



***St. Joseph Catholic School  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2023-2024***

Principal: Mrs. Tammi Haas, M. Ed.  
Assistant Principal: Mr. John Reilly, M.Ed.  
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Jennifer Insua, M.Ed.  
Canonical Administrator: Very Rev. Timothy LaBo  
Parochial Vicar: Rev. Saji Muthirenthikal, CFIC  
Parochial Vicar: Rev. Raju Yajjala, CFIC

St. Joseph Catholic School, on the campus of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Winter Haven, is a pre-Kindergarten 3 through 8th grade Catholic Elementary and Middle School under the Diocese of Orlando. The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as the teacher. Vatican II texts are used so that our theology is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with each other in meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At St. Joseph Catholic, we are attempting to "teach as Jesus did." Curriculum is based on Diocesan-approved standards and learning objectives which exceed both state and national performance norms. The curriculum is marked by current content and fresh approaches to methodology. We strive to offer a program which makes use of many sources of reading material, a wide variety of audio-visual and technology tools and a multi-text approach to the content areas.

### **ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

*St. Joseph Catholic School is a diverse community of disciples empowered through a rigorous and inclusive Catholic education rooted in Gospel values and service to others.*

#### **Parent's Role in Education**

We, at St. Joseph Catholic School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life--physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of St. Joseph Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life. Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. Joseph Catholic School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home, or within the home, will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security. **It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments.** This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

In Pope Benedict XVI's address to Catholic Educators he said, "Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (cf. *Spe Salvi*, 4). This relationship elicits a desire to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching. In this way those who meet him are drawn by the very power of the Gospel to lead a new life characterized by all that is beautiful, good, and true; a life of Christian witness nurtured and strengthened within the community of our Lord's disciples, the Church." Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

#### **Accreditation**

St. Joseph Catholic School is accredited through the Florida Catholic Conference. According to the guidelines of the accreditation conference, each teacher in grades PreK-8 holds either a Bachelor or a Master's degree. Certification by the State of Florida is a requirement of all teachers.

#### **Admission Information-- Nondiscriminatory Policy**

St. Joseph Catholic School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. Joseph Catholic School:

1-Currently enrolled students, 2-Members of St. Joseph Catholic Church, 3-Members of other parishes, 4-Students transferring from another Catholic School, 5-Non-Catholic students

The final acceptance is determined by the principal in consultation with the teachers, based on screening assessments, records from the previous school, interview with the student and parent, and available space.

All students entering St. Joseph Catholic School for the first time will be accepted on probationary bases for a trimester. This is to ascertain a student's ability to adjust to the school philosophy and curriculum expectations.

Children entering Pre-Kindergarten 3 must be three years old by September 1. **Students must be toilet trained.**

Children entering Pre-Kindergarten 4 must be four years old by September 1.

To enter Kindergarten, a child must be five years old by September 1.

To enter the First Grade, a child must be six years old by September 1 and must have successfully completed Kindergarten.

**Requirements include:**

\*Health Records

+HRS FL Certificate of Immunization

+HRS Student Health Examination

\*Birth Certificate (original)

\*Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)

\*Paperwork from any academic or psychological testing, including 504 Plans and/or Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) if applicable.

\*Transfer students must also present a transcript or report card, standardized test scores, and completed referral form (provided by SJCS) from the previous school at the time of applying for admission.

Additionally, a shadow day and/or screening is likely to be required for all students before acceptance.

\*Students enrolled in our VPK program must reapply and be assessed for admission for kindergarten.

**Academic Probation**

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies (subject average below a C) may be placed on academic probation. **Students on academic probation cannot participate in extra-curricular activities**, including sports, until the principal has determined eligibility and reinstatement. The principal is the only person able to reinstate a student from academic probation.

**After Care: See Eagle's Perch**

**Attendance**

Students are tardy if they are not in their classroom by 8am daily. To allow students time to walk to the classroom, they must have exited their vehicle by 7:57 am daily. Teachers in morning carline will redirect parents to the school office to sign their child in tardy beginning at 7:57am.

- If a student is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian must report the absence to the school office by 9am on the day of the absence.
- Parents/Guardians should call the school office and dial 1, when prompted, to leave a message in the mailbox. The message should include the child's name, date, and reason for the absence.
- In the event a student is absent from school, he/she is responsible for making up missed work. Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. It is expected that when a student returns from being out, he/she will be prepared to submit any assignments that were assigned on the child's last day of class before the absence. Students should arrange to make up any missed tests or quizzes within one week of the absence. In the event that a test was announced before a student's absence, it is expected that he/she will take the test with the rest of the class.
- Teachers will not provide missing work to students when they are absent from school. If a student is absent and wishes to do some school work, he/she is encouraged to read. Older students can also keep up with schoolwork by logging into their Google Classroom. Parents may not call or send messages to the teacher requesting work to complete during an absence.

If a child must attend a medical appointment during the school day, parents are required to sign out their child. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office. Students may not participate in a sports or school event on the same evening of a school absence or leaving school early due to illness. Students will not be dismissed from the school office after 2:15pm daily.

**Attendance Policy**

All parents sign the SJCS Attendance Policy annually. A copy of the Attendance Policy can be found on pages 11-13 of this Parent Student Handbook.

**Academic Information--Curriculum**

The curriculum is based on guidelines developed by the Orlando Diocese within a framework of Christian principles. All academic programs of St. Joseph Catholic School are governed and evaluated by the Diocese of Orlando Office of Schools and the Florida Catholic Conference.

**Grading Scale**

**For students in grades 3-8:**

Students will be recognized for academic honors at the end of each trimester. Principal's Honors is for all students who earn a 95% or above in all subject areas. High Honors is reserved for those students earning 90% and above. Students will be recognized with Honors for achieving 85% or above.

