



St. Mary Catholic School

Enter To Learn, Exit To Serve

2023-2024

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK



**2600 Bob Hall Road
Orange, Texas 77630
409-883-8913**

www.stmaryschooltx.org
<https://www.facebook.com/people/St-Mary-Catholic-School/100049464081108/>

Sister Mary Benedicta Maier, RSM, MS, MEd, Principal



HONOR SYSTEM

The St. Mary Catholic School honor system is based upon the premise that a person's honor should be among one's most cherished attributes. Part of the mission of the school is to help develop individuals of character who know what is right and who possess the moral courage to act on that knowledge. Our aim is to impart in our students the principles of truthfulness, fairness, respect for others, and a personal commitment to maintain these values, which are vital in strengthening our relationship with God.

HONOR CODE

God

Honor

Character

Truth

Fairness

Respect

First, Foremost, and Forever

ALMA MATER

Hail to Thee, our dear St. Mary
Faithful, Strong and True
We will ever love and serve thee
Wave the white and blue

Serving God and serving others
Leaders we will be
We will ever stand united
On to victory!

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PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary Catholic School emphasizes the education of the whole student by concentrating on academic excellence as well as the Christian values of faith, hope and love. This commitment extends to building Christian community and fostering Christian service to all humankind.

MISSION

St. Mary Catholic School ensures learning for all students within the framework of Catholic Christian values by maintaining accreditation through the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department. The students, PreK 3 through 5th grade, are challenged to grow in a manner consistent with their needs, interest and abilities, preparing them to live in an ever-changing world as self-directed, caring, responsible citizens.

VISION

St. Mary Catholic School will effectively compete with area schools by maintaining excellent instruction and technology and by emphasizing its outstanding curriculum and Catholic values manifested by faculty and students.

ACCREDITATION

St. Mary Catholic School is recognized by the Texas Education Agency through accreditation from the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and Accreditation Commission (TCCAC). The school is part of the Catholic School System of the Diocese of Beaumont. It is a member of the National Catholic Education Association and the Diocese of Beaumont Sports League (DBSL) Rules.

We Believe...

- That it is our responsibility to challenge our students to develop their potential in the trust-filled atmosphere of a Christian community.
- That parents, as primary educators, have the right to help direct the education of their children and the responsibility to take an active part in the school community.
- That every facet of life - spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional - should be addressed in the educational process.
- That the development of critical thinking skills, knowledge and reasoning are more important than the mere accumulation of facts or data.
- That every child is uniquely valuable and deserves our best efforts in learning the ultimate value of life.
- That students and teachers deserve a setting conducive to education - calm and enriching classroom that encourages creativity and fosters learning.

DUTIES OF THE PARENTS AND STUDENTS

FAMILY

We, at St. Mary Catholic School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is parents' right and duty to become the primary role models for the development of their child's life - physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, moral and psychological. Their choice of St. Mary Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping their child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life. In order to receive the most benefit of the educational opportunities we offer, the following are the duty of the parents or guardians.

- Provide a Christian home and establish the religious and moral training of their children.
- Ensure regular attendance without being tardy.
- Instill politeness and respect for school employees.
- Ensure that their child has the necessary school materials.
- Uphold the policies and procedures of the school.
- Make certain the uniform code is followed.
- Instill the priority that must be placed on home study.
- Participate in St. Mary Home (Spring Festival) and School Organization activities.
- Regularly confer with the teachers on their child's progress.
- Activate their Parent Portal account and access it regularly in order to remain informed about the progress of their St. Mary student.

STUDENT

A good, Christian education is the most valuable experience a student can have as it will set their course for a lifetime of achievement. In order to receive the most benefit from this educational experience, the following are expectations of the student.

- Always attend each class on time, with the necessary materials.
- Come to school well groomed and properly dressed.
- Do all home assignments and develop good study habits.
- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Promptly relay messages to parents.
- Exercise disciplined behavior both in and out of classes.
- Cooperate with all school authorities and obey school regulations.
- Participate in school functions.

EXIT LEARNER GOALS

These statements explain the goals of St. Mary and portray what the faculty is seeking to accomplish with each graduating student.

I. MENTALLY

- A. Exhibit a capacity for critical thinking and reflective problem solving
- B. Exhibit creativity and imagination in a variety of disciplines
- C. Exhibit the ability to think critically, act creatively and carefully solve problems
- D. Exhibit effective written and oral communication skills necessary
- E. Exhibit an ability to use technology creatively, practically, and responsibly
- F. Exhibit evidence of original composition and academic integrity

II. SPIRITUALLY

- A. Exhibit a knowledge of the Catholic Church's teachings and Sacraments
- B. Exhibit a well-formed conscience pursuant to the teachings of the Church
- C. Exhibit understanding of one's own faith and beliefs
- D. Exhibit the skills necessary for the continuing journey toward self-understanding
- E. Exhibit empathy for those from differing races, religions and socio-economic backgrounds

III. WORLD COMMUNITY

- A. Exhibit a love for the environment, and aspire to protect it
- B. Exhibit an understanding of how faith demands that we care for the less fortunate of our world
- C. Exhibit daily understanding of conflict resolution
- D. Exhibit an understanding of manners and a sense of courtesy

IV. LOCAL COMMUNITY

- A. Exhibit leadership skills in various community or school settings
- B. Exhibit the understanding of the value of good citizenship and community service
- C. Exhibit a commitment to service particularly concerning the less fortunate

V. SELF

- A. Exhibit discipline, perseverance, and courage within the realm of sports or extra-curricular activities
- B. Exhibit the ability to be a member of a team, sport, club or other group project
- C. Exhibit a commitment to a healthy lifestyle in an effort to prevent illness and as a means of experiencing a full life

ADMISSION POLICIES

POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION

St. Mary Catholic School admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities of the school and provides equal opportunity and access to persons without regard to race in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, and any other school-administered program. St. Mary Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender or national and ethnic origin in the educational programs or activities they operate.

