

# **Parent/Student Handbook St. Stephen Catholic School 2025-2026 School Year**



## **ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Archdiocese of Detroit holds that the Catholic schools serve as an integral extension of the educational ministry of the Church, which continues the teaching mission of Jesus.

Catholic Schools:

- proclaim the Gospel;
- develop a faith community in which Gospel values are formed, experienced and lived;
- preserve and teach the doctrines and traditions of the Catholic faith;
- provide a learning environment which fosters academic excellence;
- respect and value the racial and cultural diversity that is unique to the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Catholic schools will continue to involve students more fully in the mission of the Church by:

- building a community rooted in the life of the Holy Spirit
- a commitment of service to others
- a response to the call for peace and justice in our world

## **ST. STEPHEN'S MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*As a ministry of the parish, St. Stephen Catholic School inspires academic excellence by the pursuit of Truth, formation of disciples of Jesus Christ, growth in virtue, and service with mercy.*

### **VISION STATEMENT**

- St. Stephen Catholic School envisions a vibrant community dedicated to fostering academic excellence, where a classical education sharpens students' minds and shapes their learning through seminars, question-based narratives, and dynamic classroom discussions. Led by educators who are both exemplary in their teaching practices and inspiring in their witness to faith, our school nurtures lifelong learners who seek Truth and wisdom.
- In formation as disciples of Jesus Christ, we aspire to train future saints, who, inspired by the Spirit of St. Stephen the martyr, courageously witness to Christ in their daily lives. Our school is a place where the seeds of faith are planted deeply, growing each child's understanding of their call to holiness and service.
- Our commitment to growth in virtue calls forth courageous Catholic leaders who love others and reflect Christ's compassion. Through grade-level, schoolwide, and athletics virtue programs, students develop holy habits that strengthen character and prepare them to live with integrity, generosity, and courage.
- We serve with mercy by engaging in community ministry, equipping our students to become active instruments of renewal within the Church and beyond. By reaching out to those in need, our school lives out the call to service that is central to our mission.
- St. Stephen Catholic School strives to "Educate in Christ," cultivating a community where each child grows in faith, knowledge, virtue, and love. We invite families, educators, and parishioners to join us in this sacred mission, as together we form disciples and courageous leaders who will serve the Church and society with compassion and conviction.

St. Stephen School is under the administration of the Pastor and the Principal. They are responsible to the Archdiocesan authorities for the religious and academic instruction of the students, for implementing school policies, for public relations and the maintenance of the school.

1. The Pastor, by delegation of his bishop, is the primary educator, especially in Catholic doctrine and formation within the parish.
2. The Principal directs and supervises the teaching/learning situation of the entire school.

## **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

### **Per AoD policy 1.08:**

*Parent/student handbooks constitute a contract between the school and the families it serves.*

*Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without prior notice. The school principal will attempt to keep the school families informed of all changes as soon as practical.*

*Catholic schools have a mission of forming disciples of Jesus Christ. Every Catholic school, therefore, must cultivate an environment that upholds the teachings of the Catholic Church in an authentically Catholic culture, protecting and promoting the inherent and inviolable dignity of all persons, created in the image and likeness of God. Catholic school leaders, staff, and community members must ensure that all curriculum, activities, advocacy, and training align with the teachings of the Catholic Church.*

*Grounded in the Church's commitment to care pastorally for individuals struggling with gender confusion, all ministers of the Church in the Archdiocese of Detroit (clergy, employees, and volunteers) are expected to accompany these brothers and sisters with true compassion and to assure them of God's personal love.*

*By virtue of each person's creation in the image and likeness of God as male or female, and the truth that God's plan for our holiness and flourishing is revealed through our bodies, all ministers of the Church in the Archdiocese of Detroit (clergy, employees, and volunteers), students, and registered youth program participants shall respect their God-given biological sex regarding (but not limited to) the use of personal pronouns, dress code, bathrooms, and all other facilities. All documents and records shall reflect the person's God-given biological sex.*

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

St. Stephen Catholic School welcomes all students who seek an education rooted in faith, virtue, and academic excellence. As a ministry of St. Stephen Parish, we uphold the dignity of every child and do not discriminate based on race, nationality, ethnic origin, or sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Act of 1972.

### **Commitment to Catholic Education**

Admission to St. Stephen Catholic School requires an understanding and acceptance by both parents and students that our school is Catholic in philosophy and practice. Faith is woven into every aspect of our curriculum, and all students actively participate in religion classes, liturgical celebrations, and prayer. We expect all students to respect and uphold the values and teachings of the Catholic Church as part of our school community.

Parents/guardians play a vital role in the faith and academic formation of their children. By enrolling at St. Stephen, families commit to supporting the school's mission, vision, and policies. If a family does not cooperate with school policies or creates a disruption to the mission of the school, they may be asked to withdraw their child.

### **Admissions Process and Priority**

Registration opens in the spring semester. All current tuition and fees must be paid in full OR entered into an agreed upon payment plan before a student may be enrolled for the next academic year. Admission is granted based on seat availability and the following priority:

1. Returning students and their siblings
2. Parishioners of St. Stephen Catholic Church
3. Parishioners of another Catholic Parish
4. Non-Catholic students seeking a Catholic education

Non-Catholic students are welcomed into our school community and are expected to fully participate in religious instruction, school Masses, and all faith-based activities.

### **Transfer Student Requirements**

Students transferring from other schools must meet the following conditions before being accepted:

1. All financial obligations to their previous school must be resolved.
2. The most recent report card must be submitted for review, followed by a parent interview. A student interview may be required.
3. Immunization requirements set by the Wayne County Health Department must be met.
4. All transfer students are admitted on a probationary basis for one quarter (nine weeks). During this time, students must demonstrate a commitment to academic effort, personal responsibility, and adherence to school expectations. At the end of this period, the principal and teachers will determine if continued enrollment is appropriate.