**Before Care: See Eagle's Perch**

**Birthday Observances**

St. Joseph Catholic School understands that a child's birthday is a special day. Students in Pre-K through Grade 8 may come to school dressed out-of-uniform on their birthday or half-birthday. If a student's birthday falls on a Mass day, the student should dress out on an alternative day. Invitations to parties are given to all members of a class or mailed to individual students if all students in the class are not invited. Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. If a family chooses to celebrate their child's birthday with a treat for the class, Maschio's

(our lunch provider) is happy to provide the class with a treat at a nominal cost to the family. Birthday treats may not be sent in with the student. They must be purchased from Maschio's and will be shared during lunch in the cafeteria. Parents can secure these birthday treats may be purchasing in advance using the form provided by Maschio's.

### **Board of Education**

This board is an advisory body that assists in the support and counsel of all school planning at St. Joseph Catholic School. The Diocese of Orlando Office of Schools sets policy for all Catholic schools in the Orlando Diocese.

### **Book Bags**

All book bags/back packs must fit in the student's cubby or locker. Large, wheeled book bags generally do not fit and create a safety hazard in the classroom and will be sent home for a book bag that will fit.

### **Car Line**

Specific procedures for morning and afternoon carline are established to ensure the highest level of student safety is maintained. Adults entering the carline agree to abide by those policies and procedures. All persons picking children up from SJCS must have the Pikmykid app on their phone. For morning and afternoon carline, drivers are asked to pay close attention during the car line process and follow directions of the teachers on duty. For the safety of all, drivers should not be on a cell phone while in car line. No student is to be dropped off or picked up in the office parking lot during drop off or dismissal.

- **Morning:** All students are to be dropped off in the horseshoe near the Parish Center. Cars should follow the line of cars moving all the way to the top before stopping to let their child out of the car.
- **Afternoon:** Cars entering carline for pick up must have a school issued car tag clearly displayed in the front windshield.

Each family is given two car tags at the beginning of the school year. Additional car tags may be picked up by the legal guardian of a student in the office. If an adult comes through car line to pick up a student without a car tag, he/she must be prepared to present picture identification. If an adult fails to comply with such request, the student will not be dismissed to the care of that adult. Parents/Guardians may not park and walk up to pick up their child. Homeroom teachers should be advised in writing if a child is to go home in a different car pool or by a different means on a given day. Students who have a learner's permit or driver's license are not permitted to drive on school property.

### **Cellular Phone/Personal Electronic Device Policy**

While students are permitted to bring a cell phone to school, cell phones must be kept in the student's school bag and **must be turned off** until the **student leaves the campus**. Cell phones are not to be used in school without expressed teacher permission. Violations of this policy will result in the cell phone being confiscated from the student and will need to be retrieved by a parent/legal guardian from the school office. An after school detention will be given to the student on the first violation (and each successive) of this policy. If the rule is violated more than two times in a school year, the phone will be dropped daily in the principal's office and retrieved at the end of the day. **If the cell phone was used in class for texting or taking pictures, it will be dropped off each morning to the principal after the first violation. Students may not use their cell phone camera at any time.** Smart/Apple Watches and Fitbits are not permitted.

### **Cheating/Plagiarizing**

Cheating and plagiarizing of any type will not be tolerated. Students who have any involvement in an activity of cheating/plagiarizing will face disciplinary action.

### **Child Abuse Laws**

St. Joseph Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Florida. Diocesan Policy #PS006 and Florida Statutes Chapters 415 and 232.50 requires any clergy, religious or lay employee or volunteer who knows or has cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to any form of abuse or neglect by any person, to contact the Florida Department of Children and Families on the same calendar day, respond to the local DCF, call back with additional information and to cooperate with any and all authorities in the investigation of any child abuse report. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

**Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors:** The Diocese of Orlando has adopted a Code of Conduct that can be found on pages 13-17 of this Handbook.

### **Communication**

St. Joseph Catholic School prides itself on effective and frequent communication between school and home. This commitment takes place in a variety of ways including, but not limited to: weekly email blasts sent by the principal, Eagle's Eye newsletter distributed electronically weekly, and occasional emails from the teacher or room moms. Hard copy correspondence occurs occasionally. It is the responsibility of the parent to expect and read these communications in their entirety. St. Joseph Catholic School cannot be held responsible for parents not receiving information when it is sent out. Faculty and staff are committed to working with all parents when any concerns arise. Please contact the employee that is most involved in the situation to settle any issues. You may consider reaching out to the employee via email, telephone, or setting up a face to face conference. Please allow 24 hours for an employee to respond. Further, please respect the employee's family time by refraining from texting or calling an employee between 7pm and 7am, unless it is an emergency. Administration is happy to become involved after the parent meets with the employee and isn't satisfied with the resolution.

### **Conferences**

Two Parent-Teacher Conferences are held each year. Parents requiring additional conferences during the school year may make arrangements with the individual teachers.

### **Confidentiality**

St. Joseph Catholic School employees maintain strict confidentiality reflecting all children. In the event of any concerns or incidences, every attempt will be made to conference with a parent in a private setting to preserve the confidentiality of the student. Further, employees will never discuss a child with any parent other than his/her own legal guardian.

### **Counselor**

A certified guidance counselor serves the needs of students and parents through class and individual consultation.

### **Eagle's Perch: Before and After Care**

St. Joseph Catholic School has a before and after care program called Eagle's Perch. Before care is in the Parish Center beginning at 7:00. The cost is \$2.00 per family for before care. After Care is \$4.50/hour per child. After care for preschool students begins at noon and immediately following school for elementary students. Students must have attended school during the day to attend Eagle's Perch. Eagle's Perch closes at 6:00 PM. Students who are not picked up by 6:05 will be billed \$15 until 6:20 and \$1.50 per minute after 6:20. The Eagle's Perch fees are due within one week of receiving a statement. St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to dismiss any child from the Eagle's Perch program for failure to pay fees or inappropriate behavior.

