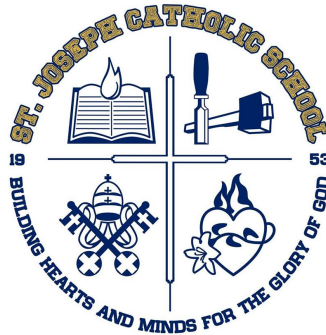


St. Joseph Catholic School



Family Handbook 2023-2024

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at St. Joseph Catholic School. This handbook serves as one means of communication between the faculty and families of St. Joseph Catholic School. Please read it carefully, discuss the contents with your children, and keep it accessible for reference throughout the school year. After reading over and discussing the handbook, please sign the agreement form and return it to school. Should you lose this paper copy, it can be found on our school website at catholic-community.org/school.

If you have a question or concern about your child's education, please contact the appropriate faculty member. If further discussion or clarification is necessary, please contact the principal. By working together, we can ensure that your child obtains the best education possible. The dedicated staff at St. Joseph strives to make our school the best it can be.

We at SJCS would like to thank you in advance for donating your time, talent, and treasures. Without the volunteers who work so tirelessly throughout the school year, we would not be able to offer our quality educational experience. As educators we know that active parental involvement is essential for your child's success.

May God bless you and your family as we journey together through another school year.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Brittney King

Principal

FACULTY & STAFF

Listed below are the St. Joseph Catholic School professional faculty and staff. Please feel free to contact them by calling the school at 812-738-4549 or by email. Email accounts are first name.lastname@catholic-community.org. Each teacher also has a webpage that can be accessed from the www.catholic-community.org website.

Preschool - Ms. Kayla Simmons

Preschool Aide - Mrs. Amanda Uhl

Pre-Kindergarten—Ms. Maggie Ordner

Pre-K Aide – Mrs. Teresa Ordner

Pre-Kindergarten - Mrs. Susan Fisher

Pre-K Aide - Anna Cooper

Kindergarten—Mrs. Jill Graham

Kindergarten Aide – TBD

1st Grade—Mrs. Francesca Simmons

2nd Grade— McKendra Bowden

3rd Grade—Mrs. Heather Rochner

4th Grade— Ms. Kristy Stemle

5th Grade—Mrs. Deanna Schmelz

6-8th Grade Language Arts - Mrs. Christina Ordner

6-8th Grade Mathematics - Mr. Wesley Messick

6-8th Grade Science & Social Studies - Mrs. Erica Hendrich

Music - Mrs. Kathleen Santoro

Title I Teacher - Mrs. Pamela Carmichael

Special Education - Mrs. Kim Rowe

P.E. - Mr. Jeff Schreck

Junior High STEM - Mr. Andy Hendrich

Principal - Mrs. Brittney King

Assistant Principal & Safety Specialist - Mr. Kevin Rice

Office Secretary - Mrs. Colleen Keller

Student & Family Advocate - Mrs. Amanda Phipps

Facilities Manager & Safety Specialist - Mr. Bob Brann

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MISSION STATEMENT

St. Joseph Catholic School, inspired by Catholic Values, prepares children for their future by promoting their academic growth, nurturing their faith in Jesus Christ, and developing their commitment to life-long service to their community.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Catholic identity is awareness and an articulation of Catholic belief and practice. It is an attitude and an atmosphere of sincere Christian love. It is striving for excellence and using one's gifts as Jesus has taught. It is reflected in the school wherein the child attains a strong self-concept, learns self-discipline, gains a sense of being part of a larger family, and develops a relationship of religious study to real life.

Since St. Joseph is a Catholic School, the faculty & staff must recognize and foster the following elements that are the characteristics of a Catholic School:

1. An educational community of students, faculty, staff and parents inspired by the Christian message and life
2. A continuing dedication to growth in human knowledge in the light of the Catholic Faith
3. Fidelity to the Christian message, the tradition and the Magisterium of the Church
4. A commitment to the service of the people of God and the human family.

5. Develop the total Christian personality by instilling in the students a respect for life and reverence for Christian living.
6. To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.
7. Aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities.

It is the consensus of St. Joseph Catholic School that every human being has a right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability, regardless of background or sex. In the early years, education is often of the utmost importance because through education and guidance the children of today become the Catholic citizens of tomorrow.

ADMISSION STATEMENT

In order to ensure an orderly and equitable admission for children to Saint Joseph Catholic School, this policy and procedures is adopted and shall be periodically revised to allow for improvement based on the changing needs of parish membership, demographic trends and/or other pertinent factors. Once recommended by the School Commission and ratified by the Pastor, revisions of this policy shall supersede any prior admission policy of the School.

A. Primary Goal – Catholic Education

The primary goal of the school is to provide a Catholic education to the children in the Parish in accordance with the mission statement of the school, archdiocesan policies, curriculum and guidelines. Therefore, all students once admitted are required to participate in religion classes and liturgies and otherwise conform to the religious expectations of the School.

B. Accommodation of Students with Special Needs

The School strives to accommodate students with physical, emotional, social, or learning challenges. However, families must fully disclose the nature and known extent of such challenges at the time of registration. The School has limited resources to meet certain challenges and may recommend educational alternatives that may better serve the needs of some students.

C. Financial Aid and Responsibility

It is a goal of the School and Parish to provide financial support to economically disadvantaged parish families to the fullest extent possible to enable all children of the parish who wish to attend the School. However, all School families must assume responsibility for paying the agreed-upon tuition charges in full and on time as prescribed by the School. Families of students who are not of Catholic Faith will be expected to assume their portion of the financial responsibility for the education provided through an increased tuition rate, since they do not participate in the investment (subsidy) received by School from the contributions of parishioners.

