



**SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH  
SCHOOL**

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# 2018-19

## STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK and guidelines

# Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School

Part of the Educational Mission of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish  
And  
The Archdiocese of Atlanta  
Pre-Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade



*Accredited by*  
District-Wide Accreditation of the Office of Catholic Schools  
Sponsored by AdvancED

*Member of the*  
National Catholic Educational Association

The rules and policies for Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School outlined in this handbook are the material condition of the contractual agreement between the school, the student, and the student's parents/guardians. The administration of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School has tried to be as explicit as possible. However, because during the academic year new and unusual circumstances may arise, the principal has the authority to use their discretion in making decisions regarding unforeseen circumstances. The principal may also amend the school handbook for just cause. Parents and students will be given written notification if changes are made.

This handbook is in full compliance with the Policies for Catholic Schools as published by the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

# **Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School**

## **Mission Statement**

At St. Joseph Catholic Parish School, we are a family of learners who model Christ in all that we do. We are happy, holy and helpful!

## **Vision Statement**

St. Joseph Catholic Parish School believes Jesus is the master teacher and commits to teaching as He did. Students are developing into current and future leaders who are thoughtful, compassionate, and problem-solvers. We strive to build self-confident students whose security is based on knowledge of God's love for them and the value of service to others. Students are challenged to inquire about the world around them in order to positively impact their environment, both locally and globally. We are continuously striving to expand our Christ-like influence into the community thus attracting more families to our Catholic school. Our teachers, parents, community partners and Our Church are unified in the belief that children are the central focus of our mission.

## **Motto**

We are happy, holy and helpful!

## **Mission Statement for the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Atlanta**

The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Atlanta serve a vital role in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing quality education in an environment of spiritual, intellectual, and moral formation in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

## **Statement of Public Assurance**

Schools in the Archdiocese of Atlanta admit students of any race, sex color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to all students at the school. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex color national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, loan program and athletic or other school administered programs. St. Joseph Catholic Parish School is in full compliance with all archdiocesan policies set forth in the archdiocesan schools' policy manual.

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is accredited by and meets all the standards of the District-Wide Accreditation of the Office of Catholic Schools Sponsored by AdvancED. The School holds membership in the National Catholic Educational Association and the Georgia Independent School Association.

## **School Colors**

Navy Blue and White

## **Mascot**

Knight

## **Use of School Logo and/or Motto**

The school logo and motto are the property of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. No individual or group of individuals may use the school logo and/or motto without the expressed written permission of the pastor and the principal.

## **Hours of Operation**

School office hours during the school year are 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

- Morning drop-off and student supervision begins at 7:15 am.
- The school day begins at 7:50 am. Students arriving after 7:51 am are tardy.
- The school day ends at 3:15 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays unless there is an early dismissal.
- The school day ends at 2:15 pm on Wednesdays unless there is an early dismissal.
- All students are dismissed at 12:00 pm on early dismissal days.

Students must be picked up by 3:35 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and by 2:35 pm on Wednesdays, unless the student is enrolled in the Extended Day Program (EDP) or another school sponsored program. Students not picked up by 2:35 pm / 3:35 pm will be sent to the Extended Day Program (EDP) for parent pickup. Fees will apply.

## **Asbestos**

The school is free from asbestos.

## **History**

The history of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is a living testament to the dedicated men and women who shared the vision of Catholic education in Athens, Georgia. Bishop Gross of Savannah purchased the site of Saint Joseph Church on the corner of Prince and Pulaski streets in 1873. At that time, there were only ten Catholic families living in Athens. In 1910, after years of service from traveling priests, Saint Joseph Church got its first resident priest. Father Harry Clark came to Athens with enthusiasm and foresight. In 1913, a large church building and rectory were completed which would house a school one day. The dream of Catholic education in Athens was on its way to becoming a reality. In the fall of 1949, under the careful direction of Father Walter J. Donovan, Saint Joseph Church began their school with 35 students in grades 1 through 6 on the bottom floor of the rectory. The faculty consisted of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus whose community so lovingly ran St. Mary's Hospital. The first principal was Sister Maria. The dream of Catholic education continued throughout the 1950s as the Athens community grew along with the number of families joining Saint Joseph Church. Five years later, the student population increased from 35 to 170. In 1953, Father Donovan received permission to expand the current school to include grade seven. The Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart withdrew from Saint Joseph School in 1968. The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, took over the administration of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. Two important milestones in the history of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School were celebrated in the 1999-2000 school year:

- Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School celebrated fifty years of providing excellence in education and religious instruction to the Athens community.
- Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of providing educational leadership at Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School.

In 2004, under the direction of Father David McGuinness, the Saint Joseph Community was asked to begin serious study of how to accommodate growth. As a result, Saint Joseph Parish purchased 46 acres on Epps Bridge Parkway on the Clarke/Oconee line and began building the school and multipurpose building which opened for the 2012-13 school year.

## **Statement of School Philosophy**

The purpose of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is to promote the Christian growth and development of the whole child within a structured academic environment. The school strives to communicate knowledge, to aid in the acquisition of values and in the discovery of truth within a living, believing community of faith. We strive to make real the goal set forth by the American bishops in their document, *To Teach As Jesus Did*: "Community is at the heart of Christian education, not simply as a concept taught, but as a reality to be lived." Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is an integral part of both the Saint Joseph Parish and the regional communities. The children come to this community with spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, and creative talents, which are developed through sequentially implemented educational programs. This philosophy comprises the following aspects of student growth:

## **Religious Formation**

- We believe that our school community, composed of parents, students, faculty, and staff, strives to witness Gospel values through instruction, worship, and community service; thus fostering personal dignity and respect.
- We believe that each child is a unique member of the Christian Community needing respect, acceptance, love, and understanding.
- We believe that community is a reality to be lived and is at the heart of Catholic Education.
- We believe that teachers, administrators, parents, and members of the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.

## **Academic Excellence**

- We believe that learning is an ongoing process whereby each person seeks to fulfill his or her God-given potential in accordance with individual talents and abilities.
- We believe children need encouragement to strive for the attainment of academic, aesthetic, and technological knowledge through skills and study habits appropriate to each student's level of development.
- We believe that the commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners.
- We believe that students need to not only demonstrate their essential knowledge and skills, but also need to be actively involved in solving problems and producing quality work.
- We believe that students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process.

## **Social Consciousness and Emotional Growth**

- We believe in the uniqueness of each child, thereby encouraging a healthy self-concept, while acknowledging the diversity and special qualities of others.
- We believe in the importance of developing, in each child, the concepts of self-discipline and respect for others.
- We believe in nurturing each child's personal character development so that he/she may grow to become a responsible, caring individual who is sensitive to the needs of the global community and responsive to local needs through community service.
- We believe that positive relationships and mutual respect among and between students and staff enhances a student's self-esteem.
- We believe that a safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.

## **Physical Development**

- We believe in developmentally appropriate physical learning activities that promote the physical growth of each child.
- We believe that children need to be taught good nutrition, proper hygiene, and healthy lifestyles that promote the total development of the child.

## **Parent Philosophy**

The parents of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School view education as a combined effort between the home and the school. Our quest for the development of the total child at Saint Joseph Catholic School encompasses and is based upon the following parent philosophies:

- Guidance in a Catholic environment encompassing Christian values and principles including respect for self, respect for peers, respect for property, and respect for authority should provide a focus for education.
- Education should provide an exposure to the diverse philosophies existing in today's world helping each child to gain the abilities and tools needed to cope in a healthy Christian manner based on right versus wrong rather than peer pressure.
- The development of the total person should include a sense of personal responsibility, the desire to do one's best, and the recognition of the differences, strengths and weaknesses in all persons.

- Learning should occur in an academically challenging environment for each child as a basis for promotion and preparation for future academic levels.

### **Parents are responsible for:**

- Supporting the mission of St. Joseph Catholic Parish School.
- Supporting school policy and the authority of the administration and teachers.
- Supporting students' completion of all assignments.
- Following the policies and procedures stated in the handbook.
- Ensuring regular attendance at school and school events.
- Meeting financial obligations on time.
- Caring for school property and supplies and reimbursing or replacing any lost or damaged property.
- Regularly checking the school website, calendar and email for school communications.

### **Guidelines for Growth**

Education is a lifelong process. It enlarges the capacity of our human spirit as well as our imagination. It demands constant nourishment and a mature openness to creative alternatives. To prepare young people for a world we ourselves cannot yet envision is no small task. It requires the concerned cooperation of parents, the school, and the child at all times. It calls for strong, mutual support, and honest discernment of what is really important in the development of the child. It means working together to foster in young people the kind of values we would like to see present in our future community. It includes being flexible enough to deal with each young person as a unique human being with something significant to contribute, yet firm enough to preserve the quality of life we seek for the whole community.

As educators and parents, we are united in our efforts to help young people become responsible, creative human beings. A child learns responsibility as he/she begins to take a more active role in choosing the outcome or consequences of his/her actions as they affect the wider community of home, friends, and school. Such growth happens only in an environment of fair-mindedness, caring warmth, mutual cooperation, and consistency.

Our efforts to foster responsibility among students in a consistent, concerned manner are rooted in our belief in the student. If the young person knows what is expected, knows the limits that have been set by caring adults, and has an active part in deciding what is best for the individual and overall community, then the student is more likely to responsibly choose the appropriate behavior or the consequences that result from his/her choice(s) of action.

***The School and the parents are partners in the education of our children. If, in the opinion of the administration, that partnership is no longer viable, the School reserves the right to require the parent to withdraw the student from the School.***

### **Parent/Guardian Volunteer Program**

St. Joseph Catholic Parish School values the time and talent of our families. Your participation through volunteerism is essential to the success of our school and contributes to our positive school culture. Each family is required to contribute a minimum of 20 (twenty) hours per year. Hours begin July 1 and end June 30 of each year/ Hours are easily fulfilled by your regular involvement with your students, the school, the parish and our educational program. Opportunities are not limited to those listed in the guidelines. Program guidelines and the volunteer hours reporting form can be found by visiting our website at:

<https://www.sjsathens.org/parent-resources/volunteerprogram.cfm>

### **Background Investigation Reports for Volunteers and Employees**

Employees of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School are required to undergo a background investigation and receive an affirmative report prior to hiring. Volunteers who work on a regular basis with, or in close proximity to, students during the school day, or at school-sponsored activities, will also be required to obtain an affirmative background investigation

report through the same agency as employees. Results of background investigative reports will be kept strictly confidential and, except as required by law, information will only be revealed to the applicant or a person whose duty required him/her to review the results. The sole purpose of the investigative report is a determination regarding the qualifications of an individual to work as an employee or volunteer at the school. **All Employees and certain, identified Volunteers must attend the safe environment training.**

## Communications

### Cell Phones

The school recognizes that parents may want their child(ren) to have cell phones for safety purposes before or after school hours. If a parent chooses to have their child(ren) have a cell phone at school, the parent and students must complete the phone registration form and return it to the office prior to the phone being on campus. Forms must be updated annually. The school will not be held responsible for missing or damaged cell phones. Cell phones must be turned off immediately upon entering school property. **Students must keep their cell phones concealed in the OFF positions in their backpacks at all times during the school day.** Students' cell phones may not be turned on or in use at school between the hours of 7:15 am through the time the student leaves campus, unless permission has been granted by a faculty/staff member and the use takes place with supervision of faculty/staff.

If a student is found to have a cell phone on their person or in/on their belongings in the **ON** or **OFF** position, or a backpack in the **ON** position the following infractions will be applied:

First Offense: The cell phone will be confiscated and a parent will need to come and pick the phone up from the office at the end of the day.