### **Conditions for Admission or Re-Admission**

Admission decisions are made on an individual basis, considering the student's academic performance, behavior, and family cooperation. St. Stephen Catholic School reserves the right to deny admission or re-admission based on, but not limited to, the following:

- A history of significant disciplinary or academic challenges
- A need for special services beyond reasonable accommodations
- Unresolved financial obligations at St. Stephen OR to a previously attended school

At St. Stephen Catholic School, our mission is to form disciples of Jesus Christ, cultivate academic excellence, and instill virtue in every child. Families who choose to join our community commit to this sacred mission, fostering a Christ-centered environment where students grow in wisdom, faith, and love.

## KINDERGARTEN ADMISSION

At St. Stephen Catholic School, we recognize the early years as a sacred time for growth in faith, virtue, and academic foundations. Our kindergarten program nurtures young learners in a Christ-centered environment, fostering a love for Truth, wisdom, and the joy of learning.

To be eligible for kindergarten, children must be five years old by September 1st of the enrollment year. A copy of the child's birth certificate is required at the time of registration.

In accordance with state law, parents must provide documentation of all required immunizations from a licensed physician or health clinic. Children who do not meet immunization requirements will not be permitted to attend school until compliance is met.

To ensure that each child is prepared for the structure and expectations of our classical curriculum, all incoming kindergarten students will complete a readiness assessment and meet with the kindergarten teacher. This process helps us understand each child's developmental stage and how best to support their transition into our school community.

Through this admissions process, we seek to welcome families who desire a Catholic education rooted in faith, virtue, and academic excellence.

## ACCREDITATION

St. Stephen School has been accredited by the Michigan Association of NonPublic Schools.

## CURRICULUM

At St. Stephen Catholic School, our curriculum is designed to inspire academic excellence, the pursuit of Truth, and the formation of virtuous disciples of Jesus Christ. Rooted in the classical Catholic tradition, our educational program cultivates wisdom and a love of learning while preparing students for lifelong success in faith, academics, and service.

As a Catholic school, all students participate in daily religion classes that provide a deep understanding of Catholic doctrine, Scripture, and Christian values. These classes go beyond knowledge, guiding students to apply their faith in daily life, form a strong moral compass, and grow in discipleship. Prayer, liturgical participation, and service to others are woven into the fabric of our school life.

Our rigorous academic program, spanning Pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in high school, college, and beyond. With an emphasis on critical thinking, virtue, and intellectual formation, our curriculum includes:

- **Religion** – Deepening faith and moral understanding
- **Science** – Exploring the order and wonder of God's creation
- **Social Studies** – Understanding history and civic responsibility through the lens of faith and reason
- **Mathematics** – Developing logical reasoning and problem-solving skills
- **Language Arts** – Cultivating strong communication, writing, and analytical skills

Our curriculum aligns with the standards set by the Archdiocese of Detroit, Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools (MANS), and Michigan Department of Education, ensuring both academic excellence and faith-centered formation. Through a classical approach that includes question-based discussions, Socratic seminars, and a rich study of literature and history, we prepare students not only for academic achievement but also for lives of virtue, wisdom, and courageous witness to Christ.

### **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES**

Students are **required** to participate and benefit from supplementary programs such as:

- .....weekly computer education class
- .....weekly physical education class
- .....weekly music class
- .....weekly art class
- .....weekly Library class

### **LITURGY**

At St. Stephen Catholic School, participation in the sacred liturgy is central to our mission of forming disciples of Jesus Christ. Rooted in the rich tradition of the Catholic Church, our liturgical life nurtures faith, deepens students' understanding of Truth, and fosters a spirit of reverence and devotion.

Recognizing that parents are the primary educators of their children in faith, we seek to complement and support the spiritual formation that begins at home. Catholic parents are encouraged to fulfill their sacred duty by bringing their children to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, in accordance with the precepts of the Church. A strong family commitment to the liturgy reinforces the values and teachings imparted in school.

Within the school community, students actively participate in scheduled school liturgies, fostering a shared experience of worship and prayer. With age-appropriate involvement, students contribute through prayer, song, and service, deepening their connection to the Eucharist. In addition to weekly Mass, students join the parish community for liturgical celebrations on Holy Days and other significant moments in the Church's calendar.

Through frequent encounters with Christ in the Eucharist, our students grow in holiness, virtue, and love for the Church, preparing them to live as courageous witnesses of the Gospel.

### **TUITION AND FEES**

At St. Stephen Catholic School, tuition is more than a financial obligation—it is an investment in a child's faith, formation, and future. By choosing a classical Catholic education, families partner with us in the pursuit of Truth, the formation of disciples, and the cultivation of academic excellence, virtue, and service.

Tuition directly supports the mission of our school by ensuring that our dedicated educators receive just compensation and that our students continue to benefit from a faith-filled, rigorous curriculum. The principal and business manager establish tuition rates each spring, carefully considering factors such as fair wages for faculty and staff, school operational needs, inflation, and enrollment trends.

Recognizing the sacrifices that families make for Catholic education, we are committed to assisting those in financial need. Tuition assistance is available through the Archdiocese of Detroit and other sources. Families seeking assistance should contact the school office for more information.

**Tuition Payment Options:**

Families may choose from the following payment plans:

- **Option 1:** Single Payment Plan
- **Option 2:** Two-Payment Plan
- **Option 3:** Monthly Plan (administered through F.A.C.T.S.)

A **\$30 fee** will be applied to any returned checks.

**Catholic and Non-Catholic Tuition Rates:**

Active, registered members of any Catholic parish are eligible for Catholic tuition rates. Families must provide parish registration information to qualify.

**Tuition Refund Policy:**

Tuition refunds will be granted for any unused quarters of the school year. Once the second semester begins, no refunds will be issued. Refunds will not be granted for students who are expelled or asked to withdraw. All fees are non-refundable, and refunds will be processed only after all financial obligations have been met.

