

SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL
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Parent - Student Handbook
2024-2025

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Saint Joseph School Parents and Guardians,

This parent-student handbook serves as a guide to the philosophy, policies, and procedures that govern Saint Joseph School. Please take time to review the information in this handbook which we hope you will find to be helpful as you journey through your Saint Joseph School experience. In abiding by this handbook, you are affirming your commitment to a way of treating each other described in our civility code. Any changes made to this Handbook will be communicated with you in a timely manner.

If at any time throughout the year you should have questions regarding the information contained within, please contact Saint Joseph School so that we may assist and support you.

Thank you for the privilege of sharing your child's educational journey with us.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristen Fiumara". The script is cursive and fluid.

Mrs. Kristen Fiumara
Interim Head of School

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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

VISION

A Saint Joe's student pursues excellence, is driven by a love of learning and intellectual curiosity, and actively seeks ways to serve others. Their journey is deeply anchored in faith and morality, as they strive to strengthen their relationship with God and the community they serve.

MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Joseph School, in partnership with our families, provides an exceptional traditional Roman Catholic education committed to helping each student thrive academically, spiritually, and socially. Rooted in our four pillars of Faith, Virtue, Intellect, and Stewardship, our mission is to provide an educational experience that empowers well-rounded individuals with a deep sense of faith and purpose, and a strong foundation for lifelong success.

CORE VALUES

Faith: We embrace and celebrate our spiritual traditions, fostering an environment where faith is not only respected but also cherished. We strive to inspire a deep connection to something greater, cultivating moral character, and encouraging students to live their lives guided by strong ethical principles.

Virtue: We believe in the power of virtuous living and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of life. Our school community promotes values such as kindness, humility, diligence, and charity. Through intentional Roman Catholic character development programs, we aim to instill virtues that will guide our students in becoming responsible, compassionate, and ethical contributors and leaders in their communities.

Intellect: We are dedicated to nurturing the intellect of every student, providing a rigorous and engaging academic curriculum that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning. Our passionate educators employ innovative teaching methods, personalized instruction, insightful classroom discussions, and real-world applications to foster intellectual curiosity, problem-solving skills, and a deep understanding of diverse subjects.

Stewardship: We recognize our responsibility to be good stewards of the world around us. Through environmental awareness programs, community service initiatives, and Catholic social teaching, we encourage our students to actively engage in making a positive impact on their communities and the world. We instill a sense of social responsibility, empowering our students to embrace their roles as global citizens and champions of human dignity, common good, and positive change.

STUDENT MOTTO

Accept Jesus in our hearts.
Aim to serve others.
Achieve academic excellence.
Aspire to change the world.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

SPIRITUAL LIFE AT SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL

Saint Joseph School's Catholic identity is integral to daily life at school. Our community lives out a belief in a loving God and a commitment to outreach. Religious instruction initiates a carefully guided spiritual journey where prayer, appreciation, respect, reflection, and a growing knowledge base are interconnected. Saint Joseph School upholds the virtues Christ exemplified during His time on earth.

MASS

Weekly liturgies are held on Friday morning at 9:00AM at Saint Joseph Parish Church. Once a month, typically on the first Friday of each month, the entire school community gathers for a community liturgy. On Fridays when an all-school Mass is not scheduled, a divisional liturgy is held and celebrated separately for the Lower School (Kindergarten-Grade 4) and Upper School (Grades 5-8), scheduled for alternating weeks. Mass is also celebrated on special holy days and for unique liturgies during appropriate seasons of the Church. The Mass schedule for Saint Joseph School can be viewed on the school's website in the calendar section. Parents and guests are always welcome to attend these special celebrations.

As celebrating Mass as a community is a school priority, please avoid scheduling appointments for doctor and dental visits during Mass times.

Catholic students in grades three through eight are invited to participate as altar servers, lectors, and cantors at the school Masses. Students need to be trained as altar servers in their own parishes or at Saint Joseph Parish and will be scheduled to serve at school Masses throughout the year.

Receiving Holy Communion at Mass is the high point of Catholic sacramental life. Non-Catholic students, parents, and guests may join the Communion line to receive a blessing from the communion minister.

CHAPEL

Each week, the Upper School division meets in the lower church for Chapel. During these sessions, students hear from a variety of speakers, including clergy, faculty, and classmates. The intention is to start the day on a positive note, whether it emphasizes the idea of our monthly virtues, the current liturgical season, or current events. It is an opportunity for students and staff to reflect on spiritual lessons, affirm their faith, and strengthen their character.

SCHOOL SAFETY, HEALTH, AND SUPPORT

SCHOOL SAFETY: CORE ELEMENTS

Keeping children safe is our highest priority. With this goal in mind, we have implemented several initiatives to ensure the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and guests:

- All who come on campus, whether parents or visitors, must register with our receptionist at the main office before entering the school.
- All adults who work with our children, whether these adults are faculty, staff, or parent volunteers, must complete an annual CORI form and complete Virtus Training.
- We complete emergency drills with the entire school at regular intervals throughout the school year.
- In an emergency or other crisis, the school will communicate to parents, faculty, and staff in a timely manner.

SECURITY

All visitors, including parents/guardians, are required to sign in at the front desk when coming into the school for any reason. Unfamiliar persons will be asked to state a reason for being on campus and may be asked to leave the school grounds. School personnel will contact the local law enforcement to remove any unwanted or unauthorized persons from the school building or grounds. Parents/guardians are asked to assist our office by reporting anyone loitering in, on, or near the school building or grounds.

To maintain a safe campus environment, both hidden and visible security cameras are installed in areas permissible by law to identify safety concerns, maintain security, detect theft and misconduct, and discourage and prevent acts of harassment and violence.

While we strive to maintain as safe a campus environment as possible, it is incumbent on students, faculty, and staff to be aware of their surroundings as they transit the campus and report any suspicious activity to any administrator or security personnel.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills are conducted at regular intervals throughout the school year. Parents and volunteers in the school building at the time of a drill are expected to participate fully, following all procedures including being silent during the drill.

ROLE OF PARENTS DURING A CRISIS

In any school crisis, we know that you will be intensely concerned about your child's safety. Obviously, your separation from your child makes this time even more

difficult than usual; please know that we share that deep concern. The safety of your child and all the children at Saint Joseph School is our highest priority each day and especially during a crisis. With this in mind, the school will communicate to parents, faculty, and staff as soon as possible and as soon as we have clear, verified information. Understand that our goal is to be thorough and accurate.

In times of crisis or emergency, please follow these guidelines:

- Remain calm.
- Follow the directions of the school's emergency alert system.
- Unless you are directed to do so, please do not come to campus and do not call the school.
- We ask that you do not speak with the media during this time as the school will keep the media informed.

EMERGENCY CONDITIONS AND INCLEMENT AND SEVERE WEATHER

Important: All parents should have complete and up-to-date contact information on file in RenWeb.

Emergency

In the event that an emergency necessitates that school close early, all families and faculty/staff will be informed through the school's emergency alert system.

Inclement and Severe Weather

When there is inclement or severe weather, Saint Joseph School typically follows the Needham School District; however, the school also looks to Dover, Dedham, Natick, and other school districts, as well. If there is an interruption in the normal school schedule, all families and faculty/staff will be informed through the school's emergency alert system.

POLICIES ON PROTECTING CHILDREN

All faculty, staff, and volunteers are required to complete Virtus Training through the Archdiocese of Boston. No adult will be permitted to supervise children without first completing this training.

HEALTH OFFICE INFORMATION

Health Office Emergency Form

The Health Office Emergency Information Form is now included online as part of the Main Office Form. This information provides important health and developmental history about your child and must be completed by parent/guardian before school entry for all students.

Physical Examination

Saint Joseph School adheres to the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for physical examinations and immunizations. Physical exams are required for all NEW students as well as any student entering Preschool, Kindergarten, Grade 4 and Grade 7. New students must provide a physical exam that contains TB risk assessment and immunization record.

Required Immunizations

Regulation 105 CMR 220 from Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires each student to be up to date with grade entry immunization requirements. Aside are the current grade level immunization required before the start of the academic year.

Vaccine Exemptions

No student may attend school unless there is a documented medical or religious waiver. If there are medical reasons why your child has not been immunized, a doctor's note must be signed and forwarded to the health office annually. For a religious exemption, the parent/guardian must submit a letter annually to the health office stating that a vaccine conflicts with their religious beliefs.