Second Offense: The cell phone will be confiscated and will be held until the end of the day in the school office and a parent will need to pick up the phone and pay a \$10.00 fine.

Third Offense & subsequent offences: The cell phone will be confiscated and will be held in the school office until the end of the day and parents will pay a \$25.00 fine.

### Contacting Students During School Hours

Parents should send all messages or information in writing to the homeroom teacher first thing in the morning. In the event of an emergency, messages should be called in to the front office before 2:00 pm. The office staff makes every effort to diligently relay messages in a timely manner. Parents are not to call a student from the classroom or interrupt the learning process. All messages should go through the front office.

### E-mail

All e-mail communication representing the school and its activities must be approved by the principal. Teachers' and faculty members' email addresses are listed on the school website. Communications between teachers and parents may be used strictly for general information purposes only, such as to confirm a conference time; to request a phone call; to clarify an assignment. Teachers try to respond to parent e-mail messages within 24 hours. If parents need to communicate schedule changes, lunch information, etc. to their student(s), they should do so by contacting the front office or teacher, not the student directly. If schedule changes are same-day, it is recommended that parents contact the front office, as teachers are actively engaged in their classrooms and do not always have time to check e-mails for schedule updates. Students' email use is restricted to educational purposes only.

The best way to reach a faculty member is via e-mail. Please allow 24 hours for your reply. If you have an emergency, please call the front office and indicate this to office personnel.

### Social Media

Social Media encompasses the various cyberspace ways that persons can communicate with each other. Social Media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Snapchat Video, Instagram, Vine, email, etc.

While the school does not prohibit the use of social media, conduct, whether inside or outside the school, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school can result in disciplinary action. Therefore, defamatory or threatening statements made on social media may result in discipline of the student account holder.

The School name, logo, motto, mascot or uniform may not appear in any form on any type of social media, e.g. student pictured in school uniform. Likewise, the School name, logo, motto, mascot or uniform may not appear in any form of paraphernalia, e.g. putting the name on t-shirts, without the express written permission of the principal.

### **Photographing/Audio/Video Recording Policy**

No photographic or audio/video recording devices may be used during functions of the school without the expressed permission of the principal. Such events include, but are not limited to, classroom presentations, field trips, performances, parent conferences, administrative conferences, and/or religious services. This policy also includes tape recording of conversations. Parents must sign an Archdiocesan Media Release form annually concerning photograph and name recognition of their child(ren) in school PR/Marketing publications and for use on the school website and social media.

### **Consultation, Communication, and Concerns**

Communication between parents, teachers and the school is essential in education. This union of authority will not occur accidentally, but results from the combined efforts of both parents and teachers, for the benefit of the child. Open communication between teacher and parents should occur naturally as both are, by nature or profession, child advocates whose first concern is the welfare of the child.

When either the parent or the teacher has a question, suggestion, or concern regarding the child, both should feel welcome to contact the other to begin the conversation. Sometimes an email or phone call is all that is needed. Other times, a conference may be more appropriate. Either the teacher or the parent may request a conference with the other. However, parents are always expected to attend conferences called by school personnel.

#### **If parents have concerns, the following procedures should be followed:**

- Contact the teacher first. Your child's teacher is your partner in the education of your child. Most concerns that you have can be dealt with satisfactorily if the teacher is made aware of your concern in a timely fashion. Please allow the teacher time to respond. Teachers will return your phone call or email as quickly as possible, but you should allow them at least two school days to respond.
- If you feel that your concern has not been adequately addressed, you may then request a meeting with the teacher and a third party. Typically, this will involve the Guidance Counselor. At that meeting the concern will be addressed and an attempt will be made to resolve the issue. Documentation reflecting an agreement or action plan is the desired result of this phase.
- In the rare instance that a resolution does not result during the second phase of this process, you should then contact the Principal

### **Device/Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School provides technology resources for the use of students, employees, and others affiliated with Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. The equipment, software, and network capacities provided through Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School computer services are and remain the property of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. The use of these resources is a privilege, and requires great responsibility. This privilege may be revoked if misused and may result in the suspension or loss of these privileges, as well as disciplinary, legal, and/or monetary consequences.

#### **Device Responsibility**

- All computers, printers, scanners, digital cameras and other peripherals are the property of Saint Joseph Catholic School and are provided for educational purposes only. Permission must be granted before using any school equipment.



- Computers must be treated with respect. Destruction of computer equipment and peripherals will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to any attempt to harm or destroy the computer hardware, the data of another user, the network/Internet, or any networks or sites connected to the network/Internet. Attempts to breach security codes and/or passwords will also be considered a form of vandalism.
- Students may not deliberately perform an act that will adversely impact the computers, peripherals, or network. This includes, but is not limited to, changing control panel settings, and tampering with components of computers or networks.
- All software on school computers is copyrighted. Students may not install or copy software, screensavers, or other utilities on or from Saint Joseph Catholic School computers.
- Students may not intentionally introduce a virus, or other software or engage in activity that would result in damage to files, drives, or other storage medium.
- Software licensing and copyright laws must be honored. Please use recognized bibliographical standards when making references to copyrighted material.
- Students may not consume food or beverages while at or near technology.
- Students must always get permission from their instructor before using the network or accessing any specific file or application.
- Internet access with a filter is available to students and employees of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. We believe the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. The Internet links computers to universities; elementary, middle and high schools, science labs; museums; art galleries; government sites such as The White House, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian; as well as numerous sites. Our goal in providing Internet service is to promote educational excellence. All users are expected to conduct their online activities in an ethical and legal fashion.

While our intent is to make the Internet safe for our students, and provide access to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials that are not appropriate. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of educational information resources, exceed any disadvantages; but ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

To gain access to the Internet, all students must read these guidelines and agree to abide by the contract. The contract must also be read and signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s). This contract will be enforced throughout every school year at Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. To that end, the Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to sign the contract. The most important prerequisite for someone to receive an Internet access privilege is that he or she take full responsibility for his or her own actions. Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School will not be liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the Internet through this hook up. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their actions. The signing of this document is legally binding and indicates the parties who signed it have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance.

## **School Visit Procedures**

All school visitors/volunteers must report to the school office to sign in and receive a badge. Parents are not to visit the classroom during school hours and interrupt the teaching-learning process. For security and order, when a parent must contact his/her child during the school day, the parent is to come to school office and request the secretary page the classroom. The student will then report to the office to meet the parent if it is an appropriate time.

Lunches being delivered to the school by parents should be brought to the office. The student's teacher will be notified to send the child at the least disruptive time prior to the lunchtime to receive the lunch. Lunches are not delivered to the classroom by parents or others.

**Former students, friends and casual visitors are not allowed to visit faculty, staff or students during school hours**

**without written permission from the principal.**

## **Attendance**

In accordance with the requirements of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School will be in session from 7:50 am until 3:15 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The school will be in session from 7:50 am until 2:15 pm on Wednesdays. The first morning bell will ring at 7:45 am. At 7:51 am, the tardy bell will ring. Morning announcements, the Pledge and prayers will begin at 7:55 am. Students arriving at school after 7:51 am are considered tardy.

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School operates 180 days for students, in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Students are expected to be in school and on time all days when school is in session, including days scheduled for exams or field trips.

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School evaluates the academic achievement of its students on the basis of their involvement and success in the academic program of the school. Tests, homework, and class participation, are included in this evaluation. Therefore, to meet the academic standards of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School in a particular course, attendance and participation are mandatory.

Parents are responsible for the attendance of their children at school. As a guide for parents, Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School considers the following to be valid reasons for absence from school: **sickness, death in the family, health treatment or court appearances.**

Students absent from school for illness or unexcused reasons may not participate in a school related activity on the day(s) of absence.

If a student surpasses twenty (20) days absence, readiness for the next grade is impacted. Effective communication of the parents, professional staff, and the Office of Catholic Schools is necessary to determine necessary placement. The principal will make the final decision. The number of absences, not the cause, is the essential determinant for loss of credit, with one exception: absences caused by an official school event will not be counted as accumulated absences.

## **Appointments**

Medical, dental or other appointments should be made outside of school hours of operation. Scheduled appointments do not constitute an excused tardy or absence from school. We encourage you to use the school calendar to help schedule these appointments on scheduled days off and/or early dismissal days. If a student arrives late or leaves early for an appointment, they will be marked tardy or ED (early dismissal) in RenWeb.

## **Reporting Your Child's Absences**

Parents are required to inform the school of an absence by calling the School before 9:15 am each day of the absence. Parents may also report an absence via email to the school secretary, teacher, nurse and any other relevant faculty. If no notification is received, the absence will be considered unexcused.

## **Returning to School Following an Absence**

On the day the child returns to school, a written note, signed by the parent/legal guardian must be presented to the homeroom teacher (*Archdiocesan Policy 5170*). This note gives the reason(s) and date(s) of the absence(s). It is the responsibility of the student to personally present an absence note to the homeroom teacher.

## **Extended Illness and/or Injury**

When there has been an extended illness, an explanatory note from the currently licensed attending physician is required. If the returning student has any physician prescribed restrictions or follow up action plan, they must be in writing and submitted to the office staff or school nurse. Any detailed restrictions and or follow-up need to be discussed with the principal and/or health room staff. St. Joseph Catholic Parish School will attempt to

accommodate any restrictions within reason.

Physical education and “use of stairs” exemptions or restrictions also require a physician written excuse submitted to the office staff or health room. The written excuses must detail the exemptions and/or restrictions, including the students use of the school elevator if needed and be time limited and renewed with any changes or updates every two weeks until the student has achieved full recovery or the school year has ended. Without this required documentation, the student will be expected to participate fully in PE and all other school activities.

Students who are absent from school may not be present on campus to participate in extracurricular or after school activities without permission of the principal.

### **Scheduled Absences Policy**

Trips for the purposes of education enrichment must be pre-approved in writing by the principal. Vacations not on the school calendar are strongly discouraged. Parents should not schedule extended weekend trips, well-child doctor appointments, etc. for their children in conflict with the school program. In situations where absence cannot be avoided (weddings, reunions, etc.), the principal, teachers and nurses should receive written notification well in advance. Teachers may choose to give the student work to take along or have the work available when the student returns, depending on the grade level of the student and the type of work missed. Students are responsible, under the supervision of their parents, for the mastery and completion of work missed during an absence. Students who miss class for these or other reasons are fully responsible for requesting (first day back) and completing within the allotted time, all work (i.e. homework, class work, tests, etc.) missed during the absence. *(See Make-up Work Policy.)*

### **Make-up Work Due to Absence**

For all absences, regardless of reason or length, it is the student’s responsibility on the first day back to contact each teacher for missed class or homework assignments or tests. Work will be made up when returning to school. The school is under no obligation to provide advanced assignments, tutoring, make-up work, or special testing schedules when parents take their child(ren) out of school for personal reasons (which are counted as unexcused absences). Arrangements/Allowances will be made for long-term illnesses (3 days or more). Work that is not made up will be marked as incomplete and graded accordingly. Late homework and assignments that are complete, and correct will be deducted a certain percentage off. For each day after the first day they are late, more percentage points will be deducted. Students are always expected to complete homework and assignments on time.

### **Tardies**

Students in Pre-K - 8 should be at school when the 7:45 am bell rings. The school day officially begins at 7:51 am. Students arriving after 7:51 am. must enter through the front office and are marked tardy. To be in compliance with Archdiocesan policy, students who are tardy or absent in a combination of 30 or more instances will not be promotable to the next grade. Excessive tardiness will also be grounds for the student’s non-renewal for the next school year. Parents will be notified once their child earns five tardies.

