

Saint Mary's Catholic School

Student & Parent Handbook

2021-2022

SECTION I: THE MISSION and VISION

1.1 Mission

Saint Mary's Catholic School exists to provide an opportunity to grow in faith, wisdom and knowledge in a challenging academic environment formed by Catholic tradition.

1.2 Vision

Saint Mary's Catholic School is committed to the application of Christ's teaching by instilling the value of service to others while providing our students with the necessary skills to further their educational pursuits. Our mission as a strong Catholic community is supported by high-quality educators, dedicated staff and invested families.

1.3 Philosophy of Learning

Our Christ-centered approach to learning encourages responsibility, accountability, respect, and above all compassion for one another. We recognize diverse learning styles among our students and strive to differentiate instruction so that creativity is fostered and individual needs are addressed. We endeavor to instill within the child and the community a life-long love of learning rooted in Catholic values and the conviction to follow them.

1.4 Diversity & Non-Discrimination Statement

Saint Mary's Catholic School seeks to foster a community of inclusion that respects the dignity of the individual in the areas of age, gender, religion, ability, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, culture, etc. All members of the Saint Mary's Catholic School community are responsible for advancing an understanding of and a respect for diversity.

1.5 Religious Identity and Services

Saint Mary's Catholic School teaches the doctrine of the Catholic Church and integrates the faith and values of the Church throughout the curriculum. The comprehensive school curriculum has been approved by the Bishop and the Office of Catholic Schools.

Saint Mary's provides students, faculty, and staff with a variety of religious observances during the school year. Attendance at Mass and prayer services scheduled during the school day is required by all students.

The celebration of Mass, or Holy Eucharist, is the highest form of Catholic religious observance. Because of the substantially different beliefs about the meaning of the Eucharist, Catholic Church law states that only Catholics who have celebrated their First Holy Communion may receive Holy Communion. While Holy Communion is being offered, members of other faith traditions are invited to come forward for a blessing. Members of other faith traditions are encouraged to participate in every other aspect of Mass.

Students will be taught the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation and moral practices. The various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school will be respected, however only , Catholic teachings will be taught.

1.6 Accreditation

Saint Mary's Catholic School is accredited by Cognia via the Catholic Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools system accreditation.

SECTION 2: PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

2.1 Parent/Guardian Responsibility

The school believes that parents are the primary educators of their children and that a deep partnership should exist between the parent, student and school personnel. The goal of this partnership is to fulfill the mission of the school through mutual respect and open communication. The school reserves the right to issue discipline consequences up to and including not re-enrolling a student if the school concludes that the actions of the student and/or parents preclude the school from fulfilling its educational purpose. The decision of the school in these regards shall be final.

SECTION 3: GENERAL INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Admissions and Placement

Saint Mary's Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid programs, and other school-administered programs.

3.1.1 Acceptance at Saint Mary's Catholic School is based on:

Applicants reaching age 4 by September 30th of the school year in which the child wishes to enroll and older are considered in order of siblings of enrolled students, parishioners, demonstrated commitment to the practice of the Catholic faith, active in another faith, non-active Catholic families, and then all other families. As a faith-based school, faith is a priority. The following items will be used when considering admission:

- Report Cards/Transcripts
- Demonstrated congruence between earned grades and testing
- Teacher recommendations
- Age appropriate grade level
- Classroom accommodations
- Other pertinent information concerning the student (including the possible outcomes of screening, interviews etc.)

3.1.2 Student Placement

Saint Mary's Catholic School has an objective, methodical process for placing students in grade-level classrooms to ensure that there is an equal balance of student abilities among each of the classes. The final decision regarding placement, acceleration, promotion, or retention of a student rests solely with the principal.

3.1.3 Accommodations

Saint Mary's Catholic School strives to meet all needs of each student, however, there are cases where the needs of a student are greater than the school's ability to provide support. The school reserves the right to determine what accommodations will be provided and these accommodations will be outlined in the student's Learning Plan. A student must have current psychological and/or educational testing (not more than three years old) on file to receive a Learning Plan. In many cases, students may require services outside of school personnel. The expense of these services is the responsibility of the parents.

3.1.4 Tutoring

There may be times when a student needs individual help above and beyond the classroom teacher such as a supplemental tutor. The cost of this tutoring will be the responsibility of the parent. Saint Mary's Catholic School

teachers may not tutor students on their roster and may only tutor students outside of the teacher contracted hours of 7:30-3:30. Payments are to be made to the school and not the teacher directly.

3.2 Attendance Policy

Regular, prompt attendance is essential for success in school. Unless excused for illness or another serious reason, students are expected to attend school. Parents are expected to notify the school if a student is going to be absent. For known late arrivals, early dismissals or anytime there is an absence, email SMCS attendance at attendance@saintmary.org.

The school expects that parents keep the child home when necessary due to illness. If your child has a fever of greater than 100.4°F he/she should not come to school. The child needs to be free of a fever without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours prior to returning to school. If your child has a contagious disease, your child should not come to school.

Students who do not come to school are not permitted to attend any after school activities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

Parents are encouraged to schedule vacations and their children's medical and dental appointments at times when school is not in session.

Since attendance and punctuality are vital to student success, excessive absences and tardiness will result in a parent meeting with administrators, during which an attendance contract will be discussed.