ADMISSION POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School welcomes any student who wishes to apply for admission regardless of race, sex or national origin. The intent of this policy is to be clear, concise and fair. Please contact the school principal with questions you may have.

Priority Ranking

1. Children of families who are registered parishioners within St. Joseph Catholic Church.
2. Children of families who are registered parishioners within the New Albany Deanery.
3. Children of administrators, teachers and staff of St. Joseph Catholic School.
4. Children of non-Catholic, non-parishioners with siblings at St. Joseph Catholic School.
5. Children of non-Catholic, non-parishioners with no siblings at St. Joseph Catholic School.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

In order to enroll in St. Joseph Catholic School Preschool program, a child must be at least 3 years of age on or before August 1, 2023. Age must be verified by a birth certificate and a copy must be on record in the school office.

In accordance with state law, all students must be immunized. Immunization guidelines can be found at <https://www.in.gov/isbvi/files/2018-2019%20SchoolVaccinations.pdf>

INCOMING STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

Students will be considered for admission after the following has been accomplished:

1. Enrollment/Admission forms are completed.
2. A conference with the principal, parents and student has been held to discuss the goals, religious mission and expectations of the School.
3. Previous educational records have been supplied to the School including, if available and applicable: current grade transcript or report card, most recent standardized testing results, Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Service Plan, Section 504 Plan or Individual Catholic Education Plan (ICEP).
4. Updated immunization records have been received.

If the Principal determines through the above procedures that the family and student have philosophies, educational goals and levels of preparation that are compatible with the religious mission and educational programs offered by the School, and that the

student is likely to be successful in the Catholic educational setting, and an opening exist, the student will be considered for admission. All transfer students are admitted on a probationary basis.

ANIMAL RESTRICTION

To maintain safety and mitigate health risk, animals are prohibited without prior office approval.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

The safety of all students is a high priority. Because of the limitations of the parking lot, there is a specific procedure for morning arrival and afternoon dismissal for all students.

Parents should enter the south gate of the back parking lot. Students should be dropped off and enter Door #3. Parents will then exit through the north gate. Student drop off will take place from 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.

- Students arriving at school between 7:30 – 8:00 a.m. will need to report to their classrooms.
- School starts at 8:00 a.m. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. are to use the main school entrance. Students will report to their classrooms and will need to be signed in by a parent/guardian. Students will be marked tardy.

ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to attend school regularly. Students who have good attendance generally have higher grades and are happier. WHEN A CHILD IS ABSENT, A PARENT MUST CALL OR EMAIL THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO REPORT THE ABSENCE. Please call before 9:00 a.m. There is an answering machine that will answer if no one is in the office.

If parents do not call the school by 9:00 a.m., the school may call parents to check on the child. When calling in an absence, the parents may request work be brought to the office or sent home with a sibling. This request should be given before noon to allow the teacher the necessary time to prepare materials.

It is the school's policy not to give assignments in advance of a student's absence because of a vacation. One day is allowed for make-up work for each day absent.

Prompt attendance at school is necessary as the teachers begin class immediately following announcements. A child is marked as "Tardy" if he/she enters school after 8:00 a.m. or leaves prior to the end of the day. Either an a.m. or p.m. tardy will be recorded in the attendance record.

Unexcused Absences - Per semester, if a student exceeds 3 unexcused absences, a written communication will be sent to parents/guardians.

After 5 or more unexcused absences, further steps will be taken which could include in-person conference, notification of the county prosecutor, and/or potential unenrollment.

Unexcused Tardies/early dismissal - Per semester, if a student exceeds 3 unexcused tardies/early dismissals, a written communication will be sent to parents/guardians.

After 5 or more unexcused tardies/early dismissals, further steps will be taken which could include in-person conference, notification of the county prosecutor, and/or potential unenrollment.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM

Before and after school care is provided for St. Joseph Catholic School students. This service is available to families for a monetary fee. We strive to keep the cost at a minimum to make it cost effective for families, while still covering the school's cost to provide the service.

Before School Care opens at 7am.

After School Care starts once dismissal is finished (Monday-Thursday at 3pm; Friday at 2pm). After Care closes at 6pm each day. After 6pm, an additional fee of \$10 is charged for each 10 minutes past 6pm.

Out of School Program Cost

- After Care only - \$55 per week, per student
- After Care per Day - \$11 per student
- Before & After Care - \$75 per week, per student
- Before Care only - \$25 per week, per student

Students are expected to follow all school rules during before and after school care. Out-of-School Staff follows the outlined disciplinary actions as stated in this handbook. St. Joseph Catholic School maintains the right to suspend after care services to students who continually violate school policy.

To allow out-of-school services to be provided, it's imperative to continually pay your account balances to stay below \$250 due. If your balance exceeds \$250, services will be terminated until your balance is paid in full.

After Care Services will not be provided on the following school days within the 23-24 school year:

Good Friday - March 29, 2024

Last Day of School - May 22, 2024

BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

SJCS believes that we are all God's children. However, we are made as sinners. From time-to-time, we all make mistakes. To this end, we shift the focus from rule violations and punishment to educating on accountability and fixing the harm one has done.

Restorative Justice emphasizes accountability and making amends with those hurt. It also seeks to repair the harm one has done. It typically involves meetings between the students, teacher, principal and possibly parents. This cooperative process brings together all willing stakeholders and supports fundamental changes in people, relationships and communities.