### **Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals**

Every effort should be made to avoid exceptions to the published school schedule. Students arriving 3 hours late or leaving 3 hours early will be marked absent one-half day. The proper procedure for an early dismissal is as follows:

1. A note, signed by the parent, is presented to the homeroom teacher before the school day begins.
2. The parent or guardian must sign the child out in the school office. The child will be paged by the secretary and will report to the office where the parent is waiting.
3. If the student returns to school, she/he must be signed in by the parent or guardian and receive a pass to class at the school office.
4. Principals are authorized to require satisfactory explanations from the parent/guardian for the absence of the student from all or part of the day. The explanation will be obtained in writing. Because schools are

legally required to maintain notes in their files for the current school year, failure to provide a written explanation may be considered parental neglect.

**No early dismissals are allowed after 2:30 PM to not to interrupt end of the day procedures. Early dismissals after 2:30 PM will be exceptionally allowed only in case of emergency.**

### **Attendance at Performances**

Participation in a school performance is considered to be part of the total school program. Students are expected to be present for all class and/or department performances. In the rare event that a student is not able to participate in an evening performance, the student must present the teacher with a written excuse from the parent at least a week in advance of the performance.

### **Morning Drop-Off Procedures**

All students and families are required to follow the school drop-off procedures for carpool. For safety and security purposes, students may be dropped off only by the procedures described in this section.

- Drop-off begins at 7:15 am.
- Students are dropped off in the circle and enter through the main entrance of the school. For the safety of our students, the car line will be limited to one lane in the morning.
- All cars are to remain in the single lane closest to the curb and have your children exit on the right-hand side of the vehicle only.
- Do not exit the single lane or pull around a parked car.
- If you choose to park in the parking lot, escort your student(s) along the sidewalk.
- Students arriving after 7:51 am are tardy and must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to sign-in and receive a tardy slip from office staff.

### **Afternoon Dismissal Procedures**

All students and families are required to follow the school dismissal policy for carpool. For safety and security purposes, students may be dismissed only by the procedures described in this section. Any deviation from a student's regular dismissal procedure requires written parental permission.

- Students are dismissed at 3:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and at 2:15 pm on Wednesdays.
- Parents are to drive cars into the loop, pull up to the next car and turn vehicle off. Remain in your vehicle until your child is dismissed to the car.
- Once outside, students will go to their designated area and are to remain seated until the faculty member leading dismissal says that students may go to their cars.
- After all students are safely in their car the faculty member will dismiss cars one line at a time.
- If you choose to park in parking lot, use the sidewalk to pick up your child in their designated pick-up area.
- *For the safety of our students, please do not:* walk through center sidewalk, leave cars running, leave cars unattended, or be on your cell phones during pick-up time, or exit the single lane or pull around a parked car.
- Students that are not picked up by 3:35 pm are to report to EDP (fees will apply).

### **Rainy Day Dismissal Procedures:**

- Students will remain inside the building until they are dismissed to their cars.
- Parents are to drive cars into the loop, pull up to the next car and turn vehicle off. Remain in your vehicle until your child is dismissed to the car.
- One lane will be used for rainy days; do not exit the single lane or pull around a parked car.
- If you choose to park in the parking lot, please walk all the way up to the building and wait under the entrance until your child is called by faculty to join you.

### **Dismissal to Adults Other Than the Parent/Guardian**

Written permission from the parent or guardian must be presented any time anyone other than the parent or

guardian is signing out or picking up a student who is not already identified as an emergency contact. This includes parents of other students at St. Joseph Catholic Parish School. Photo identification of the adult picking up the students must be presented to the front office, who will make a copy for the school's records.

### **Half Days**

Designated 12:00 pm dismissals are beneficial to students, families, and the school. Such a practice is considered educationally sound and is in complete accordance with regulations of the Archdiocesan Department of Education, as well as the AdvancED.

The Extended Day Program does not operate on Half Days. Students should be picked up by 12:00 pm on designated half days.

### **Students Left after Carpool**

Students who are not picked up by 3:35 pm will be placed in the Extended Day Program and billed according to the set fees. Students placed in this program must be signed out from the Extended Day Program only by the responsible adult.

### **Walkers/Bikers**

Students that walk or ride their bikes from school must have parental permission on file. Students must inform the teacher on duty that they are leaving. Students must leave school grounds upon dismissal. The school is not responsible for students once students leave the school property.

## **Extended Day Program/EDP (After School Program)**

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School offers after school supervision for enrolled students. The program is offered to students in Pre-K through 8th grade and operates only on scheduled full days of school until 6:00 pm. The Extended Day Program does not operate on early dismissal days. Registration is required for participation. The policies and regulations of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School apply to its Extended Day program. The school reserves the right to withhold or suspend participation for valid reasons. EDP fees will be billed monthly and paid through FACTS Tuition Management Program. Registration fees and late pick-up fees are available from the Extended Day Program Director. Students who are not picked up from EDP by 6:00 pm will be billed \$1.00 per minute they remain late.

## **Snow, Weather and Emergency Conditions**

In case of snow, the St. Joseph Catholic Parish School will follow the instructions for the Clarke County Schools. AM Radio stations WRFC960, WBKZ 880 and WGUA 1340; FM Radio stations WGMG102.1 and WUGA 91.7 and television 11 Alive will carry officially authorized Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School closings. The school website, e-mail and social media accounts will also be used to report school closings. In the event of emergency or any outstanding public occurrence, schools will be closed on an Archdiocesan level by the Superintendent of Schools. In the event of a local circumstance of an unusual nature, the decision to close school will be made on the local level by the Principal.

In case of tornado warning or actual tornado, parents should not call the school. The SJS Parent Alert text message system will alert each family and relate the information about the conditions at school. In addition, parents may wish to check their e-mails and the school's social media accounts for updates.

For all emergency school closings, the SJS Parent Alert text message system, email and social media will be used to relate the information about the conditions at school.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School has on file in the school office as well as in each classroom a detailed Emergency Plan. This plan includes the Crisis Intervention Plan, Fire procedures, Severe Weather procedures, and Lockdown and

Evaluation procedures. These procedures are reviewed and updated yearly.

## **Admission and Registration Requirements**

All students are on probation during the first year of their attendance at Saint Joseph Catholic School. During the first year probationary period, the school shall determine whether or not the school can meet the needs of this student. The decision of the principal is final. Admittance to Saint Joseph Catholic School is in accordance with the standards prescribed by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

New students shall be placed in the grade level where they will be the most successful in the professional opinion of the admissions team based on the results of their entrance criteria and admissions documents.

Admission to any Catholic school is contingent upon having met all financial obligations at a previous Catholic or private school.

Admission is subject to limitations on class size. In addition, the school reserves the right to deny or postpone admission to any applicant when it is determined that the school program will not meet the applicant's educational needs or requirements. A placement test is administered as part of the application process. If tutoring or testing is recommended, parents interested in enrolling their child must abide by the school's recommendations.

Local transfer of students from any public, private or Archdiocesan school into grade eight are not generally considered. Students whose families have relocated to the Athens area may apply for admission into grade eight.

No eighth grade student is guaranteed admission into any archdiocesan or independent high school upon graduation from Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School.

All Catholic students must provide a Parish Verification form from their home parish indicating a status of "active" Catholic in order to receive the Catholic tuition rate.

There will be no waiver given for a religious exemption of the Immunizations, we will accept a medical waiver – signed by a MD stating that the child's life would be placed in danger should immunizations be required.

Upon notification of acceptance by Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School, the student will be expected to matriculate at the date requested by the principal or the applicant's name will be withdrawn without refund of fees.

Upon a child's acceptance into Saint Joseph Catholic School, the parent is required to sign a contract acknowledging an understanding and acceptance of the rules and regulations, conditions, and requirements of the school as so stated within the contract, school handbook, Archdiocesan policies, and school bulletins. (See Archdiocesan policy 5110.)

### **Grade placement is based upon the following criteria:**

#### **Results of the screening/placement test**

A placement test must be administered to all applicants as part of the admissions process but does not guarantee acceptance. Placement or screening tests are one means of determining that a child will meet with academic success at Saint Joseph Catholic School, and are used to assist us in determining whether our program will meet the individual needs of a prospective student.

#### **Age Requirements**

Pre-Kindergarten – Age of four by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year.

Kindergarten – Age of five by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year.

First Grade – Age of six by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year.

\*Admission of a child from another state is based upon the age requirement of that jurisdiction.

**Completed set of documentation requirements grades Pre-Kindergarten to eighth grade:**

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic students)
- Georgia Immunization Form 3231 & 3300
- Parish Verification Commitment Form (Catholic students)
- Records from previous school (transcripts, testing, etc.)
- Copy of recent Report Card
- Results of Standardized Test Scores
- Teacher Evaluation (Current School)
- Discipline Record (required for applicants to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only)
- Completed Application and Fee (\$100.00 for EACH NEW student)

**Regarding admission of children with exceptional needs**

Whenever a student seeks enrollment into the Catholic school, the school shall inquire as to whether the student has a history of, or is presently eligible for, an Exceptional Educational Needs Program. Students eligible for this placement should not be enrolled in the Catholic school unless a program is available through that Catholic school which can meet the student's needs.

Each local Catholic school shall have a process that identifies the special educational needs of students. At Saint Joseph Catholic School, the Student Success Team (SST) consisting of the resource teacher(s), guidance counselor, and the Principal manages this process. The process shall include parents, the local Catholic school, and the public school and/or professional agencies. The feasibility of accepting or retaining an enrolled child with special needs in the individual school will be dependent on several factors including the nature and extent of the child's special needs, the professional staff's ability to make reasonable accommodations on-site, and the ability to make reasonable accommodations to the physical plant. The ability to make reasonable accommodations may not include students with pervasive developmental delay, significant neurological impairment, conduct disorders, or severe emotional disturbance.

If the school is not able to accommodate the special needs of the student applying for admission or if a current student who develops a special need, the school should refer the child's parents to the Department of Catholic Education for further evaluation. The Archdiocesan School Psychologist or independent licensed psychologist may be able to direct the parents to an appropriate school that is better able to accommodate the child's needs and/or disabilities. (*See Archdiocesan policy 5130.*)

**Priority for admission**

In the admission of students to elementary school and subject to the overriding discretion of the Principal, priority consideration shall be given to these criteria in the following order:

- A. All currently enrolled students who have re-registered by the due date, unless the school has determined that the child may not return for the following year. The school reserves the right to reconsider and retract renewal of admission after the due date if, between the date of re-registration and the beginning of the following school year, situations are discovered which are in serious violation of school policies and which, had they occurred or been discovered earlier, would have led to the student not receiving re-registration forms.
- B. Students whose siblings attend or have matriculated/alumni from Saint Joseph Catholic School.
- C. Students from the host parish, Saint Joseph Catholic Church.
- D. Students on the current year's waiting list in good standing.
- E. Students who are children of employees within the building.
- F. Catholic students from parishes in the Archdiocese without a Catholic School.
- G. Catholic students transferring from an out of town Catholic School.
- H. Catholic students from parishes with a Catholic School.
- I. Catholic students from other Catholic Schools.
- J. Students of other religious affiliations.

Unusual circumstances not covered by the previous priorities shall be at the discretion of the principal or designee.