Through the shared commitment of families, educators, and the parish, we strive to make Catholic education accessible while upholding the mission of forming courageous disciples who will serve the Church and society with wisdom, faith, and integrity.

**PARTICIPATION IN FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES**

Fundraising at St. Stephen Catholic School is a vital expression of our commitment to academic excellence, virtue, and service. These efforts help sustain and enhance the programs that support our mission of forming disciples of Jesus Christ, fostering wisdom, and cultivating a thriving faith-filled learning environment.

All school-sponsored fundraising initiatives must align with the mission and values of St. Stephen Catholic School. To ensure proper stewardship, all fundraising activities must receive **prior written approval** from the principal before proceeding.

Following each fundraiser, organizers must submit a **written summary** detailing the total funds raised, how the proceeds will be allocated, and the timeline for disbursement. This process ensures transparency and accountability, allowing our school community to make the best use of resources to further our educational and spiritual mission.

By working together in a spirit of generosity and collaboration, our fundraising efforts strengthen our school, deepen our impact, and allow us to continue **“Educating in Christ”** for generations to come.

**FAMILY SERVICE HOUR REQUIREMENT**

Families are the model of service for their children. In support of our mission, both for the growth and sustainability of the school and for answering the call as disciples of service.

Families of students in grades K-8 are required 15 service hours.

Families of students whose children ONLY attend Preschool are required 7 hours of service.

Families whose students are in both Preschool and in K-8 are required 15 service hours.

The deadline to complete 2025-2026 service hours is 05/01/2026.

Families will be billed \$20 per unserved hour.

Families are expected to complete service hours using the form located in the school office. This form may be provided digitally.

Completed forms must be submitted to the school office.

## **DRESS CODE REGULATIONS**

At St. Stephen Catholic School, our dress code reflects our commitment to academic excellence, virtue, and the pursuit of Truth. Our uniform fosters a spirit of unity, removes distractions, and allows students to focus on their formation as disciples of Jesus Christ. By promoting modesty, discipline, and respect for self and others, our dress code aligns with our mission to educate excellently without detracting or disunity. This code applies to appropriate casual wear, clothing restrictions, footwear, accessories or hairstyle. The dress code policies work to be fair, inclusive, non-discriminatory and respectful of genuine cultural and religious customs and expressions, while maintaining the standards of the school's learning environment and mission.

### **General Guidelines**

- Students are expected to maintain a neat and professional appearance that upholds the dignity of our learning environment.
- Uniforms should be clean, well-maintained, and properly fitted.
- Hairstyles should be simple, natural, and not obstruct vision. Hair dyeing, fad cuts, and excessive accessories are not permitted.
- Jewelry and accessories should be minimal and in keeping with Catholic values.
- Shoes must be sturdy, closed-toe, and in dark black or brown. Canvas, cloth, and plastic shoes are not allowed.

### **Dress Code for Girls**

- **Grades K-4:** Blue plaid uniform jumper with a white or light blue polo shirt with three buttons, long or short sleeves. Jumpers must be knee length. A navy blue sweatshirt, with St. Stephen logo or a button up navy blue sweater may be worn. Navy blue uniform dress slacks may be worn. In August, September, and May navy blue knee length dress shorts may be worn.
- **Grades 5-8:** Navy blue or khaki, loose fit, dress slacks with a navy blue, light blue, or white polo shirt. Hip hugger or low cut slacks are not permissible. Belts must be worn. The blue plaid uniform skirt and blue plaid uniform skort may be worn. A navy blue sweatshirt, with St. Stephen logo only,



may be worn. In August, September, and May they may wear navy blue or khaki dress shorts.

### **Additional Notes for Girls:**

- Socks: Solid color, white, navy, or black crew socks, knee highs or tights. Colors should match the uniform colors.
- Only conservative, neat hair styles are acceptable. Hair must be natural color with **no tints or dyes**. Hair should not obstruct the vision of the student. Only small modest hair accessories allowed. Headbands must be navy blue, brown, black or white.
- Leather dress shoes with a closed heel and toe in dark black or dark brown. No canvas, cloth, or plastic shoes allowed. Heels are to be no higher than one and one quarter inch.
- Leggings may be worn under the skirt or jumper from **November 1 st through April 1st**. They must be solid color, navy or black. They must go to the ankles. You must wear socks with them.
- Make-up of any kind is not allowed. Only clear chapstick is permissible. No lip gloss, mascara, eye liners, or eye shadow of any kind. No nail polish. No fake nails.
- Small conservative post type earrings only (one set). No drop earrings. Earrings are to be worn in the ear lobe only. No other earrings are allowed. No excessive, expensive jewelry. Only a religious type of necklace will be allowed. No current fad accessories such as beads, pearls, chokers, plastic wrist bands, ankle bracelets, etc.

### **Dress Code for Boys**

- **Grades K-4:** Solid color, navy blue uniform dress slacks with a light blue polo shirt, long or short sleeves. If slacks have belt loops, a belt must be worn. Belts are to be plain – black, brown or navy blue. Optional: In August, September, and May, they may wear navy blue dress shorts that go to the knee. A navy blue sweatshirt, with St. Stephen logo only, may be worn.
- **Grades 5-8:** Navy blue or khaki uniform dress slacks with a white, navy blue or light blue polo shirt. A navy blue sweatshirt, with St. Stephen logo, may be worn. Belts (plain- black, brown or navy blue) must be worn.

### **Additional Notes for Boys:**

- Belts (plain black, brown, or navy blue) must be worn with pants that have belt loops.
- Only conservative, neat hairstyles are acceptable. No tinting or dying of hair will be allowed. Current fads are not allowed. Hair must be natural color. No fad haircuts or shavings are allowed. Length of hair: **nothing below the eyebrows**, hair shall be **above** the shirt collar.
- No earrings or jewelry are allowed. No fad accessories. Only a religious type necklace will be allowed.