SJCS reserves the right to select the best course of behavioral management depending on the action or behavior.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Parents may send in a pre-packaged store bought birthday treat to share with the class on their child's birthday. We do have students with food allergies, labels that list ingredients will help the teacher determine if these children should not eat the treat. Please do not bring snacks that contain peanuts or any peanut products.

Students who have birthdays during summer break, will be recognized on their half birthdays. If your child is having a birthday party and is going to invite all classmates, we ask that you arrange this with the child's teacher. If only select classmates are being invited, please mail the invitations to the home to avoid any hurt feelings. **At the end of each month the students who celebrated birthdays that month are recognized and given a free dress pass to be out of uniform on the designated day.**

BULLYING POLICY

We must give students the tools to combat bullying, including standing up for themselves, de-escalating situations, and seeking adult support. Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. Bullying de-values isolates, frightens and affects an individual's ability to achieve. We take bullying very seriously as a school, across the whole community, and will not tolerate bullying in any form.

Bullying: An act of intentionally intimidating a weaker person to do something. The behavior is repeated over time.

Verbal Bullying: The use of words and language to cause emotional distress to another person, exclude them, or make them feel threatened by others.

Physical Bullying: The repeated unwanted violation of another person's body through hitting, touching, tripping, kicking, threats and other forms of physical harm.

Indirect Bullying: When one person, or a group of people, undermines or tries to ruin your reputation by spreading rumors or gossiping.

Cyber Bullying: Repeated bullying that occurs in an online space.

We are all responsible for upholding the school values, reporting bullying, and refraining from participating in any form of bullying. This includes our students, staff, parents, administration and bystanders.

SJCS Procedures for Bullying:

- Investigate all claims
- Bullying incidents must be reported to the Indiana Department of Education
- All claims will be directly handled by the school administrator and counselor.
- Parents will be notified and we will work toward a resolution.

CLASS SIZE

In order to provide the most productive learning environment, SJCS limits the number of students in each class. Pre-Kindergarten is limited to 10 students per teacher or aide. Classes Kindergarten through 6th grade are limited to 18 students. Exceptions may be made if classroom aides are added to support the teacher.

COMMUNICATION

Statistics show that miscommunication is at the root of many problems and misunderstandings. We have several methods of communicating information.

Flock Note – Communication from the school office will be sent via email or text from our Flock Note Account. At times we may also send a message using Jupiter Ed (parent portal for grades & communication).

Teacher Communication – Teachers & parents are always encouraged to communicate via email or by sending communication through the PowerSchool Portal.

Pre-School – 2nd Grade: The lower grades use SeeSaw. This app allows teachers and parents to communicate with ease. Teachers will also post about your child's day. Students work within their own SeeSaw platform weekly. Please watch for instructions from the classroom teacher on how to join.

PowerSchool – This program is used to communicate student grades. It is the parent's responsibility to check grades frequently and connect with the classroom teacher should you have questions. Teachers also have a responsibility to communicate with parents should they have concern. It is essential to work together as a family. The office will send login information at the start of school.

EzSchool App – This program is used to order and pay for school breakfast & lunch. The office will send login information at the start of school.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. with prayer, announcements, and the pledges. It is important that students arrive at school on time. Any student who arrives at school after 8:00 a.m. is considered tardy.

The afternoon prayer and announcements occur at 2:40 Dismissal begins at 2:50 (Mon-Thurs. and 1:55 on Friday). Parents will need to come in and sign them out after 3:00. We ask that parents avoid calling to pick children up early. This disrupts the classroom as students are preparing for the end of the day.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Dismissal will take place in the back-parking lot by entering the south gate and parking in an orderly fashion. A SJCS faculty member will be directing parents as they enter parking slots. Once parked, we ask that all parents/guardians remain in their vehicles or at minimum next to it. A SJCS faculty member will escort your student to your vehicle. Once you have your student(s) secured, you will be given permission to exit the parking lot safely through the north gate.

Monday – Thursday Schedule

- Bus Riders will be dismissed at 2:40 p.m.
- Carpool Dismissal takes place from 2:50 – 3:05 p.m.

Friday Schedule

- Bus Riders will be dismissed at 1:45 p.m.
- Carpool Dismissal takes place from 1:55 – 2:10 p.m.

EARLY PICKUP

For a student to be counted as present, they must complete their lunch period.

For early dismissals students need to be picked up no later than 2:15 pm Monday-Thursday, and 1pm on Friday. After 2:15pm, students will need to remain in their classrooms until dismissal starts at 2:40pm.

DRESS CODE

***Please reference the Uniform Policy document located on the school website

[DRESS CODE \(ecatholic.com\)](http://ecatholic.com)

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers will be allowed to choose field trips that fit into the curriculum. Students may be charged a fee for entry and transportation. Parents for whom a field trip is financially difficult should contact the principal.

A permission slip with pertinent information will be sent home prior to the field trip. Students must return the signed permission slip in order to participate in the field trip. **Verbal permission will not be accepted; however, a faxed/emailed permission slip could be permitted.**

Students may be denied participation in field trips for not returning the field trip permission slip; for serious, unwarranted behavior; for academic failure due to poor effort; or because of a parental decision not to participate. The decision to deny student participation will be made by the principal and/or parent. The student will be required to stay at school to complete assigned work. Please keep in mind that this includes such trips as CYO Camp and 8th grade trips.

Should parents want to chaperone on a field trip, the Safe Parish Training must be completed and on file in the school office.