The priorities listed previously will also apply to pre-registered and current school year waiting lists. If the registration should reach a point where a decision is necessary as to which children shall be admitted, the Admissions Committee, which shall consist of the principal of Saint Joseph Catholic School and the faculty advisors, will do this.

## **Enrollment**

The school provides classes at the following levels: Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades one through eight. Class sizes are set by the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

### **Class Size Policy**

The maximum class size for Pre-Kindergarten is 20 students; the maximum class size for K-8 is 30. Exceptional circumstances may necessitate an increase or decrease in the maximum class size. Examples of exceptional circumstances might warrant a class size in excess of the target include:

- Inclusion of siblings of currently enrolled students;
- Retention of a student in a grade which is already full; and
- Circumstances such as family transfers and other extraordinary situations. No student enrolled in Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School shall be denied re-enrollment as a result of the adoption of this Policy Statement. Any reduction in a class size to the target class size shall be achieved by normal attrition.

## **Re-enrollment Policy**

The continued enrollment of the student is subject to the student observing all school rules as set out in the school handbook including but not limited to general behavior, academic performance and attendance.

Continued enrollment in any given school year, and re-enrollment in any subsequent year, are subject to the parents'/guardians' continued support of the mission of the school as documented in the school handbook and the maintenance of a demonstrably effective and supportive relationship between the school and the parents/guardians. Re-enrollment in any subsequent year is subject to mutual agreement. The student, the parents or the school administration with or without cause may withhold that agreement. The deadline date stated on the re-registration form will be enforced or the space will be assigned to another student.

## **Financial Information**

### **Tuition**

Tuition payments form the primary source of financial support for the academic programs of St. Joseph Catholic Parish School. Tuition payments are the responsibility of the parents/guardians. Failure to pay tuition seriously jeopardizes the fiscal health and stability of the school. Tuition must be paid in a timely and consistent manner.

All payments to the school are collected through FACTS Management Co. FACTS accepts MasterCard, Discover or American Express

### **Families can pay their tuition/fees in one of three ways:**

- **Full Payment** - Due by a defined date in early August, FACTS Mgmt. Co will send out invoices via email or postal service with the option to pay online, mail a check/money order or pay by credit card to FACTS. There may be a convenience fee added if paying by credit card. **(FACTS online enrollment required)**
- **Monthly Payments** - Under this plan, the yearly tuition is deducted monthly through FACTS and can be spread out over either 10 months (August through May) or 12 months (July through June). Monthly



tuition payments are automatically processed from either your checking or savings account. Those choosing this plan will authorize FACTS to withdraw automatic monthly payments on either the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. A yearly service fee payable to FACTS will automatically be deducted from the identified account.

- **Bi-annual payments** - Under this plan, payments are made in August and January of each school year.

### **Student Fees**

Student fees provide our students with the latest technology, classroom equipment and supplies, workbooks, textbooks, testing fees and materials, and student tax and insurance. An additional \$50.00 is charged to our 8th graders to cover their retreat and graduation expenses.

Additional fees for school programs and events are not included in the base student fees and will show as additional charges in FACTS throughout the year. School programs and events may include but are not limited to; field trips, school lunch charges, band rental fees, donations, EDP charges, athletic fees, etc.

### **Discounts and Incentives**

Families with multiple children will pay only one (1) full tuition. Each additional child will receive a \$500.00 discount.

If tuition is paid in full by the date defined by the school, the family will receive a 3% discount on the amount billed so long as the family is not receiving any type of financial aid.

If a currently enrolled family recruits a new family and the new family stays through January, the currently enrolled family receives \$200.00 off their tuition in February. If the recruited family re-enrolls by the deadline for the following school year, the currently enrolled family gets their re-enrollment fee for the following school year waived.

### **Delinquent Tuition Policy**

Timely payment of tuition is essential in order for the school to meet its financial obligations. It is the family's responsibility to contact the Business Manager as soon as the payment is delinquent. The Principal, Business Manager, and family will confer to devise a written plan to bring the account current. If the stipulations in the written plan are not adhered to, further steps will be taken, up to and including, forfeiting the student's place in Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. If tuition becomes delinquent and the family has not taken the initiative to contact the school, the school will contact the parents to schedule a meeting. Failure to respond to school communications will be taken seriously and could further jeopardize the student's enrollment at Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School.

**If a student's tuition is delinquent by more than two (2) months and no prior arrangements have been made with the principal, that student will not be allowed to return to school. Those families who have not completed tuition/fee payments in full by June 30th are required to submit a written plan of payment to the Principal. The family may not re-enroll until all financial obligations are met.**

School policy requires that quarterly report cards and school records will be withheld in case of delinquent tuition or other fees, pending payment or other satisfactory arrangements between the school principal and the parent or guardian. Students in the eighth grade will not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremonies until tuition and all fees are paid in full.

A \$30.00 service charge will be assessed for any returned payments.

### **Additional Tuition Policies**

Any student transferring throughout the year will be charged all fees and tuition due for the full month of the transfer occurs.

Tuition for children of families who are active members of Saint Joseph Parish who have filed a Parish Verification Commitment Form with the school will receive the annually determined Catholic tuition rate. Tuition for children whose families attend other Catholic Churches and who have Parish Verification form from that parish will receive the annual determined Catholic tuition rate. Active membership in a Parish is understood to mean that the family worships in the Parish and contributes time, talent and financial resources to support the Parish. Active membership is to be determined by the pastor of the parish of which the family is a member. Attaining and retaining Active Parish Verification status is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the student.

### **Tuition Assistance**

Financial aid is available to those families that demonstrate financial need. Families that wish to apply for financial aid will do so through FACTS Management Co. by completing the FACTS Grant and Aid assessment by the deadline as specified by the school. Amounts awarded are based on calculated need, archdiocesan policies and availability of funds. Beginning the financial aid process in a timely manner and meeting set deadlines is strongly encouraged. Families who have received assistance in the past must apply each year for financial aid and continue to demonstrate financial need.

#### **GRACE Scholars**

Students entering Pre-K, Kindergarten, or First Grade who reside with their parent or guardian in the State of Georgia and have proof of residence are eligible to apply for the GRACE Scholarship.

Students entering second grade or above who are transferring from a Georgia public school are eligible to apply for the GRACE Scholarship.

Please visit the GRACE Scholars website for more information: <https://www.gracescholars.org/>

### **Student Record Policy and Procedure**

The school must maintain educational records for each student. Cumulative records shall be maintained upon the student's entrance into the school until the student has graduated or is no longer enrolled in the school. The permanent records should be maintained for infinity. Information about students shall be used judiciously and should always contribute to their welfare. All reports, tests, and evaluations, upon the request a parents, will be shown to them in the presence of a professional person qualified to explain and interpret the records. A written request must be submitted at least twenty-four hours prior to viewing official school records of his/her child.

Non-Custodial Parents: This school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. The custodial parent needs to inform the school in writing when, if ever, the child can be released to the non-custodial parent. Schools may withhold report cards for unsatisfied financial obligations for the quarters in which the unsatisfied obligation occurred; health records may never be withheld. (See Archdiocesan policies 5190.)

### **Court Decrees Regarding Child Custody**

The following policy applies to any currently enrolled student(s) and to student(s) applying for admission. If the family is separated or divorced, or if there is a court decree regarding custody, the school requires that the court decree regarding child custody be presented to the school prior to acceptance or registration. For currently enrolled families, any court decree regarding child custody must be supplied to the school as soon as the decree is issued. Intentional withholding of these legal documents could result in denial of acceptance or withdrawal of the invitation to return or to remain at Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. If the family has separated but no court decree has been issued, a letter from the parents with detailed directives for the school to follow with regard to whom the child may be released is required and must be

notarized. All court decrees and parent directives regarding custody are maintained in a confidential file with the school office. The information is shared with those entrusted with the student's safety, and on a need-to-know basis including the child's teachers, the administration, and front desk personnel.

It is the parents' duty to inform the principal when a student is the subject of a court decree. A request shall be given to the parent who maintains primary physical custody of the child to submit a copy of the court decree about the student. If a court has issued an order affecting the physical placement of a child pursuant to Georgia Statute, or a comparable statute of another state, copies of the report card shall be issued to both parents in conformity with Georgia Statute, unless one parent has been denied periods of physical placement with the child by the courts under Georgia Statute. In this case, no student information will be provided to the parent who has been denied periods of physical placement, in conformity with Georgia Statute.

## **Academics**

All children are expected to participate in all classes and activities during school hours. Exceptions for reasons of health should be directed, in writing, to the teacher.

Students are responsible for having the required materials for each subject.

All assignments are expected to be neatly completed and turned in when due. It is the student's responsibility to arrive fully prepared with homework, supplies, assignments, etc. Homework and all necessary items must arrive with the student at the beginning of the day/class. Work must be complete before grades will be given for that quarter. Any work which is not turned in by the end of the quarter will not be accepted and will receive a failing grade.

Occasionally, a student may need extra help with a particular subject. The teacher may require the student to remain after school for additional instruction. This work session can be arranged with the teacher as needed.

## **Religious Education**

At Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School, religious education is more than the handing on of religious truths. Its goal is growth in faith, which implies both formation and transformation, leading students to live out the Gospel as members of a believing community. Our program offers students a way of understanding themselves and their world through Christ's message of love and views all life as a gift from God.

Classes are designed to foster an understanding of Catholic doctrine including experiences in liturgical preparation, participation, and community outreach. Thus, our program hopes to awaken within each child the desire to follow Christ's command to love and live justly in the world.

In addition to scheduled religion periods, students gather weekly as a school community in the church for worship and praise. The school also holds weekly class masses for one or mixed grade levels. Catholic students in grades 3-8 will attend reconciliation sessions with our school Chaplain at least twice each school year. Students and teachers also participate in Adoration in our school chapel. We welcome and encourage parents to attend our Masses and prayer services.

First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion preparation will be conducted in grade two, prior to the reception of these sacraments at the student's home parish. To be eligible for sacramental reception, a student must have attended religion classes the year prior to the year that the sacrament is to be received. In other words, a second grade student must have attended religion classes while in first grade in order to be eligible to receive First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. If the family is registered at the Saint Joseph Catholic Church, notification of necessary student and family meetings will be sent by the Director of the Parish School of Religion. Families from other parishes should contact the Director of Religious Education in their home parish to make arrangements for their child's reception of these sacraments. If a child enters Saint Joseph Catholic School after grade two and has not received these sacraments, arrangements for instruction must be made through the family's home parish; i.e. Catholic schools cannot prepare students who are out of

the normal sacramental sequence.

Following the stated order of school admission, students from other faiths may be accepted into Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School. These students are welcomed and encouraged to share their faith perspectives and insights when appropriate and applicable within the classroom setting. Such discussions enrich and deepen the faith experience for students. All students, regardless of faith persuasion, participate in religion classes, activities, and liturgical events within the school program with the exception of sacramental reception.

## **Safe Environment**

All students will participate in the VIRTUS Safe Environment Program, adopted by the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Parents will be notified via email and letter. Parents may review the materials but must inform the Principal by the designated date on the form sent home by the school counselor if they do not wish for their child(ren) to participate.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are an extension of classroom learning and are scheduled for all grades. These trips are considered a privilege for students who demonstrate appropriate behavior. (*See General Behavior.*)

Field trips require written parental permission. A general form, granting parental permission for neighborhood excursions must be signed and on file. An official Archdiocesan permission slip with detailed information will be sent home with each student prior to all school sponsored field trips. This permission slip must be signed and returned to the school before any student may participate in the activity. If a student opts out of a field trip or is removed from a field trip by the school for whatever reason the student must still report to school and will be placed in a class and will be required to complete the classes work for the day.