	2.9, PreSchool, PreK	K – 6th	7 – 12th
HIB	4 doses		
DTAP	4 doses	5 doses	
Polio	3 doses	4 doses	4 doses
Hep B	3 doses or lab immunity	3 doses or lab immunity	3 doses or lab immunity
MMR	1 dose or lab immunity	2 doses or lab immunity	2 doses or lab immunity
Varicella	1 dose or lab immunity or historical evidence of disease	2 doses or lab immunity or historical evidence of disease	2 doses or lab immunity or historical evidence of disease
TDAP			1 dose
Meningococcal (Menacwy)			1 dose
Lead Screening		Kindergarten Only	
Vision		Kindergarten Only (students will be screened by SJS staff within first 30 days of entry into K if the parent or guardian does not present certification of passed vision exam)	

Medication Policy

Saint Joseph School Medication Policy complies with the Massachusetts Department of Health Regulations.

- The Department of Public Health encourages that medication be administered before and after school hours, if possible.
- All medication, prescription or over-the-counter, requires an order from a health care provider who is licensed in Massachusetts.
- Daily medications must be delivered by the parent/guardian to the school Health Office in the original labeled prescription bottle.
- Only a 30-day supply may be given to the Health Office.
- Annual medication orders must be written on our after July 1, 2024, to be valid for the current 2024-2025 academic school year.
- All medication forms must be signed by BOTH parent and physician.
- Short term medications are medications lasting 10 days or less. The prescription label on the

original pharmacy container is acceptable as the physician's medication order. The parent must still sign the medication administration authorization/agreement form.

- The only medication available to students on an as needed basis is Acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- All medications MUST be picked up by a parent/guardian by the last day of school.

SJS LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

Parents/Guardians are required to notify the school Health Office if your child has a life-threatening allergy.

- SJS recognizes the increasing prevalence of student food allergies and the life-threatening nature of allergies for many students.
- Communication, planning, and education with faculty/staff, parents/guardians, and students will aim to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students.
- Use of food as reward or incentive during the school day is prohibited.
- SJS cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies.
- Students should NOT share or trade food.

Early Childhood School:

- The following foods are allowed in ECB:
 - Students' own snack and lunch.
 - Our Hot Lunch vendor.
 - Pizza Friday.
- The Early Childhood School Building is a "nut free" building.
- Non-curriculum related classroom-based celebrations and parties are food free.

Lower School, Kindergarten–Grades 4:

- The following foods are allowed in grades K-4:
 - Students own snack and lunch.
 - Our Hot Lunch vendor.
 - Pizza and Chicken Nugget Friday.
- Snack is eaten in the classroom. Based on students' allergens in each classroom, certain foods may be restricted.
- Parents/Guardians of students in Allergy Aware Classrooms will receive a letter from the teacher stating the prohibited food items for the classroom. A parent/guardian signature will be required to confirm acknowledgement of this request.
- Lunch is not declared "allergen free" and foods with known allergens (peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, shellfish, soy, wheat, etc.) are NOT banned.
- Non-curriculum related classroom-based celebrations and parties are food free.

Upper School, Grades 5–8:

- Snack is eaten in the classroom.
- Lunch is eaten in the cafeteria.
- Snack and Lunch are not declared "allergen free" and foods with known allergens (peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, shellfish, soy, wheat, etc.) are NOT banned.

SJS Special Events

- If food is being served, administration will attempt to reach out to families two weeks prior and include what will be served (i.e. Kona Ice Truck/Popsicle Party, Field Day, etc.).
- Please feel free to have your child bring their own snack and/or lunch.
- Please contact your child's teacher letting them know if your child may have the food.

Pizza Friday and Hot Lunch

The hot lunches and Pizza and Chicken Nugget Fridays are provided by an outside vendor. By signing up, you are aware food may contain or come into contact with common allergens, such as dairy, eggs, wheat, soybeans, tree nuts, peanuts, fish, shellfish or wheat and Saint Joseph School cannot guarantee the absence of cross-contamination.

EPI-PENS

Each student who has a life-threatening allergy is required to provide at least one set of Epi-pens to Saint Joseph School.

- ECB students will have their Epi-pen stored in their classroom.
- Grades K-8 Epi-pens will be stored in the Health Office.
- Students attending Aftercare are required to provide a 2nd set of Epi-pens.
- Each Epi-pen must be valid for the academic year. Should the Epi-pen expire mid-year, we will request you to provide a replacement Epi-pen.
- Epi-pens on field trips:
 - Each student's Epi-pen will travel with the teacher.
 - Will be administered for a life-threatening allergic reaction.
 - Students with an allergy will be assigned to his/her guardian or SJS staff member.
 - 911 will always be called after the administration of epinephrine and transported to the hospital.

EPI-PEN Education and Training:

SJS will provide education and training to all appropriate personnel on management of student allergies. The training will occur 2x/year. The training will address prevention efforts, information about common allergens, recognition of signs of an allergic reaction, and the emergency response plan.

First Aid/CPR:

All staff at SJS are mandated to attend First Aid/CPR training.

There are 5 AEDs present at Saint Joseph School:

- Outside Health Office (2nd floor at 110 May St.)
- Early Childhood School Building – by main door
- Lower School Gym (Kennedy Center)
- Upper School Gym
- Saint Joseph Church (church main entrance)

When To Keep Your Child Home:

Please keep your child home from school if he/she has:

- Fever – if your child has a temperature of 100.0 or greater, you should not send your child to school. Children must be fever free, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting/Diarrhea – If your child is vomiting or has diarrhea, your child should stay home. Children should be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours after diarrhea or vomiting.
- Flu – If your child is diagnosed with the flu, please contact the school, Health Office. Your child can return to school once symptoms have resolved and they have been fever free for 24 hours without medication.
- Strep Throat – Children diagnosed with strep may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotics and improvement in symptoms.
- Conjunctivitis (pinkeye) – Children diagnosed with pink eye may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotics and improvement in symptoms.
- COVID – 19 – If your child is diagnosed with COVID-19, please contact the school Health Office.
- An upper respiratory illness with significant coughing and/or nasal discharge.

Parents/Guardians are also encouraged to contact the health office for any questions, concerns and specifically for the for the following reasons:

- New medical diagnosis or a change in your child's health status.
- Newly prescribed medications or a change in a current medication.
- Serious injury, illness, or hospitalization.
- Fracture, sprain, stitches, or cast.
- A contagious disease such as chicken pox, flu, strep throat, whooping cough, covid-19.
- If your child is absent for an extended period.
- If there are recent changes in your family that may affect your child, such as a birth, recent loss, or sudden illness.

COUNSELING SERVICES

When needed, Saint Joseph School will provide counseling services by a qualified licensed counselor who works in cooperation with teachers and administrators to address any issues that children may experience while at school. It is a normal part of children's growth to experience difficulties from time to time and we are here to support those challenges so each child will feel comfortable and empowered to understand themselves, others, and the world around them.

It is a common occurrence for the counselor to meet with students to problem-solve and discuss issues related to friendships, behavioral concerns in the classroom, processing feelings, and many other regular childhood and adolescent developmental challenges.

Individual and small group counseling is provided on a short-term basis, as needed, that supports fostering age-appropriate social and developmental skills scheduled as needed with the teacher.

When needed, Saint Joseph School reserves the right to require students to meet with the school counselor or require students to receive outside professional counseling in order to remain a student at Saint Joseph School. Counseling services are provided on a short-term basis and are designed to support students and families related to their educational experience at Saint Joseph School. Community referrals are provided for more in-depth, long-term counseling.

Through Needham Youth Services, Needham youth may receive counseling services from a licensed mental health counselor at no charge. School Counselors work closely with NYS employees to facilitate sessions and services for students in need of support. Parents will be contacted by SJS Counseling staff prior to making any referrals or appointments. This service is not extended to non-resident students. Additionally, SJS partners with the Needham Police Department in moments of mental health crisis. Through NPD, professional staff from Riverside may be available to provide assessments and referrals for any student in crisis. For more information on counseling services and crisis support, please contact the School Counseling department.

RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES, CONFLICTS, AND GRIEVANCES

Saint Joseph School recognizes that disputes, conflicts and/or grievances can arise within the Community in either the educational or employment setting. For the continued health and prosperity of the Community it is important that such matters be resolved as quickly as possible. Accordingly, members of the Saint Joseph School Community are encouraged to avail themselves of these procedures within five days of the incident to afford all concerned the opportunity for a satisfactory resolution of any matter of concern. Depending upon the issue or the

person(s) involved in the matter, the following procedures will be followed:

For matters involving a teacher or a staff member, the first step is to discuss the issue with the individual. If the issue cannot be resolved, the parent/guardian should request a meeting with the appropriate supervisor. In the event that

the matter remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Head of School. After meeting with the Head of School, the parent/guardian may appeal to the Pastor, if the matter remains unresolved.