- Leather dress shoes in dark black or dark brown.. No designs or visible logos. No canvas, cloth, or plastic shoes allowed.
- Socks: Only solid color, white, navy, or black crew socks.

### **Outerwear & Gym Uniforms**

- Only St. Stephen logo sweatshirts may be worn in the classroom.
- A plain navy blue or white cardigan may be worn.
- Gym uniforms consist of gray sweatpants with the St. Stephen logo and a red T-shirt or sweatshirt with the school logo.

### **Jean Day & Special Dress Days**

- On designated Jean Days, students may wear blue denim jeans with gym shoes.
- Jeans must be loose-fitting and free of rips, frays, or embellishments.
- Participation in Jean Day contributes to the school's Technology Fund.

### **Enforcement**

Students not in compliance with the dress code may be required to change and parents will be notified. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of student dress and grooming.

By adhering to this dress code, students demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, and the mission of St. Stephen Catholic School as we strive to form young disciples who live with integrity and virtue.

### **St. Stephen Catholic School Attendance Policy**

At St. Stephen Catholic School, we recognize that consistent attendance is essential for academic excellence, personal growth, and the formation of virtuous habits. As we strive to cultivate disciples of Jesus Christ, we encourage students to embrace responsibility, discipline, and commitment in all aspects of their education—including attendance.

### **Commitment to Daily Attendance**

To fully engage in the pursuit of Truth and wisdom, students are expected to be present and on time every school day. Parents and guardians play a vital role in supporting their child's education by ensuring regular attendance and minimizing unnecessary absences.

### **Reporting Absences**

- Parents must notify the school office at **734-753-4175 by 9:00 a.m.** on the day of an absence.
- It is the joint responsibility of parents and students to obtain and complete missed assignments, tests, and projects. Work may **not always** be provided in advance for planned absences. This is at the

discretion of the teacher and administration.

## **Tardiness**

- Students arriving after **8:05 a.m.** are considered late and must report to the office before going to class.
- Punctuality is an important virtue that reflects respect for learning and others. Chronic tardiness disrupts the educational environment and hinders student progress.
- Repetitive tardies will be communicated to the parent. A timeliness plan may be put in place by the administration in the event of excessive tardiness.

## **Extended Absences & Make-Up Work**

- If a student is absent **12 or more days in a quarter**, grades may be withheld unless arrangements are made to complete all required work.
- Students absent **30 days or more in a school year** will be considered for retention. A meeting with the teacher and principal will determine the appropriate course of action.
- Students in **grades 5-8** must schedule make-up tests before or after school with their teacher.

## **Health & Communicable Illnesses**

- In compliance with Wayne County Board of Health regulations, all communicable diseases must be reported.
- If a student is absent due to a communicable illness, a **doctor's clearance letter** is required before returning to school.

## **Sick/Illness Policy**

To keep our students healthy and at their best, keep your child home if they are not feeling like themselves. Below are some guidelines on when to keep your child home:

- Vomiting – keep home until the child is vomit free for 24 hours.
- Diarrhea – If your child is spending most of their time in the bathroom has two or more loose/water stools in 24 hours.
- Fever – children must be fever-free for 24 hours.
- Illness being treated with an antibiotic. Depending on the illness, children cannot return on an antibiotic before 24 hours.
- Lice – children must be lice AND nit free before they can return to school.
- Unexplained rash – please have any rash diagnosed by the child's doctor before returning.
- Discharge from eyes – For itchy, pink/red watery eyes, has your child's doctor diagnose before returning.
- Sore throat – Have your child's doctor diagnose the symptoms before returning.

If your child experiences any of these while in our care, we will call for them to be picked up as soon as possible. Please have a backup plan for your child.

## Early Dismissal Procedures

- A **written request** must be submitted for early dismissal, stating the reason, time, and name of the adult picking up the student. This can be done in the office.
- The designated adult must report to the school office for check-in and sign out the student after providing proper identification.
- Parents are expected to communicate known early dismissals in advance to the school office.
- To maintain a focused learning environment, **parents should not disrupt the classroom**. Students will meet their parent/guardian in the office.

By fostering responsibility and accountability in attendance, St. Stephen Catholic School prepares students not only for academic success but also for a life of integrity and service, grounded in our Catholic faith.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home quarterly. Student progress can be accessed at any time through FACTS Mgt.

## St. Stephen Catholic School Grading & Recognition System

At St. Stephen Catholic School, academic excellence is pursued through the diligent study of Truth, the formation of virtuous habits, and a commitment to personal growth. Our grading system reflects both academic achievement and character formation, recognizing students for their dedication to learning and the development of Christ-like virtues.

### Grading Scale

Letter grades are assigned to students in **Grades 3-8** across all major subject areas. **Kindergarten through Grade 2** use a developmentally appropriate grading scale to reflect growth and mastery of foundational skills.

### Primary Grades (K-2)

- **83 – 100%** – Proficient
- **72 – 82%** – Developing
- **71% and below** – Needs Improvement

### Upper Grades (3-8)

- **A = 93-100%**
- **B = 83-92%**
- **C = 72-82%**

- **D** = 60-71%
- **F** = 59% and below

Special subjects, including but not limited to **Computer, Art, Music, Library, Spanish, and Physical Education**, follow the same grading scale unless otherwise noted.

### **Honor Roll Recognition (Grades 3-8)**

Students who demonstrate outstanding academic performance and virtuous behavior are recognized each quarter through **two honor roll distinctions**:

#### **High Achievement Honor Roll**

- **GPA of 3.75 – 4.0** in all major subjects
- No C's, D's, or F's in any subject

#### **Achievement Honor Roll**

- **GPA of 3.0 – 3.74** in all major subjects
- No D's or F's in any subject

The **major subjects** include:

- Religion
- Reading (including Literature)
- Language Arts (including Vocabulary)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Spelling

### **Courtesy Honor Roll (Grades 3-8)**

Virtue is the foundation of true leadership and discipleship. To recognize students who demonstrate respect, integrity, and kindness in their daily interactions, those earning an **A or B in conduct** will be named to the **Courtesy Honor Roll**.