Occasionally, a stop for lunch will be preplanned with the teacher and the class. Parents who volunteer to chaperone for a field trip must have successfully completed the background check. Chaperones may not bring younger children or guests. Transportation is by bus, except for trips to local sites when walking is appropriate.

Fees for field trips will be charged through FACTS. No refunds will be granted for students who have submitted a signed permission slip even if they do not attend the trip on the scheduled date.

## **Curriculum Information**

The Principal, along with the teachers and Curriculum Committee of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School are responsible for scheduling, program/curriculum development, enrichment programs, and text selection. Grade level curriculum overviews can be found on the school's website.

## **Reporting and Grading**

A report card will be issued for all grades, Pre-K-8, four times during the year at the end of each quarter to inform parents of their child's progress. The report card is a formal mode of communication from Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School to parents. The purpose is to give an accurate picture of the student's progress. The grades should be a reflection of the student's performance in the following areas: class participation, homework, testing, special projects, and effort. Parents should be well aware of their child's progress at all times and should not hesitate to notify the teacher if test papers, etc., are not being brought home on a regular basis.

Mid-quarter progress reports will be issued to all students for grades 3-8, regardless of their grade performance. If a student is performing below grade level or is experiencing difficulty, progress reports may be sent home for students in grades 1 and 2. This progress report is issued in time to prevent failure if acted upon immediately and progress is resumed. Report cards and progress reports must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher. Pre-K students will

be evaluated with formative and summative assessments throughout the school year.

Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences are scheduled on the school calendar twice a year. Additional conferences are available as needed and must be pre-scheduled between the teacher and parent. Report card grades and comments will not be changed without supporting data and documentation; all such changes require the principal's approval.

## **The Grading Scale**

Grades First and Second and Grades Kindergarten through Eighth enrichment classes is as follows:

VG = Very Good    G = Good    S= Fair Progress    NI = Needs Improvement    U = Unsatisfactory

In accordance with the policy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the grading scale for Grades 3-8 at Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is as follows:

90-100	A
80-89	B
75-79	C
70-74	D
69 and below	F

## **Awards**

### **Christian Character**

To recognize excellent growth in Christian character, awards are issued to students as determined by their classroom teacher. Students who demonstrate respect, courtesy, reverence, good-manners, good-sportsmanship, and a positive attitude in their daily interactions will be recognized on a quarterly basis. In addition, Middle School students must demonstrate initiative and leadership.

### **Academic Honor Roll**

The purpose of the Honor Roll is to reward outstanding scholastic achievement for students in grades 3-8 who are highly motivated, responsible, hard working and whose work reflects these qualities. The Honor Roll is divided into two (2) areas:

#### **First Honors**

- Grades 3-5: All 90s or above in academic subjects; a Satisfactory (S) rating or above rating in enrichments and areas of personal development
- Grades 6-8: All 90s or above in academic subjects; a Satisfactory (S) rating or above in enrichments and areas of personal development

#### **Second Honors**

- Grades 3-5: All 80s or above in academic subjects, including Spanish; a Satisfactory (S) rating or above in enrichments and areas of personal development
- Grades 6-8: All 80s or above in academic subjects, including Spanish; a Satisfactory (S) rating or above in enrichments and areas of personal development

### **Other School Awards:**

Perfect Attendance Certificates are awarded to those students who have not been tardy, absent or dismissed early each quarter or school year.

## **Homework**

A complete education includes learning and accepting responsibility. Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School's policies are based on our belief that learning is the child's responsibility. Homework and all necessary school materials are due at the

beginning of the class period. It is the student's responsibility to arrive fully prepared for the day with homework, materials, and all articles of school that are needed for the day.

Homework assignments are posted daily in each classroom. It is a school requirement that all students keep a daily list of assignments in an assignment notebook. This notebook must accompany the student home at night to provide a reference for homework assignments. Middle School teachers will also post homework assignments on RenWeb and/or Google Classroom. It is the teacher's responsibility to maintain a current and updated homework site. Long-term and short-term assignments and their descriptions/explanations are the responsibilities of the student.

### **General Homework Times**

Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten	Activities that involve the parent in the child's learning
Grades 1-2	15 to 30 minutes per night.
Grade 3-5	30 to 60 minutes per night.
Middle School 6-8	60 to 120 minutes per night.

Some students may require more time due to absences, skill level, and personal learning style study habits. Parents and students will be informed of long and short-term homework assignments. The teachers will make every effort to coordinate assignments to avoid overlapping completion dates of long-term projects.

With the exception of absences, assignments will not be accepted for regular credit after the class/homework roll has been taken. If absent, it is the student's responsibility to contact each teacher upon returning to school for missed homework/class assignments. This applies to any situation that causes a student to miss a class. Late homework assignments that are complete, and correct will be deducted a certain percentage off. For each day after the first day they are late, more percentage points will be deducted. Students are always expected to complete homework and assignments on time.

### **In-Class Assignments**

It is the expectation that classroom assignments will be completed by the end of the class period, or will be considered homework unless otherwise instructed by the teacher.

### **Tutoring**

A teacher may not provide paid tutoring services to any student who is a member of the teacher's class or grade level. A teacher may provide paid tutoring services to any student who is not a member of the teacher's class or grade level. A teacher may provide unpaid tutoring to any student regardless of class or grade level. All on campus tutoring services provided by teachers must take place before 7:35 am, after 3:35 pm, or at scheduled planning times.

### **School-Community Interaction**

In order to foster in each student a desire to share in life beyond home and school, it is the policy of this school to maintain a close relationship with the community at large.

Social activities appropriate to the various age groups in the school may be planned during the course of the year. However, an activity carries the sponsorship of the school only when an official announcement of it comes from the school authorities with their explicit endorsement.

The staff is encouraged to support school-community interactions by including students in field trips, in-school lectures, competitions, etc. Special emphasis will be placed on developing awareness in the students of the needs of the community.

In-house enrichment activities are scheduled for all grade levels according to availability and appropriateness.

All faculty members are encouraged to investigate early in the school year any academic or cultural resources available to them through the contacts of parents of students. These may include collections, crafts, literature, art productions, audiovisual materials or any other learning sources.

As we take full advantage of cultural and educational resources made available by the community, each teacher is encouraged to share his/her individual talents by involvement in extracurricular school activities.

## **Library/Media Center**

### **Standards and Practices:**

- To support and collaborate with the classroom and enrichment teachers
- To support the Scholastic Reading Counts program for grades K - 8
- To sponsor Battle of the Books for grades 3-8
- To encourage ethical and respectful behavior both online and in our school Library Media Center

### **Course Structure**

Scholastic Reading Counts Program, Grades K - 8: Scholastic Reading Counts (SRC) is an independent reading program for our students which combines reading practice and software-based reading assessment. The program is proven to develop reading skills, help raise test scores, and motivate students to achieve reading success.

## **Standardized Testing Programs**

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School's standardized testing program is supervised by the Archdiocese and enables us to evaluate our school in the light of its own objectives and in relation to others in the Archdiocese and the surrounding area.

## **Promotion**

A student who satisfactorily completes the prescribed Archdiocesan course curriculum is promoted to the next higher grade at the end of the year. Promotion for students with low averages may depend upon fulfillment of summer school, tutoring, or testing requirements. The Principal has final decision on grade placement.

## **Retention/Placement**

### **Placement Policy**

Placement decisions will be based upon a consideration of the overall welfare of the student, including academic, emotional, and social factors. The teacher makes group level placement decisions. When necessary, grade level placement decisions will be reached based on the recommendations of the SST (Student Success Team), which includes the teacher, or teachers, guidance counselor, and principal. After completing the prescribed steps, including parent conferencing, additional learning strategies, and/or recommendation for educational/psychological testing by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist, the team will make a grade level placement recommendation to the principal. This may require waiting for the final report from the educational/psychological tester to be included as part of the process leading to the final decision. At times, the school may recommend a new learning environment, based on testing results. Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School includes parents in grade level placement discussions; however, the school reserves the right to make the final decision for grade level and group placements.

### **Failure Policy**

Students in the intermediate or middle school grades (intermediate: grades 3-5; middle school: grades 6-8) may not fail (definition: earned grade of "F", 69% and below as a final year average) more than two core courses in one academic year. Should a student fail three or more core courses in an academic year, alternative educational placement will be required.

Students who fail one or two core courses in one academic year will be required to remediate the coursework according to the parameters set by the school. Failure to successfully remediate according to the school guidelines indicates the parents' choice to seek alternative educational placement.

Students in grades 3-8 who have failed two courses in one academic year, and who have been successfully remediate, may return to school in the following year with the status of academic probation. Should a student fail one core subject (final year average) within the year while on academic probation, alternative educational placement will be required. (Core subjects are religion, language arts, mathematics, core Spanish, social studies, and science). Academic failure in any core subject may adversely impact a student's acceptance into an archdiocesan Catholic high school.

## **Moral Standards**

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School has a concern with students who engage in behavior, which is in opposition to our Catholic philosophy and moral standards. Engaging in such behavior on or off campus could require a penalty or dismissal from the school. Actions taken are dependent upon each individual situation.

Students are expected to be considerate and courteous of fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel, and all adults on the premises. Any action which causes, or has the potential to cause, harm to others, or serious damage to property, will not be tolerated. An evaluation of these incidents will be conducted, with appropriate consequences applied.

## **General Behavior Policies**

Discipline in the Catholic school is to be considered as an aspect of moral guidance. Positive concepts of discipline are built on a belief in the dignity of each person. A central goal of the school is to help students develop self-discipline. Self-direction, rather than external control, is the ultimate aim of true discipline.

The purpose of discipline is to ensure a classroom and school environment, which is conducive to learning, and to promote character development, which cultivates the virtues that ensure Christian living, and to redirect inappropriate behavior.

A Discipline Team will work together to implement our discipline policy. Discipline policy is available at school for review and is sent to all parents and students at the beginning of school year.

**All adults working in the school have authority over the students. Students are expected to treat all adults with respect.**

### **It is the school's responsibility to:**

- Implement this policy through regular meetings with all school personnel
- Inform faculty, staff, students, and parents of this policy through the handbooks and commitment of the school
- Include harassment education in the guidance curriculum
- Require teachers, administrators, and all school personnel to remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile or offensive school environment
- Establish practices, which create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation, or harassment

### **It is the student's responsibility to:**

- Conduct him/herself in a manner, which contributes to a positive school environment
- Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating or harassing
- Report all incidents immediately to a supervising adult
- Discontinue immediately any behaviors that are perceived as intimidating, harassing or unwelcome



## **General Behavior Procedures**

Discipline is necessary for learning, order, and living together in harmony. Saint Joseph Catholic School strives to promote self-discipline in each student. Discipline is based on respect for each individual and the group. This respect dictates what students will follow:

## **Classroom Discipline and Management**

The individual classroom teacher will handle classroom discipline and management. Each teacher will explain his/her discipline expectations and procedures at the Parent Orientation meeting. Teachers may use a weekly or monthly behavior chart, student Profile Sheet, write notes, or other means of communication. Teachers will contact parents as soon as possible if there appears to be a conduct problem. Parents are expected to sign notes and are encouraged to remain in communication with the teacher throughout the year. If a problem arises, a parent is expected to contact the teacher first before taking it to the administration.

A system of legally sound procedures based on established policies will be employed with regard to handling discipline in the schools.

