ____ No Spoke with: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

8. Notified the Appropriate Law Enforcement Agency or the Department of Social Services:

____ Yes ____ No Spoke with: _____ Date/Time: _____

Signature of Person Reporting the Incident

Date and Time



2026-2027

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

By signing this document, I affirm that I have read, understand, and agree to all policies and procedures as they apply to St. Joseph Catholic School. Handbook can be found on the school website under Resources and in the FACTS Family Portal

I further agree to discuss all policies with my student(s).

Parent/Guardian Signature

Printed Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Printed Name

Date