### **Quarterly Honors Assembly**

Each quarter, students who earn Honor Roll or Courtesy Honor Roll distinction will be recognized at a **special honors assembly**, celebrating their academic achievements and commitment to virtuous living.

Through this grading system, we strive to cultivate students who not only seek **academic excellence** but also embrace the virtues that will guide them in their faith, relationships, and lifelong learning.

## St. Stephen Catholic School Policies & Procedures

At St. Stephen Catholic School, we seek to cultivate a strong partnership between parents, teachers, and students to foster academic excellence, virtuous growth, and a deepening relationship with Christ. The following policies reflect our mission to support student learning, ensure safety, and encourage personal responsibility in alignment with our faith-based community.

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### Parent-Teacher Conferences

Communication between parents and teachers is essential to the success of each child's academic and personal growth. To support this collaboration, **parent-teacher conferences are required at the end of the first quarter**, typically scheduled in November. Throughout the year, additional conferences may be requested by either parents or teachers to discuss student progress, address concerns, or provide support.

To ensure meaningful and focused discussions, all conference requests should be scheduled in advance by sending a note to the teacher or contacting the school office. Out of respect for the learning environment, **conferences will not be held during instructional time or before school begins**, as teachers are engaged in preparing lessons and supervising students.

Parents with questions or concerns regarding their child's education should first communicate with the appropriate teacher. If further discussion is needed, a follow-up conference may be arranged with the teacher and principal to ensure the best possible outcomes for the student.

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### Emergency Policy & Procedures

The safety and well-being of our students are a priority at St. Stephen Catholic School. To ensure a prompt and appropriate response in the event of an emergency, **each student must have an updated emergency contact card (may be digital)** on file in the school office. This card should include the **names, addresses, and phone numbers** of parents and an additional emergency contact. Any updates to emergency information must be reported to the school office immediately.

If an accident occurs on school grounds:

- **Minor injuries** (such as small cuts, scrapes, or bruises) will be treated in the school office.
- **Serious injuries** requiring professional medical attention will be handled with urgency. The student will be made comfortable, and **parents or the designated emergency contact will be called immediately. 911 may be called with serious situations, including but not limited to: seizures, anaphylactic reactions, loss of consciousness, or severe injuries.**

*It is the responsibility of parents and/or guardians to inform the principal and appropriate teachers if a student is subject to any medical need that requires regular or periodic attention while at school. School personnel will not dispense or administer any medicine to students without written parent / legal guardian permission and physician authorization and instructions. If prescription or non-prescription medicine must be taken during school hours, the principal or his/her designee will supervise the administration of the medicine by the student in the presence of another adult.*

We ask all families to maintain **current and accurate emergency contact information** to ensure a timely response in any situation.

All medicine administered by the school must have a doctor's note of direction and written parent permission.

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### **Student Phone Use**

Developing responsibility is an important part of a child's formation at St. Stephen Catholic School. Students should arrive each day **fully prepared** with all necessary materials, including books, assignments, gym shoes, and lunches.

To maintain a **focused learning environment** and **keep the school phone lines available for essential communication**, students may use the office telephone **only in emergencies and with the principal's permission**.

- **Forgotten items (e.g., homework, gym clothes, lunches, or books) are not considered emergencies.** Parents are not expected to bring these items to school.
- Classroom interruptions will be kept to a minimum, and **only urgent messages will be relayed to students** during the school day.

By fostering personal responsibility, we help students develop habits of preparedness and self-sufficiency.

Students are prohibited from using cell phones any time during the school day. This includes outside in the dismissal lines.

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### **Technology Use**

Technology is a valuable tool for learning and research, but it must be used responsibly and in accordance with our Catholic values.

- **Before accessing school computers or the internet, all students must sign the Technology Use Contract**, a requirement of the Archdiocese of Detroit.
- This contract outlines **expectations for ethical and appropriate technology use**, ensuring that students engage with digital tools in a way that supports their education and moral formation.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the loss of technology privileges.

### **Name/Image/Likeness for Media Purposes**

St. Stephen Catholic School communicates with parents, students, faculty, and members of the community by maintaining a website on the Internet, publishing parish and/or school bulletins/brochures, producing videos or DVDs, and publishing other materials (hereafter referred to as "publications").

Students may create writings or artwork, and parents may provide or the school may create (or have created) audio or video recordings, photographs, drawings, or other materials which contain students' likenesses (referred to as "images").

Parents authorize the school to use, display, and copy, modify, and post any such images as the school deems appropriate, now or in the future, in publications and on official Social Media Channels (Facebook and Instagram). At no time will a child's full name accompany a picture on social media, unless parent approval is given.

Parents and students understand and agree that neither the school nor any third party will compensate them for the images used as described in this authorization.

Parents or students may cancel this authorization at any time by providing written notice to the school at 18800 Huron River Dr. New Boston, MI 48164. Parents may also, at any time, direct the school in writing at the same address to remove any particular image from its website. Within a reasonable amount of time, the school will remove the images from its website and exclude them from future publications.

The school will not be liable to parents and/or students, regardless of the form of action or theory of recovery, for any direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, special, punitive, or exemplary damages in connection with, or related to, this authorization or the school's use of the images of the students.

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## Administration of Medication

To ensure the health and safety of our students, all **medications—both prescription and non-prescription—require written authorization** from both a **parent/guardian and a physician** before being administered at school.

### Medication Guidelines:

- All medication must be **in its original container**.
- Prescription medications must have a **pharmacy label** that includes the student's name, medication name, dosage, and administration instructions.
- Non-prescription medications must be labeled by the **parent/guardian** with the child's name, dosage, and time of administration.
- Any **changes in dosage** or the **addition of new medication** must be accompanied by a physician's note.
- **A written statement from a parent or physician is required to discontinue medication.**

### Additional Policies:

- Medications will **not be transported by school personnel**.
- Empty bottles and discontinued medications will be sent home with a parent notification.
- At the end of the school year, all medications must be collected by the parent.
- If a student needs to carry an **inhaler**, written authorization from a physician is required.