### **Emergency Closing**

If it should be necessary to close the school because of inclement weather affecting the entire county, Diocesan policy states that the school will follow the directive of the local county school system. Parent guardians will be notified of school closings by email/text message, on Facebook and the school website. Please be aware that St. Joseph Catholic School students may return to school following a weather emergency prior to public schools.

### **Emergency Plan/Drills**

St. Joseph Catholic School has a plan for emergencies including fire, weather, and security. Training is held annually for all faculty and staff. State law requires that fire drills be held monthly. Weather drills are held periodically. Security drills are held a minimum of two times a year. In the event of a lockdown emergency, St. Joseph Catholic School has a crisis plan in place, and follows the directions given by local law enforcement when present. The plan includes procedures that promote safety and security of students and staff. In addition, the plan ensures that school facilities and equipment are safe and in good condition in compliance with the "Safe Passage Act (Section 229.8348, Florida Statutes)". All teachers and staff are aware of the procedures to follow to keep your children safe. The school will communicate with guardians via text/email message when appropriate.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips will be scheduled by the teacher with the approval of administration. In the case of a field trip out of the county, charter buses will be secured, and all students must ride the charter bus to and from a field trip. Parent chaperones will be permitted to attend the field trip if they have fingerprint clearance through the Diocese of Orlando. Siblings are not permitted on field trips. Any individual driving on behalf of the school, including driving to a field trip must have a current Driver Authorization Form complete on file in the school office with the minimum insurance requirement. All SJCS chaperones are required to wear a SJCS shirt when attending all off campus trips with the school.

### **Financial Obligations**

All families must enroll in the FACTS Tuition Management Service. Payments begin in July. All Application Fees and Registration Fees are **NON-REFUNDABLE**. Tuition and outstanding balances for the school year must be current in order to register for the following school year.

**A RETURN FEE OF \$25.00 WILL BE ASSESSED TO YOUR ACCOUNT FOR ANY RETURNED CHECK.**

**You may apply for financial assistance by clicking on the white FACTs box on the school homepage ([www.stjosephwhschool.org](http://www.stjosephwhschool.org)) \*The application deadline for Aid Assessment to factstuitionaid.com is April 15**

### **Tuition Payment Options:**

#### **Payment Options:**

- Pay in full by JULY 1, or
- Pay ½ annual tuition by July 1, and the remainder by December 1, or
- Pay monthly – the last month available would be June of the school year.

Registration is not complete, students' spots are not secure, until all steps in the registration process have been completed, including but not limited to: completing the online application, submitting registration fees, providing scholarship award letter, setting up a FACTs account, and any other requirements outlined by administration. Students who are not completely registered will not be placed in a classroom until all steps are satisfied and may be in danger of forfeiting their spot in the class.

### **FACTS® Tuition Management Service Overview**

- There is an annual non-refundable \$38 administrative fee for enrollment in the Facts® program per family. This fee will be added to your tuition collected by FACTS® on the first scheduled payment—please do not make this payment to the school.
- FACTS will collect tuition using a direct debit to each family's checking or savings account on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, or last day of the month. If funds are not available at that time a second attempt will be made during the next processing cycle. During this second attempt, the family will be charged a \$30 fee before the full tuition payment has been processed. If FACTS is unsuccessful in collecting the balance due for tuition and fees by the third cycle, the principal and the school board finance committee will be notified. Unless documented proof of financial hardship is provided by the family, the principal will notify that payment is needed in full within 10 days. If full payment is not received within ten days the family will be required to withdraw the child(ren) from the school. **Student records will not be forwarded for any student if a balance of fees is owed to the school.**

### Tuition Assistance

It is the goal of St. Joseph Catholic School to provide opportunities for financial assistance to families. Although tuition assistance funds are limited, financial assistance is available to families who demonstrate a need. Families seeking financial assistance must first apply for the Step Up for Students Scholarship or other state funded scholarships. Once proving that they were denied state funded scholarships, families should complete an application for financial aid. The scholarship committee will not review any applications, nor award any scholarship money to families that do not complete the online application in its entirety. The application is available on our school website.

### Fingerprint Clearance

The Diocese of Orlando requires that all volunteers, including field trip chaperones, must obtain Diocesan fingerprint clearance. This clearance is separate from all other fingerprints that an individual may have for other purposes. Those seeking fingerprint clearance should allow a minimum of two-three weeks before the scheduled event. Once cleared, fingerprints will expire at five years. The expiration date of the fingerprint clearance is the responsibility of the individual. The school will not be responsible for notifying individuals when their fingerprints are about to expire.

### FLVS

The administration of St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to place students in classes, particularly leveled classes in middle school. An objective procedure has been established looking at various data points to determine what is best for the individual students. Students who choose to take a Florida Virtual School course will need to receive approval from the guidance counselor. If a child chooses to take a FLVS course that is offered at St. Joseph Catholic School, the student may not opt out of the course at SJCS. Further, if the parent chooses to enroll their child in an accelerated class, the student must still take the SJCS class assigned by administration. The student must take the class, complete homework, tests, projects, etc and receive a grade on his/her official transcript that will go with him/her to high school. Families considering adding a FLVS course to their child's schedule are cautioned that many of the state scholarships (Step Up, McKay, Gardiner, etc.) limit the number of FLVS classes a student can take in a year. If your child is considering a FLVS course and receives financial aid, please do your due diligence in researching the policy. Failure to comply may result in losing your financial assistance.

### Food Allergy Policy

St. Joseph Catholic School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, St. Joseph Catholic School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian, and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life threatening allergy.