SCHOOL FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Saint Joseph School is committed to communicating with its parent community in an efficient and timely manner. Parents can expect to receive accurate, relevant, and consistent information regarding their child's experience at Saint Joseph School. It is important that a parent's contact information remains current in the FACTS/RenWeb system to ensure parents receive electronic, print, and phone communication.

Maintaining open and effective communication between school and home is essential to foster a collaborative and supportive environment that optimizes students' academic growth and overall well-being.

- The "Sunday Scoop" is a weekly All-School communication that is emailed to the entire community and posted on the school website (under "News"), each Sunday. It contains important details about upcoming community and academic events, as well as opportunities for school involvement and support.
- Every Friday, all Little Sharks (2.9) through Grade 5 classroom teachers will send out an electronic blast which keeps parents informed of the learning and activities going on in the classroom. Upper School teachers will publish periodic updates via email.

The school's website (www.saintjoes.com) serves as a dual-purpose platform. Firstly, it acts as a tool to attract

and inform potential new families about the institution's offerings, values, and strengths. Secondly, it provides current students and families with easy access to information, resources, and updates about academics, events, and extracurricular activities, fostering communication and enhancing the overall school experience.

At Saint Joseph School, we actively engage with our community through various social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Through these channels, we strive to showcase the magic that exists within our school and share our vibrant learning environment with students, parents, staff, and the wider community.

We post regularly on these platforms to keep everyone informed about exciting events, educational achievements, co-curricular activities, and various happenings within our school community. Our social media presence enables us to celebrate the accomplishments of our students, faculty, and staff, while also promoting a sense of belonging and school pride.

Through these platforms, we hope to highlight the values and ethos that make our school unique, and we welcome all students and their families to be part of this digital journey, celebrating the magic inside our school. We encourage everyone to follow our pages, engage with our content, and share their experiences, creating a dynamic and interactive online community.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES, ROLES, AND INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

The positive interaction, communication, and cooperation between faculty and parents are vital to the success of Saint Joseph School. With this in mind, we have listed some of the important responsibilities, services, and information that support the work and energies of the school.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parental support of the school policies and procedures contained in the Parent-Student Handbook and parental support of and cooperation with the faculty, staff and administration promotes student success and responsibility and is vital to our educational mission.

PROMOTING ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL INTEGRITY

A hallmark of Saint Joseph School is excellence in academics. Parents have an important role to play in ensuring when a student puts their name on their work, it is indeed their work. Work that is handed in by students that is not attributed to the original author will be considered plagiarized. Of primary importance is the responsibility of parents to create a home environment that contributes to the growth of their children's integrity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All student records are private and confidential. Parents, however, have the right to inspect their children's file. No information is released to non-educational agencies without parental consent unless directed by a court order to do so.

PARENT GUIDELINES

Parents are invited to contact the appropriate person at the school at any time during the school day. When differences of opinion, questions and comments arise, we ask that parents address these areas in the following way:

First, please always keep in mind that our goal as a school is to help children help themselves; our goal is for students to learn the process for resolving difficulties with their classmates or with their teachers without intervention from adults. But when they do need our help, it is important that we resist the urge to resolve the issue for them; instead, we play "coach" and mentor. In this way, we offer clarifying questions and give them strategies for responding to the issues on their own.

Next, if this strategy does not resolve the situation, then an initial contact may be made with the teacher who is most closely involved with the situation. Every effort should be made to satisfy questions in a way that respects the best interests of both the student and the school. Our focus here should continue to be: "How can we help the student resolve the situation successfully?"

If such a meeting does not result in a satisfactory solution, parents or faculty may involve the Head of School.

CAMPUS VISITATION

Parents and other visitors are welcome on campus and, in fact, continue to be a tremendous help when teachers invite them to assist with special activities and classroom projects.

Items needed by your child should be left with the school receptionist. A member of the staff will deliver that item to your child, or your child will pick-it up on the way to lunch or in between classes.

Families with special divorce, custody, or security concerns must inform the school in writing and provide copies of court orders that give or deny permission for visitation to specific parties.

Saint Joseph School prohibits a person from bringing a handgun on the physical premises of our school or any grounds or building on which an activity sponsored by our school is being conducted, or a passenger transportation vehicle of our school.

USE OF FACILITIES

Although Saint Joseph School is your School, use of indoor and outdoor facilities for non-school events, must get prior approval from the Director of School Operations and Head of School.

TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences can be scheduled as needed throughout the year. A scheduled NO SCHOOL day is reserved for conferences in October just after the first trimester midterm progress reports are made available. The Early Childhood School will have a second round of conferences later in the year, typically in Spring.

Any time a parent/guardian feels a conference is needed, he or she may contact the teacher to arrange for one. Parents are encouraged to communicate regularly with teachers.

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ADULT CIVILITY CODE

The Civility Code applies to parents, guardians, adult siblings and relatives associated with each student, while on campus. The school has the right to dismiss a student from attendance if the student's family is threatening or causing campus life to be disrupted or less secure either by their actions or language.

CIVILITY CODE

As an adult member of the Saint Joseph School community, I hereby agree to conduct myself with conspicuous civility at all times. All of my exchanges with students, faculty, staff, parents, and visitors will be marked by respect and kindness, even in times of stress or disagreement. This Civility Code for teachers, staff members and parents is a counterpart to the school motto is recited by our students daily. In order to be an effective member of the Saint Joseph School community, I pledge to follow this Civility Code for the good of the whole community and, especially for the children who learn from my example.

Consequences

While the normal consequences for a violation of the Civility Code follow the sequence below, some violations may be so severe or extreme that they require immediate probation or separation of students and/or adults:

1. The individual will be contacted to discuss the situation and consequences of the behavior. A written warning is given at this time.
2. If the individual commits another violation, the person is placed on probation. The terms/length of this probation are determined on a case-by-case basis. Examples of probation may include, but are not limited to restrictions such as:
 - a. Prohibited from attending School events
 - b. Prohibited from accompanying classes on field trips
 - c. Prohibited from being on the Saint Joseph School campus
3. If the individual's behavior continues to be deemed a problem during the defined probation period or if he/she violates that probation, where applicable:
4. The child of the individual will be dismissed from Saint Joseph School without tuition refund.
5. The staff or faculty member will be dismissed from Saint Joseph School.

All members of our community (parents, faculty, staff, grandparents, and/or any adult associated with each student) will be held to the same civility standard.

While Civility Code violations are usually held in the strictest confidence, some civility code regulations may be so public or significant, the Head of School may inform

the school community. In these instances, an individual's name is not used.

Any questions regarding such policies or procedures should be directed to the Head of School.

ATTENDANCE

Overview

Saint Joseph School deems attendance and punctuality for all school commitments as important. Commitments include classes, physical education, athletic practices and contests, morning prayer, assemblies, Mass, appointments with teachers, administrators, or advisors, and other required activities. Failure to meet any of these commitments warrants some consequence. **If, for any reason, there are more than 18 absences in any class, credit for the course will be subject to review by the student's teacher and the Head of School.** A loss of academic credit can occur if a student's total absences from class approach a level which is felt by the school to significantly compromise his/her learning and the integrity of the course. In all cases, a student's absences do affect a student's grade.

Promotion may be jeopardized if a student misses more than 18 days (10% of the school year) of which 5 may be used for reasons other than illness. When a student exceeds these 5 days, zeros may be given for all assignments, quizzes and tests. With advance notice, students may arrange to coordinate materials and assessments at the discretion of the teacher. Make-up assignments and assessments are not guaranteed for non-illness related absence and may not receive full credit.

Students who have been absent are responsible for obtaining assignments and completing missed work. Such work should be completed to meet the teacher's deadlines.

If a student is out due to an injury, he/she must return to school with a written note from the parent and/or doctor stating what the student can and cannot do and for how long. We assume that the student can participate fully in activities unless a note is provided indicating that he/she will not be allowed to participate in PE, recess or extracurricular activities.

Students are not allowed to participate in any after-school events if they are absent from school more than 4 hours on the day of the event.

Absences due to travel and non-medical reasons are unexcused. Written notification of extended travel must be provided to the Head of School and the homeroom teacher/advisor ahead of time. Students must work with their homeroom teacher/advisor on a make-up work plan. Upper School Students are encouraged to make best

use of online resources to stay current with assignments and learning objectives.

Communicating Absences

The school must be notified if a child is to be absent. There are two ways you may go about reporting the absence. You may either send an email or leave a voicemail. The email address is: attendance@sjs-needham.org, or please call the office by 8:10 AM to report your child's absence. Simply dial: 781-444-4459 (press 1) and follow the instructions on the recording. Parents should notify the teacher in writing if you know of an absence in advance.

Full Day Attendance

Students must be in attendance at least 4 hours to be recorded for a full day of attendance. Students are not permitted to participate in after school events if they are absent from school for more than 4 hours or, if during the course of the day, are sent home by the school nurse.