FIRST AID

If an accident occurs, or if a child needs to be sent home because of an illness, parents or emergency contact will be notified. Parents are asked to alert the school, in writing, of any physical or emotional handicap or medical condition a student may have. School personnel will administer first aid, clean wounds, or apply direct pressure to stop bleeding. Staff members may also take a student's temperature or apply an ice pack as warranted.

FUNDRAISING

Tuition for this school year is based on the projected success of fund-raising events. These events include the summer picnic, Benefit Dinner and Silent Auction, Golf Scramble, and Reverse Raffle. As SJCS is committed to the spiritual and educational success of your child, a commitment from all parents is necessary for the operational success of the school. At registration, all parents are encouraged to commit to work at a number of these events to make them successful and to keep tuition costs low. Your commitment of time, talent, and treasure will ensure the success of St. Joseph Catholic School.

HEALTH

If your child is under a doctor's care for any reason, please inform the school office. This includes skin rashes and skin discolorations, irritated eyes, earaches, etc. Often, students are brought to the office with concerns only to find out that parents are aware of this and students are being treated. We really appreciate this information to best meet your child's needs.

Immunizations recommended by Indiana State Law will be required and checked before enrollment is finalized.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of the learning process that has taken place in school. Failure to complete assignments can negatively affect a student's grade. Each teacher has classroom consequences when students do not have homework completed. We realize there are sometimes situations that make it difficult for a child to complete homework, if this occurs, please communicate with your child's teacher. A typical day's homework should not normally exceed:

Grades K, 1 and 2	15-20 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	20-30 minutes
Grades 5 and 6	30-40 minutes
Grades 7 and 8	40-60 minutes

HONORS

In order to recognize all students for their accomplishments and abilities, we host an Awards Program at the end of the school year.

LITURGY

On Fridays and/or on Holy Days throughout the year, the children will attend the 8:00 a.m. Mass. SJCS has created a "Liturgy Club" in which students volunteer for the different parts of the Mass. If your student would like to participate, ask their teacher for more information. Parents, family, and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend Mass.

Parts of liturgical ministry include: altar serving, lector, sacristan and greeting at the doors. Students who wish to participate should apply within the first month of school and attend assigned practices to prepare for the ministry.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Hot lunches are provided in the cafeteria each day. Parents must order lunch for their child/children from the EZSchool App website, <https://www.ezschoollapps.com/>. The lunch should be ordered before the start of the school day. If you need assistance with ordering the lunches, please contact Mrs. Phipps, in the school office.

We will be using EZ lunch, as our school lunch program. Each parent will be provided log-in information. You will need to go online and order lunches for your child/children. As you order your balance will be displayed. It is vital to keep your lunch balance below \$50.00 owed to SJCS. Going over this amount is a violation of the Food and Nutrition Program. SJCS can be cited for overages. There are a couple of options for paying for the lunch accounts in this system.

1. You can pre-paid by adding money to the account. As you order lunches, the balance is deducted from the account. When your balance is near zero, you will be sent an email reminding you it is time to add more funds.
2. You can choose to pay as you go. This allows you to pay weekly or monthly for the lunches that were purchased. The balance will be displayed on your account site. You can charge the balance to your credit or debit card, or you can send a check to school and the office staff will credit the account. If you choose this option, we do ask that you pay on a weekly or monthly basis.

There is a “convenience fee” on all credit and debit card charges.

Families eligible for the free lunch program will have an opportunity to apply before school begins. We encourage all eligible families to take advantage of this program. The school is eligible to receive federal funds based upon the number of students on the free lists. In all cases, the consideration is based on numbers not names. All applications are reviewed by the principal and are kept confidential.

Parents may not bring a fast food lunch to a child. Students may not bring carbonated drinks, tea, or kool-aid for lunch. This is a violation of the Food and Nutrition Program.

Lunch costs \$3.15 per day and breakfast costs \$2.10 per day (milk is included in the price of the regular lunch and breakfast). **Milk sells for \$.40 per carton. Milk may be purchased for a morning snack as well as at lunch with parent consent. Please order milk on the school lunch website.**

MEDICATION POLICY

Indiana laws require that school personnel observe certain safeguards in overseeing the administration of prescription or over the counter medications to students. **The school staff is prohibited from dispensing medication unless a prescription signed and dated by the physician and a medication form signed by a parent is on file.**

Medication should remain in the original bottle that it was purchased in. Students taking prescribed medications must come to the school office to take their medication. Also, medications may not be transported to and from school via the student's backpack. Parents must deliver the medication to the office or a staff member and likewise, staff members must hand the medication directly to the parents. Any students with a life-threatening condition may carry medication such as an inhaler, EpiPen, glucose tablets, etc. provided a doctor's statement is on file in the school office.

Nonprescription medications, such as pain relievers, cough drops, etc. will not be provided by the school office. However, parents may provide them for their child, and we can dispense them with a signed parent approval form on file.

Students with severe allergies requiring the use of an EpiPen must have one in the office. If there are special dietary needs, parents must fill out a form including this information and it be on file in the office.

St. Joseph School will maintain a medication log for your child and keep it in permanent records. All medication will always be contained in a locked cabinet.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Parents are encouraged to become active members of the PTO. The PTO acts as a source of information and programs pertinent to the members. It also acts as a fund-raising source for materials needed by the school. The PTO works with parents to provide chaperones for students on field trips, as well as assistants in the classrooms. The PTO sponsors several events for the students throughout the year including paying for transportation and part of the field trip expenses. The more time and effort put into this organization; the more students benefit!