### Head Lice

St. Joseph Catholic School maintains a no nit policy. Students who are identified with lice will be sent home immediately and must be checked/cleared through the school office before returning to class. In the event of a confirmed case of head lice, all parents of students in that class will be notified via email so that necessary precautionary steps can be taken at home if desired.

### Health Concerns

Please remember that students must be free of a temperature over 100.4 degrees within the last 24 hours without anti-fever medication. Additionally, students should be kept at home if they have had any cases of vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours. Students who come to school before the 24 hours have lapsed will be sent home. Please advise the school if your child has a special health concern such as an allergy, asthma, epilepsy, recent surgery or any condition requiring administration of medications. A doctor's note is required if a student is to miss physical education class. Any limitations that a student may have that prohibit full participation in physical education classes must be brought to the attention of the health office. In the event a student has a bathroom accident during the school day, a parent will be notified and requested to come assist the child to clean up. Faculty and staff are not permitted to clean any student private body areas.

### Immunization Requirements

Catholic Schools within the Diocese of Orlando require enrolling students to submit a Florida Department of Health Certificate of Immunization as provided for in Florida Statute 1003.22 to be submitted as a condition precedent to acceptance. Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Orlando do not recognize a religious objection to this immunization. In accordance with the Polk County Health Regulations, all students enrolled in a school must have a current HRS Student Health Examination and State of Florida Immunization Record on file with the school before a child can enter on the first day. Immunizations must be up to date.

- Pre-Kindergarten: Student Health Examination, 1 MMR, 1 Varicella (or documented case of chickenpox), Hepatitis Series (2 or 3 depending on availability), 1HIB, DPT series must be started, Polio series must be started.
- Kindergarten: Student Health Examination (within one year), 2 MMR, 2 Varicella (or documented case of chickenpox), Hepatitis Series, DPT (total of 5), Polio (total of 4).
- Grades 1-6: 2 MMR, DPT (total of 5), Polio (total of 4), Hepatitis Series, Varicella (or documented case of chickenpox)
- Grade 7-8: 2 MMR, DPT (total of 5), Polio (total of 4), Hepatitis Series, TDaP

All students enrolling in St. Joseph Catholic School for the first time are required to have a physical examination by a physician.

### Medication

If a child must take any prescription medication during the school day, that medication must be delivered to the office by an adult in the original container received from the pharmacy with an affixed label containing: Child name, administration amounts, and the number of times/day to be administered.

A medical authorization form must be picked up in the school office or the doctor could complete a form. The school cannot dispense medication without the authorization form. **Students cannot carry medications** (including lozenges, cough drops, aspirin, inhalers, ointments, etc.) or keep any medications in their backpack or desk.

### **Homework Policy**

It is expected that all students will complete and submit homework in a timely manner. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Teachers in grades K-5 will handle missing homework assignments within their classroom. These expectations and consequences will be communicated to parents at the beginning of the year annually. Middle school students who do not turn in their homework assignment at the time that it is due will stay after school until 3:40pm. There are no exceptions. Students are responsible for remaining afterschool without having to be reminded; failure to do so will result in a lunch detention. Administration reserves the right to keep any student with missing work after school, from a special area class, field trip, or special event until the assignment is complete.

### **Library**

The school has a well-equipped automated library and media center. Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition. Fines will be levied on missing or damaged books.

### **Lockers**

Each student is assigned a locker or cubby in which to store clothing and textbooks. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be placed in the Lost and Found basket. **Periodically, parents are reminded to check Lost and Found and then remaining items are donated to charity.** In an effort to help us eliminate the number of lost and found items, parents are asked to label all items such as lunchboxes, jackets, and water bottles with your child's name.

### **Lunch Program**

St. Joseph Catholic School partners with Maschio's to offer a hot lunch daily. Meals are prepared in the Parish Center. Lunch accounts are maintained online. Families of students wishing to purchase hot lunch must put money on their child's account. Students must have their own account and may not share with family members. In the event that the student tries to purchase a lunch and doesn't have enough money in his/her account, he/she will be permitted to charge their own account until a debt of \$20 is accumulated. Maschio's will notify parents of delinquent accounts via email. After a student reaches a debt of \$20, he/she will be given a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a bottle of water for lunch and will be charged \$2. Students may choose to bring their lunch each day. Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with lunch monitors are in order at all times.

### **Off-Campus Conduct**

The administration of St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day, including but not limited to appropriate usage of social media.

### **Office Records**

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. Additionally, parents are required to make the appropriate changes in RenWeb. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

### **Parent Custody**

It is required that the custodial parent provide the principal with an official, updated copy of the custody order. In absence of a court order, a school should provide the non-custodial parent the opportunity, upon request, for a parent teacher conference. Likewise, the school should share pertinent information with the non-custodial parent in a timely manner.

### **Parent Organization (PTO)**

This organization works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, and building community are goals of this organization.

### **Promotion and Retention Policy**

Advancement to the next grade in St. Joseph Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level. Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of **all** subject areas. Students who have earned an average below 60 in **any** subject area cannot be promoted to the next grade.

### **Report Cards/Progress Reports**

**Report Cards** are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be given three (3) times during the academic school year at the conclusion of every trimester. All school related financial obligations must be met prior to the release of the report cards. **Progress Reports** will be given mid-way between each trimester. Additionally, parents are strongly encouraged to use RenWeb to monitor their child's grades a minimum of three times per week.

### **Restroom/Locker Room Privacy Policy**

St. Joseph Catholic School complies with the requirements of §553.865, Florida Statutes, The Safety in Private Spaces Act. Except where facilities are specifically designated as unisex, the school's bathroom and locker rooms/changing facilities are designated exclusively for use by biological females or biological males. Any student who willfully enters a school restroom or locker room/changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any school personnel will be subject to disciplinary consequences as established by the school principal unless a specific statutory exception applies. This provision shall be considered a part of the school's code of student conduct and the instructional personnel Code of Ethics."