3.2.1 Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals

Students arriving after 8:00 am or leaving early must check in/out through the main office. Parents must sign students in/out in person. Tardiness will be recorded on the student's attendance record.

Parents of students who will be dismissed early must send email notification (attendance@saintmary.org) and to the teacher at the start of the school day. Children will only be released to those adults on the emergency contact list.

Due to the reverence of Mass, early release or late arrival should be planned after Mass. Students arriving during mass times will wait in the main office until the conclusion of mass.

Parents of students in ECDC classrooms will report to the main office for student sign-out.

3.2.2 Make-Up Assignments

For planned appointments and absences of three days or less, assignments will be sent home at the discretion of the teacher. When the student returns to school he/she should meet with all his/her teachers to gather any missed assignments.

For absences that exceed three days, please notify the homeroom teacher and assignments will be sent home. For extended medical absences, the school will work with the family in regards to making up school work.

Classroom work and homework may or may not be given prior to vacation leave. Classroom work and homework will be made up upon return.

3.3 Tuition Payment and Delinquent Accounts

Tuition must be paid in accordance with the applicable payment schedule.

If the child's financial account is delinquent, the school will work with the family to bring all balances current. Please contact the school to schedule a meeting to arrange an appropriate payment. In the event tuition is not paid upon completion of a student's enrolled time at Saint Mary's, the student's report card and/or transcripts may be withheld.

3.4 Continued Enrollment and Re-enrollment

Enrollment at Saint Mary's Catholic School is on a year-to-year basis. Enrollment of a student in any academic year does not create a right or entitlement to re-enrollment in any subsequent years. Instead, re-enrollment of any student requires the joint agreement of the student, the parents, and the school administration. That agreement may be withheld by the parents, or the principal. Enrollment during a school year is subject to termination at the discretion of the principal/pastor.

Families withdrawing their children from the school need to notify the Director of Admissions as soon as possible. Upon request from the new school and with parental consent, the records will be forwarded assuming all financial obligations are satisfied.

3.5 Transcript Requests and Teacher Recommendations

Transcript requests need to be made in writing to the Director of Admissions. Please allow at least three business days for the transcripts to be sent. Teacher recommendation forms, if required, will be mailed within five days.

3.6 Curriculum/Program

The school's curriculum is the Catholic Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic School Consensus Curriculum, which is based on national and state standards.

3.6.1 Religion Curriculum

The school's religion curriculum is consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and follows the religion curriculum guidelines promulgated by the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. All religion textbooks are subject to the approval of the Office of Catholic Schools. All supplementary material used in the curriculum must conform to Catholic moral teachings and doctrine.

3.6.2 Lunch

Students have two options for lunch. Students may pack their lunch each day or students may purchase lunch. Outside food delivery by parent or vendor is not to be a regular practice.

Lunch orders are submitted on two week cycles. Lunch orders are placed via Boonli.com. The password to create an account is saintmarys34. **For the 2021/2022 school year, we will operate a nut free school.** Tree nuts and peanuts are not to be brought to school.

3.6.3 Classroom Celebrations

In order to keep a routine for our students, classroom celebrations will be limited to birthday and pre-planned events and will be coordinated in advance between the teachers. Additional school events and celebrations will be in coordination with the room parent.

3.6.4 Birthdays

Each child will be recognized on their birthday during morning announcements. Parents should work directly with the teacher regarding classroom treats for a child's birthday.

3.6.5 Textbooks

The Principal, in consultation with the faculty, has final approval of the textbooks used in the school. Within each classroom there is a collection of textbooks that are used as reference. Consumable workbooks are provided to the students by the classroom teacher. Textbooks used in grades JK-8 are the property of Saint Mary's Catholic School, and students will be responsible for damages thereto. Lost, stolen or damaged textbooks are the responsibility of students. Where necessary, replacement fees must be paid prior to issuance of end-of-year report cards or 8th grade transcripts.

3.7.6 Community Service/Service Learning

Saint Mary's Catholic School encourages and sometimes provides students to participate in community-wide or grade level service. Each year, students engage in opportunities to practice the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Middle school students are expected to complete 25 hours of meaningful service each year. Students

must complete the service and write a reflection on their experience to receive credit toward the requirement. Specific guidelines are provided through the student's religion class.

3.7.7 Physical Education Program

Students must bring a signed note from their doctor if they have any extended circumstances where they cannot participate in PE due to injury, illness, or any other medical condition. For same day injury or sickness a parent note is sufficient.

3.7.8 After School Care

Saint Mary's Catholic School provides an After School Care program which has its own handbook located on the website.

3.8 Academic Policies

3.8.1 Report Cards

Report cards are emailed to parents four times a year, at the end of each quarter.

3.8.2 Academic Grading Scales

Kindergarten - 2nd Grade:

- 3 - Meeting grade level standard; applies skills consistently and independently
- 2 - Developing grade level standard; applies skills inconsistently with or without support
- 1 - Below grade level standard; unable to apply skills with support

3rd Grade - 8th Grade:

A+ - 97-100	A - 93-96	A- - 90-92	
B+ - 87-89	B - 83-86	B- - 80-82	
C+ - 77-79	C - 73-76	C - - 70-72	
D+ - 67-69	D - 63-66	D- - 60-62	F - 0-59

3.8.3 Testing

The Performance Series assessment is given to students three times per year in grades 2-8. Test scores are evaluated to ensure that each child is progressing appropriately.