- Students are expected to move quietly and stay to the right of the hallways.
- Conduct in the cafeteria is to be governed by acceptable norms of etiquette. Student behavior must conform to the guidelines as displayed in the cafeteria.
- The buying and selling of personal belongings or objects of any kind is forbidden during school hours.
- Students may eat only during the designated lunch or snack periods.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.
- No electronic equipment of any kind may be brought to school without written permission from a teacher.
- All students must remain on the school grounds, or in an area of supervision, during school hours, or at any school related event. At all times when on school property, including recess, a.m. and p.m. carpool, and all social functions, once outside, students may not re-enter the building, leave the designated areas, or enter the classrooms without the supervising adult's permission.
- Proper conduct by the students riding a bus is essential. Consequently, a student whose behavior causes a disturbance will lose his/her field trip privileges for a length of time determined by the principal.
- Students may not use phones to call about forgotten assignments, tests, or materials. There is a phone available in the office for students use only at the direction of a teacher.

## **Playground Policies**

Students are expected to:

- Show respect to all teacher/staff and volunteers
- Play in the designated areas only
- Refrain from any physical contact with another student (e.g. pushing, shoving, contact tag, etc.)
- Use the playscape correctly
- Students must swing facing the school; no students should stand behind the swings; only one student per swing seat
- Slide down the slide feet first only
- No jumping from playground equipment or swings
- Climb only on ladder areas - not on slides
- Do not run between the swings on the playground
- Use the chin bar for hand swinging or pull-ups only
- Stay off the drainage rocks
- Refrain from hanging from trees, digging holes, or kicking up the grass or throwing rocks or sticks

All food should be finished in the cafeteria. Therefore, no food items may be eaten outside, unless otherwise directed. Students are to remain outside under the supervision of the designated teachers. All trash and recycling should be placed in the correct cans: food and trash will not be left on the ground, playscape area, or picnic tables.

In case of emergency or accident, the student must report to the teacher on duty.

Faculty members on duty will resolve any matters relating to student behavior and may give "timeout" or other appropriate disciplinary measure to a student for inappropriate behavior. The length of the "time out" would be relative to the student's age/grade. In case of serious infractions, the student must be referred to the teacher on duty or sent to the office.

## **Discipline**

Student behavior is a direct reflection on Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School, its faculty, staff, and students. Therefore, students will be judged by their conduct during school and at school related functions both on and off campus. Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School expects its students to behave in a Christian manner at all times. The moral obligation of training children rests first with the parents/guardians. It is vital that the school and parents/guardians support each other and work together to resolve any issues that may arise. Our faculty and staff are implementing a comprehensive integrated model of prevention to support these expectations. Students are expected to follow the Saint Joseph School Honor Code to always be "Happy, holy and helpful." When students do not follow our Positive Behavior Code, the following punishments will be distributed. Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School will use a centralized school detention system. The school Principal will manage the centralized detention system, with assistance from each teacher within the building.

### **Middle School Discipline**

**Demerits:** 3 demerits a quarter will result in a detention. The student's conduct grade for the quarter drops to "Needs Improvement" after 3 demerits and drops to "unsatisfactory" after 6+ demerits. Demerits do not carry over from the first semester to the second semester. All faculty and staff may issue demerits to students in grades six through eight.

#### **Demerits may be issued for the following reasons (including but not limited to):**

- Failure to obey directions, defiance, or disrespect of a teacher or staff. Inappropriate or disrespectful behavior (loud and disorderly included)
- Physical altercations such as hitting or fighting
- Words or actions which are disrespectful or detrimental to the well-being of peers and/or teachers, including bullying
- Excessive or out of turn talking and loudness
- Repeated failure to observe dress code. Students who are out of uniform will receive a "Uniform Notice" for the first two infractions. For the third and subsequent violations: a demerit is issued for grade 6-8
- Students that are in the school building without permission including but not limited to: entering classrooms, accessing a teacher's desk or closet without permission, accessing another student's locker, desk, bookbag or other property
- Chewing gum/candy during school hours
- Violation of the cell phone policy will result a demerit and the first cell phone infraction will also apply
- Destruction of another student's or school property

### **Serious Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior**

Just cause for an automatic detention, suspension, or expulsion shall include, but is not limited to the following serious violations: chronic misbehavior in class, chronic failure to observe school rules, disrespect and/or disobedience to teachers or staff, fighting, academic dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, the copying of another's homework, and forgery, making threats of a serious nature, use of profanity, obscene conduct or possession of obscene literature or materials, theft, deliberate damage to school property, books, or equipment or to the property of another, possession of knives, weapons, fireworks, etc. or anything that may threaten to harm another person, leaving school grounds without permission, use of cellphones during the school hours, or other inappropriate behavior considered serious by the administration. A student accused of a serious wrong can be placed on a home-study program pending the outcome of adjudication or investigation. New students are on a probationary status for the first year and may be dismissed for any serious offense at the discretion of the Principal.

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, this clause empowers the principal to address and to take appropriate action for any situations that violate the spirit and philosophy of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School, even though not specified. Therefore, exceptions and/or additions to the above policies may be made at the discretion of the principal. The Principal is the designated leader of the school in concert with the faculty and staff, and is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. The Principal reserves the right to waive any regulation for just cause.

## **School Desks and Lockers**

Lockers and desks are provided to the students by the school and are considered school property. Because they are school property, lockers and desks and the contents kept within them are subject to search by the school administration at any time. Students and their parents should not have any expectations of privacy with respect to lockers and desks.

## **Violation Notices/Detention**

Behavior and other violation notices are sent automatically via RenWeb.

Detention will be required when a student's behavior does not show improvement or when there is continued misconduct, disrespect of classmates, disobedience, incomplete assignments, or when 3 demerits are received in one quarter in middle school. When a student receives a detention, the parent will receive an e-mail notification so that transportation arrangements may be made. Detentions will be served on scheduled afternoons from 3:35-4:35 pm. The parent must acknowledge that they received the detention notification by replying to the e-mail alert or by sending written confirmation to the teacher.

## **Expulsion Procedures**

Parents are notified of pending expulsion. A parent/student conference will be held with the Principal. This conference will include any other teachers and faculty involved if necessary. Documentation of the event or events leading to expulsion will be submitted to the Superintendent.

### **Appeal**

Parents with a student in an Archdiocesan school may appeal within ten (10) calendar days to the Superintendent for a review of the decision. The Superintendent will only assure that correct procedures were followed as defined by the Archdiocesan Policy.

### **Reasons for Expulsion**

Possible reasons for expulsion, based upon the discretion of the Principal:

- Actions detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Assault (fighting, physical contact), battery, harassment or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or student
- Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher
- Continued willful disobedience
- Use, sale or possession of narcotics, and/or other controlled substances on or near school premises
- Use, sale, distribution or possession of any alcohol for beverage purposes on or near school premises
- Stealing
- Smoking or possession of tobacco products
- Willful vandalism
- Habitual truancy
- Possession of firearms, real or toy
- Possession of weapons, material that can be used as weapons and other contraband materials

- Possession of matches, lighter or any flammable substances
- Violation of probation contract
- Other conduct that is inconsistent with the mission or policies of the school
- Compromise of academic standard (i.e., habitual cheating, theft or compromise of testing etc.) In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority expel a student. Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of expulsion. The reason for expulsion will permanently be placed in the student file. (Archdiocesan Policy 5470)

## Harassment

Among our highest priorities is the safety of our children. Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form, verbal abuse, physical abuse, or any other behavior that is harmful to the well-being of others. All incidences of aggressive behavior will be handled expeditiously with these tenets in mind.

It is imperative to maintain an educational environment that encourages optimum human growth and development. Respect for the dignity of each person is essential to Catholic tradition; therefore, it is also essential that Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious or priest is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. Substantiated acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students filing false or frivolous charges will also be subject to the same disciplinary actions.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is hostile or intimidating. Harassment can occur any time during school or school related activities. Harassment may be verbal, physical, visual, or sexual.

**Verbal Harassment:** Derogatory comments and jokes, threatening words spoken to another person.

**Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidation interference with normal work or movement.

**Visual Harassment:** Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, gestures

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Conduct himself/herself in a manner, which contributes to a positive school environment.
- Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating or harassing.
- Immediately report all incidents to a supervising adult.
- When informed he/she is perceived as engaging in intimidating, harassing or unwelcome conduct, the person must discontinue that conduct immediately.
- Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School is committed to and abides by the harassment policies of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Students or parents may file a letter of grievance of harassment. The letter should be filed with the principal, unless the grievance includes the principal; then the grievance letter should be filed with the superintendent.

**All Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School students are subject to disciplinary action any time they are on school property or at a school-sponsored function**, which includes but is not limited to athletic events (as a fan or participant), service projects, field trips, and fundraising events.

## Search and Seizure (Archdiocesan Policy 5500)

All property of the school, including students' desks and lockers and their contents, may be searched or inspected at any time without notice. School personnel have an unrestricted right to search these structures as well as any containers, backpacks, purses or articles of clothing that are left unattended on school property.

The search of a student's person or personal property currently being carried is permissible when there is any suspicion that the student may be carrying contraband. Contraband, for purposes here, shall be defined as any weapon, illegal drug, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or other item, the possession, which is prohibited by law or by the school policy. School administrators must always have another school authority present when a personal search is conducted. The school reserves the right to search any item brought on campus. This will allow the principal to search confiscated cell phones for inappropriate content.

If a student refuses to voluntarily empty pockets or to permit inspection of his/her personal property, the student should be detained until parents are contacted and arrive.

Parents should then be informed that the student is risking possible suspension or dismissal for refusing to comply. In some cases, if a weapon or other dangerous ordinance is suspected, the school will contact the local police department immediately and will not attempt to disarm the individual.

If a weapon or illegal drug is actually seized, the school authorities may contact the local police department to report the incident and secure the contraband until the police arrive. Possession and/or use of drugs and/or alcohol and/or weapons may result in suspension and/or expulsion from school. The administration of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School reserves the right to search the person or property of any student suspected of possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons.

## **Uniform Codes**

The dress code emphasizes the word "uniform," underscoring the need for all students to abide by the intent of the uniform code. The school Administration is the judge on the suitability of attire. It is the student's responsibility to be in complete uniform when he/she comes to school each morning. All uniform pieces should be properly fitting and tailored.

- No writing or decorations on shoes or uniform, or body will be permitted. Fake tattoos, henna tattoos, body art are not permitted. Shoe strings must be tied.
- Shirts and blouses must be worn tucked in.
- Length of girls' skirts, jumpers, or skorts should touch the top of the knee, when kneeling.
- Boys' pants should be appropriate, fit properly and be neat in appearance. "Sagging" of pants or shorts is not allowed.
- Hair should be clean and neat in appearance. Altering of natural hair color, extreme or exaggerated hairstyles are not permitted. Excessive use of hair styling products is not permitted. Boy's hair is to be neatly trimmed above the collar and above the eyebrow and above the ear. Boys must also be clean-shaven.
- Girls' hair accessories must be simple and one of the colors that coordinate with the school uniform.
- Makeup, nail polish and jewelry, other than a watch, or religious medals, are not permitted. Only girls may wear earrings, and these must be limited to one pair of small post style, one earring in each ear.
- Fake fingernails and eyelashes, are not permitted.
- Non-prescription eyeglasses are not permitted.
- All students must wear uniform sweaters, fleece or sweatshirts rather than non-uniform garments. Winter coats and gloves are an exception during the winter months.
- All articles of clothing are to be labeled with the student's name.
- All students must leave campus in their school uniform. Only participants in school-sponsored athletic events would be an exception to this rule.
- Only plain white, short-sleeved undershirts may be worn under school shirts.
- Male and female students may wear brown Bucks or Sperrys with their dress uniform. Female students may also wear navy blue or black Mary Janes with their dress uniform.
- Tennis shoes worn on PE days should be all or mostly grey, white or black.
- Boys in first through eighth grade should wear a brown leather belt.
- Socks should be navy blue or black for dress uniforms; white socks may also be worn with PE uniforms only.
- Female students may wear navy blue or black tights.
- Student uniforms must be clean and in good condition. Your cooperation and support is necessary.