Student Tardiness

Upper School Students should enter the building each morning, report to their lockers and then report to homeroom. There should be no loitering at the lockers. Upper school students not in their homeroom by the 8:10 AM bell are considered tardy and must report to the main office receptionist for an admission slip. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Lower School Students should check in at the main office prior to reporting to their classrooms. Lower School Students should work to be in their classroom prior to the 8:10 a.m. bell. Excessive tardiness may result in a parent conference and intervention plans.

Releasing Students

Dental and medical appointments should be scheduled after school hours except for emergencies, if possible. We understand that scheduling appointments during the school day is sometimes unavoidable. However, please make every effort to arrange appointments before or after school hours, as it is extremely disruptive to the class and the student.

A student will not be released from school during the school day without the written or e-mail request of a parent or guardian. Students will be released only to parents or to one authorized by them. Parents report to the 90 Pickering Street office to pick up students as they will be dismissed from there only. Should a student return to school prior to the end of the school day, he or she should sign into the main office before returning to class.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

SCHOOL HOURS

Early Childhood School: 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM
Grades K-8: 8:00 AM – 2:40 PM
First Bell: 8:00 AM
Morning Prayer & attendance: 8:10 AM

Drop-Off And Pick-Up

To maintain an effective system and to ensure ultimate safety for all children, we ask for 100% parental cooperation. It is imperative that EVERYONE follows the arrival/dismissal regulations to maintain (1) safety for the children, (2) respect for the neighbors, (3) orderly traffic patterns for the town.

All car line students in Grades K-8 **MUST** be dropped off/picked up in the SCHOOLYARD car line.

Drop-Off – Grades K-8

- All cars must enter the schoolyard by way of Highland Ave. and exit after student drop-off onto Pickering St., making a right turn **ONLY** at the end of the driveway.
- Morning drop-off must be orderly and safe by forming a **single** line and dropping children off at the play structure walkway/ramp.
- If you need to come into the building for any reason, kindly park along the fence on the right.
- All cars must proceed through the schoolyard as quickly as possible to avoid a back-up on Highland Ave.
- Students dropped off as “Walkers” may enter the building via the front door at 90 Pickering St. or the Mary’s Garden Door at the corner of Pickering and May streets.

Drop-Off – Early Childhood School Students

- Little Shark (2.9) students must be escorted into the building. Enter through Door#1, walk down the stairs and help your student unpack.
- Pre-School students must be dropped off at the Early Childhood School playground.
- Pre-K students must be dropped off at Door#2 of the Early Childhood School building.
- Parents may park in designated areas only. **NO PARKING** or pulling into the lot behind the Early Childhood School building. Parents may NOT park in the Administration parking lot on Oakland Ave. Please abide by all posted parking/traffic signs.
- Older students may be crossed with the crossing guard at Pickering and May/Oakland while you escort your Little Shark (2.9), Pre-School, or Pre-K student into the Early Childhood School Building.

Pick-Up – Early Childhood School Students

- Little Shark (2.9) students must be picked up inside the building. Enter through Door#1, walk down the stairs and pick up your child.
- Pre-School students will be released and picked up at Door#2 of the Early Childhood School building.
- Pre-K students will be released and picked up at the rear black gate of the Early Childhood School building.

- **NO PARKING** in the lot behind the Early Childhood School building.

Pick-Up – Grades K-8 (Carline)

- There will be five (5) car lines formed in the schoolyard for pick up.
- All cars must enter the school yard by way of Highland Avenue and exit onto Pickering Street, making a right turn only at the end of the driveway.
- Please follow the direction of the staff member on duty.
- Once all students are safely in the parked cars, a staff member will direct each line of cars to begin exiting the schoolyard by way of Pickering Street. Lane #5 (furthest from the school) will be the first to exit.
- Please do not block a lane. If your child has not come out of school, please circle around the building.
- Staff members will periodically stop the traffic flow so that your children may go to your car. Please do not call them to come to your car while the traffic is moving. Please do not leave your car. We will assist your child if necessary to get to your car.
- Please drive slowly and carefully while in the school parking lot.
- Please do not leave your car idling in the car line.
- Please do not use a cell phone while you are operating a vehicle in the car line.
- If you have a relative or friend picking up your child, please share the school pick-up protocol.

Pick-Up – Grades K-8 (Walkers)

- Families planning to pick up their students on foot must meet their students on the front lawn by the 90 Pickering St address.
- There will be no dismissal from the “Mary’s Garden Entrance”
- Upper School Students will also be released from the student exits on May St.
- Students in 4th – 8th grade may walk home if the family residence is in proximity to Saint Joseph School. Homeroom teachers should be notified of this designation at the start of the year.

Note:

- To maintain positive, good-neighbor relations, please adhere to all no parking signs.
- There is no parking at the Needham Public Schools parking lot on Oakland St.
- Mary’s Garden is a space designated for spiritual reflection. If you would like to congregate or allow students to play, please use Greene’s field park and playground.
- No parking is allowed in the Stephen Palmer lot.

OTHER PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES & INFORMATION

Non-Custodial Parents

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

Divorced parents must furnish a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree to the Head of School to be kept confidential so the school can always maintain student safety.

Volunteers

Volunteers are vital to the success of the Saint Joseph School experience. Many opportunities exist throughout the school for parents to volunteer. Parents who volunteer in classrooms are asked not to bring preschool-aged children into the classroom while classes are in session and to follow the guidelines set by the classroom teachers.

All volunteers must follow the guidelines of the school including completion of the VIRTUS workshop available through the Archdiocese of Boston. Additionally, a current CORI form must be on file with the school office. Volunteers must sign-in at the receptionist desk and wear an identification badge while at school.

PARENT SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (PSA)

Saint Joseph School is well-served by a strong partnership between Parents, School Administrators, and Teachers, evidenced by a robust volunteer program and frequent opportunities to connect on school-related issues. One of the best parts of our school community is being part of the “Parent School Association” (PSA). You’ll meet fellow parents, plan fun school-wide events, and get a chance to be involved in your student(s) school life. All Saint Joseph School parents/guardians are automatically members of the PSA. There is no need to sign up, and we do not solicit dues. Event volunteers are solicited in the spring/summer prior to the upcoming school year. The PSA hosts meetings that are open to all. More information on the PSA can be found on the school website and PSA can be reached via email at PSA@sjs-needham.org.

ENROLLMENT AND PARENT FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Enrollment

All students are required to have a signed Saint Joseph School Enrollment Contract along with a re-enrollment fee and tuition deposit to reserve a space for the upcoming school year. Failure to complete the enrollment contract and submit the re-enrollment fee and tuition deposit by the stated deadline will delay class placements and may

result in the space being awarded to another student. If you do not choose to re-enroll your child for the upcoming school year, you must contact the Admissions Office to complete a student withdrawal form.

Tuition Payments

Enrollment of your child in Saint Joseph School obligates you to pay the full tuition for the year.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for dismissal. Records will not be released until all fees are paid. Any family who has a problem paying tuition and incidental fees should contact the school finance office immediately.

Holidays, missed days, sick days, or vacations are not deducted from payments or tuition. A payment is not the cost of education for the month, but simply a division of the total tuition cost. Tuition includes textbooks.

Students will not be allowed to attend school, take examinations, or participate in graduation if tuition accounts, and incidental payments are not current.

Placement Policy

Students accepted to Saint Joseph School will be placed according to the best interests of the child. In all cases, the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, in conjunction with the teachers and Director of Admissions, will determine placement of students in classes.

Student Withdrawals and Transfers

In the event a student must withdraw, the parent/guardian must submit a completed withdrawal form that can be obtained from the Admissions Office. All

financial obligations must be met prior to withdrawal for records and/or recommendations to be released.

When a student transfers to another school, the parent/guardian must notify the Admissions Office. The date of and reason for the transfer will be recorded on the cumulative record. A cumulative record will be mailed upon request to the receiving school.

All school accounts must be in good standing before any records will be released.

Tuition Policy

1. For a student to enter Saint Joseph School in August/September, tuition must be current as of September 1st of that year.
2. For students to receive final report cards, tuition must be current.

If for any reason a parent chooses to transfer a student from Saint Joseph School, the following tuition refund policy will be honored:

- Transfer before July 1 - **FULL REFUND** (*less registration fee and book/supply fee*)
- Transfer between July 1-October 1 - **70%** of tuition *less registration fee and book/supply fee*
- Those on monthly, quarterly, and semiannual plans forfeit all paid tuition to date
- Transfer between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31 - **30%** of tuition *less registration fee and book/supply fee*
- Those on monthly, quarterly, and semiannual plans forfeit all paid tuition to date
- Transfer after Dec. 31 - **NO REFUND**

DRESS CODE

Expectations

Students are expected to be clean, neat, well groomed, and to dress in good taste that is not distracting to others and that conforms to the uniform rules listed below. Additionally, our expectation is that your child is in proper dress from the moment that he or she steps onto campus each morning.