3.8.4 Middle School Honor Roll

Honor Roll for middle school is calculated at the end of each term. First honors requires a ≥ 93 in academic subjects and a B and above in all resource classes. Second honors requires a ≥ 88 in academic subjects and a B and above in all resource classes.

3.8.5 Family Directory

The Saint Mary's Catholic School family directory containing names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers for students and parents can be accessed through FACTS SIS. If there is any change of personal or family information during the school year, please make the change through FACTS SIS so that our records stay up to date.

3.8.6 Student Images

Images of students may be published on the school website, parish publications, advertisements/press releases, school yearbook and social media. All families should complete [this Publicity Release Form](#) as required by the Diocese.

3.8.7 Retention

It may be necessary for a student to repeat the work at a given grade level in order to understand and succeed in important skills. If retention is being considered, parents will be notified and a conference will be scheduled to discuss the situation and create a student success plan.

3.9 Child Transportation

3.9.1 Carpool/Dismissal Procedures

- Parents are discouraged from entering the school building during carpool.
- Use of cell phones during carpool is prohibited.
- Students who are not picked up by 3:00 pm will be placed in the After School Care program. Fees will apply.
- Children who need to remain at school outside of the school hours indicated below must enroll in the After School Care program.

3.9.2 Carpool Times:

Families with children in grades JK-8 are expected to participate in arrival and drop off using the carpool system. Morning drop off is intended to have families pull up to the curb and have the children walk independently into school.

Morning Drop-Off: 7:30 am – 7:55 am

No student is to be left unattended on Saint Mary's Catholic School property before 7:30 am. If you arrive on campus with your child before 7:30 am, your child must remain with you until the doors of the school are opened.

After 8:00 am, parents must park and walk their child into the main office to check their child into school and provide a note explaining the late arrival, if it wasn't emailed.

Afternoon Pick-Up: 2:45 pm – 3:00 pm

After 3:00 pm, parents must park in the back parking lot and go to After School Care to pick up their child.

No child should walk through the parking lot while cars are moving.

3.9.3 Change in School Schedule / Inclement Weather Policy

Saint Mary's does not follow any county or district for school closings, delays, or early dismissals.

In the case of inclement weather, once a decision has been made by the Principal, Saint Mary's Catholic School will communicate all weather-related delays and closings in the following order:

- Via Text Message & Automated Phone Call using our Parent Alert System.

Since this is our first mode of communicating all weather-related information, we ask that you please take a moment to ensure that you have signed up to receive text messages and that the phone number you have provided for the Parent Alert System is correct.

- You will also receive an email from the Principal confirming the weather-related delay or closing.
- Lastly, we will post all weather-related information on our school website and social media channels (@saintmarysrva on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter) as well as inform local media (CBS 6, ABC 8, and NBC 12).

3.9.4 Change of Transportation Arrangements

Parents must notify the main office **and** homeroom teacher if they want their child to be transported by someone other than a parent. Please send notice of the change in arrangements with your child when he or she comes to school. If you must make a change during the school day, please notify the main office.

Please do not leave changes in your child's transportation arrangements on voicemail. When someone arrives to pick up your child the office will ask for confirmation of identification with a photo ID.

3.9.5 Child Custody Issues

Saint Mary's Catholic School requires the custodial parent to file a certified copy of the custody decree, or the custody section of the divorce decree, with the school. School officials will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that children are released only to the appropriate parent at the appropriate time according to the court-mandated custody arrangements.

Parents must accept the primary responsibility for their custody arrangements and should instruct their children as to which parent should have physical custody of them on any given day. If no custody decree is on file, school officials will presume that both parents have custodial rights.

Non-custodial parents have the same rights as custodial parents to inspect their children's records unless a court order to the contrary is on file with the school.

3.9.6 Items Left at Home

If you need to bring an item to your child during the school day, please put the student's name and the teacher's name on the item and drop it off in the main office.

3.10 Regulations for Student Conduct

The primary rule governing the conduct of all members of our school community is the "Great Commandment" of our Lord: You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind and you must love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew. 22:37-40). Any conduct which undermines this goal will not be tolerated. Student actions on campus, or at school events are expected to be in agreement with the policies listed below. Off campus student behavior could become a school matter if the situation impacts the school day.

All employees at Saint Mary's Catholic School are dedicated to helping students become more responsible for their own actions. The goal is that students interact with respect and in accordance with school rules while at school, at school activities, and when outside of school.

3.10.1 Expectations

The following is a list of basic expectations of student conduct. Any violation of these regulations is taken in context, and disciplinary action can range from a verbal warning to expulsion, at the discretion of school officials.

Respect: Students shall conduct themselves with respect toward one another and faculty and staff members at all times. Rude and disrespectful behavior, disruptions, inappropriate gestures, defiance, or refusal to accept the reasonable directions of school personnel will require disciplinary action.

Drugs, alcohol, and paraphernalia: The use or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substances is strictly prohibited. The possession of drug-related paraphernalia is also prohibited.