PREFERENCE FOR CATHOLIC STUDENTS

As a Catholic school within the Diocese of Beaumont, St. Mary Catholic School gives preference in admission to Catholic students living within the feeder parishes' boundaries; secondly, to Catholic students living outside the feeder parishes' boundaries; thirdly, to non-Catholics. All students enrolled in the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Beaumont, Catholic and non-Catholic, are enrolled in the Religious Education program and attend all liturgical services.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Registration fees for returning students must be paid by April 30th. Fees for new students are due at the time of registration. Fees are non-refundable. Registration for the next school year will not be completed until tuition, fees and other financial obligations for the current year are paid. New parents must complete a new enrollment packet and returning parents must complete a re-enrollment packet each school year. This is necessary to obtain updated information such as medical conditions, allergies, address, phone numbers, email address etc. Students will be enrolled in school when the administrative office has received a completed enrollment packet and past/present tuition fees are paid.

Tuition

Tuition may be paid in ten monthly intervals unless paid in full at the time of enrollment. All payments begin on July 15 and continue through April 15 of each school year. **Fees- All fees are non-refundable and are due at the time of enrollment.**

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Parents/guardians are expected to be prompt in attending to all financial matters. They must contact the Principal immediately if a financial problem arises. Non-payment of financial obligations may be cause for dismissal. Records and report cards will not be released until all financial obligations are met.

Per the Diocese of Beaumont, parents must be signed up and use the FACTS system for tuition payments unless paying in full.

SPECIAL NEEDS, DIOCESAN VISION STATEMENT

The Diocese of Beaumont promotes a model of inclusion for children with mild learning disabilities/differences in our schools. We believe that children with mild learning differences can be successful within the regular classroom setting when strategic teaching methods are utilized and appropriate planning are implemented. This philosophy is based on the understanding that parents are active partners with the school and play a critical role in their child's success.

Unlike the public school system, Catholic schools do not receive state and federal monies to fund special education programs. Therefore, we do not write or accept Individualized Education Plans as public schools are mandated to do. However, a plan may be written at each school for those students who are experiencing learning or behavioral differences. Each school will designate the proper personnel to collaborate on this plan with the parents. The plan's content is dependent on each school's ability to make reasonable accommodations to assist a student or to provide personnel who may participate in the plan.

Parents are expected to provide copies of all assessment information to schools in order that an appropriate student intervention plan can be written. If an assessment has not taken place, the school may require that an assessment is necessary to determine the student's strengths and weaknesses. This assessment can be done by a local ISD at no charge to the parents. Contact your administrator for information.

In some cases it may become evident that the severity of the learning or behavioral disability/difference exceeds the level of accommodations the school may be able to offer the student. The question of what will best benefit the student's success may indicate that a different educational placement is necessary. This decision will be based on knowledge of the resources of the school and the severity of the problem. In all cases, the decision will be based on Christian compassion.

POLICY FOR REENTRY/TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

Students who leave St. Mary Catholic School under any circumstances and decide to return to St. Mary Catholic School will be subject to the following guidelines:

- No delinquent tuition or fees
- Review of conduct.
- Review of grades.
- Parents may be subject to signing a Probation Agreement.
- Payment of first full semester tuition may be due upon time of enrollment.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks must be cared for and covered, if appropriate to the material of the cover. The student's name must be written in ink in each book. The teacher issues textbooks, and students will return their book to the teacher if they withdraw from school during the term or at the conclusion of the school term. The original textbook must be paid for before a replacement will be issued. Textbook records for the year must be cleared before the end of year report card is handed out.

HOMEWORK

Homework is used to enrich or reinforce topics introduced and taught in class and should be used as a practice of skills, extension of concepts, or preparation for classroom work. We encourage parents to check the student's folder and assignment book (where applicable) each night to see if there are papers to be signed. If papers are to be signed, parents are to return them the next day.

Completion of homework is integral to the learning and mastery process. The time spent to complete homework assignments is to be age appropriate. Unfinished classwork may be assigned as homework for completion at the teacher's discretion. Homework is to be checked by the teacher or within the classroom.

GRADES

For each nine-week grading period, a minimum of 15 grades will be taken--to include 3 from major tests/projects and 2 from homework/classwork--in the core subjects of Religion, Reading, Language Arts (writing, grammar, spelling), Math, Science and Social Studies. Grades will be weighted as follows:
Kindergarten and 1st Grade: All grades will be weighted the same.

At St. Mary Catholic School tests/major projects will be weighted at 40% of the final average during each nine-week period. All other assignments will be weighted at 60% of the final average during each nine-week period. **Late work will be accepted with a penalty.**

Grading Scale

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	75-79
D	70-74
F	Below 70

LATE WORK

5 points off for each day late, up to 3 days. After 3 days, the assignment will become a 0.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks period. Report cards for the first 3 nine-week grading periods will be handed out at drop-off and/or pick-up. Report cards for the fourth grading period will be handed out at May Crowning.

Parent Portal is accessible to parents and students as a perpetual report of student progress. Parents and students are expected to use this tool to remain abreast consistently of academic progress.

Report cards and other school records are withheld when financial responsibilities to the school have not been met. This also includes other obligations such as make-up work, fines, returning schoolbooks or equipment.