### **Sacramental Program**

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at St. Joseph Catholic School. Religious instruction is included in the curriculum each day. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist, form the core of our efforts in Grade 2. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist. Sacramental Catechesis is intended for all members of the Christian community, takes place within the community, and involves the whole community of faith. Parish Church is the center of worship in the community. It is the place where all Sacraments are celebrated. The liturgical life of the Church revolves around the sacraments, with the Eucharist at the center. (*National Directory of Catechesis*)Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition. Families interested in Reconciliation and Eucharist should contact the Director of Religious Education at St. Joseph Church in the Fall to register and begin sacramental preparation.

### **School Hours**

- Grades Pre-K-3 & PreK-4—8:00 AM – 11:50 AM;
- Grades Kindergarten through grade 5—8:00 AM-3:00 PM.
- Grades 6-8: 8:00AM-3:10PM.

At St. Joseph Catholic School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. The school doors are opened for students at 7:30 AM. Car line begins at 7:30. Students arriving before that time are required to attend Before Care in the Parish Center. Parents are charged \$2/family each day for Before Care. Students not out of their car by 7:57am will be tardy; parents will be directed to drive around to the office parking lot and sign their child/ren in tardy in the office. **Students cannot be left unattended on the school property.** Please check the school calendar and weekly newsletter for early dismissal dates. Parents are to make arrangements for their child(ren) to arrive at school on time and be picked up at dismissal time. Students not picked up by the end of car line (3:35 PM) will be sent immediately to the After School Care Program. Students may not be picked up from the school office after 2:15pm daily.

### **School Logo**

The school logos may not be used without the expressed written consent of the school administration.

### **School Office Hours**

The school office is open on all school days from **7:30 AM – 3:30 PM.**

### **School Property**

The parent of a child who destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. No writing in hardback textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

### **Search of Students and their Property**

The Diocese of Orlando affirms that, consistent with the Diocesan Mission Statement, each Catholic school has a special responsibility for the conduct of students and for ensuring the right of teachers to teach and students to learn in a safe and caring Christian environment. Given the Diocese's dedication to create and maintain a safe environment, students will not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any and all property brought on school grounds or to school events. The search of a student's person or any item carried by the student is permissible when there is any suspicion that the student may be carrying contraband. Contraband is defined as any weapon, dangerous object, illegal drug, drug paraphernalia or other item prohibited by law or by school policy. All property of the school, including student desks and lockers, as well as contents may be opened, searched, or inspected at any time without notice. School personnel have an unrestricted right to search this property as well as any containers, book bags, purses, or articles of clothing that are left unattended on the school campus. Searches may be conducted by authorized school personnel, police, or other appropriate officials with the approval of the principal, including random searches.

### **Service Hours--Parents**

Upon acceptance, all families agree to complete 20 service hours during the school year. Each family MUST do 2 service hours for Fall Fest. The service hour agreement sets our school apart from all other schools and has many benefits. It shows students that their parents are present and involved. It is the reminder to all that the time of each of us is equally important and valuable. Everyone has something to give. Anyone performing service hours at school must be fingerprinted and have viewed and submitted the quiz results for the Diocesan Safe Environment Training Video according to Diocesan policy. Parents are required to document service hours in Renweb.



In determining whether a particular service “counts” as hours a general guideline is to let common sense be your guide. If it has been requested by a faculty or staff member or a room parent or committee chair—it counts! If it is a service that has been requested and would otherwise require the school to hire someone to perform—it counts. If it is goods or a donation that has been requested—it counts. Some examples are: parent attendance at PTO meeting—2 service hours; chaperoning a field trip or working in the cafeteria—hour for hour spent; donation toward Gala or Fall Fest Basket—one service hour per \$10 spent. Examples that do not count toward service hours: Donating toward teacher gift; donating to Food Pantry; donating toward items requested by teachers or staff. All other activities are to be documented as the amount of time spent doing the service.

### **Service Hours—Students**

Students in middle school (grades 6, 7, 8), in keeping with the school philosophy that we give service to others, must complete 10 service hours per year. Failure to complete service hours will affect the Religion grade. Additionally, students involved in the National Junior Honor Society and Student Service Council are expected to complete additional service hours. Students will log their service hours in Renweb.

### **Sports Program**

St. Joseph Catholic School offers the following sports: boys’ and girls’ soccer, basketball, golf, tennis, running club, boys’ flag football, girls’ volleyball and cheerleading. Students in grades 5 to 8 are eligible to participate in sports. A participation fee of \$50.00 per sport per student will be assessed at the beginning of each sport season. All athletes are subject to academic and conduct eligibility requirements. **Students that do not maintain a 70 average in any subject area cannot play sports.** A student who is involved in a sport including, cheerleading, and is placed on academic ineligibility can no longer play or practice with the team until they are released from academic probation by the principal.

### **Student Conduct**

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students’ sense of appropriateness will indicate to them. The principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises. Conduct referrals are given for major violations of the conduct code. Detentions, if given, are to be served on the date assigned. Students assigned detention may not be involved in any extra-curricular activity on the day of the detention if the detention has not been served.

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, toys, trading cards, laser lights, cameras, iPads, or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time. If a student chooses to violate this rule, they alone are responsible if the item is lost or stolen.

The School Administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. **Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) at the end of the school year.**

### **Discipline**

It is our policy to work with all children in a positive way. We encourage students to develop responsible behavior and self-esteem through good decision-making with the ultimate goal of self-discipline. All disciplinary action taken by the administration or teacher is intended to help the child accept his/her responsibility for being a student in our school. Parents will be informed by phone, email, or written note.