Weapons: The use or possession or portrayal of a weapon, of facsimile thereof, including but not limited to, firearms, knives, laser pointers, or explosive compounds, is prohibited at any school function. Furthermore, the attempted use of any object to harm another is considered use of a weapon.

Tobacco use: The use or possession of tobacco products at school or any school function is prohibited.

Fighting: Fighting or threatening physical violence or similar behavior is prohibited at any school function. Students who instigate or involve themselves with fights but are not actively involved (such as; students who spread rumors, put others up to fighting, make rude, vulgar, obscene, racial, or insulting remarks, etc.) subject themselves to consequences.

Vandalism: It is a serious offense for students to perform any act of vandalism on or off campus.

Harassment/Bullying: It is a serious offense for students to harass, antagonize or instigate a conflict with any student, faculty, or staff members or to invade their privacy. “Cyber-bullying” and other electronic means used to harass students or to demean members of the school community, even on non-school computers or personal electronic devices (cell phones, etc.) off campus or after school hours.

Students shall not sexually harass any other student or any member of the faculty or staff.

Academic Expectations:

Honesty and integrity are expected of all students at all times. Students are expected to submit their own work on all assignments unless given explicit instructions by the teacher who issued the assignment. Both parties involved will be issued consequences.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's work and claiming it as your own or failing to give appropriate credit to the author or creator. This could result in both an academic and disciplinary penalty.

Violation of test-taking procedures: To protect the integrity of the testing process, each student must abide by the procedures established by the individual teachers. Failure to follow these procedures invalidates the test results and is therefore not allowed.

Other Violations of School Expectations:

Lying in order to cover one's own misdeeds or the misdeeds of others is worthy of disciplinary action.

Theft or damage of the property of others or of the school is a violation of the code of conduct.

The use of any verbal or written inappropriate, abusive or profane language or gestures is prohibited on campus and at any school event. It is also unacceptable to engage in demeaning activities at athletic contests, such as insulting the other team, its fans, or the officials.

Only appropriate decorations are permitted inside and outside of school lockers. Lockers are school property and could be checked or searched at any time. Students are responsible to keep their lockers free from old food or an excess of debris.

Electronic devices: Students may only use permitted electronic devices during school hours with teacher permission. All other electronic devices, including cell phones, must be turned off and stored in backpacks.

Elementary School/ECDC: No personal devices should be brought to school.

Wearable technology: Smart watches may not be worn during the school day. In cases where a medical need requires a smartwatch or cell phone, permission must be granted by the principal in consultation with the school nurses.

Students may not hand out, post or share any unauthorized materials without the permission of the adult supervising their activity.

Uniform violations: The school uniform is a representation of Saint Mary's Catholic School and should be worn appropriately at all times. See section 3.12 for more information on dress code.

Inappropriate access: Students are not to access classrooms, offices, teacher desks or property, or other sections of the school unless accompanied by an adult employee of the school. During the school day, students are not to go to parts of the campus outside the building without permission and supervision. This includes the parking lots, fields, adjoining woods, neighborhoods and sidewalks.

Inappropriate computer use: Students must agree and sign the acceptable use and procedures document before accessing school technology. Appropriate use of technology is defined by the policy found in Appendix A of this handbook.

3.11 Disciplinary Procedures

Consequences of not adhering to the expectations for students enrolled at Saint Mary's Catholic School may depend on the severity of the situation.

If a student chooses to behave in a way that disrespects others, self, school property or principles, or disregards the rules or learning environment the parents would be notified of the infraction and disciplinary measures determined. The student will be included in the conversations about the situation and disciplinary consequences.

General Discipline procedures:

1. Student will be informed or reminded that a behavior is not acceptable or permitted
2. If necessary, or if the issue continues the teacher will contact the parent
3. If the behavior persists the the teacher will involve an administrator and a call home will occur within 24 hours
4. If necessary an investigation will take place
5. Consequences will be issued, potential consequences include a written reflection of the incident, lunch or after school detention, suspension etc.

3.11.1 Physical Altercation

If a student is involved in a physical altercation, the student's parent(s) will be called and the student will be sent home. Additional consequences will be considered following the school's investigation.

3.11.2 Suspension

Depending on the severity of the misconduct, and the context of the situation a suspension may be in-school or out-of-school.

A student who disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school, damages property, or endangers themselves or others may be immediately suspended from school. The administration will notify the student's parents by telephone, followed by a letter that will serve as formal notification. This letter will be kept in the student's file.

3.11.3 Expulsion

Serious violations of the school's discipline code may result in expulsion. If expulsion is called for, the parents will meet with the Principal directly. In a case of expulsion, parents are responsible for the remaining tuition balance.

3.12 Dress Code

3.12.1 Uniform Policy

The goal of the uniform policy is consistency and uniformity; therefore, all uniform pieces must be purchased from Flynn O'Hara. A uniform closet is also available at the school. Specifics regarding uniform code are available on the website [here](#).