All of the required school uniforms for both boys and girls must be purchased through Lands' End. Ordering information, including our school code, can be found on our website.

The listed criterion contains uniform variations that may be worn year round. However, PE shorts are not to be worn separately to school when the morning temperature is less than 32 degrees. PE shorts may be worn under warm-up pants and later worn as separate attire if the temperatures rise during the day. In addition, khaki shorts are not to be worn to school when the morning temperature is less than 32 degrees.

### **Dress Down (Casual Clothing) Regulations**

Students may wear clean, neat pants or shorts (no more than 2 inches above the knee, when kneeling). No leggings are permitted on dress down days. Shirts and blouses must have sleeves and be an appropriate length. Inappropriate graphics or slogans are not permitted on shirts. Sneakers/shoes and socks are required; no sandals are permitted. No jewelry, nail polish, lip-gloss, large earrings, make up, etc. (Refer to regulations for regular uniform days.) The administration will make the final determination of appropriate attire.

### **Spirit Day Regulations**

Students may wear any Saint Joseph tee shirt or blue or white shirt. Shirts must have sleeves and be an appropriate length. Inappropriate graphics or slogans are not permitted on shirts. Students may wear their PE shorts or PE pants or regular uniform bottoms. Sneakers/shoes and socks are required; no sandals are permitted. No jewelry, nail polish, lip-gloss, large earrings, make up, hair coloring, etc. (Refer to regulations for regular uniform days.) The administration will make the final determination of appropriate attire.

## **Middle School Information**

### **Middle School Placement for Pre-Algebra and Algebra**

Students will be offered Pre-Algebra (grade 7), Algebra (grade 8) if they meet five of the six Archdiocesan requirements listed below. All other students will receive the grade level instruction both in math and language arts.

- Minimum score of 80% on the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Assessment
- Minimum NPR score of 80%tile on the IA Mathematics test
- Minimum NPR score of 80%tile on the IA Computation test
- Minimum average score of 85% on Math course tests during the current year
- Minimum average score of 85% in Mathematics on report cards during the current year
- Student must demonstrate consistent, successful completion of homework and positive classroom performance as defined by the mathematics teacher

IA=Iowa Assessment

NPR=National Percentile Rank

The school's principal may exercise discretion in placing a student into an appropriate course upon review of the student's performance records and Cognitive Ability (CogAt) Quantitative score as presented on the Iowa Assessment. Continuation in any math course is at the discretion of the teacher and administrators.

### **Electives**

Sixth grade will take both Fine Arts and Band. Seventh and eighth grade students must choose one of the following electives. Guidelines for the electives are as follows:

#### **Fine Arts**

- Weekly sketchbook assignments for homework will be given. Sketchbook will be given a cumulative quarterly grade.
- There will be at least 3 major class projects per quarter.
- All other projects will be added to the student's individual portfolio to be graded as a midterm and

- final grade.
- Students are expected to have correct supplies for class.

### **Band**

- Exercises and musical pieces will be given for daily practice.
- If the student rents an instrument from the school, they will be charged a monthly fee.
- Students are expected to be prepared for class by bringing their instrument and music.
- If music is lost, the student is responsible to pay for replacement copies.
- The student is responsible to pay for a broken instrument or replacement pieces.

### **Final Exams**

In accordance with attendance and make-up work policies, final exams are not generally administered prior to the scheduled date, unless arrangements have been made well in advance (at least 45 days/6 weeks) with the Middle School Team and the principal.

### **Graduation**

Students who have satisfactorily completed the eighth grade courses and satisfied all financial obligations will participate in a dignified, simple graduation luncheon and graduation ceremony held at the end of the school year. Student participation in the graduation ceremony is contingent on the parents paying all financial obligations to the school within one month of graduation. The dress requirement for Graduation Mass is the SJS dress uniform.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

There is certain criterion that must be met in order to maintain participation in middle school Extra-Curricular activities, including Athletics. The criteria are as follows:

- Students must maintain a 75% average or better in all academic areas.
- Students must maintain at least a Satisfactory in conduct. The student will be ineligible for 2 weeks if they do not meet these criteria.
- Grades and conduct will be checked prior to the start of the extracurricular season, at midterms of each quarter and at the end of each quarter. Students must be eligible at each checkpoint to participate.

### **Yearbook**

Eighth grade students assist in the publication of an annual yearbook, which highlights school activities. The students work under the direction of a faculty member.

### **4-H**

Under the cooperative Extension Service of the University of Georgia and the College of Agriculture, students in grades five through eight participate in the 4-H Program. Monthly meetings are held in school. Students are encouraged to participate in the activities throughout Clarke County. The 4-H program is under the direction of SJS faculty members.

### **Contests**

During the school year students are invited to participate in various contests e.g. art, poster, essay, spelling, poetry, math, geography, and science. Faculty coordinators distribute detailed information to the appropriate grades. These contests provide opportunities for students to develop their talents.

### **MathCounts**

Students in Middle School can participate in MathCounts, a national enrichment, coaching and competition program that promotes middle school mathematics achievement. An SJS faculty member directs this program.

### **National Junior Honor Society**

The purpose of the St. Joseph Parish Catholic School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, to develop character and to encourage citizenship in the students of St. Joseph School. Our St. Joseph chapter meets monthly to plan and carry out activities that support this purpose. Membership in the St. Joseph Chapter of the NJHS is an honor bestowed upon a student by the faculty. Selection for membership is based on outstanding scholarship, leadership, service, character, and citizenship. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities to remain a member in good standing. This program is open to all sixth through eighth graders who qualify.

## **Athletics**

The athletic program provides all students access to extracurricular sports in a supportive, learning environment. The primary goals include development of skills, sportsmanship, teamwork, and team spirit. There is certain criterion that must be met in order to maintain participation in the athletics program. The criteria are as follows:

- Each student must maintain a minimum 75% average in all academic areas.
- Each student must maintain at least a Satisfactory in conduct throughout the season. A student will be ineligible for two weeks if he/she does not meet this criteria.
- Grades and conduct will be checked prior to the start of the extracurricular season, at midterms of each quarter, and at the start and end of each quarter. A student must be eligible at each checkpoint to participate. If a student is ineligible to start the season, the student will be unable to participate until the next checkpoint. It is at the discretion of the coach and or moderator to determine if the student may join the team, club, or activity when the student becomes eligible at the next checkpoint.
- Each student will be required to completely follow guidelines set by his/her coach or can be subject to suspension or termination from the team.
- Each student will be required to have a physical as well as a participation form on file.
- Each student will be required to pay a designated sports fee per each sport of participation.

### **Athletic teams are as follows:**

Cross Country (Fall; grades 5-8)

Volleyball (Fall; grades 5-8)

Flag Football (Club/Fall; grades 3-8)

Cheerleading (Fall; grades 6-8)

Basketball (Winter; grades 6-8)

Soccer (Spring; grades 5-8)

Tennis (Spring; grades 5-8)

Golf (Spring; grades 5-8) *\*must have own set of clubs*

Pep Squad/Peppers (Fall, grades 3-5)

## **Cafeteria/Lunch Program**

Families can provide lunch for their students or participate in the lunch delivery program. If families choose to provide lunch for their student, lunches must be ready to eat. Students will not be able to cook or heat food at school. If a child's lunch is dropped off, it must be left in the office and office staff will communicate with the homeroom teacher about delivering to the child.

If families choose to participate in the lunch delivery program, they will follow the instructions and guidelines for ordering on our school website: <http://www.sjsathens.org/parent-resources/lunchprogram.cfm>

Good manners and proper etiquette are as much a part of lunch as socialization. Lunch guidelines are as follows:

### **Students are expected to:**

- Show respect to the faculty member and parent monitors on duty.
- Remain in their designated seat until dismissed.



- Eat in an orderly manner, place food on a cloth or paper napkin.
- Deposit unopened food items, recyclable cans, and trash in designated containers.
- Wait in silence after the prayer has been said until dismissed.
- Depart in a single file line, place lunch boxes in designated areas, and proceed in an orderly manner to their next destination. Students are not to slide down or climb up railings.

The school will follow Archdiocese 5305 Food Allergy Guidelines.

Carbonated beverages (soda) and energy drinks are not permitted during school hours. Soft drinks may not be consumed during regular lunch periods unless as part of a special, school-sponsored lunch.

Each class shall assign individuals for cafeteria clean up duty on a rotational basis throughout the year. These students are responsible for cleaning the cafeteria after the class's designated lunch period. However, individuals are expected to clean their own eating space prior to leaving the cafeteria.

### **Lost and Found**

All clothing and personal property should be marked clearly with the child's full name. Articles found will be placed in the Lost and Found bin. Periodically the Lost and Found is cleared of unmarked articles, which are donated to charity.

### **Fundraising Policy**

Students are prohibited from door to door-fundraising activities sponsored by the school or a school related organization.

### **Insurance**

There will be a standard school policy, which will cover each student during school hours. The policy will be issued at the opening of school. The premium is included in the student fees.

### **Lost/Damaged Books**

Students are responsible for lost or damaged textbooks and library books. Fines will be assessed at the end of the year.

### **Use of Parish/School Facilities and Grounds**

Whenever circumstances permit, school facilities are available to the parish community. The school building itself is available at all times, with the exception of regular school hours, to the Department of Religious Education. These facilities may never be used for strictly business purposes.

Please contact the School Office for information concerning reservations or use of the facilities.

Students may not be on school grounds unsupervised outside the regularly scheduled school hours.

### **Birthday Celebration Policy**

Each student will be honored on his or her birthday. Students may bring a treat to share with his/her class only. Deliveries of flowers, balloons, and the like, are not permitted. To safeguard children's feelings, no gifts and/or social invitations may be distributed at school, unless invitations are extended to every child in the class.

### **Substance Abuse Policy of Archdiocese of Atlanta for Catholic Schools**

The school shall provide programs for intervention/prevention of substance abuse in its curricula and shall establish and publish disciplinary policy/ regulations regarding drug and alcohol possession and/or abuse on parish/school premises. Support and referral procedures shall be available for students. Parents have a responsibility to require, promote, and model safe, ethical, and legal behavior in regard to tobacco, drugs, and alcohol use. *(See Archdiocesan policy 5230.)* Substance abuse is considered to be behavior that is detrimental to the welfare, safety, or morals of all students and school personnel. Promoting a healthy and safe environment in the Catholic school tradition with respect for mind and body, all schools shall have a drug education program.

It is considered a serious offense for any student to possess, use, abuse, sell, distribute, or procure or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any other controlled substances. Any prescription or non-prescription drug not taken as prescribed is also considered substance abuse. This policy shall apply to any student on or off school property during a school-sponsored activity. Saint Joseph Catholic School is a smoke-free environment. *(See Archdiocesan policy 5230.)*

## **Health, Welfare and Safety Policy of Archdiocese of Atlanta for Catholic Schools**

The State of Georgia requires by law that any principal, teacher, counselor, or other school administrator report all cases of suspected child abuse of children less than eighteen years of age. Georgia Law, Code Section 19-7-5, requires the report of injuries or neglect of minors, provides immunity for those reporting in good faith, and provides a penalty for violation of the law.