St. Joseph Catholic School Student Responsibilities

- Students have the responsibility to attend school regularly
- Students have the responsibility to treat others with respect
- Students have the responsibility to treat school property and the property of others with respect
- Students have the responsibility to respect the privacy of others
- Students have the responsibility to listen courteously to the opinions and points of view of others
- Students have the responsibility to come prepared to learn with all the necessary materials

Follow the four R’s—reverent, respectful, responsible, right choices

### **Consequences for Misbehavior**

We encourage students to develop responsible behavior and self-esteem through good decision-making skills with the ultimate goal of self-discipline. All actions have implications for self and others.

Consequences are seen as a supportive way to teach accountability, trust, honesty, and respect.

Each teacher will determine the discipline consequences for misbehavior in their classroom. Consequences for misbehavior may include, but not be limited to, (1) loss of recess, (2) time spent in a time-out chair, (3) silent lunch with teacher or silent lunch table in the cafeteria, (4) conversation with parent(s), (5) visit dean or administration.

### **Middle School Student LOG Program Procedures**

Students’ names are recorded in the Student LOG Program for infractions of student conduct. The student LOG Program is designed to help middle school faculty and students address the issues of student conduct that generally occur outside the classroom. Teachers still have the responsibility and freedom of making their own classroom rules and procedures. The LOG program helps to correct infractions that occur outside the classroom.

### **Some infractions that could earn a LOG:**

- Uniform violations including make up/hair color and length/shirt untucked/jewelry violations
- Gum chewing is an AUTOMATIC detention AND counts as a LOG

- Multiple tardies to the same class
- PDA (public display of affection)
- Coming unprepared to class
- Inappropriate behavior (hallway, cafeteria, restroom, stairs, Eagle's Perch, sidewalk, church)
- Writing on arms, legs or body parts

**Major infractions** for all students are enforced with referrals to the dean, assistant principal, or principal in cooperation with the teacher(s) or faculty member(s).

### **Behavior Code**

Our behavior code is intended to create an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to academic progress and the personal development of all students. Students are expected to:

1. Show consideration, courtesy, respect and proper care to all school personnel and fellow students as well as their property.
2. Attend class on time.
3. Refrain from picking up and/or throwing or kicking sand, stones, or other potentially harmful objects.
4. Dress in accordance with the school dress code. (see Uniforms and Dress Code)
5. Avoid all activity that involves violence, vandalism, stealing, offensive language, gestures, or disrespect in any way.
6. Gum chewing is not permitted while on school premises, including Eagle's Perch and field trips.
7. Weapons of any kind are not allowed on school property.

### **Detention**

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. The day, date, and time of the detention is at the discretion of the Principal or Dean. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, ballgames, etc. **Students who are scheduled to serve detention are ineligible to play sports or participate in extra-curricular events on the day of detention if the detention was not served.**

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others or possess drugs and/or alcohol at school or school sponsored events may face expulsion from St. Joseph Catholic School. Expulsion is at the discretion of the school principal with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Orlando.

### **Anti-Harassment Policy**

Harassment is contrary to Gospel values and has no place in the Catholic school. All students are entitled to study in a school environment that is Christ-centered and free of harassment. Harassment occurs in many ways, including, but not limited to: verbal and written threats, bullying, cyber-bullying, emotional, psychological, physical, racial, and/or sexual. The school will treat complaints of harassment seriously and will respond to such complaints in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. Harassment of any type will not be tolerated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

The following examples are a non-exhaustive list of possible forms of harassment: 1. Verbal or written: comments such as hurtful name-calling, teasing, taunting, gossip, and threats, whether in person or through any form of electronic communication; 2. Bullying: characterized by aggressive behavior toward another, intentional repeated hurtful acts over a period of time, imbalance of power (real or perceived) between the bully and the victim; 3. Cyber-bullying: using electronic communications to do the act of bullying (i.e. email, texting, social network, on-line chats); 4. Physical includes: punching, poking, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting, spitting, stealing, pinching, and tickling; 5. Emotional: rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, manipulation, isolating, ostracizing, and peer pressure; 6. Sexual: exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, sexual harassment and abuse involving actual physical contact and sexual assault, sex-ting, unwanted touching, inappropriate social networking; 7. Racial includes, but is not limited to, actions based on personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or perceived sexual orientation; 8. Jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, cyber rumors, drawings or objects which are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, incite, abuse or demean an individual or group. Harassment also includes any other form of treatment or conduct that could create an offensive, intimidating, or hostile environment or otherwise be unwelcomed by a student or group of students.

School shall include in their regular instructional programs lessons that teach the dangers and consequences of harassment. Special assemblies or speakers may be part of the curriculum to inform and educate students. St. Joseph Catholic School shall be proactive in dealing with incidents of harassment, working closely with families, parents, and guardians.

Harassment/Bullying of any type is not tolerated. The administration investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Engagement in online activities such as, but not limited to, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

### **Student Records**

St. Joseph Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Parents requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the St. Joseph Catholic School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent electronically or via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents. **No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.**

### **Technology**

All parents and students must read and sign the Diocese of Orlando Acceptable Use Policy (DNAUP) annually before having access to school technology. Parents or volunteers at school photographing events are asked to refrain from posting pictures on Facebook or any other social networking sites that contain images of students other than the family's own child(ren).

### **Telephone**

Permission to use the telephone for emergencies must be obtained from the school secretary. **Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, reminders of early dismissals, etc. do not constitute emergencies.** Please encourage your child to be responsible for the materials needed for his/her day at school. Delivery of messages and forgotten materials to the classroom causes a disruption for all children in a class. Messages to students and teachers will be relayed only during transition times throughout the day. Students will not be called out of class to speak to a parent/guardian on the phone.