The administration reserves the right to make individual judgments as to the appropriateness of dress and grooming in addition to the stipulations below:

- In general, students are expected to appear well kept, with shirts tucked in, and shoes tied. The fit and length of shorts, skorts, kilts and jumpers should be generously sized and no more than 3 inches above the middle of the knee.
- Students shall dress in an appropriate school uniform for the day's activities:
- Beginning in the school year 2021-2022, all students will be required to wear formal uniforms on mass days. Formal uniforms for elementary students consist of the drop waist jumper for girls and long pants for boys. Middle school students are already required to wear formal uniform elements on mass days.
- Boys Regular Uniform
- Girls Regular Uniform
- Students' hair shall be groomed and neat. Boys' hair should not exceed the top of their eyebrows and the collar of their shirt. Boys' hair should not exceed 1 ½ inches in height. No facial hair is permitted. Mohawks are not permitted.
- Students shall refrain from the use of unnatural hair dye, acrylic nails, nail polish, press on tattoos or writing on hands and arms. Students shall refrain from the use of makeup.
- Students shall observe the following regulations regarding jewelry: stud earrings (one per ear), watch and/or bracelet, religious necklace, and a ring. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.

3.12.2 Dress for "TAG" Days

There are days during the school year in which a child does not have to wear their uniform. These are called "TAG" days. Often these days are fundraisers and require a small donation.

While students may wear their clothing of choice on these days, students are expected to dress neatly and appropriately. Some specific requirements are listed below.

- Closed toe shoes with backs must be worn. Athletic shoes are encouraged.
- Dresses, skirts, shorts, and other similar clothing must be long enough to generously cover the student's body between the waist and the knees, the standard length of 3 inches above the middle of the knee is expected.
- Leggings are only allowed when worn with a top that is long enough to generously cover the student's body between the waist and the knees. Leggings are not to be worn with oversized t-shirts and sweatshirts. Ex: a dress or skirt of appropriate length.
- No running shorts (example Nike type or spandex) or shorts of similar length are to be worn. Athletic shorts of appropriate length may be worn.
- Tops must be at least 2 inches wide at each shoulder.
- Unless specific permission is given, hats are not to be worn inside.
- Unless specific permission is given, hair, jewelry and makeup rules remain the same as a school uniform day.

Specific items that are not permitted:

- Clothing with rips and/or tears, even if that is how the piece of clothing is designed.
- Clothing with inappropriate messages.
- Clothing that is tight or immodestly cut.
- Clothing that is see-through or revealing.
- Clothing that reveals the midriff while sitting, standing, or reaching.

Please remember that what may be appropriate elsewhere may not be appropriate for School. If there is a question as to whether something is appropriate or not, assume that it is not and have your child make another choice.

The regular school uniform is always an option on "TAG" days.

3.12.3 Lost and Found

Please label all items with your child's name so we may return lost items to their owners.

Items not retrieved after two weeks shall be donated. Lost and found is located in the hallway nearest the Middle School entrance. You may contact the office to access the lost and found.

3.13 Communication

3.13.1 Communicating with Teachers and Staff

Communication is essential to cultivate the partnership between parents and teachers.. Email is the preferred means of communicating with faculty and staff at Saint Mary's Catholic School. Please allow 24 business hours to respond. Faculty and staff hours are from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm, Monday-Friday. Your child's teacher should be the primary point of contact regarding student issues.

3.13.2 No Solicitation by Parents, Staff and Faculty

In order to attain the fundraising program goals at Saint Mary's Catholic School, no solicitation of funds by parents, staff and faculty is permitted without the express permission of the Principal or Pastor.

3.13.3 Phone Calls

If a student needs to make a phone call, he/she must have permission from faculty or staff member. Phone calls may be made from the main office. Because student cell phones are off and away students are not able to send or receive messages during school hours.

If you need to reach your child during the school day, please call the main office and we will have a message delivered to your child at an appropriate time.

3.13.4 Conferences

All visits to the school, including conferences, should be pre-arranged with the administration or the classroom teacher. Conferences and visits must be planned and scheduled in advance, with a minimum of one day's notice. Unauthorized visits and doorway/hallway conferences are not permitted.

Parents are encouraged to meet with the teacher during scheduled school conference days. Conferences are held two times per year - once in November and once in February. Parents of students in JK-5 should meet with the homeroom teacher. Parents of middle school students should meet with the subject area teacher. In some cases, the middle school teachers may meet with parents and students as a team. It is recommended that middle school students be present at the conferences.

3.13.5 Problem Resolution Procedure

Saint Mary's Catholic School has a problem resolution procedure that allows parents to seek effective resolution when they have a concern about a classroom situation. The student should first meet with the teacher. If the matter is not resolved a parent should meet with the teacher involved. If the matter is not resolved at that level, the parent should next contact the Principal for assistance. The decision of the Principal is final.

3.13.6 Friday Flash

Saint Mary's Catholic School publishes an electronic newsletter every week, called the Friday Flash, to provide parents with the latest news and information about upcoming events. The newsletter is emailed to families. [Friday Flash archives](#) are also available on Saint Mary's website. When necessary, an additional email will be sent earlier in the week to communicate pertinent information.

3.13.7 Weekly Folders

Communication, including graded work, will be sent home in a folder for children in grades JK-5 weekly.

3.13.8 Promotion of Businesses

Throughout the school year, Saint Mary's Catholic School receives countless requests to distribute informational materials to parents about local sports, dance, cooking, and other youth-related activities. Each and every activity is beneficial in its own right. The school cannot distribute all of these materials to parents, however we would like to promote family businesses in alignment with our mission to the community. See the Friday Flash for future information.