RECESS

Students will spend time outside when the weather allows. Please dress your child accordingly. Except for extremely cold temperatures and heavy rain or snow, the students go outside most of the year. **Hats, gloves, scarves, etc. should be clearly marked with the child's name.** Even though students are expected to go outside for recess time, if a child submits a doctor's note for an instance to the Principal, a student will be permitted to read a book in the office during recess.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

If a SJCS student transfers to another school, the school record may not be released to the parents. The new school must request the records from SJCS after the parent has granted written permission for records to be released. Records cannot be released until all financial obligations have been met.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

St. Joseph Catholic School is part of the ministry of St. Joseph Parish. Religion is taught at each grade level, and spirituality is part of everyday life. Students receive instruction in scripture, Catholic traditions and history, as well as sacramental preparation. Students plan and participate in weekly liturgies.

The tradition at St. Joseph Catholic School is to place a high priority on stewardship or sharing time, talent, and treasures with others. Stewardship is modeled by spending time serving the community, sharing talents, and using stewardship envelopes at the weekly Masses. Prayer is an important part of the day. Prayers are said in the morning, before lunch, and at dismissal. These prayers may be formal, spontaneous, silent reflection, or shared prayer by the students.

REPORT CARDS

At the end of each quarter, report cards will be distributed. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held after the first and third quarter. The report cards indicate student progress on the standards described for each subject and grade level. Parents will also receive progress reports from I-Ready math and reading.

Report cards may be withheld at any time of the school year due to non-payment of tuition, lunch fees or before and/or after school care.

SJCS's grading scale is as follows:

A = 91%+

B = 81% - 90%

C = 71% - 80%

D = 61% - 70%

F = 60% and below

RETENTION AND PROMOTION

A student is promoted to the next grade if he/she has attained a suitable measure of success at his/her present level and has successfully met the requirements of the state testing in the appropriate years.

A student may be assigned to the next grade level when he/ she has worked to the best of his/her ability but has not merited promotion. A student could be placed in the next grade level when his/her work does not meet expectations, but retention is not deemed a beneficial option.

Retention is a very serious step. If a teacher perceives an advantage to the child by retention, a conference involving the principal, teacher, and parents will be held and a mutually agreed upon course of action will be taken. Factors such as maturity, developmental skills, and academic performance all play a role in the decision. The best interests of the child will always be a prime concern.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist will be celebrated in the second grade. 3rd through 8th grade students will have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is available at the age of 13. Students who have been baptized and made their first communion may participate in the preparation program within the school year.

SCHOOL CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School **generally** follows the South Harrison School Corporation regarding school closings, delays, or late openings due to inclement weather; however, we will make our own determination. Parents will receive emails or text messages

through Flock Note indicating schedule changes as early as possible. We will also post changes on Louisville TV stations.

When the area is under a severe thunderstorm or tornado warning, and severe weather seems imminent at the time of dismissal, the students will be kept in school until the immediate danger has ended. Parents will be alerted by email or text message through Flock Note in the event this schedule change is needed.

In the unlikely event that we should have to dismiss school before the regular time, we would inform the families via email, text message or phone call. Each child should know where he/she is to go if students are sent home early because of inclement weather.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

A part of our Catholic education at St. Joseph Catholic School is the development of self-discipline in each student. This applies to study habits and schoolwork as well as to behavior. Disruptions from unruly students interrupt the learning process. Students must exhibit good behavior and respect for the teacher and the other students in the room. Each classroom will display the rules of expected behavior and consequences of violations of these rules. Teachers may also distribute copies to parents and students. The rules will be explained and discussed at the beginning of the school year.

Expectations are as follows:

- A. Students are expected to be quiet upon entering the building in the morning, following lunch/recess, returning from Mass, etc. There should be quiet in the hallways since other classes are in session.
- B. Students are to walk reverently in line to church so they will be ready to enter church in an attitude of prayer.
- C. School property (books, furniture, and other equipment) used by students must be maintained in good condition. Repair or replacement of such property damaged or lost by the student is the student's responsibility.
- D. Aggressive behavior such as fighting and inappropriate behavior are not permitted. "Play fighting" does not exist.
- E. Disrespect for teachers, other adults, or other students will not be permitted. The school reserves the right to suspend and dismiss students who disrupt the learning process on a constant basis.
- F. Homework and assignments are to be completed in a timely manner.
- G. For disciplinary reasons, students may be placed on in-school suspension or out-of-school suspensions. In the case of in-school suspension, the student will be put in another classroom and given independent assignments to complete. Classroom instructional time will be missed; however, assignments will be graded.

H. In the case of out-of-school suspensions, the student will not be permitted entrance into the school for a designated period. The student receives no credit for work and may not make up assignments or tests missed during the time of suspension. This action will be taken in the event of a serious violation.

I. Any student found in possession of illegal or prohibited substances or items that could be used as weapons are subject to suspension and possible withdrawal. Parents will be notified immediately, and proper action will be taken.

PDA POLICY

SJCS recognizes that genuine feelings of affection may exist between two students. However, students shall refrain from all Public Displays of Affection (PDA) while on campus or while attending and/or participating in a school-related activity. The expression of feelings toward one another is a personal concern between the two individuals and thus should not be shared with others in the general vicinity. PDA includes any physical contact that may make others in close proximity uncomfortable or serves as a distraction for themselves as well as innocent onlookers. Some specific examples of PDA include but is not limited to:

- holding hands
- kissing
- hugging
- other displays similar to the above with the intention of being affectionate

Failure to abide by this policy after teacher intervention will result in parental contact and possible more severe actions taken.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures will be taken in the fall and in the spring. Parents are under no obligation to purchase the pictures. The pictures taken during this time will be used in the school yearbook. A retake session will be scheduled for the fall photo sessions in case students are absent.