HONOR ROLL

To qualify for the Distinguished Honor Roll (95 and above) or the Honor Roll (90 and above), a student must achieve the required grade in all subjects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education classes are part of the curriculum for all students and participation is required. A note from parents is necessary when sickness or other conditions prevent student participation.

CAMP KAPPE

Students in Grade 5 are **REQUIRED** as part of the 5th grade science curriculum to attend Camp Kappe. The students will be engaged in learning activities throughout this 4 days, 3 nights trip. A parent meeting will be scheduled by the homeroom teacher to ensure that parents and students are informed regarding requirements for the camp.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A student is promoted if he/she has satisfactorily completed the work of their current grade level. Students will complete each grade level consecutively and **no grade will be skipped**.

Students shall attain an overall average of 70 or above for the year. If a student fails to do so, the student may be retained in the same grade the following school year.

Major subjects are language arts, reading, social studies, mathematics and science. If one major subject is failed, the student may still be promoted to the next grade. However, if two major subjects are failed, the student will be retained.

****A student may receive passing grades and still be retained if it is determined by their parents, teachers, and the principal that the student's skills are insufficient for him/her to be successful at the next grade level.**

Excessive absences may result in retention which will be determined by administration. (See **Attendance Policies Below**).

TRANSFER STUDENT

The principal shall formulate procedures for awarding credit to students who are not enrolled for a complete grading period at the local school. These procedures shall be established within the parameters published by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and shall include at least the following:

- In determining grades for the nine weeks period or semester grades, students transferring from an accredited Texas school shall have those grades from the accredited school included in proportion to the time those grades represent.
- Students transferring from a non-accredited and/or non-graded school shall have grades for the nine weeks period or semester grades determined by conferences between the teachers and the principal. They shall consider student performance in relation to other students in the receiving local school. These conferences and the performance of the transferring student shall determine a fair and reasonable grade for schooling received at the non-accredited or the non-graded school.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

An achievement testing series and an educational ability battery will be administered to the specified grades at the discretion of the superintendent in consultation with the principal.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is a major factor in the academic success of the student. Attendance is an important responsibility of the parents or guardians and an important record-keeping task of the school. **Attendance is expected and required except in the case of illness or death in the family.** The following information is meant to clarify the attendance policies and practices at SMS. **A half day is marked at 11:30 a.m.**

Absences from school affect grades and can cause failure. After three **consecutive** days of absence without notification, **the teacher will notify the parent by email/phone call.** After **five** days of non-consecutive absence without a just cause, the **teacher will notify the parents in writing.** After **ten** days of non-consecutive absence without a just cause, the teacher will notify the principal who will contact the parents to discuss the student's attendance record. After **twelve** days of non-consecutive absence without a just cause, retaining the student in the same grade will be seriously considered.

Reasons for an extended consecutive absence will be evaluated, and performance on a home-bound program will be taken into consideration in determining promotion to the next grade. If there is to be an extended absence, the principal should be notified as soon as possible. The principal must approve absences for other than illness or death in the family in order to be considered excused.

Students missing school for **an extended period that is not due to illness or death in the family** will be given schoolwork to complete **after** returning from the extended period. The school does not support such extended absences due to vacations or other breaks during the school year.

- **Absence Notification** – Should a student be unable to attend school for all or part of a day, a parent/guardian should call the school office by 8:30 a.m. to inform the school.
- **Returning to School After an Absence** – A note of explanation should be given to the receptionist **ON THE DAY OF RETURN** with an excuse note from the physician, dentist, etc. **If a student misses 3 or more days due to an illness, a doctor note is required for return.**
- **Extended Illness** – If an absence of 5 or more consecutive days is anticipated due to extraordinary circumstance (i.e. extended illness, serious injury), please contact the receptionist.
- **Leaving During School** – If a student wishes to be excused from school during a particular period of the day, a note signed by the parent or guardian must be presented to the teacher that day. The request must

indicate who will pick up the student and the relationship of the person to the student. If there is not a written request, the parent must go to the receptionist and have the student called to the foyer. At the time of leaving the **parent** must sign the student out at the front desk and sign in at the time the student returns. Students may **NOT** leave the campus or building at any time for any reason during the school day without checking out through the receptionist.

- **Emergency** – If a student becomes ill or is involved in an emergency situation, a parent/guardian will be notified and arrangements made for pick-up. At the time of departure the parent must sign the student out with the receptionist. Students will remain at home or will be required to leave campus if he/she exhibits a fever over 100 degrees, vomiting/diarrhea. (See appendix on Communicable Disease for additional information)

Make-Up Work due to absences

- Make-up work is expected for all work missed due to an absence:
 1. A parent/guardian may request assignments if the student will be absent for an extended period of time.
 2. Students are expected to make up work missed while absent within two days after returning to school. If more than one day is missed, additional time will be allotted to make up work at the discretion of the teacher. **Work for partial day absences is due on time.**
 3. Should the number of absences within a nine-week grading period be so great that the student is not able to make up all the work, a grade is given for the work completed. If the student is not able to satisfactorily make up enough work to be evaluated, a failing grade is given for that nine-week period. A grade in a subject is dependent on the work completed.
- **Extracurricular Participation- A student may not attend or participate in an athletic event, practice or extracurricular school activity on a day he is absent from any portion of that day from school without the specific permission of the administration.**

TARDINESS

A student is considered tardy when the student is not in the front doors in the foyer by 7:45 am. After 7:45 a.m., the student must report to the receptionist before going to class to obtain a tardy slip. An appointment that results in a tardy arrival to school will require an excuse note from the physician, dentist, etc. **Three unexcused tardies will be considered an unexcused absence. Five unexcused tardies will result in a lunch detention or a fine of \$10, posted to the FACTS account. The choice of the penalty will be that of the parent/guardian.** The parent or guardian will be contacted, and a conference may be held to address tardies.