### **Testing**

All schools in the Diocese of Orlando are required to administer standardized testing as an integral part of the total instructional program. This testing, however, is *not* “high-stakes” – the results are not used to determine teacher efficacy, nor are they used solely to determine a child’s promotion or retention. Test results/scores are simply one measure of the total composite of a child’s individual academic progress; thus, the information is used to assist teachers in meeting the specific and targeted learning expectations for a child’s appropriate developmental level. This information is critical in helping our teachers provide the best educational opportunities for our students.

Given the number of benefits derived from the standardized testing, the Diocese of Orlando does not allow a parent or a student the choice of “opt-out” of testing. Students who are absent for any reason, including medical absences, during the school’s designated testing window will be rescheduled for testing upon his/her return to school at the discretion of the school’s administration. Students will not be exempt from taking standardized tests.

Accommodations or modifications will be offered as required to meet the qualified child’s learning needs. This means accommodations or modifications are allowed *only* when specifically indicated through testing via a professional evaluation completed as part of the IDEA Child Find process by the public school District, or through a private psychological-educational evaluation approved by the Office of Catholic Schools.

In addition, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Orlando do not write 504 Student Disability plans. Accommodations, or modifications, are offered at the sole discretion of the school staff and must be based on an evaluation of the documentation provided and other factors deemed relevant by the school staff.

### **Transfer of Students**

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. **No student records will be forwarded to another school until all accounts have been settled.** (See previous section on Student Records for transcript information.)

### **Visitors/Volunteers**

All parents are expected to contribute a minimum of 20 service hours in a given school year. Please see the section “Service Hours” for additional information. School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For the safety and security of students, each person is required to sign in at the office. All guests will be required to be screened through our Raptor system and will be asked to provide a driver’s license. Once cleared in the office, all visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated lanyard that may be picked up and returned in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. All volunteers must have had their fingerprints cleared through the Diocese of Orlando and view the Safe Environment Video (and submit the quiz results to the school office) before coming onto the school property. Fingerprint clearance is valid for 5 years. It is the responsibility of the parents/volunteer to know when his/her fingerprint clearance expires. The school cannot be accountable for notifying parents when their fingerprint clearance will expire.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school. **If a student has attended any portion of a month, or the school is not notified in writing that the student has withdrawn, the family is responsible for the entire month’s tuition.**
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance.
- Just as parents have the right to withdraw a child, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if deemed necessary.

**Right to Amend** St. Joseph Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Eagle’s Eye Newsletter.

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

2023-2024

St. Joseph Catholic School is proud to partner with parents in providing a high quality, rigorous education that best prepares their children for the future. Attendance in school is a major predictor of student academic success. It is the shared responsibility of the school and the home to assist students in developing desirable habits of punctuality and attendance.

It is expected that all students will attend school daily, arriving on time (exiting the car before 7:57am) and remaining in school until dismissal. As parents of students at St. Joseph Catholic School, it is assumed that you recognize the value of a Catholic education and will partner with us to ensure your child's regular attendance. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments after dismissal. When that is not possible, parents are encouraged to make the appointments first thing in the morning or as late in the afternoon as possible. While attendance for a full day is ideal, being present for a portion of the day is better than missing the entire school day.

Parents understand that regardless of the reason that a child is not in school, a child is marked absent when he/she is not present in the classroom. Still, parents are encouraged to provide the school with doctor's notes whenever their child misses any portion of the day due to an appointment. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to call the school if their child will be absent and to state the reason for the absence. There is a special attendance line used for absences. Parents should call the school and dial 1 to leave a message that includes the student name, date that he/she will be absent, and the reason for the absence. The principal is authorized to require satisfactory explanation from the legal/custodial parent or guardian for the absence of a pupil for all or any part of the school day. The explanation must be obtained in writing and retained as documentation. When students are absent, they miss important instruction and fall behind in their studies. It is the responsibility of the student, with the support of the parent, to acquire missing assignments upon their return to school and turn them in. Students may be required to remain afterschool following an absence to make up for the missed learning time. Parents will be notified via text message by 2pm on the day that the student needs to stay late. Again, the responsibility to ensure that these assignments are completed, and a grade is calculated, rests on the student and parent. Parents are encouraged to use our portal, Renweb, to monitor that all assignments are accounted for.

Those families receiving financial assistance through the state agree to comply with their attendance policy. These policies state that students may not be absent more than 18 days during the 180-day school year ("90 percent attendance"). Failure to be present for this minimum amount of time will result in the loss of the scholarship. If you plan to withdraw your student during the school year, please notify the private school two (2) weeks prior to withdrawal.

For long-term or extensive absences due to medical conditions, parents should enroll the student in the applicable county public school district for home instruction or make an arrangement with the school administrator for continued academic progress.

#### Absences (Including Early Dismissals):

The following steps of action will be taken:

- A. 5 absences, the parent will begin to receive an email automatically generated notifying them of the number of absences accumulated thus far and reminding them of the policy.
- B. 12 absences, the parent will receive communication from a school administrator, and the student will be placed on attendance probation.
- C. At the 19<sup>th</sup> absence in a school year, SJCS is not able to provide the student with the quality education, and the student will be withdrawn.

#### Tardies:

As stated above, one of our goals as the partner in a child's education is to help them develop discipline, including developing desirable habits of punctuality. When a student is tardy, it does not prepare him/her for a successful day of learning, and it interrupts the teacher and the rest of the class. A student is tardy at St. Joseph Catholic School, if he/she is not out of his/her car by 7:57am daily.

The following steps of action will be taken when a student is tardy:

- a. 5 tardies, the parent will begin to receive an email automatically generated notifying them of the number of tardies accumulated thus far and reminding them of the policy.

- b. 12 tardies, the parent will receive communication from a school administrator, and the student will be placed on attendance probation.
- c. At the 19<sup>th</sup> tardy in a school year, the student’s education is being negatively impacted, and a review by the principal and Pastor will take place to determine if the student can remain at St. Joseph Catholic School.