The school office is equipped with **two Epi-pens for emergency use**, and designated staff members are trained to administer them in the event of a severe allergic reaction.



By upholding these policies, we work together to ensure a safe, healthy, and faith-filled learning environment for all students.

### **Food Allergy Management**

St. Stephen is not a “nut free” school.

In partnership with families, we work to minimize the risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students.

#### *Family's Responsibility*

- Notify the school of the child's allergies.
- Work with the school to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs.
- Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications directed by a licensed physician.
- Provide properly labeled medications and replace them if medication expires.
- Educate your child on safe foods and symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Provide emergency contact information.

#### *School's Responsibility*

- Be knowledgeable about federal laws including ADA, IDEA, and Section 504.
- Review the health records submitted by parents and licensed physicians.
  - Identify a core team including principal, teacher, and staff who will be in contact with the student, and counselor to work with parents to establish a prevention plan.
- Coordinate with the school secretaries to be sure medications are properly stored.
- Designate school personnel who are properly trained to administer medications in accordance with licensed physician's directions and Good Samaritan Laws.
- Discuss field trips with the family of the food-allergic student to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.

#### *Student's Responsibility*

- Should not trade food with others.
- Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic.
- Should remain seated at the “nut free” table if assigned due to allergies.
- Preschool students provide their own snacks and lunches.

Rooted in our mission to form disciples of Jesus Christ and cultivate academic excellence, St. Stephen Catholic School upholds policies that foster a structured, safe, and respectful learning environment. These guidelines reflect our commitment to Truth, virtue, and service, ensuring that all students grow in wisdom and responsibility within a Christ-centered community.

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### School Entrance Policy

To maintain a **safe and uninterrupted learning environment**, all visitors must enter through the designated **School Entrance** and **report to the office immediately upon arrival**.

- **Parents and visitors are not permitted to enter classrooms** or disrupt instruction between **8:35 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.** unless they have a scheduled appointment.
- **Morning arrival is a critical time** for teachers to prepare for the school day. Please refrain from engaging teachers in conversation during student drop-off.
- All visitors should use the **door marked "School Entrance"** for access to the building.

By respecting these policies, we ensure a **focused, safe, and faith-filled** school day for all students.

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### Fire, Tornado, and Shelter-in-Place Drills

Regular safety drills ensure that our students and staff are well-prepared to respond to emergencies.

- **Fire Drills**
  - A **continuous emergency alarm** signals evacuation.
  - Each teacher will instruct students on **specific evacuation routes** and procedures.
  - The school conducts a **minimum of five fire drills per year** (three in the fall, two in the spring).
- **Tornado Drills**
  - Students will be directed to a **designated safe area** within the school.
  - Parents are asked **not to call the school during a tornado warning** to keep phone lines open for emergency communication.
- **Shelter-in-Place Drills**
  - The school will conduct **three drills per year** to prepare for situations requiring students to remain indoors for safety.

These drills reinforce our commitment to **ensuring student safety** while fostering an atmosphere of calm preparedness.

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## Transportation

St. Stephen Catholic School partners with the **Huron School District** to provide school bus transportation for students residing within district boundaries.

- Bus riders must **follow all safety rules and show respect** to bus drivers at all times.
- Failure to adhere to bus regulations may result in **temporary or permanent suspension of bus privileges**.
- Students may only **exit at their assigned stop** unless they have a **bus pass** issued by the school office. A parent must provide a written request for a bus pass in advance.
- Families living outside the Huron School District are responsible for arranging their own transportation.

By **respecting transportation guidelines**, we ensure a safe and orderly commute for all students.

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## Emergency School Closing

St. Stephen Catholic School follows the **Huron School District's** decision on weather-related school closures.

- If **Huron Public Schools close due to severe weather**, St. Stephen Catholic School **will also be closed**.
- School closings will normally be announced via news channels, social media, and through the FACTs communication system.
- If an emergency arises **specific to our school** (such as heating system failure), closure announcements will be made independently.
- Parents **should not call the school, convent, or rectory** to inquire about closures, as phone lines must remain open for emergency communications.

## Emergency Closing During School Hours

- If Huron Schools announce an **early dismissal**, St. Stephen Catholic School will also dismiss early.
- Parents should ensure their children **know where to go in case of early dismissal**.

By staying informed and prepared, we can ensure the **safety and well-being** of all students.

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## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

To **protect the safety of our students**, families should follow these **arrival and dismissal guidelines**:

### Morning Drop-Off

- Students should be dropped off along the drive-line curb, not on Huron River Drive.
- Only families who plan to enter the school should park in the parking spaces. Families dropping off should park single-file along the curb, pulling forward as far as possible around the drop-off curb.
- **1st-8th Grade Students** enter through the “**School Entrance**” **Door** between the school and the church.
- **PreSchool and Kindergarten Students** enter through the “**PreSchool Entrance**” **Door**. Any late PreSchool & Kindergarten students should report to the “School Entrance” Door to check-in at the Front Office.
- All parents & visitors must use the school entrance at all times when visiting the school.

## Pick-Up

- Students in Grades K-8 must be picked up **no later than 3:40 p.m.**
- If a parent is habitually late (normally 3+ occurrences during the school year) in picking up their child, the administration reserves the right to assess the family a late fee. Beginning 15 minutes after dismissal, the family will be assessed at \$5.00 per minute late.
- Cars of families with students in grades 1-8 should park in a single-file line around the drop-off curb. Preschool families should park in the spaces closest to the Pre
- To keep the **pickup line moving**, parents should park in designated spaces if they need to take care of school business.
- **Students should remain with their parents at all times once picked up.**

These procedures ensure that students **arrive and leave school safely and efficiently** each day.