COMMUNICATIONS

CONFERENCES

Either a parent/guardian, or local school personnel may request special conferences if needed.

It is requested that parents not see a teacher during instructional time as teachers may not leave their classes for this purpose. During the school days, the teachers are charged with the responsibility of supervising/teaching the entire class of students; stopping them to consult may distract them from this important duty.

Appointments should be made through the school and will normally be scheduled during a teacher's planning/conference period or before or after school.

VISITORS

Any person, including volunteers, coming on campus must check in with the receptionist **before** proceeding with intended business and must obtain a visitor's badge that is visibly worn at all times. No parents or guardians may enter a classroom without the school's permission. Visitors must sign in and sign out with the receptionist.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers must have completed a background check and have been certified in Protecting God's Children. Training sessions dates and times can be found on the Diocese of Beaumont website. Driver's Motor Vehicle (DMV) information must be renewed every 3 years, and Protecting God's Children certification must be renewed every 7 years. Protecting God's Children can be renewed through the Diocese of Beaumont website by clicking on the Safe Environment tab.

LUNCH MENU

Students will bring their lunch every day. On Fridays, students may bring their lunch and/or order Dominos through a partnership with School Eatery. Information has been sent home for the parents. They will order online and pizza will be delivered.

SCHOOL TELEPHONES

Students will **not be allowed** to use the telephones during the regular school hours. If a true emergency arises, the receptionist will place the phone call for the student; plans for after school should be made before the child goes to school. Homework and projects should be gathered together at home so that all materials are brought with the student in the morning when he/she arrives at school.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

- **Cell phone use by students is prohibited on campus.** Students who bring cell phones to school **must** leave them in their backpacks. However, the school is not responsible for any cell phone lost or stolen. **Any student with a cell phone that is visible will be confiscated from the student and held in the principal's office. The first time will be a warning and students will get their phones back at the end of the day. The principal (or teacher) will contact the parent. The second and all subsequent times, parents will have to pick the phone up and there will be a \$25 fine.** Use of cell phones will **not** be allowed during dismissal or in after school care. Students will be allowed to use the school phone if there is a need to call home after dismissal.
- Items not used directly in the educational process are NOT to be brought to school. These items include but are not limited to smart watches, computer games, laser pointers, etc.,
- Toys, magazines and trading cards also should not be brought to school, unless requested by the teacher. Items from travel, scientific or historical items, and other important items that might be brought from home for a specific class or subject should be taken promptly to the teacher.
- Items that are seen or heard during regular school hours will be confiscated and must be retrieved from the principal by the parents/guardian. Same rules apply for the electronics. First time warning, second time parent pick-up with a \$25.00 fine.

UNIFORM DRESS CODE POLICIES

The school dress code is designed to encourage neatness and good order among the students, reflect a seriousness of purpose toward learning, instill school pride, render a financial savings to parents and be a symbol to the school community.

Students (K-5th grade) are **required** to wear school uniforms on school uniform days. **NO OTHER CLOTHING IS PERMISSIBLE.** It is the parent's responsibility to see that their child is in **compliance** with the uniform dress code. **Used uniform shirts, pants, t-shirts, sweatshirts in limited sizes are available at the school. Once the school inventory is depleted, parents will need to purchase directly from the vendor. Instructions for ordering are on our website: www.stmaryschooltx.org**

Please **write your child's name on all clothing and items brought to school.** Parents will be asked to bring appropriate clothing if uniform code is not followed. **The uniform code consists of the following:**

ACCEPTABLE DRESS – BOYS

- **Tops**

1. Monogramed polo shirt (white, navy, or royal blue).
2. Monogramed oxford shirt (sky blue or white)
3. Solid white or navy long-sleeved shirt (worn under uniform shirts)
4. Monogramed pullover, V-neck sweater, or fleece (Uniform shirt must be worn under sweatshirt.)
5. Fridays-- school t-shirt
6. Shirts must be neatly tucked with uniform slacks or shorts.

- **Bottoms – navy, gray twill or khaki**

1. Uniform slacks or shorts (no baggy style, no cargo, no joggers, no side pockets, and no jeans). Length of shorts must be at the top of the knee cap or below.
2. A belt (traditional in style, navy, black, or brown) must be worn with uniform slacks or shorts.
3. Uniform slacks/shorts must be belted at the waist.
4. Long pants must be worn on Mass days.

- **Shoes**

-Must wear closed toe athletic shoes with socks for safety/practical reasons.

For safety, athletic shoes are needed by all grade levels for Physical Education.

* **Socks- - (K-5)** must be **solid** white, black, gray, brown, or navy knee or ankle socks.

- **Hair** – must be neatly styled

Boys transferring from other schools must cut hair before enrollment into St. Mary.