3.13.9 Fundraising

Fundraising at Saint Mary's Catholic School is generally limited to the Annual Fund Campaign, Capital Campaign, Annual Fun Run, Gala and special events associated with the PTO.

All fundraising events on school premises must be pre-approved by the Principal and Pastor.

3.14 Student Health and Safety

3.14.1 Immunizations

In conjunction with Saint Mary's Catholic School admissions procedures, all students are required to have the immunizations as mandated by state law. The parent(s) of children with expired immunization records or with missing immunizations will be notified by the school via e-mail. An updated form will be expected within 30 days of notification.

3.14.2 Security in the Building

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. Our secure main entrance is the entry to our school and all visitors and volunteers must check in upon arrival in the main office and wear name badges at all times when in the building.

3.14.3 Over-the-Counter Medication

The school nurse will administer over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen, Tums, ibuprofen, Benadryl, and throat lozenges to students. Permission to give these medications needs to be signed and dated by the parent or guardian and on file with the clinic.

Dosages for the medications are per the manufacturer's recommendations and based on weight.

Students should not carry any over the counter medication with them while at school. Parents should hand deliver medications (prescribed/over the counter) to the school clinic in the original container. Contact the clinic for additional requirements for medications.

3.14.4 Distribution of Prescription Medication

Information about prescription medication that needs to be administered during the school day must be shared with our school nurses. The nurses will contact parents if there are concerns about a treatment plan being successful at school.

A student who needs to take prescribed medication during school hours must have a current signed and dated form on file with the clinic.

3.14.5 Medical Forms

School Entrance Health Forms are required to be provided for all new students, rising Kindergarten and rising 7th grade students. The 7th grade vaccination information must include the DTAP Booster and Meningitis vaccine.

Over the Counter medication and Prescription medication forms are required annually with updated information.

3.14.6 Infectious Diseases

Students with a contagious illness will be sent home from and must be kept out of school until symptoms including fever no longer exist. Specifically, students who test positive for Covid 19 will need to follow CDC and Diocesan guidelines to determine eligibility to attend school. The faculty and staff will be trained in universal precautions.

3.14.7 Concussion Policy

The School acknowledges that concussions are a serious medical injury. In keeping with our Mission, we aim to support students and their families through the healing process. We have implemented procedures to help assist with this process. If a student suffers a concussion, their family will be provided with the full concussion policy, along with supporting documents to assist with recovery and care.

When a student is diagnosed with a concussion, school nurses/clinic staff will notify teachers of all restrictions and necessary protocol and accommodations.

3.14.8 Child Abuse/Neglect

The laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia require that members of professions such as teaching, nursing, counseling, and medicine must report to the proper authorities any cases of suspected abuse. Members of these professions are held legally accountable for failure to make such reports and are protected against legal consequences when complying with these expectations. Our school will report suspected child abuse and neglect.

3.14.9 Animals

Animals which do not serve as service animals are not allowed in the classroom or on campus except with the express permission of the Principal. Cars arriving with family pets must keep the pets in the car at all times.

3.14.10 Incident Reports

All accidents or injuries on school premises will be documented. Parents will be notified if further medical attention may be warranted. An incident report will be filled out in those incidents. Incident reports will be kept on file in the clinic.

3.14.11 First Aid

All certified teachers are CPR & First Aid certified.

3.14.12 School Emergency Plan

The school maintains a crisis plan that outlines procedures for the following emergencies: building evacuations, fire, bomb threat, natural disasters, and intruder. In the event of an actual situation, parents will be notified via text or email.

3.14.13 Drills

Safety Drills are scheduled on a regular basis with one or more drills scheduled each month.

3.15 Extracurricular Programs

3.15.1 Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Saint Mary's Catholic School recognizes that athletics and other extracurricular activities are important parts of the educational experience. The school offers a range of activities, with the school making the final determination of which activities will be offered each year.

Information about the athletic program will be updated and posted on the school website, as well as emailed through the weekly newsletter. The athletic program will comply with all applicable requirements.

3.15.2 Eligibility

All students must be in good standing with the school to participate in school athletics.

3.15.3 After School Activities

For the safety of all students, parents and/or siblings are not to be in the building until the conclusion of said activity.

3.15.4 Management of Club, Class and Organization Funds

As it relates to parent volunteers, no single individual, adult or student, is to be solely accountable for incoming funds at any time. At least one adult should be present whenever funds are being handled. Two adult individuals should count and record all funds, which are to be deposited in a locked box in the Business Office. All such funds will be deposited in a school account for which the Principal is a signatory.

3.15.5 Field Trips

Saint Mary's Catholic School offers field trips periodically throughout the school year. These trips are curriculum appropriate and have educational benefits. Part of our mission of Saint Mary's Catholic School is to educate the student beyond the four walls of the classroom. In most cases, the school uniform will be required for field trips.

Field trips are purely voluntary; students may elect not to go. However, participation is strongly encouraged because of the added value these trips bring to the student's education experience. If a student chooses not to go on a trip, school attendance is still required and work related to the trip will be assigned by the teachers leading the trip.