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

St. Joseph Catholic School believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of academic achievement. As an Indiana accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school has a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have behavior crises are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint.

Behavioral interventions for children must ensure all children are treated with dignity and respect. This environment should allow all children to be free from physical or mental abuse, aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety, and

any physical seclusion or restraint imposed solely for purposes of discipline or convenience.

Seclusion or restraint shall not be used as routine school safety measures; that is, they shall not be implemented except in situations where a child's behavior or action poses imminent danger of physical harm to self or others and not as a routine strategy implemented to address instructional problems or inappropriate behavior (e.g., disrespect, noncompliance, insubordination, out of seat), as a means of coercion or retaliation, or as a convenience. Any use of either seclusion or restraint shall be supervised, short in duration and used only for the purposes of de-escalating the behavior.

Parents can access a full copy of our school's plan by request in the school office.

SNACKS

All students are given time each morning to have a nutritious snack. No chips of any kind are permitted. If you are unsure that a snack would be acceptable, please ask the office. Milk is available to be purchased from the cafeteria for \$0.40 per carton. Morning milk should be ordered on the EZ Lunch website.

PLEASE REMEMBER: This is a snack. We want students to eat a good lunch so please be mindful that this is only a snack. One item should suffice for most students.

Saint Joseph encourages proper hydration of its students and therefore strongly encourages students to bring their own water bottles for use throughout the day. Inside the classroom, students may only have water. Soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks, coffee, etc. are prohibited from drinking during school hours.

Suggested snacks include:

apple	banana	fruit cup	celery sticks
raisins	crackers	trail mix	nuts
granola bar	carrot sticks	cheese crackers	grapes

SPORTS

St. Joseph Catholic School participates in the athletic program as part of the New Albany Deanery Sport Program. When there is enough interest from students in grades 3rd through 6th grades, we participate in the deanery basketball and cheer programs. More information will be forthcoming.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 will take the ILEARN tests as required by the Indiana State Department of Education. ILEARN testing occurs in the spring, as mandated by the State. Parents will receive a report of their child's performance on the tests. 3rd grade students also take the IRead assessment in the spring.

STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN - ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis believe:

- in fostering positive relationships that exemplify the love of God;
- that Catholic school communities are enriched by the unique image and likeness of God that is present in each individual;
- that formation best occurs within faith-filled cultures of learning that are inclusive;
- that parents are the primary educators of each young person and that it is the responsibility of Catholic schools to support the domestic church;
- that Catholic schools are part of the evangelizing mission of the Church, forming disciples through the intentional integration of faith, culture, and life; and
- that “excellence” is defined by and achieved through the growth and holistic development – spiritual, intellectual/academic, social, emotional, and physical – of the individual within the context of community.

The best way in which Catholic schools can practice these beliefs is by operating Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities in their preferred form – in person – whenever possible. Therefore, as early as July 1, 2021, Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities will resume with new health and safety precautions in place, unless there is a resurgence of the pandemic and/or canonical and/or civil authorities require(s) closure.

The Catholic school will take every precaution possible to protect students and adults. Heightened protocols related to cleaning and sanitization are in place. Expectations of proper handwashing, physical distancing to the extent possible, and minimal sharing of resources to the extent possible will be enforced. Guidance from IDOE, CDC, and local authorities will be employed as best fits our Catholic school community as determined by administration. A more comprehensive plan is (attached/included).

1. I understand that the School will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment, including specific measures to guard against the spread of a contagion such as Covid-19. I accept that no matter the precautions taken by the School there is no way to fully assure that such measures will be successful in preventing injury, exposure to a contagion, or illness. I understand that by allowing my child to participate

in Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities, there is some assumed risk on behalf of students and their parents.

2. I will provide my students the necessary equipment, resources, and support needed for participation. These needed materials will be communicated by the teacher(s), coach(es), and/or moderator(s). I will also reinforce to my student the need to maintain all expected protocols related to his/her health and that of others.

3. I understand that parish and school leaders, united in the mission of the Catholic Church, work collaboratively to make sure shared spaces are as safe and secure as possible for participants in all ministries.

SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, EXCLUSION, and FAIR PROCESS

SJCS follows the Archdiocesan Policy 2008-01 regarding student suspension, expulsion, exclusion, and fair process.

The grounds for suspension or expulsion in the policy apply:

- 1.1 on school grounds immediately before or during school hours, or immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used.
- 1.2 off school grounds at a school-related activity, function or event; or
- 1.3 traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.
- 1.4 The grounds for suspension or expulsion in this policy may also apply: if a student is engaged in unlawful activity on or off school grounds at any time while school is in or out of session; if a student is engaged in disruptive, harmful or threatening behaviors that may impact the school, its staff, or its students (i.e. harassment, threats, internet activities targeting students or staff, public immorality, etc.)

TECHNOLOGY USE

Computers and IPads are intended to facilitate learning as an extension of the classroom. Students are required to abide by the following technology guidelines. Failure to follow the technology guidelines may result in the loss of computer privileges.

Technology Guidelines

- 1) Students may only view authorized websites.
- 2) Students may use the computer for schoolwork, not personal use.
- 3) Students may not use the computer for threatening or abusive purposes.
- 4) Students must display respect for all hardware and software.