1. No longer than middle ear – earlobe must show
2. Cut **above** the eyebrows
3. Sideburns no longer than middle of the ear

4. No longer than top of the shirt collar
5. No shaved designs, nor beaded or braided hairdos.

ACCEPTABLE DRESS – GIRLS

- **Tops –**
 1. Monogramed polo shirt (white, navy, or royal blue).
 2. Monogramed oxford shirt (sky blue or white)
 3. Solid white or navy long-sleeved shirt (worn under uniform shirts)
 4. Monogramed pullover, V-neck sweater, cardigan or fleece (Uniform shirt must be worn under sweatshirt.)
 5. Fridays-- school t-shirt
 6. Shirts must be neatly tucked with uniform bottoms.
- **Bottoms – navy, gray twill, or khaki**
 1. Plaid jumper (K-3rd grades) or plaid skirts (4th-5th grades) Jumper and skirt length need to be at the top of the knee or below—in the front and the back.
 2. Uniform slacks or shorts (no joggers, no jeggings, no capri style pants, no jeans). Length of shorts must be at the top of the knee cap or below.
 3. **Jumpers and skirts must be worn on Mass days.**
 4. Modesty blue shorts under jumpers or skirts must be finger tip length .
 5. Leggings may be worn UNDER the skirts or jumpers. They must be navy, black, or white.
- **Belts – brown, black, or navy (Same as boys)**
- **Shoes**
 - Elementary must wear closed toe athletic shoes with socks for safety/practical reasons.
- **Socks**
 - (K-5) must be solid white, black, gray, brown, or navy knee or ankle socks.
- **Hair**
 1. Hair ribbons –(white, royal, or navy—unless it’s a dress up or spirit day, then the bow can match their outfit)
 2. Hair ornaments must not be a distraction.
 3. Hair color should be one natural color and not distracting.
 4. Hair may not cover eyes.
 - **Makeup –** No make-up
 - **Finger nail polish-** (clear or light pink only)
 - **No artificial nails**

OFFICIAL UNIFORMS OF ORGANIZATIONS

Members of organizations such as Scouts, Student Council, etc., may wear their **official uniform** on meeting and spirit days. **Jeans are only acceptable on days set out by the principal.**

UNACCEPTABLE DRESS IN GRADES Pre-K–5th AS FOLLOWS:

- Knit or stretch shorts or pants
- No eyeliner of any kind

- Earrings (girls only) nothing below the ear, no cartilage piercing, or no more than 2 per ear.
- No more than 2 bracelets
- Jewelry (no chunky, flashing, or distracting necklaces or bracelets)
- Extreme styles, un-natural hair color (out of eyes at all times)
- Razor sides or stripes cuts, or cuts with 00 or 0 size blades
- Clogs, light up shoes, Heelies, Crocs, flip flops, dress heels, backless shoes, sandals, open toed shoes, boots, or any hard sole shoes
- Coats/jackets/sweatshirts/sweaters **without school logo** (thick coats may be worn during transition only on cold days that the approved coats/jackets/sweatshirts/sweaters may not provide warmth)
- Tattoos (permanent) Band-Aids may not be used to cover tattoos. **Temporary tattoos** can only be worn when sold at school for fundraisers.

The administration has the final decision as to whether a particular garment is suitable for wearing to school. Dress Code violations that can be corrected must be corrected immediately. Any removable, unauthorized articles of clothing (jackets, sweaters, etc.) that are in violation of the Dress Code will be confiscated. The student may redeem the article at the end of that day. SMS and its personnel are not responsible for any such item. Any items unredeemed at the end of each semester will be given to charity or placed at the school's uniform sale.

The administration reserves the right to require students to change, call parents to bring replacement clothing, or to go home (unexcused absence) should any of these actions be deemed necessary.

Campus Wide Discipline Plan (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support)

Discipline can be defined as the training that develops self-control and character. It is also the aim of discipline to protect the good of all by curtailing the abuses of the few. Rules exist in order to create an atmosphere in which differing personalities can come together harmoniously while working individually towards personal and common goals. Consequences are designed and imposed so that the freedom of all to participate in school activities might never have to be limited because of the disorder of the few.

Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to students, staff, and visitors to St. Mary Catholic School. Students are expected to greet teachers, staff members, and adults when they pass in the hall. Students are expected to be reverent during Mass and daily prayers.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), an evidence-based framework for developing positive behavior, is used to create a positive climate for learning. The premise of PBIS is that continual teaching, modeling, and reinforcing of positive behavior will support children's positive behaviors, reduce discipline problems, and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety, and learning.

It is the goal of St. Mary Catholic School to implement Positive Behavior Intervention and support for all students.

PROCESS

At the beginning of the school year, each teacher will give a contract explaining expectations for the school year. The parent/ legal guardian and student will need to sign and return the contract by the given due date.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Students shall NOT engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment towards their peers, faculty, employees, or other members of the school community. Sexual harassment can result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other sexual conduct, either verbal or physical, or any conduct or other offensive unequal treatment that would not occur but for the sex of the person when the conduct, advances or requests have the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive environment of interfering with the performance of promotion of the individual.

A student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment as defined above shall bring the matter to the attention of the principal. The principal shall thoroughly investigate all complaints of sexual harassment.

BULLYING POLICY

St. Mary Catholic School prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Bullying occurs when a student or a group of students engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct that:

1. Will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threats create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

Examples of Bullying may be but is not limited to hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demand for money, destruction of property, theft of possessions, name calling, rumor spreading and ostracism.

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible to teacher and principal. All acts of bullying are taken seriously and will result in the following:

- 1st Offense
 - Counsel with principal
 - Write an apology note
 - Notification to parents
- 2nd Offense
 - Write an apology note
 - Out of School Suspension
 - Notification to Parents

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Any behavior that may be construed by others to be offensive will not be tolerated. This includes hand-holding, hugging, kissing, etc.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

The following types of behavior will result in disciplinary action which may include **in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion**. These behaviors will apply to all school sponsored functions included but not limited to the festival, sports events, dances, club functions and field trips.