Every field trip must have a faculty chaperone as the point of contact between the school and the parents. The faculty chaperone is responsible for ensuring that all of the school's policies and procedures for field trips are followed.

Parents who are serving as chaperones help ensure that students are behaving appropriately. If a situation becomes a discipline issue, the chaperone will inform the faculty chaperones for any disciplinary measures. All parent chaperones must have met volunteer requirements which can be found [here](#).

The school may deny a student participation in a field trip for disciplinary reasons.

Children not enrolled in the school may not attend school field trips. This prohibition includes children of parents who drive on field trips.

3.15.6 Field Trip Transportation

Privately owned vehicles may be used to transport students to and from field trips and other school-sponsored activities, provided the following requirements are met at least one week prior to the trip:

- Completion of the online [Volunteer Driver Information Sheet](#)
- The driver must be at least 21 years old and present copies of a valid driver's license and proof of motor vehicle insurance.
- The vehicle must be insured for the limits required by law and any additional limits required by the school's insurance carriers.
- Children under the state age and weight limit must be strapped into approved booster seats.
- All other students must wear seat belts at all times.

3.16 TECHNOLOGY

3.16.1 Responsible Use

Technology provides students access to resources that will assist in fully educating each student by supporting the school's curriculum. The ability to access the Internet also is crucial in affording students the opportunity to become effective and critical users of electronic information. Students are expected to use the technology appropriately and as directed.

3.16.2 Internet Filter

The Saint Mary's Catholic School network employs an Internet filter. However, filtering software does not block access to all material that users might find offensive. Saint Mary's Catholic School cannot be held responsible for a student encountering this type of site.

3.16.3 Supervision and Monitoring

Saint Mary's Catholic School teachers will endeavor to closely supervise and monitor student use of technology tools and devices while in school, especially when accessing the Internet. However, it is expected that students will use technology responsibly and monitor their own actions.

3.16.4 Access to Subscription Resources

Password access to subscription resources is for the use of enrolled students and their families only, whether in school or at home. It is a violation of our agreements with these companies to allow access to users who are not students at Saint Mary's Catholic School.

3.16.5 Downloading Programs and Other Applications

Downloading program files and other applications without the express permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. Loading personal software on a computer or other technology tool or device is also strictly prohibited without express permission. This includes music, apps, games, and other software. Students may not make any changes of any sort to general use computers or other technology tools or devices.

3.16.6 Individual Student Accounts

There are many resources available to students that provide individualized learning and require individual student accounts, such as G Suite for Education. In order to create these accounts, Saint Mary's Catholic School shares limited student information with some of these companies, such as student name, grade, and teacher.

3.16.7 Email

Students in some grades are provided with student email accounts. These accounts should only be used for school-related purposes. During school hours, email accounts should only be used with a teacher's permission.

Students are not allowed to use school computers to access or send email from personal email accounts.

3.16.8 Printing

Printing on school printers should be limited to those pages necessary for class assignments. Please be judicious in the use of the school's paper and toner. If it is necessary to print pages from a web site, remember that it is often more efficient to cut and paste the information needed to a Google document. (Be sure to cite any sources from which you take information.)

3.16.9 Publishing of Student Work

In order to share and celebrate student work, it may occasionally be published on the school's web pages. Student work will only be posted with a first name.

3.16.10 Loss, Theft or Damage

Students are expected to use computers and other technology tools and devices responsibly and carefully. If equipment is damaged, lost or stolen, students are responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.

3.16.11 Personal Devices

Middle School Students: If cell phones are brought to school, they must be off and away for the duration of the school day. Occasionally, teacher directed use of cell phones for classroom activities is allowable.

Any phone used or causing disruption will be confiscated and must be picked up by a parent.
Elementary School Students: Cell phones are not to be brought to school.

SECTION 4: SCHOOL CALENDAR

4.1 See school website for the current detailed monthly school calendar [here](#). Our year at-a-glance calendar is on the homepage of our website.

SECTION 5: FACULTY AND STAFF DIRECTORY

5.1 See school website for a faculty and staff directory [here](#).

Appendix A: Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy For All School Employees and Students in Grades 6-8 Diocese of Richmond Saint Mary's Catholic School

Technology is an essential educational tool whose use must be grounded in the values and mission of Catholic education. All users, **faculty, staff, administrators, and students**, are expected to exhibit high standards of behavior at all times when using the Internet, email and other technology.

The use of computer systems and the Internet at School must be in support of the educational mission and objectives of the Diocese of Richmond and of the School. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges. Based upon the Acceptable Use Policy guidelines in this document, the Principal will deem what is inappropriate use and his/her decision is final. In addition, the Principal has the right to close an account at any time. School authorities may take other disciplinary actions for any unacceptable behaviors. The administration, faculty and staff may request that the Principal deny or revoke specific user access. Additionally, the cost of any repairs caused by inappropriate behavior will be the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Prior to being given access to the School's computers and Internet, all staff members, as well as students in grades six through twelve and their parent(s) (when student is under the age of 18), must return the signed Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Contract. Students in grades K-5 will return the Computer and Internet Promises form. These agreements will be completed every year.