- 5) Students are prohibited from using the computer for any other activity that is deemed unacceptable in a Catholic school setting.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET:

The purpose of using the Internet in the school is to support education by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of the internet is a privilege not a right. Misuse of the Internet will result in the student not being allowed to use the computer at school. Students will be instructed on appropriate use of materials, copyright and plagiarism. It is important that students appreciate and understand which web information is reliable and which should not be used for academic support. Students will also be instructed on safe use of the Internet and how to recognize potential danger.

Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronics such as iPads, iPods, Phones, tablets, Kindles, etc... are not to be used during the school day. St. Joseph School would prefer that students not bring these devices to school; however, we recognize that in some situations, students may have reason to do so. When these devices are brought to school, students must leave them in backpacks, and they must be silenced. If a student is found with a device during school hours (including recess and lunch) will have the device taken away from them. The device will be taken to the office and must remain there until dismissal time. If the student has a device taken from them more than three times, the device will not be returned to the student. A parent will have to come to the office to retrieve the device.

Parents are asked to please contact the office if they need to get a message to their child. Please do not text or leave voice messages for your child. Students should not text parents, encourage your child to come to the office if they need to contact you.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Responsibility is one of the important values that we teach our students. One way that students learn responsibility is to prepare for the upcoming school day. Please encourage your children to be active participants in getting ready for school. Students will not be permitted to call parents during the school day for forgotten lunches, books, folders or issues regarding going home with friends or taking friends home with them. These arrangements are to be made and the necessary notes written before they come to school.

TUITION AND FEES

St. Joseph Catholic School is operated through the funding raised by tuition and fees, fundraising activities, and a subsidy from the Tri-Parishes. For the benefit of all, it is imperative that parents maintain a current balance on their financial obligations to St.

Joseph Catholic School. In addition, parish members are expected to give time, talents, and treasure, which include volunteer service time and contributions to the Church. Tuition rates have been established to provide a fair contribution from all, parishioners and non-parishioners alike. Every effort is made to see that students receive the highest quality instruction, materials, and school facilities. We appreciate the total cooperation on the part of parents to meet financial obligations.

Payments will be accepted in the following manner:

1. Registration fee, book & technology fee, and at least the first month's tuition is due on or before registration.
2. A choice of two payment plans are available:
 - A. One full payment in August at registration.
 - B. Ten monthly installments from August through May. Payments must be received by the 10th of each month.

Refunds

In the event of a withdrawal from school for any reason and all tuition monies having been paid, a refund of tuition will be made for 50% of the months of withdrawal.

However, if tuition had been paid in monthly installments, no refund will be given.

Technology Fee: This \$150 fee is added into the tuition **This fee is non-refundable.**

Registration Fee: The registration fee is \$180 per child. **This fee is non-refundable.**

Delinquent Accounts:

The following policy is used for delinquent accounts:

- * Policy is distributed to all parents/guardians
- * A reminder letter is sent to parents when accounts become 10 days overdue.
- * A letter is sent when accounts become 30 days overdue to arrange a meeting with the Tuition Committee to formulate a financial plan.
- * If the overdue account is not resolved or an alternate plan set up, the students(s) will not be eligible to continue at St. Joseph Catholic School. **Report cards and records will be withheld until final payment is made.**
- * Unpaid portions of tuition and/or fees may be turned over to small claims court if prior measures do not resolve the delinquent account.

PreSchool & Pre-Kindergarten Tuition

There are no “make up” days for Pre-Kindergarten. If a student misses due to illness, vacation, or snow days, no additional time will be given free of charge nor will days be made up.

SJCS will allow families the following:

1. Families are not limited to a
2. MWF only program. Families are not confined to the same plan for the year.
3. Tuition is based on 180 student days. Tuition will be charged monthly for 10 months. This eliminates the need to adjust for holidays and breaks. Tuition is due by the 10th of the month.
4. SJCS allows the morning students to attend class full day on days where a 2-hour delay is called.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

St. Joseph Catholic School and the Tri-Parishes are committed to providing the highest quality education at a reasonable price. In addition, the Parish has made a commitment that families are not denied Catholic education because of financial hardship. Families who need financial assistance to cover the cost of tuition and/or books and fees are strongly encouraged to apply for aid. In order to qualify for tuition assistance, a family must complete the Federal Free and Reduced Meals application and be accepted into that program. Please contact the school office at 812-738-4549 for more information.

Some families are not eligible to receive financial support through the Indiana Choice Scholarships or the Scholarship Granting Organization – The Institute for Quality Education. If you are not sure if you qualify for these programs, there is a link to each from the school website www.catholic-community.org. The principal can also provide information and answer your questions about these awards.

The federal government also provides assistance to families in need for school lunches and textbooks. All families receive the application in the enrollment packet on registration day. Applications are also available at the school office if a need arises throughout the school year.

VOLUNTEERS

One of the greatest resources of St. Joseph Catholic School is the number of generous volunteers who share their time and talents to help the faculty and staff provide a quality Catholic education. Volunteers provide much help needed in many areas: classrooms, playground, field trips, fund raising, library, lunchroom help, as well as many other activities. It is always our responsibility to keep children safe. To this end the Archdiocese does require background checks and Safe and Sacred training for all volunteers. Without satisfying Safe & Sacred Training, parents and volunteers cannot participate within school activities.