*A Code of Conduct  
for  
Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors  
of  
Catholic Schools in the  
Diocese of Orlando*

*“Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart”*

*-Psalm 139*

This **Code of Conduct** applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who interact with our schools and Catholic Education in the Diocese of Orlando. It also applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who are present at school and school sponsored activities, meetings, and/or functions within and outside of school hours. As parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors, there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Orlando.

## **Code of Conduct for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Orlando**

It is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers/volunteers and visitors always model acceptable behavior within the school setting, at school sponsored activities or in any social or professional media involving the school and/or Diocese. “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; and in fulfilling their duty, teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be

willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem” (*The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 796, Para. 2).

This Code is designed to guide all stakeholders in their dealings with staff, other parents, students, and the wider school community. The Code stands beside but does not exclude or replace the rights and obligations of individuals under common law while recognizing the rights of the Diocese of Orlando as a Catholic religious entity and the religious nature of Catholic schools.

### **Mission Statement:**

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Orlando proclaim the Gospel message within an academic environment of excellence that challenges students to be creative and critical thinkers who integrate faith, moral leadership and compassionate service in order to create a more just and humane world.

### **Rights of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:**

- To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students and other parents
- To be listened to, and clearly communicated with by the school in a timely manner, regarding your child/ren’s education and development
- To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by faculty/staff

### **Responsibilities of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:**

- Value and advocate for your school and its reputation.
- Be mindful of the hurt and damage social media may cause to faculty/staff members, other parents, and students.
- Respect the rights of faculty/staff members and other individuals
- Respect the reputation of teachers and be mindful of communications especially social media; e.g. tone of emails
- Follow the correct procedures to resolve a grievance or conflict, as outlined in the school’s handbook
- Parents must follow the instructions and directions of the teacher. A parent may remind students of the rules but at no time issue consequences and should refer the student to the teacher if the behavior

continues

- As valued members of the school community attend and participate appropriately in school liturgies, extra-curricular or special events including athletics, concerts, academic and cultural events

### **As a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and/or Visitor, we ask that you:**

- Cooperate with school/campus security protocols when on school grounds in order to support the overall safety and security of all children in our care  
*Please note that each school in the Diocese of Orlando has a “Raptor” comprehensive visitor check-in/check-out system located at the front reception desk to prevent school access to unauthorized persons. Using a valid driver’s license, “Raptor” runs all visitors against the National and State Sex Offender Registry each time he/she visits the campus. ALL visitors and volunteers must wear their name badges/lanyards in plain sight at all times while on school grounds or at school-related events*
- Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education
- Under no circumstances approach/contact another student to address, discuss or reprimand them because of actions towards your own child/ren. These issues should be addressed by school administration. This includes the use of digital/social media to address or air grievances.
- Respect teachers’ preparation and assigned supervisory time before, during, and after school Make an appointment for long discussions at a mutually convenient time. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please do not expect a meeting unless pre-arranged
- Protect our children and do not discuss any grievances or perceived failings in front of any student regarding the school
- Respect the decisions made by the administration and faculty, even if you disagree with them
- Listen to your child/ren, but remember that a different version of the event may be interpreted by others
- Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to your school in a constructive and appropriate manner
- Observe the school’s policies, as outlined on the school webpage and/or the school’s handbook and endeavor to support them in the home
- Cooperate where your child’s behavior has overstepped accepted school standards, as outlined in the Student

- Code of Conduct, and follow specified protocol for communication with faculty/staff members
- Value the school community and its reputation especially when engaging with social media
- Do not smoke or use offensive language on school premises
- During livestreaming instruction, parents/guardians must not record or take screenshots of the instruction or share the livestream link with others. A quiet space needs to be provided to the student only, to avoid disruptions or distractions to the teacher and other students. If parents/guardians have any concerns with the livestream instruction, they need to schedule time with the teacher outside of class time.

### **Addressing concerns regarding situations involving your student(s):**

Our Catholic schools want to work in partnership with our families. If anyone has a **current complaint, criticism, or concern**, it is expected the following steps be followed in the first instance:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved (e.g. class teacher) first and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. Where/if possible make an appointment with the relevant person. Follow the chain of command.
2. If for some reason this is not possible, then make an appointment to see an administrator, or other designated leadership personnel.
3. The Administrator (or designee) should attempt to mediate and find resolution in the presence of both parties.
4. If, having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction, the parents must contact the pastor. Only after steps 1-4 have occurred with no resolution, then you may contact the Office of Catholic Schools using information on the website of the Diocese of Orlando - Office of Catholic for further facilitation (<https://www.orlandodiocese.org/ministries-offices/schools/>).
5. Understand that parents, caregivers, guardians, etc. will not receive disciplinary or conflict resolution details that involve children other than their own. This is in accordance to Florida Statute.

**It is important to note that criticism regarding a faculty/staff member will only be heard if it is related to their professional conduct.**

***Breaches and/or the inability to respect the Diocese of Orlando – Office of Catholic Schools Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors, or exasperating complaints, may result in exclusion of a parent, guardian, caregiver, volunteer, and/or visitor from a school, and/or possible termination of enrollment of their***



***child/ren.***

If your complaint relates to Sexual Abuse by a faculty/staff member towards a child in both an historical or current matter, you should, contact the statewide toll free abuse and neglect registry at 1-800-96ABUSE ( 1-800-962-2873) and/or law enforcement. The Diocese of Orlando also offers the esrvice of a Victim Assistance Coordinator. The number is 407-246-7179.

Parents, Guardians, and/or Caregivers, when signing off on accepting the school's policies in the Enrollment Application Form, and by the act of accepting enrollment at a Diocese of Orlando Catholic School, are accepting of this Code of Conduct in its entirety.

*Excerpts of this policy have been used by permission of the Diocese of St.Petersburg, FL.*

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