System users at School have no right to privacy and should have no expectation of privacy in materials sent, received, or stored in School-owned computers or on the School network. All communications (including email) and information accessible via the network is School property. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to authorities. The technology coordinator/system administrator supervises the use of the network by students and school personnel. He/she has access to all files and email and may authorize access as necessary. Security on our computer system is a high priority. Anyone with reason to suspect a security problem on the School network must notify an appropriate authority.

At School, the faculty and staff blend thoughtful use of computers and the Internet throughout the curriculum and provide guidance and instruction to students in their use. The School provides controls and filtering protection on the School's network. Outside of School, families bear responsibility for the education and monitoring of their students in Internet and computer usage much as they do with television, telephones, radio, movies, and other media. The School may not be held responsible for users' intentional misuse of the Internet or equipment.

Acceptable Computer and/or Internet Use

1. The School's technology is meant for educational purposes: classroom instruction, research, and/or approved projects. In order to accomplish these goals, the School's computers may be used for accessing research databases and libraries of information in the form of text, graphics, photographs, video, and sound, as well as for interacting and collaborating with others.

2. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) being polite, using appropriate language, properly citing and/or obtaining permission for all

information from research sources when the information used from those sources is included in a work as a direct quote or paraphrase.

Unacceptable Behaviors must be promptly reported to the Principal or his/her designee includes, but not limited to the following:

1. Refusing to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette as mentioned above.
2. Attempting to log on to the School network or the Internet using a user ID/password other than his/her own. Sharing passwords or trespassing in others folders, work or files.
3. Sending any written comment or picture that is malicious regarding another student or individual. All forms of e-communication harassment of any kind, unfounded accusations, derogatory remarks, confidential information or promotion of illegal or immoral behavior.
4. Sending and receiving of any material in violation of any national, state or local regulation. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted, threatening or obscene material.
5. Using School name or logo on personal websites. The School discourages revealing personal information on the Internet and can make no guarantees of privacy or security when the user shares personal information on non-secure websites.
6. Publishing information on the Internet, such as blogging, that brings discredit to the School (whether on or off School premises).
7. Non-School related social contacts between faculty/staff and students .
8. Any access of inappropriate materials that are offensive graphically or display unlawful messages, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, threatening, and/or illegal content or downloading/installing unapproved software.
9. Damaging/vandalizing computers (including the uploading or creation of viruses), systems, networks or any peripherals , attempting to gain access to unauthorized sources, attempting to harm or destroy data of another user, or attempting to circumvent protective security software.
10. Using network in any way that will limit or disrupt network use or attempting to alter School system settings or data.
11. Using the network for political or commercial purposes such as endorsing political candidates or selling items or services.
12. Assisting others in violating any of these policies.
13. Abuse or fraudulent use of the computer system, network or Internet not specifically mentioned

Prohibited unless authorized by the Teacher/Administration:

Access to personal email, chatting, texting, social media. .

Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the computers and Internet.

**Computer and Internet Promises
For Grades 1 - 5
Diocese of Richmond
Saint Mary's Catholic School**

Introduction

The use of the computers and the Internet at the School must be for learning. We believe that using technology to learn is an important tool and we expect that students act responsibly.

Computer use is a privilege, not a right, and improper use will result in losing those privileges. The teacher will decide if improper behavior has occurred and whether computer privileges are to be taken away. Should the situation require intervention from an administrator,

When you use the School's computers, the Principal and other adults have the right and ability to look at your files and activities. Make sure that what you put in the computer system is in alignment with our school Mission, and also courteous, legal, and acceptable.

Security on our computer system is important. If you see anyone trying to use other people's work or trying to go to areas that are not allowed, it is your responsibility to notify the teacher.

Just like parents monitor what you watch on television, see at the movies, listen to on the radio, or talk to on the telephone, the School will provide guidance on what is proper and teach you how to use the computers and Internet in a responsible way.

Your Promises

Using the computer and Internet correctly and responsibly is very important. I promise to follow these rules.

1. I PROMISE to use all equipment carefully and not intentionally damage or destroy it.
2. I PROMISE not to tamper with the software or network.
3. I PROMISE to use the computers and Internet for School work only and use only the programs and websites that my teacher has approved.
4. I PROMISE to keep my password to myself and not to share it with others.
5. I PROMISE not to use someone else's password.
6. I PROMISE to be polite and not to use any language or pictures that are hurtful to others.
7. I PROMISE to give credit to others when I use their words or ideas.
8. I PROMISE to obey copyright rules.
9. I PROMISE to use only my own files and/or folders and never to trespass into someone else's.
10. I PROMISE to tell my teacher if I see something on the computer that is inappropriate.
11. I PROMISE to ask for help when I don't know what to do and to print only when my teacher tells me to.
12. I PROMISE not to reveal my address, phone numbers, or any personal information about me on the Internet.

I understand that if I do not use the computers or Internet responsibly or if I break my promises that there will be consequences.

The School and the Diocese of Richmond make no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for Internet service. They will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. The School and Diocese specifically deny any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its provision of Internet service.

Saint Mary's Catholic School
Student & Parent Handbook
2021-2022

Statement of Receipt of Handbook

I, _____, have
(Printed Parent Name)
read and reviewed the 2021-2022 Student & Parent
Handbook with my child, _____.
(Printed Child Name)

I am familiar with the policies and procedures and agree
to abide by all contained therein.

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Grade