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## Lunch Period Expectations

The lunch period provides students with an opportunity to **nourish their bodies, practice good manners, and build community**.

- Students are under the supervision of **adult lunch monitors** and are expected to **show respect and cooperation**.
- **Inappropriate behavior** such as **disobedience, disrespect, fighting, or inappropriate language** will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.
- The lunchroom is a space for **fellowship and gratitude**, reflecting the virtues of charity and self-discipline.

By treating this time with **courtesy and responsibility**, students contribute to a **joyful and respectful** dining experience.

## **Physical Education & Activity Policy**

At St. Stephen Catholic School, we recognize that physical activity is essential to the development of a healthy body and mind. Aligned with our mission to cultivate virtue, discipline, and lifelong habits of wellness, our physical education and activity programs promote fitness, teamwork, and personal growth.

- Our Physical Education curriculum follows the Michigan K-12 Physical Education Content Standards and Benchmarks to ensure a well-rounded and developmentally appropriate program.
- Every student, regardless of physical ability, is encouraged to participate in ways that foster growth, confidence, and perseverance.
- Students receive 45 minutes of structured Physical Education per week, reinforcing the importance of movement and fitness.
- A daily 20-minute recess provides an opportunity for students to develop social skills, creativity, and a love for outdoor play.
- After-school sports and activity programs are available to encourage teamwork, leadership, and physical well-being beyond the school day.

By integrating movement and virtue-based coaching, we nurture students who care for their bodies as gifts from God and use their energy to serve and lead with joy.

## **CONCUSSIONS**

Concussion Acknowledgement forms will be sent home to all new students, and information about concussions will be provided to families. See link [here](#).

Adult coaches (paid or volunteer) and teachers of Physical Education class must complete the established free online training course.

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## **Field Trip Guidelines**

Field trips at St. Stephen Catholic School are an extension of our classical education approach, providing hands-on learning experiences that deepen understanding, curiosity, and faith. To ensure the safety and integrity of these experiences, all parents who participate as chaperones, drivers, or classroom assistants must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All volunteers must complete the "Protecting God's Children" training and pass a background check as required by the Archdiocese of Detroit. This ensures a safe and secure environment for all students.
- Parents can find training locations and registration at [www.aod.org](http://www.aod.org). A copy of the completion certificate must be submitted to the school office.

- Proof of insurance must be provided for every field trip. The required coverage amount will be communicated annually, as set by the Archdiocese of Detroit.
- Chaperones represent St. Stephen Catholic School and are expected to model Christian virtue, ensuring that all students follow school-wide expectations for behavior and respect.
- Students must remain with their assigned chaperone at all times to maintain safety and order.
- Chaperones must drive directly to and from the field trip destination with no additional stops.
- Volunteers must be willing to supervise students beyond their own children, fostering a spirit of community and shared responsibility.
- Any special field trip instructions will be provided in advance to parents and students.

Through these policies, we ensure that field trips enhance student learning, deepen their faith, and reflect our commitment to excellence in education.

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### Student Code of Conduct

At St. Stephen Catholic School, we believe that discipline is a path to virtue, shaping students into responsible, faith-filled individuals who reflect Christ's love in their actions.

- Our faculty fosters a positive and nurturing environment by using reinforcement strategies that encourage respect, responsibility, and self-discipline.
- Good behavior is expected at all times, and students will be recognized for their efforts in exemplifying Christian virtues.
- We believe that every child is capable of behaving appropriately and that no student should disrupt another's right to learn.
- Classroom and school-wide discipline plans are designed to guide students toward personal growth, ensuring a structured, respectful, and joyful learning environment.

By upholding high expectations and supporting students in their moral and academic development, we create a school culture that honors God and one another.

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### Bullying & Harassment Awareness Policy

Rooted in the Gospel values of love and respect, St. Stephen Catholic School is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment where all students can grow in virtue and wisdom.

- Bullying and harassment of any kind are strictly prohibited and will be addressed with seriousness and compassion.

- Every member of our community—students, teachers, and parents—is encouraged to promote a culture of kindness, accountability, and respect.
- We expect that anyone witnessing an incident of bullying or harassment will take responsibility by reporting it immediately to the principal or a trusted staff member.
- Racial, ethnic, and sexual harassment are completely incompatible with a Catholic educational environment and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.
- Harassment occurring on the school bus is treated as seriously as harassment within the school building.

If a student experiences or witnesses bullying or harassment, they should report it to the principal immediately so that the situation can be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken.

By reinforcing respect, compassion, and moral courage, we ensure that every child is valued, protected, and encouraged to grow in holiness and virtue.

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## Weapons Policy

As a school dedicated to peace, safety, and virtue, St. Stephen Catholic School strictly prohibits weapons of any kind on school grounds, including the surrounding area.

- A weapon is defined as any object that can be used to threaten or harm another person. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives, chains, sharp objects, and ammunition.
- Students found in possession of a weapon will face immediate expulsion, as such behavior endangers the safety and well-being of our school community.

By maintaining a secure and peaceful learning environment, we uphold our mission to form courageous leaders and disciples of Jesus Christ who model respect for life and the dignity of every person.

## DEMERIT SYSTEM

\*\*\*\*\*Any use of an illegal drug, controlled substance, tobacco, e cigarettes, or alcohol, or use of a product for which it was not intended, (i.e. glue, inhalants, whiteout, etc.), at any time on school premises (this includes school dances, basketball games, etc.) will result in immediate suspension with the possibility of expulsion. Prior to the student returning to school, a professional assessment will need to be performed (which will be paid for by the parents). The student must follow the recommendation from the assessment, or expulsion will be the only option.

Demerits will be issued for violations of the school discipline policy.

Parents: If your child deems the consequence too harsh, please, remind him/her that it is exactly that, a consequence for breaking a rule. If rules are kept, there will be NO consequence.