1. Chewing gum is not allowed on campus at any time.
2. Violation of the dress code.
3. Any fighting, disruption, or interference with curricular or extra-curricular activities.
4. Damage or destruction, or attempted damage or destruction to school property or private property.
5. Physical or verbal assault on a school employee, student, school volunteer, or other persons while under supervision and control of the school, or in the course of a school-related activity.
6. Possession of dangerous weapons (knives, guns, clubs, etc.)
7. Stealing of school or private property.
8. Violation of attendance rules and regulations.
9. Cheating or copying schoolwork, tests, or other assignments.
10. Showing disrespect, disobedience or disregarding directives, corrections or commands by any school personnel.
11. A student shall not use any form of profanity, written, verbal or implied.
12. Intimidating, threatening, degrading, or disgracing a fellow student, visitor, administrator or member of the school staff by written, verbal or other means.
13. Use, possession, or sale of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs on campus or at any school function, including field trips or athletic competitions, which may take place away from the physical grounds of St. Mary Catholic School.
14. Any off-campus misconduct that may endanger the health or safety of a St. Mary student or family member or off-campus behavior which adversely affects the educational process.
15. Any conduct, both inside or outside of the school, that reflects negatively upon the reputation of the school may be subject to disciplinary action. This includes posting pictures of students in school uniforms participating in inappropriate activities. Students and parents may not put the school logo on a website or anywhere else on the Internet.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any and all disciplinary regulations for a just cause. When the conduct of a student, whether at or away from school, is detrimental to the reputation of the school or the moral good of the student body, the principal reserves the right to dismiss the student. Before major disciplinary action is implemented the Superintendent will be consulted.

Consequences

Lunch Detention—Students may be assigned a lunch detention for disruptive behavior.

After-School Detention—We now have a scheduled detention on Wednesdays from 3:25-4:25. If it is necessary, a student will be given after-school detention. **After 3 unexcused absences, a student will serve an after-school detention.**

Office Visit – The student will be sent to the office for further guidance and discipline.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

In-school suspension is the temporary removal of the student from his normal classes.

After sufficient warning and at the discretion of the principal, a discipline referral will be issued to the student, giving the reason for suspension. The referral must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned the next day. Twenty-four hours' notice will be given. In-school suspension shall be held for the entire school day.

In-school suspension takes precedence over appointments, practices, games, lessons, dances, Student Council meetings, field trips, and any school-related extracurricular activities. ISS may be assigned but is not limited to the following infractions: fights, inappropriate behavior, phone use on campus during school hours, non-conforming to dress code.

Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion

The principal may exercise out-of-school suspension and expulsion. A student on any type of suspension will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities during the time of suspension.

Out-of-school suspension is defined as a temporary dismissal of a student from school. Students who have been disciplined through out-of-school suspension will result in an unexcused absence and will be unable to make up all academic work during the period of suspension.

Expulsion is the permanent dismissal of a student from school.

The procedure for out-of-school suspension and expulsion is as follows.

1. Student receives notice of infraction.
2. Student is given the opportunity to address the infraction.
3. The principal confers with parents regarding the infraction.

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM

Any form of academic cheating or dishonesty on any school assignment will not be permitted. As new methods of cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty develop, we expect all students to interpret the requirement of academic integrity broadly and in good faith. Instances of cheating or plagiarism will usually result in a '0' being awarded for the work in question. A discipline referral will be sent home by the teacher notifying the parent of the incident. The discipline referral must be signed by the parent and returned the next day. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the principal.

Academic fraud includes, but is not limited to:

1. Copying from or looking on anyone else's paper during an exam or quiz, or allowing another one to copy from you.
2. Having or using a communication device such as a cell phone, PDA, or electronic translator to send or receive unauthorized information.
3. Sharing or receiving answers or other information from tests or quizzes, either during or after, by any method.
4. Having or using a cheat sheet (a piece of paper or anything else with answers, formulas, information or notes of any kind) that is not specifically authorized by the teacher.
5. Working together on a take home exam, unless specifically authorized by the teacher.

Note: The possession of any prohibited or unauthorized information or device, whether or not it is actually used, is an act of academic dishonesty and will be disciplined accordingly.

Cheating on Papers, Projects or Assignments

1. Using any materials on an assignment turned in for a grade that is not a result of your own research, work, and writing. This includes the following:
 - a. Having another person complete work for you.

- b. Copying any part of all of another student's theme, report, term paper, essay, homework, or other written work, or project of any kind and turning it in as your own.
2. Failure to use quotation marks when needed.
3. Failure to provide acknowledgement for any information paraphrased or quoted (written or oral) using citations, footnotes, endnotes, and/or bibliography.

Other

1. Lying to a teacher or making false reason to get special consideration on any assignment or exam or for a time extension on any exam, quiz, assignment, or project.
2. Forging a signature on anything that must be turned into the school.
3. Altering or falsifying a note which must be turned into the school.
4. Unauthorized removal of a test from the teacher's possession.

CHRISTIAN APPEAL PROCESS

In the ongoing effort to respond to the needs of St. Mary Catholic School Community a reconciliation process has been developed. The process being implemented is modeled after the teachings of Jesus where in St. Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 18, v. 15-17, He speaks to this issue.

"If your brother sins [against you], go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church."

Based on this teaching the steps for reconciliation will be as follows.

Informal Level

Before presenting a concern or complaint to the larger community the individual(s) presenting the issue shall meet with the person who is the subject of the complaint and discuss the issue(s). If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the conference, the process will proceed to *level one*.