- Uniforms should be clean, tidy and wrinkle free.
- Fingernails should be kept short and clean. Only clear/natural fingernail polish is permitted.
- Girls' makeup should be conservative and not stand out (Upper School students).
- Hair is to be kept neat and well groomed. Natural colors permitted only.
- Boys' hair may not extend beyond the top of the shirt collar or eyebrows.
- Students are expected to be in complete uniform from the time they arrive on campus until they leave the campus, unless involved in a supervised activity for which other attire has been approved, such as a field trip.
- Non-uniform coats and jackets are to be worn outside only.
- Hats or baseball caps may be worn outside only and must be worn correctly (bill of cap forward).
- Students are not to deface their own or anyone else's clothing in any way, such as marking or attaching things.

GIRLS, K-GRADE 8: Girls may wear a navy emblem polo shirt with the plaid skort/skirt or khaki shorts/pants, throughout the year, with solid white ankle socks, or navy knee socks or tights. Socks must be white, black, gray, or navy. Plaid jumpers with navy emblem polo may also be worn. Saint Joseph School sweaters, sweatshirts, and fleece are permitted year-round as outerwear over the regulation uniform. Sneakers or any flat, closed-toe footwear that cover the foot may be worn. Boots, such as Uggs or Timberlands, may be worn to school, but not during the school day. **Girls' hemlines should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.**

BOYS, K-GRADE 8: Boys may wear a navy emblem polo shirt with khaki shorts/pants. Socks must be white, black, gray, or navy. Saint Joseph School sweaters, sweatshirts, and fleece are permitted year-round as outerwear over the regulation uniform. Sneakers or any flat, closed-toe footwear that cover the foot may be worn. Boots, such as Uggs or Timberlands, may be worn to school, but not during the school day.

GYM UNIFORMS (Girls and Boys, K-Grade 8): Regulation gym uniforms will be worn by all students in grades K-8 in place of regular school uniforms on gym day. These consist of navy-blue shorts with school emblem or navy blue sweatpants with school emblem, a

Saint Joseph School light gray tee shirt with school emblem, and socks and sneakers. Saint Joseph School sweaters, sweatshirts, and fleece are permitted year-round as outerwear over the regulation gym uniform. **Girls' hemlines should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.**

LITTLE SHARKS (2.9), PRESCHOOL & PRE-K: Little Sharks (2.9), Pre-School and Pre-K uniforms are the same daily. It is the "gym uniform for K-Grade 8" as noted above. Daily, students in Little Sharks (2.9), Pre-School and Pre-K should wear: Navy blue shorts (sweat or nylon) with school emblem or navy pants (sweatpants) with school emblem, light gray shirt (short or long sleeve) with school emblem, and socks and sneakers. Saint Joseph School sweaters, sweatshirts, and fleece are permitted year-round as outerwear over the regulation uniform.

General Notes:

- Any staff member may ask a student to remove or replace any articles of clothing or accessories that do not comply with the uniform guidelines. Students will be asked to remove hooded sweatshirts during mass.
- Sneakers (girls and boys) may be worn all year.
- Uniforms must be ordered from Dennis Uniform Company and have the logo "screened" or "sewn" on.
- You may not add your own logo to the gym clothes.
- Uniforms may be purchased through Dennis Uniform Company at DennisUniform.com. Our preferred school number is DDCo10.

Uniform Accessories

Accessories for boys and girls should not detract from the learning environment.

Boys: One watch that is small and unobtrusive, one small cross or religious medal necklace on a chain. No beaded necklaces are permitted.

Girls: One watch that is small and unobtrusive, one pair of stud earrings that do not extend beyond the earlobe (no hoops or multiple earrings) and/or a small cross or religious medal necklace on a chain. No beaded necklaces are permitted.

For the safety of your child (and for loss prevention), other jewelry is not permitted. This includes necklaces (other than the above-mentioned type), rings, bracelets and anklets. Watches that do not receive notifications or texts are permitted. Smart watches may not be connected to the Internet during school hours.

Dress Down “Tag Day” Guidelines

For non-uniform days, students are to dress neatly, modestly, and appropriately. Specific guidelines are issued for these days and include the following:

- Shorts/skirts should be loose fitting with an attached underlayer (such as a Nike short) and be of approximate fingertip length.
- Jeans may be permitted, if not torn or frayed.
- Any athletic, closed-toe shoes should be worn. No sandals, flip-flops, slide shoes, platforms, or heels greater than one inch are permitted.
- No shirts with offensive words or pictures or commercial advertising of any kind.
- No spaghetti straps or sleeveless shirts permitted.
- No leggings or yoga pants are permitted without an appropriate length top that covers both front and back

Please ensure that your child is appropriately attired on these days. Any student (K–8) deemed to be improperly attired will be asked to call a parent to bring a uniform. Upper School students may also be assigned detention. A second violation will result in the loss of these dress privileges in the future. Continued violations will result in a conference with the Dean of Student Life.

School Store Any items purchased through the [School Store](#) may be worn with and according to the stated uniform guidelines, if the item has the school crest/emblem. For example, any school store sweatshirt with the crest/emblem may be worn as an outer layer over the above-mentioned polo, or jumper, uniform. The tie-dye t-shirt can only be worn on tag days as it does not follow the gym uniform guidelines stated above (SJS light gray t-shirt with school emblem and/or navy sweatshirt with school emblem).

STUDENT LIFE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT CONDUCT: OVERVIEW

Fundamental Standards

At the heart of the Standards of Student Conduct for Saint Joseph School is a respect for each individual student as well as a keen awareness of the spiritual, social, and academic community within which each student must function.

Those who choose to join our community do so with the understanding that the following expectations will be respected and accepted.

- **Honesty and Trust**
- **Kindness and Respect**
- **Respect for individual possessions and property**
- **Constructive resolution of conflict**
- **Concern for individual and communal well-being, health and safety**

In general, discipline is designed to encourage students to adhere to their responsibilities as citizens of the school community, to act appropriately, and to correct misconduct. Disciplinary action drawn on the professional judgment of teachers and administrators will be related to the seriousness of the offense, the student's age and grade level, the frequency of misbehavior, the student's attitude, the effect of the misconduct on the school environment, and requirements of law. Because of these factors, discipline for a particular offense (unless otherwise specified by law) may bring into consideration varying techniques and responses.

Each classroom teacher will follow the same basic discipline procedures:

- A list of identified classroom rules, stated in positive terms, will be posted in the classroom.
- A stated sequence of consequences will be enforced should a student choose not to follow the classroom rules.
- A consistent system of acknowledging appropriate behavior will be employed.
- Whenever possible, group punishment will not be utilized.
- Corporal punishment will not be administered at Saint Joseph School.

Student Expectations

- Walk, speak, and act with good purpose.
- Listen and follow teachers' instructions.
- Show courtesy and respect for adults and for each other.
- Respect the property of others and of the school.
- Walk quietly in the hallways.
- Comply with the Uniform Code.

- Be where you are expected to be, when you are expected to be there.
- Prepare for each class; take appropriate materials and assignments to class.
- Demonstrate a reverent and prayerful manner at Mass and all community gatherings.
- Represent Saint Joseph School in a positive manner.
- Demonstrate honesty and responsibility in behavior and academics.
- Cooperate with or assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order, discipline, school cleanliness.
- Work to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Adhere to these guidelines both inside the buildings and outside.

Definition of Misconduct

The school defines misconduct to include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Violating academic honesty guidelines.
- Mishandling or destroying school property.
- Taking material from a teacher's desk or file cabinet without permission.
- Cheating or copying the work of another student or a published work.
- Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or property damage.
- Leaving school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
- Using profanity, vulgar language or obscene gestures or public lewdness.
- Possessing knives, bladed instruments, air guns, chemical dispensing devices, fireworks, matches, replica firearms, electronic stunning devices and other dangerous items.
- Fighting, stealing, lying.
- Viewing and/or accessing in any way the computer files or folders of another member of the community without permission.
- Any misuse of technology as defined by the Acceptable Use Policy.
- Damaging or vandalizing property owned by others.
- Disobeying rules for conduct on field trips or school events.
- Hazing.
- Failing to comply with directives given by school personnel, including Uniform Code Regulations.
- Bullying, name-calling, ethnic or racial slurs, or derogatory statements, extortion, coercion, or blackmail.
- Engaging in any misbehavior that gives school officials reasonable cause to believe that such conduct will substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.

- Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual contact.
- Engaging in conduct that constitutes sexual harassment or sexual abuse whether the conduct is by word, gesture, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors.
- Possessing or using matches or a lighter.
- Possessing, smoking, or using tobacco products.
- Possessing, using or selling drugs or items attempted to be passed off as drugs and contraband.
- Having a cell phone or other similar device active between 8:00 AM – 2:40 PM, or in violation of grade-level policies.
- Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.
- Violating safety rules.
- Falsifying records, passes, or other school-related documents.
- Possessing or distributing pornographic materials.
- Participating in Cyber bullying as described in the “Technology Acceptable Use Policies” section.
- Refusing persistently to abide by school rules.
- Assaulting a teacher or other individual.
- Using inappropriate or illegal school electronic communication system(s), including but not limited to, internet and e-mail.
- Violating any local, state or federal laws.
- Repeated or flagrant violations of the Standards of Student Conduct.
- Flagrant insubordination or disobedience.
- Incompatibility with the educational goals, fundamental standards, and mission of Saint Joseph School. Incompatibility is defined as flagrant, routine, or consistent defiance of the basic routine of the school which includes, but is not limited to, repeated classroom absences or repeated failure to turn in classroom assignments, missing assigned punitive responsibilities, and repeated antagonistic or uncooperative behavior.

In addition, students’ off campus conduct before or after school hours may warrant disciplinary action up to and including dismissal if their conduct, in the judgment of the Head, is substantial and affects the school community adversely in any way or brings discredit to Saint Joseph School.

Consequences

A student who violates campus or classroom rules may be disciplined by one or more of the following discipline management techniques. These techniques may be used alone or in combination:

- Verbal correction.
- Cooling-off time or “time-out,” separation from peer group, including being sent home.
- Seating changes in the classroom.
- Behavioral contracts.

- Counseling by teachers, staff, or Head of School.
- Parent-teacher conferences.
- Confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process.
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned area.
- Assignment to another classroom.
- Lunch and/or after school detention.
- Assigned school duties other than class tasks.
- Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in field trips, extra-curricular activities and eligibility for seeking and holding honorary offices.
- Referral to outside agency and/or legal authority for criminal prosecution in addition to disciplinary measures imposed by the school.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.

Discipline Referral

If classroom responses and interventions fail to effect changes in patterns of behavior, a discipline referral may be used to document misconduct. The referral will delineate the behavior and resultant consequences assigned. A referral is significant and is not to be taken lightly.

Detention

Students may be assigned to serve lunch and/or after-school detention as a consequence of inappropriate behavior. Students are instructed where to report for detention by the teacher assigning the detention. Parents will be notified via writing. Upon the issuance of a second detention a meeting with the school administration will be required. Students are expected to serve a detention on the day it is assigned, as detentions are usually not rescheduled due to sports or other extracurricular activities. Multiple after-school detentions may result in one day of In-School Suspension (I.S.S.), though I.S.S. may be used sooner when deemed necessary.

Suspension

The Head of School will make all decisions involving suspension after conferring with the teacher. Before suspension is implemented, the school will notify the student and parent/guardian. A reasonable attempt will be made to hold a conference at which the parent/guardian, teacher, and Head of School will examine the situation and the reasons for suspension. All schoolwork missed during these days must be made up. If the student is not fully able to complete classwork, it may affect their credit received. If a student receives an In-School Suspension, the student is prohibited from attending any after school events, extended care, or school function on the day of the assigned suspension. If a student receives an Out-of-School Suspension, the student is prohibited from entering the school building and/or school grounds during school hours, including extended care hours and school functions on the assigned suspension day.

Expulsion

The expulsion of a student from Saint Joseph School is a serious matter. Expulsion may result when a student's behavior poses a grave moral problem and/or disrupts the school's teaching and learning environment. The Head of School may expel a student from the school for the remainder of the school year.

A student may be expelled immediately for the following offenses:

- Repeated or flagrant violation of school rules.
- Flagrant insubordination or disobedience.
- Possession and/or use of a weapon.
- Possession and/or use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inhalants while at school or its functions.
- Destruction of or failure to pay for destruction of school property.
- Bullying/Cyber bullying.
- A parent's inability or unwillingness to support the faculty, administrators, staff, rules, mission, or values of the school.
- A single violation of a school rule so egregious or serious to warrant separation from the community.

The Head of School will make all decisions involving expulsion after conferring with the teacher and the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing. If expelled, the student is prohibited from entering the school buildings and/or school grounds during school hours, including extended care hours and school functions.

LOWER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Saint Joseph School seeks to encourage student acquisition and application of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to recognize and manage one's own emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations capably. The classroom focuses on developing the individual qualities, strengths, and assets of a child related to social, emotional, cognitive, and moral development as well as positive mental health. Ultimately, our approach is also one that is committed to enhancing personal responsibility and accountability for actions.

The goal of emotionally intelligent management and discipline is internal self-management as opposed to behavior based purely on external rule-following. Discipline is a chance to learn and grow. It is individualized to the situation as much as possible. We do not use public shaming or sarcasm in any way at SJS. All behavior is communication, so it is an important part of the discipline process to consider what a student is attempting to communicate – what feelings, underlying causes, or lagging skills are becoming evident through behavior choices – and respond accordingly to address the concern. To assist students in behavioral skill-building, teachers use practices designed to create

community and teach social skills, while being mindful of teacher language and academic planning.

Most behavior issues are handled by the teacher at the classroom level. If behaviors are more extreme or repetitive in nature, teachers and students work with the Head of School. Open, communicative relationships and partnership with families is a hallmark of the SJS experience, thus a child's teacher, and ultimately the Head of School, communicate frequently with parents as children learn and grow within this discipline model.

UPPER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

SJS Upper School is a student-centered community that focuses on the unique needs of each student. As a Catholic institution, we recognize the dignity of the human person in the students, faculty, and staff. As our students progress through the various physical, psychological, intellectual, and social changes inherent to Upper School students, we also seek to provide them with the instruction and guidance to handle the various moral and ethical challenges of being an adolescent. Ultimately, we aim to foster independence in learning and decision-making through the development of the five core competencies of social emotional learning: self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and self-management.

Through our virtue program, we guide students in acquiring and effectively applying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to apply these core competencies in their own lives. Through class meetings, holding students accountable, providing clear expectations, giving students choice, role-modeling, and other strategies, we aim to have students regulate their own behavior with minimal adult monitoring and use of rewards/punishments.

Upper School student expectations:

- Be responsible.
- Respect the rights and views of others.
- Be prepared and do your best.
- Be kind toward others.
- Solve social conflicts peacefully.

In outlining clear expectations for the students, faculty, staff, and administration seek to provide guidance for behavior beginning on the first day of school. In providing an atmosphere of respect and consideration for all students, the school will have most discipline corrections handled at the classroom level. When behavior is egregious or follows a pattern of poor choices or inappropriate behavior, the child's homeroom teacher and, subsequently, the Head of School, will be involved in working with the family to identify solutions to the behavior.

ACADEMICS

Curriculum

Saint Joseph School offers a challenging and enriched curriculum stressing academic excellence. The child-centered curriculum supports the uniqueness of our students and the development of the whole person. Developmentally appropriate, well-researched instructional strategies and programs make learning interesting, meaningful, and enjoyable.

The curriculum includes all core academic subjects: religion, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish. Cultural development is encouraged by offerings in the fine arts. The goals and objectives of each core subject are built on mastery of the state and national standards.

Homework

Homework is a very important part of every student's progress. Homework provides students an opportunity to:

- Review the material taught in class each day.
- Reinforce skills taught in class.
- Prepare for examinations.
- Work on long-range assignments.
- Catch up on any missed assignments.
- Complete extra projects.
- Finish work not completed in class.
- Preview the following day's material.

Students in grades 1 through 8 can expect to do homework each weekday evening. In addition, Upper School students can expect homework on the weekends. While parental involvement with homework is encouraged, students should assume responsibility for seeing that homework is completed and turned in. For additional information concerning homework and absences (see "Attendance" section).

Student Work (Upper School)

Students are expected to complete all work in a timely manner. Work that is not complete by the deadline is considered late and subject to late work grading provisions.

Extra credit is offered at the discretion of each teacher. Teachers who choose to offer extra credit will inform students at the beginning of the grading period. Extra credit is due by the assigned deadline and no late extra credit work is accepted. Extra credit is offered to all students or none.