Any pastoral or school administrator, teacher, counselor or related professional who has reasonable cause (a set of facts which would cause a reasonably prudent person to conclude that abuse or neglect will occur or has occurred) to suspect child abuse or neglect or who has reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that the abuse or neglect will occur, is obligated to report the case immediately (as soon as possible but no more than 24 hours) by telephone or personal visit, to the local County Child Welfare Agency, the office of the County Sheriff or the City Police Department. *(See Archdiocesan policies 5280, 5290.)*

## **Local Community Health and Welfare**

The classes of Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School provide prayer support to our families. During Morning Prayer, we pray for our children, families, faculty, staff, school, benefactors and special intentions. Prayer requests may be made by calling the school or sending a note with your student. You may also email prayer requests to the principal and/or school receptionist.

## **Illnesses: When to keep your child home?**

Children must be kept at home for 24 hours after any of the following symptoms have disappeared:

- Any fever above 98.6°. Children must be fever free for 24 hours without having any medicine before returning to school.
- Any vomiting, flu symptoms such as headaches, general aching, or diarrhea.
- Any unexplained pains or cramping.
- Treatment for head lice.

A written excuse must be presented to the teacher following any absences.

## **Home and School Association**

The purpose of this organization is to work with school management and encourage parent/guardian participation in the educational and extracurricular school life of their children through traditional and nontraditional activities and financial programs. All parents are members and, as such, are urged to attend as many scheduled meetings as possible.

## School Advisory Council

The School Advisory Council is established to assist the Pastor and Principal, providing advice and counsel regarding the operation of the school. The School Council does not, however, address matters with respect to individual students or personnel. The School Advisory Council (SAC) is composed of members designated by the Principal. The Council shall have the following purposes:

- To support effective administration, operation and maintenance of the school
- To provide a means of communication
- To review and discuss programs in light of the administrative vision for the school
- To develop and strengthen the relationship between the school and its parish
- To develop and strengthen the financial functioning and viability of the school
- To assist the administration in the implementation of the policies of the Archdiocese of Atlanta

Please refer to SJS website for a current list of our Advisory Council Members.

## Health Room

The school health room is staffed by a registered nurse from 9am – 2:30 pm. The purpose of the health room is to provide care for minor injuries and illnesses, administer medication, and to notify parents if the symptoms appear more serious. During the school day, students who are too ill to remain in class should inform their teacher of the condition and report to the school health room. Students who become ill while at school may leave school only with their parent's approval. Parents are required to arrange for their child to go home immediately if the health room personnel determine the illness to be contagious or if it appears unlikely that the student will recover sufficiently to return to class that day. When necessary, health room personnel and school administration will call 911 for emergency help.

### **Administration of Medication to Students (*Archdiocesan Policy 5300*)**

With the exception of physician-prescribed inhalers, there are no circumstances under which any medication, prescription or nonprescription, may be in the possession of a student or with a student's possessions.

In all instances where medication is administered, the physician prescribing the medication has the power to direct, supervise, decide, inspect and oversee the administration of such medication. In order to ensure that the physician retains the power to direct, supervise, decide, inspect and oversee the implementation of this service, no medication shall be given to a student by any employee of the school unless the following are delivered to the authorized school/clinic personnel responsible for administering medications:

1. Written instructions from the prescribing physician for the administration of the prescribed medication, signed by the prescribing physician.
2. Written statement from the prescribing physician that identifies the specific conditions and circumstances under which contact should be made with him/her in relation to the conditions or reactions of the student receiving the medications. The statement must reflect a willingness on the part of the physician to accept direct communications from the person administering the medication.
3. A written statement from the parent/legal guardian authorizing school personnel to give the medication in the dosage prescribed by the physician and authorizing school personnel to contact the physician directly.

No medication will be administered by school personnel without the Medication Consent Form and the Physician Order for Medication Administration form being filled out and returned to the school nurse. The parent must sign the consent, and the physician must fill out and sign the prescribing information.

The school nurse, where available, or the Principal, when necessary, shall maintain an accurate medication file which includes all of these necessary forms on each student receiving medication.

Medication to be given in the school must have the following information printed on the container:

1. Child's full name

2. Name of the drug and dosage
3. Time to be given, and
4. Physician's name

Medication will be taken by the child at the designated time administered by the School nurse, or by the other individual who has been identified by the principal. It is the responsibility of the student, not school personnel, to get his/her medication at the designated time. Teachers may not dispense medication.

Only limited quantities of any medicine are to be kept at the school. Medications must be delivered to the school office. Office personnel will deliver them to the clinic.

All medications administered at the school will be kept in a locked cubicle, drawer, or other safe place. Elementary students may carry inhalers: with appropriate documentation from the doctor, if the nurse verifies that the student appropriately uses the inhaler, and the student reports to the clinic immediately after self-administering the inhaler so that the medication log may be updated. These privileges will be removed if all protocols are not followed. High school students, however, may be permitted to carry inhalers while on campus. Epi-pens may be carried on students in both elementary and secondary schools according to procedures defined in the Archdiocesan Health Handbook

The length of period for which the drug is to be administered, which is not to exceed the current school year, shall be contained in the written instructions from the prescribing physician, and further written instructions must be received from the physician if the drug is to be discontinued or the dosage time it is to be administered is changed from the original instructions.

An accurate and confidential system of record keeping shall be established for each pupil receiving medication, including the type of medication, the dose, and the time given, and the duration. School personnel are asked to report any unusual behavior of students on medication.

School personnel may NOT provide aspirin or other non-prescribed medicine to Students.

Nebulizer treatments will not be administered by school personnel. Parents/guardians must first report to the school office and then be directed to the school clinic to administer this treatment.

Teachers will not dispense medication.

The principal will designate, yearly, those employees authorized to dispense medication.

### **Medication Policy of Saint Joseph Catholic School**

Antibiotics will not be given at school-by-school personnel. If the parent feels the antibiotic must be given during the school day, the parent may come to the school office/clinic and administer it. Experimental medication/dosages will not be given. Herbal medication, dietary supplements and other nutritional aids not approved as medication by the FDA, will not be administered at school.

“Over the counter” medication must be in original labeled container. Medications sent in baggies or unlabeled containers will not be given.

During the final week of school any remaining medication should be picked up and signed out by the parent only. The clinic will not release any remaining medication to another parent or to any student. Any medication remaining in the clinic on the last day of school will be discarded in a safe manner.

### **Prescription Medicine/ Nonprescription Medicine**

All medication must be brought to the clinic by the parent in the original pharmaceutical container, with the pharmacy label. Prescription medications will only be dispensed per the pharmacist's directions on the original

pharmacy label. This includes physician prescribed inhalers on the first day they are brought to school.

### **If your student has an asthma, food or insect sting allergies**

Parents who indicate on the “Saint Joseph Catholic Parish School-Emergency Information Card” or make an entry on RenWeb that their student has asthma or severe food and insect allergies, will be asked to fill out an individualized Food and Insect Allergy Action Plan that will be utilized by the school nurse or qualified school personnel in the event of an asthma attack or an allergic reaction. Parents of students who require an EpiPen at school for severe food allergies will be required to sign the “Parent waiver and understanding of food allergy policy.” A Medication Permission Form signed by a physician and parent/guardian is also required. These forms are required annually. If your physician indicates on the “**Food and Insect Allergy Action Plan**” that your student does require an Epi-Pen, you will be required to provide an Epi-pen for your student which will be kept in the Health Room. If your student attends the St. Joseph Catholic Parish School Extended Day Program (EDP), a second EpiPen must be provided to the school. You may provide another EpiPen to be kept in your student’s classroom if you desire. A meeting must be scheduled with the school nurse and appropriate school faculty and/or administration prior to checking an EpiPen into the clinic.

### **Required Health Records for Admission to St. Joseph Catholic Parish School**

Required health certificates for school include:

- Form 3231 Certificate of Immunization
- Form 3300 Certificate of Eye, Ear, Dental Exam
- Form 5320 Health Physical

### **Immunizations**

All children must meet state standards for immunization. There is no provisional admission. There will be no waiver given for a religious exemption of the Immunizations, we will accept a medical waiver – signed by a MD stating that the child’s life would be placed in danger should immunizations be required. For medical exemptions, a physician may indicate the condition on the form. The medical exemption is applicable when a child has a long-term condition that contraindicates immunization. Schools are required to notify the State Department of Health and the local Health Department in cases of student absences due to a communicable disease.

The Law further requires that an updated “Certificate of Immunization” must be on file for every child enrolled in the school. The certificate must be readily available in the event of a disease outbreak. The Certificate of Immunization shall follow the pupil when he/she is promoted, transfers, graduates or leaves the school.

The diseases that must be kept updated on the “Certificate of Immunization” includes: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Hepatitis B, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella Zoster. New State of Georgia immunization mandate: Effective July 1, 2014, all children born on or after January 1, 2002 who are entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to have Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) and meningococcal conjugate vaccines before entering school.

The Certificate of Immunization must certify that the student has met the following standards:

- Five (5) doses of DTP, DtaP, DT. However, if the fourth (4th) dose was on or after the fourth (4th) birthday, the fifth (5th) dose is not needed.
- Three (3) doses of Hepatitis B.
- Four (4) doses of Polio vaccine. If a child received all OPV or all IPV and dose three (3) was given on or after the fourth (4th) birthday, dose four (4) is not needed. If a child has received a mix of OPV and IPV, all four (4) doses are needed regardless of age of the initial dose and/or age of the third (3rd) dose.
- Two (2) doses of MMR vaccine for all children entering school for the first time. The requirement for children entering 6th grade to have two doses of MMR remains in effect.
- Two (2) dose of Varicella vaccine for all children entering school for the first time.

### **Other Health Forms**

- **Form 3300** - All students entering a Georgia school for the first time must present a completed Department of Human Resources certificate of ear, eye, and dental examination documented on Form

3300 at the time of enrollment.

- **Form 5320 Health Examination** - The Food and Insect Allergy Action Plan must include physician instructions and be signed by the student's physician. A comprehensive physical exam is required on all new students. This must be signed by a licensed physician, MD, DO, NP, or PA working under the direction of a licensed physician. If the student is requirements, another examination is not required. This form is also required for participation in any school sponsored sport and must be updated by a healthcare provider annually if the student continues to participate in school-related sports. Students will not be allowed to play any type of school related sports without a current Form 5320 on file.

A comprehensive physical exam is required on all new students. This must be signed by a licensed physician, MD, DO, NP or PA working under the direction of a licensed physician. If the student is transferring from another school within the archdiocese and has met the requirements, another examination is not required. This form is also required for participation in any school sponsored sport and must be updated by a healthcare provider annually if the student continues to participate in school-related sports. Students will not be allowed to play any type of school related sports without a current Form 5320 on file.

In the event that a student enrolls in St. Joseph Catholic Parish School and their Health Physical record indicates they have Diabetes, Epilepsy or a Seizure Disorder, Asthma, Food or Insect Sting Allergies or if a student is diagnosed with any of these during the school year, a more detailed, physician prescribed Action Plan is required. A meeting with the parents, school nurse and/or school administration will be scheduled and the Action Plan will be reviewed. The Action Plan will be kept in the Health Room and the Health Room personnel will instruct/in-service the school staff/faculty responsible for the student in the event the Health Room is closed.

### **Right to Amend the Handbook**

The principal retains the right to amend the handbook and parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