Level One

If the member of the school community is not satisfied with the outcome of the conference at the *informal level*, the person bringing the complaint, as well as the one to whom the complaint is addressed, shall present, in writing, to the principal, their understanding of the situation, within 5 working days from the initial meeting.

Level Two

The principal, after reviewing the written statements, will meet together with the parties involved within 3 days after receiving the grievance to seek a solution.

Level Three

When the outcome of the conference at *level two* does not accomplish a resolution, either party may request a conference with St. Mary Catholic Advisory Board, within 5 days following the meeting with the principal. The written request to meet with St. Mary Catholic School Board should be sent to:

St. Mary Catholic School Board
2600 Bob Hall Road
Orange, Texas 77630

Level Four

If an equitable solution is not achieved with the School Board the individual(s) may request a Conference with the Superintendent of Schools, in an effort to achieve resolution. This request should be made within 5 days of the meeting with the School Advisory Board.

Level Five

If the person(s) still feels justice has not been achieved the individual(s) may deliver their written grievance to the Bishop of the Beaumont of Diocese who will make the final judgment.

SCHOOL POLICIES/PROCEDURES

SCHEDULE

7:45 a.m.	Tardy
3:25 p.m.	Dismissal

ARRIVALS

It is the parent's responsibility to see that students arrive to the campus on time. Students are to be dropped off **no earlier than 7:00 a.m.** under the porte cochere where teachers will be unloading students. Students will wait in the front foyer for announcements to begin. Once announcements finish, students will be dismissed by their teachers to enter the classrooms.

DEPARTURES

Students will wait in the foyer after school and will be called out to the car as it arrives. Students may not walk across the pick-up area to parked cars. If you wish to park your car instead of waiting in line, you must park in the side parking lot away from the traffic pattern and come escort your child to your car. This protects the safety of all involved.

If you are delayed in picking up your child and arrive after 3:40, the child will be in our extended day program located in the library/foyer. *(See details for After School Care),

LIBRARY

The library will be open for student use during school hours.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE (ASC)

The hourly rate for each child attending After School Care (ASC) will be \$15.00 per day. Students must be enrolled in ASC and an ASC agreement must be completed and returned to the front desk. There is a registration fee.

***Students not picked up by 3:40 pm will be placed in After School Care and parents will be billed accordingly. Parents will be asked to complete an After School Care agreement and pay the registration fee.**

Please note that we will be in contact with you if your child appears ill upon arrival. Students attending ASC should be respectful and abide by the instructions of the staff on duty. If a student becomes

uncontrollable, the parents will be called to come and retrieve the student. If this occurs repeatedly, the student will not be able to attend ASC. **We will only release a child from ASC to an adult who is on the authorized pick-up list.**

ASC ends at 6:00pm and you will be charged for late pick-ups. There will be a charge of \$10.00 per student starting at 6:01pm to 6:10pm and \$10.00 will be added for each child for each addition 10-minute increments.

At the time of registration, the parents should authorize the family physician to accept all calls from the child care director for any emergency medical care. The ASC Agreement will require parents to authorize St. Mary Catholic School Staff to take their child to a physician or facility for medical treatment in the event an emergency in which neither parent can be reached. If the above-named physician cannot respond. The agreement also authorizes any licensed physician or medical center to treat my child. Parents will need to provide a **photocopy of both sides of health insurance ID card must be provided.**

SAFETY/FIRE DRILLS- Will be conducted regularly.

TELECOMMUNICATION ACCEPTABLE POLICIES

Saint Mary Catholic School has actively pursued the implementation of advanced technology which has increased the learning opportunities available to its students, faculty and staff. Access to the Internet will enable students to explore all types of educational information throughout the world. Our intent at Saint Mary Catholic School is to make Internet access available to further our educational goals and objectives. Although we have an extensive filtering service, there still may be ways to access objectionable materials. We believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Therefore, Saint Mary Catholic School has set the following standards for using on-line information sources:

1. Students are responsible for good behavior on the school computer network and the Internet, just as they are in the classroom. Communications on the network are often public in nature. The network and Internet are provided for students to use for educational purposes only. Access to the network and Internet is given to students who agree to act in a responsible manner. Parent permission is required, and access is a **privilege** – not a right.
2. The Administration may review files and communication to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are employing the system responsibly. Network and Internet workstations will be monitored regularly. Users should not expect privacy.
3. No student is allowed access to any computer at Saint Mary Catholic School without adult supervision.
4. Access to information will be allowed within reason. During school hours, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility as they would when guiding their children with information sources such as books, periodicals, television, telephones, movies, radio, video games, and other potentially offensive media. **Students are not allowed on teacher/ staff computers.**

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES

Please provide a lunch for your student in a lunch box. Microwaves are available for students to use, but in order to ensure the student has ample time to enjoy lunch, it is best to bring food that is already prepared. Dominos is available for order through School Eatery on the school website.

EDUCATIONAL TOURS

Educational Tours can provide a valuable educational or cultural experience for students. Students whose academic performance is below a 70, or exhibits problematic behavior will not go on the educational tour unless approved by the administrator. Educational Tours are limited to students within the approved grade level.

Educational Tour Permission Forms are signed at the beginning of the year to all participation in all field trips. Students who fail to submit this proper field trip form will not be allowed to participate in the field trips. Verbal permission will not be accepted in lieu of proper forms. A parent/guardian has the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in the field trip.

Parents are expected to sign the permission form and acknowledge that the teacher, principal and school cannot be held liable for circumstances beyond their ordinary control. **Students must wear a school shirt and approved bottoms.**

DISPENSING MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Only medication that is necessary for a child to remain in school will be given during school hours. Authorized school personnel will administer only medication prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and dispensed by a registered pharmacist during school hours.