## Demerit System and Disciplinary Procedures

At St. Stephen Catholic School, the discipline policy aims to promote a respectful, safe, and orderly learning environment rooted in the Catholic values of virtue, accountability, and charity. The following outlines the process for disciplinary actions based on the accumulation of demerits throughout the school year.

### Demerit Accumulation and Consequences (Per School Year)

Demerits Earned	Consequence
3 demerits	Two consecutive recess detentions in the office.
5 demerits	35-minute morning detention (7:25-8:00 a.m.) assigned by administration. <b>No exceptions.</b>
7 demerits	Second 35-minute morning detention (same terms as above).
10 demerits	One-day in-school suspension.
15 demerits	Two-day in-school suspension. Students are ineligible to participate in any school events during this period. A required parent-administrator meeting will take place to review the student's standing and give formal warning of potential expulsion.
20 demerits	Administrative review for <b>voluntary withdrawal</b> or <b>expulsion</b> .

### In-School Suspension Work Policy

- All assigned schoolwork must be completed during the suspension period and submitted to the appropriate teacher before reentry to class.
  - Credit for completed work will be determined at the discretion of each teacher.
  - Missed tests may be made up before or after school at the teacher's discretion.
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### Demerit Code of Infractions

Each infraction listed below is assigned a range or specific number of demerits based on its severity. In serious cases, additional consequences may be applied (e.g., suspension, expulsion, or restitution).



<b>Infraction</b>	<b>Demerits</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1. Possession of a weapon	Expulsion	Immediate and permanent removal.
2. Threatening harm to others (verbal or written)	Discipline at the discretion of the principal	May include suspension or expulsion.
3. Destruction of school, student, or staff property	5	Restitution required before classroom reentry.
4. Physical aggression (fighting, bullying, bodily harassment)	4	Automatic one-day in-school suspension following incident. If injury is caused, student will be sent home immediately.
5. Leaving school grounds without permission	2–4	Based on severity.
6. Use of profane, vulgar, or obscene language/gestures (verbal or written); any form of harassment	2–4	Determined by context.
7. Disrespect or disobedience toward any adult or peer	2–4	Includes verbal and written actions.
8. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, lying)	1–3	Repeated offenses may lead to suspension.
9. Throwing objects (e.g., snowballs, spitballs)	1–2	Applies on or near all school grounds including neighboring campuses.
10. Disruptive behavior (excessive talking, noise, classroom interference)	1–2	Includes behavior in assemblies, hallways, church, and lunchroom.
11. Writing/passing notes during class	1	
12. Being in unauthorized areas	1	

13. Dress code violations	1	Student must call home for correct uniform. Nail polish will be removed in-office.
14. Unauthorized gum, candy, or food	1	Unless given permission by teacher.
15. Unprepared for class / Missing assignments / Lacking materials	1 (1st offense), 2 (2nd), 3 (3rd)	Pattern may warrant further consequences.
16. Failure to return demerit slip or required note next school day	1	Responsibility is on the student.
17. Failure to follow directions from any staff member	1	
18. Public display of affection	1	
19. Use or possession of cell phones or unauthorized electronics during school hours	3	Devices will be confiscated and must be retrieved by a parent or guardian.

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#### **Note on Repeat Offenses and Administrative Discretion**

- Repeated infractions, even of low-level behaviors, may result in escalated disciplinary action.
- The principal reserves the right to assign consequences not explicitly listed above when necessary for the safety and well-being of the school community.

*The dismissal of a student or family from a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Detroit may occur when the conduct of a student or family member of a student is contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church and constitutes a threat to the physical welfare or moral integrity of the Catholic school community or compromises the school's ability to educate and form students according to its mission. In all contexts, Catholic charity must be demonstrated.*

**Note: Cell phones must remain in the locker during school time.**

#### **SCHOOL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS:**

At **St. Stephen Catholic School**, our policies and procedures are designed to **support our mission of forming disciples of Jesus Christ, fostering academic excellence, and nurturing a culture of virtue and service.**

While this handbook serves as a guide to school expectations, it is not exhaustive. **The administration is entrusted with the responsibility of addressing situations that may arise and are not explicitly covered within this document**, always ensuring that decisions align with the **school's mission, vision, and Catholic identity.**

Students are **regularly reminded of school policies and expectations** through written and verbal communication, reinforcing a shared commitment to **order, respect, and personal responsibility.**

As the leader of our school community, **the principal holds the final authority in all matters of school policy** and retains the **right to amend this handbook as needed.** Any changes will be communicated **promptly and transparently** to parents and guardians.

By upholding policies that reflect our **commitment to Truth, virtue, and service**, St. Stephen Catholic School ensures a **faith-filled and structured environment** where students can grow in **wisdom, holiness, and character.**

#### **ELASTIC CLAUSE**

St. Stephen Catholic School reserves the right to interpret, modify, or amend the policies, procedures, and guidelines contained in this handbook at any time when, in the judgment of the administration, such action is necessary to ensure the safety, order, and mission-driven operation of the school. Parents, guardians, and students will be notified of any substantive changes in a timely manner. In all circumstances, decisions will be made in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and the mission of St. Stephen Catholic School.

**ST. STEPHEN SCHOOL**  
**18800 Huron River Drive**  
**New Boston, MI 48164**

**WEBSITE:** [www.ststephennb.org](http://www.ststephennb.org)

**SCHOOL OFFICE:** 734-753-4175  
**SCHOOL FAX:** 734-753-4579  
**EMAIL:** [schooloffice@ststephennb.education](mailto:schooloffice@ststephennb.education)  
**HOURS OF OPERATION:** 7:30 to 4:00

#### **SCHOOL DAY**

7:55 a.m. ....School doors open  
8:00 a.m.....Tardy bell  
11:15 a.m. ....Preschool Dismissal Time  
3:25 p.m. ....Dismissal time