VOUCHERS

The State of Indiana School Choice/Voucher program has expanded to offer support to more students. There are now five pathways to eligibility. 1) Students who transfer from public schools. 2) Students who are assigned to a failing school 3) Students with special needs 4) students who have previously earned an SGO Scholarship 5) siblings of students who previously received a voucher or an SGO. If students meet one of these criteria and the family income is below the eligible amount, the voucher can be awarded. This program provides the child a “voucher” to pay all or part of the tuition, books and fees for an academic year. These funds must be applied for each year. Parents are strongly encouraged to investigate and determine if their child qualifies for this program. Please see the link on our website www.catholic-community.org

WELLNESS POLICY

St. Joseph School asks that you act on the side of caution when your child is not feeling well. The attendance policy has been crafted to allow for flexibility to keep your child home if they are not feeling their best. Perfect attendance will not be awarded or recognized at the end of the school year. It is imperative that you keep the safety of everyone in mind. This policy outlines illnesses and situations that require removal from the school and those that do not. The policy is always in effect.

Absence from School is required when the child has any of the following conditions, unless a health professional determines the child's condition does not require:

- **Fever** of 99.5 degrees or higher.
- **When medication such as a pain/fever reducer is necessary to treat the child's fever or symptoms of illness.**
- **Diarrhea**- Students may return once the reason for change in bowel has been resolved and if the change is not due to Salmonella, Shigellosis or E. Coli infections.
- **Vomiting**: Please keep your child at home if they have vomited in the past 24 hours.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**: A child should stay at home for bacterial conjunctivitis (red eyes, green or yellow discharge). They may return after treatment has started and are able to participate in activities.
- **Head Lice** – A child with live lice needs to stay home until appropriate treatment has been given. An additional treatment may be needed 7-10 days later to kill the eggs that survived through the first treatment. The presence of nits (egg cases) is not grounds for absence. Using a nit comb after treatment is the most effective way to remove lice and the sticky nits. If live lice are found, this information will be shared through a communication to parents of the grade level exposed. HIPPA Laws will be followed by not giving specific student information or names.
- **Rash** – A rash with fever and/or behavior change
- **Strep Throat** – A child must stay home until 24 hours after treatment has started and the child is able to participate in school activities.

- **Chicken Pox** – Exclude the child until all the lesions have dried and formed scabs, usually within six days of onset of rash.
- Any child determined by the local health department or to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.

The office has the right to send a student home at our discretion. Your immediate attention to pick up is required. We will allow 1 hour for you to pick up your child.

If your child is sent home from school early due to illness, sickness or fever, they are required to remain at home that day and the following day. Please keep in mind that your child needs to be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Right to Amend

St. Joseph Catholic School retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Please sign and return this form to the school office no later than August 3, 2023.

We have read and agreed to be governed by the St. Joseph Catholic School Family Handbook for the 2023-2024 school year. We understand fully the requirements contained therein and recognize the right of the school to establish rules and to provide for their enforcement. St. Joseph Catholic School retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause; parents will be given prompt notifications if changes are made.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature(s)

Date

Student Signature(s):

Release Form

On behalf of my child _____, I release to St. Joseph Catholic School the unlimited right to reproduce, copy, public or otherwise use in any reasonable way for any informational or educational purpose the following:

Check all that apply:

___ Photograph

___ Quote

___ Videotape

___ Voice

Technology Agreement

My child _____ is aware of the acceptable use of technology portion of the Family Handbook.

Parent Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

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- that formation best occurs within faith-filled cultures of learning that are inclusive;
- that parents are the primary educators of each young person and that it is the responsibility of Catholic schools to support the domestic church;
- that Catholic schools are part of the evangelizing mission of the Church, forming disciples through the intentional integration of faith, culture, and life; and
- that excellence” is defined by and achieved through the growth and holistic development – spiritual, intellectual/academic, social, emotional, and physical – of the individual within the context of community.

The best way in which Catholic schools can practice these beliefs is by operating Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities in their preferred form – in person – whenever possible. Therefore, as early as July 1, 202, Catholic school ministry

and its extra-curricular activities will resume with new health and safety precautions in place, unless there is a resurgence of the pandemic and/or canonical and/or civil authorities require(s) closure.

The Catholic school will take every precaution possible to protect students and adults. Heightened protocols related to cleaning and sanitization are in place. Expectations of proper handwashing, physical distancing to the extent possible, and minimal sharing of resources to the extent possible will be enforced. Guidance from IDOE, CDC, and local authorities will be employed as best fits our Catholic school community as determined by administration. A more comprehensive plan is (attached/included).

For a student to be enrolled and to participate in Catholic school ministry and any of its extra-curricular activities, each parent/guardian with custodial rights must acknowledge and agree to the following criteria for participation:

1. My child is in good physical and mental health and does not have any physical or mental conditions, which could affect my child's ability to participate in Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities. I have medical insurance coverage appropriate for my child's participation and have provided evidence of such insurance coverage and emergency contact information to the School.
2. I understand that the School will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment, including specific measures to guard against the spread of a contagion such as Covid-19. I accept that no matter the precautions taken by the School there is no way to fully assure that such measures will be successful in preventing injury, exposure to a contagion, or illness. I understand that by allowing my child to participate in Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities, there is some assumed risk on behalf of students and their parents.
3. I will provide my student(s) the necessary equipment, resources, and support needed for participation. These needed materials will be communicated by the teacher(s), coach(es), and/or moderator(s). I will also reinforce to my student the need to maintain all expected protocols related to his/her health and that of others.
4. I understand that parish and school leaders, united in the mission of the Catholic Church, work collaboratively to make sure shared spaces are as safe and secure as possible for participants in all ministries.

St. Joseph Catholic School
Mission Policy

**Each parent/guardian of _____
hereby acknowledges that he/she has read, understands, and agrees to the
criteria for participation in Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular
activities as stated in this Student Health and Safety Plan.**

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Signature _____

Date of Signatures _____

Please return this signed form to the school office no later than August 3, 2023