No more than three assessments are administered on the same day in the Upper School. All announced tests and quizzes are posted online.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to complete their coursework independently, striving to achieve high standards to the best of their ability. The highest sense of honesty and

personal integrity should be exercised at all times, and students should submit only work that is their own. Cheating, turning in the work of others as one's own, or plagiarizing from other published sources will result in disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes the use of online translators, artificially improved written pieces, and other inappropriate uses of digital resources.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Each day at Saint Joseph School, students pledge to "Achieve Academic Excellence". Students are expected to work towards this to the best of their ability, handing in only work that is their own. Work that is handed in by students that is not attributed to the original author will be considered plagiarized. As a school, we recognize the emerging technology and benefits in the use of AI tools, such as Grammarly or ChatGPT. As the technology continues to evolve, we will continue to support both students and staff to stay literate in the ethical use of the technology, while maintaining our academic standards. We also feel it is of vital importance to partner with parents to maintain the growth of their children's understanding and use of technology in this area.

General guidelines for the use of AI:

- Students are not permitted to use AI tools for any assignments without explicit permission from the teacher.
- As a means of learning how to use technology appropriately, students will be given permission to use AI for certain assignments, at the discretion of the individual teacher.
- Students will begin using AI as a useful tool for brainstorming, editing, and suggestions.
- When a student has permission to use AI for an assignment, all use must be disclosed in citations. Failure to cite AI will result in a student losing credit on the assignment.
- Consequences of being caught using AI in any way, except those approved by the particular teacher, may include loss of credit, loss of privileges, and referral to the Dean of Students and/or Head of School.

Promotion And Retention

Teachers are responsible for communicating with parents when there is a possibility of a student failing or when there is a dip in performance so that the parent can assist in getting the student the required help or support needed.

Lower School

To be promoted from one elementary grade level to the next, a student must attain for the school year an overall average of at least 60, which is derived by averaging the final numerical grade for language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and religion. In addition, a student must attain an average of at least 60 in language arts and in mathematics.

In classes in which numerical grades are not given, promotion or retention will be based on the achievement of objectives and learning outcomes. Teachers must inform parents by the midpoint of the grading period if a student is having serious difficulties.

The school may withhold credit for a class if the student has more than 18 absences in the school year.

Upper School

In order to pass a subject, a student must have a yearly average of at least 60. To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall obtain an overall average of 60 or above for the year in all courses taken. In addition, a student shall obtain an average of 60 or above in the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, religion, and foreign language.

A student who fails one subject for the year must attend an accredited summer school and pass with a grade of at least 60. The student then will be promoted and placed on academic probation for a period agreed upon by the parents and the school. If the student does not go to summer school or attends and does not pass with at least a 60, the student will not be permitted to return to Saint Joseph School. A student who fails two or more subjects shall not be admitted to attend Saint Joseph School the following year.

Eighth graders who fail one or more subjects for the year must attend an accredited summer school and pass with a grade of at least 60 to be promoted and will not be permitted to participate in graduation ceremonies. A student who fails the eighth grade will not be allowed to repeat the grade at Saint Joseph School.

The school may withhold credit for a grade and/or class if the student has more than 18 absences in the school year.

Report Cards

Report cards are distributed over three grading periods for Lower School and Upper School students. All students will receive status reports throughout the year on an as-needed basis.

Testing

MAP Achievement assessments will be given three times annually to all students in grades K-8 per the Archdiocese of Boston. Test results are recorded on the permanent record card of each student and given to each teacher to use as a guide in planning instruction. Parents and guardians are given copies of their child's test results along with explanations from the testing company.

GRADING PROCEDURES

Little Sharks (2.9), Pre-School, Pre-K, and Kindergarten - Grade 2

The academic year is divided into three grading periods. The final grade received is recorded on the permanent record card.

2.9 – 2nd grade students' progress is reported by a checklist of objectives and teacher's comments. These report cards are intended to indicate a student's developmental growth throughout the year in both Social Emotional and Academic areas.

Grades 3–5

The academic year is divided into three grading periods. The year-end report card is added to the permanent record of each student.

Numeric grades must be given for the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and religion.

These grades correspond to the following scale:

- A+ = 97 to 100
- A = 93 to 96
- A- = 90 to 92
- B+ = 87 to 89
- B = 83 to 86
- B- = 80 to 82
- C+ = 77 to 79
- C = 73 to 76
- C- = 70 to 72
- D+ = 67 to 69
- D = 63 to 66
- D- = 60 to 62
- F = 59 or below

Art, Music, PE, Spanish, STREAM, and Learning/Social Behavior are reported with the following marks:

- E** = Excellent
- G** = Good
- S** = Satisfactory
- N** = Needs Improvement
- U** = Unsatisfactory

Grades 6-8

In grades 6-8, the academic year is divided into three grading periods. The final grade received and recorded on the permanent record card is the average of the three grading periods.

Numerical grades correspond to the following letter-grade scale:

- A+ = 97 to 100
- A = 93 to 96
- A- = 90 to 92
- B+ = 87 to 89
- B = 83 to 86
- B- = 80 to 82
- C+ = 77 to 79
- C = 73 to 76
- C- = 70 to 72
- D+ = 67 to 69
- D = 63 to 66
- D- = 60 to 62
- F = 59 or below

Students with term grades below a 70 may be referred to the Student Support Team for responsive services and support. Students and parents are encouraged to collaborate with faculty and seek various means of support when necessary.

Late Work

In grades 6-8, points are deducted for late work submitted, except for those assignments indicated by the teacher. Point deductions will be issued according to the following:

- Assignments submitted after the designated due date – maximum grade of 75%.
- Assignments submitted two weeks after the designated due date – maximum grade 50%.
- Assignments more than four weeks late from the designated due date will receive no credit.

Credit for Partial Grading Period

Students transferring from an accredited school shall have their grades from that school included (in proportion to the time they represent during the grading period) in determining final period grades.

Students transferring from a non-accredited and/or nongraded school shall have their final grades for the transfer-grading period determined by conferences among the teachers and Head of School. They shall consider student performance in relation to other students in determining a fair and reasonable grade.

Loss of Credit/Failing Year-end Grades

Upper School Faculty will provide recommendations and feedback to the Head of School. Based on information from the faculty and in consultation with parents, a decision will be made regarding student progression or credit reinstatement.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Saint Joseph School uses a team approach to student support and intervention. Each Division of our school has developed a Student Support Team to provide collaborative support to students in need. Students are referred to the team via faculty referral or parent concern. Team members include administrators, teachers, special educators, and counselors.

Concerns may include academic performance, executive functioning skills, emotional or behavioral concerns. Faculty will make referrals based on observations and classroom performance.

Parents interested in pursuing additional academic support should contact their student's primary classroom teacher to make a parent referral. Counselors are also available to provide support.

Parents will be notified if a referral has been made and will receive direct follow-up from the Homeroom teacher or counselor.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS

Students with existing learning plans from established institutions will be provided with similar services and intervention plans based on the resources present at Saint Joseph School.

Annually, Individual Learning Plans will be reviewed and renewed by parents, educators, and administrators to ensure the plan remains relevant and interventions are effective.

Any student may receive an Individual Learning Plan after being referred to the Student Support Team. Plans are intended to provide direct service and interventions to support concrete concerns and/or deficits. The goal for every student is individual success and, ultimately, the termination of the plan.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Field Trips

Field trips are a part of the educational experience at Saint Joseph School. For students to attend a school-sponsored field trip, parents/guardians must complete the official Saint Joseph School field trip form for each field trip. A handwritten note from the parent/guardian or a telephone call **will not** be accepted in lieu of a signed official permission form.

Saint Joseph School faculty and staff will supervise students on field trips. At times, however, parents may be asked to chaperone field trips. All transportation for field trips will be by bus. Any exceptions to transportation by bus will be made by the Head of School. In rare instances when parents or guardians are asked to drive for Upper School events, the following guidelines must be observed: 1) Any parent/guardian driving on a field trip must have completed Virtus Training and provide a copy of current liability insurance and driver's license; 2) There must be a seat belt for each child assigned to a car; 3) Parents must complete the *Field Trip Permission Form* for all field trips.

The guidelines for trips delineated below must be observed for the safety of the students and protection of the school:

- Parents/guardians may not bring pre-school-age children on school field trips (siblings are not allowed on field trips).
- All chaperones must stay with the group during the field trip and take an active role in supervision.
- All parents who accompany a field trip as a chaperone or driver must have completed the VIRTUS Training and have a current school year CORI form on file.

- Parent/guardian chaperones are expected to follow the classroom teacher's instructions concerning supervision and transportation.

Field trips are a privilege, not a right. Students whose behavior in school is unsatisfactory may be ineligible to participate in class trips. Unacceptable behavior on trips may result in students being sent home early. Parents will be responsible for the transportation for any student sent home early from a Field Trip. Teachers and the administration reserve the right to determine eligibility for field trips.

Participation In Student Activities

A student will be considered *eligible* to participate in on-campus organizations (e.g. Student Council, school performances, fine arts productions) and fill leadership positions if their most recent report card reflects:

- A passing grade in each subject.
- A *Satisfactory* grade or better in all special subjects as well as in conduct for all subjects.