“Over-the-counter” medication will not be made available unless prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist or approved by a parent/guardian through the school.

Each student’s medication must be in a properly labeled container with the following information: student’s name, physician/dentist’s name, date, name of medication, dosage, directions for administration, and duration medication is to be given.

Properly labeled medication will be administered when a signed permission form accompanies it from the parent or legal guardian.

LICE

Head lice (Pediculosis) are transmitted through close, personal contact. Through the use of common brushes, combs, curlers, hair ornaments and the sharing of hats, headbands or other head apparel. The insects can be transferred from person-to-person.

A student suspected of having head lice will be sent home immediately and cannot return to school without being checked by school personnel to verify that the student no longer has lice or nits.

USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY AND GROUNDS

A good citizen takes pride in the care of school property. This school and its equipment and furnishings belong to the church. The school is here for the benefit of the students with the intention that the students shall appreciate and care for it at all times. Students are expected to keep the school grounds clean. This means to avoid dropping paper, leaving textbooks and book bags outside lockers, and other articles scattered on the school grounds. The lockers are the property of the school and may be checked periodically for neatness and the health and safety of the school students. Items confiscated for not properly being stored will be sent to the office and may result in disciplinary consequences.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks (NO backpack with wheels are allowed in grades PreK-5th) and school bags are not permitted in the classrooms during regular class time. These items pose a safety problem in the classroom as they may

block aisles or cause discomfort to other students. They are to remain in the locker, in other words, the backpack or school bag must fit in the locker.

RECORDS

If a parent/guardian wishes to view or receive a copy of his/her student's record, the principal should be notified twenty-four hours in advance. The official record file consists of academic transcripts, academic testing, health records, and emergency card. Academic transcripts will not be release if there are delinquent tuition or fees.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

St. Mary Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding their child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

*****SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

Participation in extra-curricular activities is considered a privilege. Academics and behavior must be good in order to participate.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council provides the opportunity for students to participate in a representative form of government and create a desire for good citizenship based on democratic processes. It provides experiences that develop increasing responsibility, initiative, and self-direction. Student Council provides for the development of cooperation and opportunities for leadership training. The organization provides leadership for the school and promotes various projects and programs.

Each homeroom in grades 4 through 5 will elect representatives. Representatives must maintain an 85 scholastic average and have behavior in good standing. The elected officers must be in grades 4-5 during their term of office. Officers must also maintain an 85 scholastic average and have behavior in good standing in all classes as well as exemplary citizenship and leadership qualities. Elections will be held in September 2023.

SCHOOL PARTIES

Class parties are **not** permitted during school hours except at Christmas. Class parties are arranged by the room parent and are held the last day before vacation. Any other special treats must have the approval of the teacher.

Students **should not** exchange gifts for individuals at school.

Invitations for slumber parties, birthday parties and other types of parties should not be given at school unless an invitation is being given to **every** student in the class.

SPECIAL PROGRAM AND ASSEMBLY RULES

- Enter and leave in a quiet, orderly manner.
- Be respectful and courteous to faculty, students and guests.

- Express approval by applauding; whistles and loud noise are not appropriate.
- Talking should cease as soon as the person in charge of the program steps forward.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)

The Home and School Association (HSA) is created to provide a way for interested parents to help our school. While participation is voluntary, all parents are encouraged to attend the meetings and participate in the activities. HSA functions in any capacity deemed helpful by school administrators and the organization. Membership is not limited to parents of students, but may include any person interested in the success of the school. Meetings are held throughout the year and will be communicated to the school community through the school's newsletter, parent portal etc.

SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S RIGHT TO AMEND HANDBOOK

The St. Mary Catholic School Board or principal retains the right to amend this handbook. Parents will be notified of any changes. The Administrator has the authority to modify any policy within the handbook based on an individual basis.

****Please return pages 27-28 to your child's homeroom teacher by Wednesday, September 6, 2023.**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS PERMISSION

I hereby give permission for my son/daughter _____ to use the Internet at Saint Mary Catholic School. Any violation of the Telecommunication Acceptable Policies may result in disciplinary action, revocation of privileges and/or legal action.

I hereby **DO NOT** give permission for my son/daughter _____ to use the Internet at Saint Mary Catholic School. Use of the computer network is permissible only during activities that do not involve Internet access.

I hereby release the Diocese of Beaumont and Saint Mary Catholic School, as well as the faculty and staff, from any and all claims that may arise as a result of my student's use of or inability to use school computers resources within the guidelines set forth in the Parent/School Handbook regarding Telecommunications Acceptable Policies.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE

I hereby give permission for my son/daughter _____ to be photographed or videotaped at St. Mary Catholic School. I realize that the photo may be published in the newspaper, a magazine, or other publication. The video may be used for educational or informational purposes regarding the programs or curriculum at St. Mary Catholic School.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

COUNSELING RELEASE

I hereby give permission for my son/daughter _____ to be counseled on an individual basis by the school counselor, if the teacher or my child feels this is necessary. I may also request my child to be counseled at a scheduled time.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

The principal retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause.

Parents and students will be given prompt written notification if changes are made.

Since this handbook is part of the legal contract existing between St. Mary Catholic School and the parents and students, it is essential that both parents and students read the handbook and agree to be ruled by it. Failure to be informed will not be acceptable excuse for violations. Any questions should be directed to principal (409-883-8913). If appeals are made within groups, the principal has the right to make the final decision.

I have read and agree to be governed by all rules and policies in this handbook.

Student Signature	Date	Grade
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Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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