A student will be considered *on probation* from on-campus student activities should his/her most recent academic report reflect any one or a combination of the following:

- A failing grade in any subject.
- An incomplete in any subject.
- Dissatisfactory conduct for any subject.

Students on probation will meet with the Head of School to determine a path for improving his/her academic performance. During the probationary period, the student's main focus is improving one's grades and conduct. The length of the probationary period will be determined by the Head of School. Students may be allowed to participate in activities in a reduced capacity, or asked to suspend involvement with the group until evidence of improvement is demonstrated.

Athletics

Saint Joseph School Athletics utilizes the nature of sports to develop the necessary characteristics of independent and successful adults.

Competitive Athletics at Saint Joseph School uniquely contributes to the school community in many ways:

- Complement the spiritual and academic development of the Saint Joseph School student and to foster the development of the whole person.
- Challenge students to strive to achieve goals previously thought to be unattainable.
- Fuel the spirit, pride and camaraderie of the entire school community.
- Represent the Saint Joseph School community to other schools and communities through both coaches and athletes in the Competitive Athletic Program.
- Provide an effective recruiting tool to draw families to the Saint Joseph School community.

- Offer to all students in the program's corresponding age, at all skill and experience levels, the opportunity to participate in competitive sports.

In conjunction with Saint Joseph School's overall commitment to excellence, athletes and coaches in the Competitive Athletic Programs are encouraged to strive for excellence in all endeavors. The Saint Joseph School philosophy of excellence in Competitive Athletics measures not only the win/loss record within each sport, but also how well the program develops the whole person – mentally, spiritually and athletically.

Students are expected to always display appropriate spectator behavior. Students in Little Sharks (2.9)–4th grade must be under the direct supervision of an adult. Students in grades 5th–8th may attend unsupervised; however, they must always remain in the bleachers or on the sidelines area. Saint Joseph School faculty, staff, and coaches are not responsible for student/spectator supervision.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

A student will be considered *eligible* to participate in interscholastic athletics at Saint Joseph School if their most recent academic report reflects:

- A passing grade in each subject.
- A "3" grade or better in all special subjects as well as in conduct for all subjects.

A student-athlete will be considered *on probation* should his/her most recent academic report reflect any one or a combination of the following academic grades:

- One failing grade in any subject.
- Below "3" in any special subjects.
- One *Incomplete* in any subject.
- Dissatisfactory conduct in any subject.

At the discretion of the Head of School, a student-athlete will be considered *on probation*, in accordance with the expectations outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook.

Probation is one, two (2)-week period* during which a student-athlete works to improve his/her grades and/or conduct. During this two-week period, a student is still considered a member of the athletic team, but *time should be spent in improving one's grades and conduct*. Student-athletes on probation will *not* be eligible to practice or compete with the team until the probationary status has expired. Student-athletes are encouraged to seek extra help from those teachers in courses where he/she is struggling either before school or after school.

*The only exception to the two-week probationary period is the *Incomplete*. As soon as the student-athlete makes up the work that caused the incomplete and the work is to the satisfaction of the appropriate teacher, the student-athlete is no longer on probation.

Evaluating Probationary Improvement

A student-athlete will retain the status of a full, participating member of a team if his/her grades, at the end of the probationary two-week period, reflect a passing average or better in every class, and the student-athlete maintained conduct in keeping with the Saint Joseph School Parent-Student Handbook and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Ineligibility

A student-athlete will be considered *ineligible* for interscholastic sports at Saint Joseph School should there be no improvement after the two-week probationary period. *Ineligibility* means that a student-athlete may *not*

participate in interscholastic athletics at Saint Joseph School for the remainder of the season. This will result in the removal of the student from the team's roster.

All student-athletes are allowed one (1) probationary period per school year. Should a student-athlete fail to meet the academic and/or behavior standards outlined above more than once during a school year, he/she will be considered ineligible for the remainder of the school year.

Students are not allowed to participate in after school events if they are absent from school for more than 4 hours or, if during the day, are sent home by the school nurse.

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SCHOOL-ISSUED TECHNOLOGY & RESOURCE USE

The use of school-issued technology, computer network and Internet access is a privilege. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges. Use of school resources should be reasonable and related to educational purposes or personal development. No commercial or illegal use of the school's resources is permitted. Please reference the "Technology Acceptable Usage and Device Policies" shared at the start of the school year.

Chromebooks, iPads, and other personal devices are not permitted to be used before school for games or other entertainment. Upper School Students needing to use technology for schoolwork before 8:00 AM may do so in designated study halls in the Upper School building.

PUBLIC NOTORIETY

If a Saint Joseph School student's behavior (on or off campus/ during or after school) should draw negative attention to the school, the school has the right to address the student and situation through its disciplinary procedures.

SCHOOL'S JURISDICTION

Students are under Saint Joseph School jurisdiction whenever they are on campus (in the school building or on the grounds) or participating in a school-sponsored event. In these instances, all school rules apply.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Lockers, desks, and other storage spaces are school property. For the protection of all students, the school reserves the right to search school property at any time and may take possession of any articles deemed inappropriate.

POLICY AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, EXPLOITATION, AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Saint Joseph School is committed to creating an environment in which all members of the school community interact on the basis of mutual respect and the highest standards of decency, civility, and personal integrity. Thus, the school is committed to being a welcoming institution for all and therefore, free of harassment including harassment based on factors such as race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, medical condition, sexual orientation, or physical disability. The school strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate harassment of students by administrators, faculty, staff,

or other students. The school will also attempt to protect students from harassment by nonemployees and nonstudents at the school. Harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment or that interferes with daily school activities. Some examples include racial slurs; ethnic jokes; in person or social media postings of offensive statements, posters, or cartoons; or other similar conduct. Sexual harassment includes solicitation of sexual favors; unwelcome sexual advances; other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature; or derogatory comments regarding sexual orientation or slurs of a sexual nature. Any member of the Saint Joseph School community who believes he or she has been the subject of school related discrimination, harassment, exploitation or sexual misconduct should report the alleged act immediately to a teacher and a school administrator. All allegations will be investigated. Any member of the school community found by the school, after appropriate investigation, to have been in violation of our school policy against discrimination, harassment, exploitation or sexual misconduct are subject to disciplinary action. Depending on circumstances, this action may include suspension, dismissal of a student, or termination of a family contract, if school family. All are reminded that malicious accusations have serious consequences when directed at an innocent person.

In raising an issue of concern, students and parents should exercise care to ensure the accuracy of the information disclosed. Intentional false reports or bad faith reports of violations, especially regarding the Policies on VIRTUS training, refusal to cooperate during an investigation or failing to provide accurate, truthful and complete information during an investigation may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal (if student) and legal action, including termination of contract (if a parent).

TEXTBOOKS, SUPPLIES, AND EQUIPMENT

Reusable textbooks are checked out to students. These books must be covered and should not be marked-in at any time. Books are assigned to students and are the student's responsibility until they are returned to the library or homeroom teacher. Other valuable materials will be assigned to specific students for which they will be accountable. Students may also be given consumable books for class use.

Students are required to pay for any books or valuable materials that are lost, torn, or damaged, as deemed by the classroom teacher. Therefore, it is important that students carefully examine every book given to them and make sure that the teacher has noted any damage.

The school will provide all textbooks and workbooks relating to the curriculum. At the end of the school year, there is an accounting of all textbooks and school materials. If the assigned textbook and other school materials are not located, the student responsible is responsible for payment. This cost will be billed through FACTS.

LOST AND FOUND

Parents are to place students' names on all articles. All unclaimed items are stored in the respective cafeteria for one month. At the end of each month, usable items will be donated to a charity and all others will be discarded.

LOCKERS

Students are welcome to purchase a locker shelf and magnetic accessories, such as pen/pencil holders, a whiteboard, a mirror, magnets for pictures, etc. (The longest-lasting and best-organizing shelves are the free-standing, metal shelves.) Students may not attach anything to the inside or outside of the locker doors, as this may interfere with the latch.

Lockers should be kept clean, organized, and free from dirty clothes, trash and/or open food containers outside of a lunch box.

UPPER SCHOOL CELL PHONE POLICY

Student cell phones will be collected by their homeroom teacher each morning upon arrival. Cell phones will be stored in a secure location by the homeroom teacher. At dismissal each day, cell phones will be released to students as they are called for dismissal. Any students participating in athletics or aftercare may use their cell phone at the discretion of their supervising adult.

Any student found to be using a cell phone during the day or storing a cell phone in their locker will be referred directly to the Head of School. Loss of privileges or appropriate consequences will be administered by the Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School.