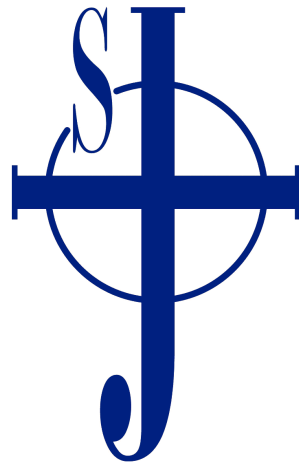


# ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

501 Cardinal Drive  
Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301  
(985) 446-1346



Handbook of Policies  
2023-2024

# Handbook of Policies 2023-2024

## Administration

Bishop.....	Most Reverend Mario E. Dorsonville
Pastor.....	Very Rev. Vicente N. DeLa Cruz, JCL, VF
Principal.....	Jami Chadwick
Dean of Students .....	Donna Landry
Curriculum Specialist .....	Jennifer Russell
Advancement/Technology .....	Maddie Becnel
Secretaries.....	Rita Carrier, Ann Ledoux, Rhonda Chance
Financial Secretary.....	Brittan Stevens

School Hours.....	7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
School Office.....	985-446-1346
School Fax.....	985-449-0760
St. Joseph Life Center.....	985-446-1387

## Mission Statement

With Jesus as our role model, St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School exists to educate the youth of the area spiritually, morally, academically, and socially in a safe, Catholic, Christ-centered environment.

## Vision Statement

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School is dedicated to forming missionary disciples of Christ while providing a rigorous academic program and promoting a virtuous life focused on service to others.

\*Please note that policies, rules, and regulations outlined in the Handbook of Policies this year are subject to change and/or adjustments based upon guidance due to the current Pandemic situation.



## **For Protection of the Family**

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You and praise You for the gift of my family. You have called us from all eternity to be members of one particular family, sharing our lives and hearts together daily.

O Lord, You committed the care of Your only Son to Our Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph amid the many dangers of this world. Through their intercession, we ask You today to grant Your special protection to our family. Protect us in spirit, soul, and body, O God. Grant that we might come to know the truth, to taste the good, and to see the beautiful, always according to Your Will. Help us to walk in the way You set before us. Merciful Father, please fill our hearts with the love of Jesus. Continue to keep us all in good health, growing in wisdom, age and grace before You and all people. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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## **Philosophy**

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We profess a belief in Jesus Christ. Through personal and community prayer, all are encouraged to develop a meaningful relationship with Jesus that leads to a total commitment to Him. We value and honor the dignity of each person as a unique reflection of God.

In this environment we integrate within our curriculum the four-fold dimensions of Christian education: message, community, worship, and service, so as to effectively communicate our culture in the light of faith. Our instructional goals focus on the total spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of the student.

### ***Profile of a St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School Graduate***

#### A Christ-centered person who:

- centers their life around Jesus
- participates in mass, the sacraments, liturgies, and prayer
- lives according to the Gospel teachings
- demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the Catholic faith

#### A Missionary Disciple of Christ who:

- is a friend of Jesus and calls others into friendship with Jesus
- shares their God-given talents
- serves the church, school, and community
- appreciates diversity

#### A life-long learner who:

- strives for their personal best
- plans and perseveres to achieve goals
- builds skills to be academically successful
- shows his faith in both words and work ethic

#### A well-rounded person who:

- sets a positive example and serves as a role model for younger students
- demonstrates good sportsmanship and displays humility
- models Catholic virtues, including respect and forgiveness of self and others
- follows the Golden Rule

## **Safe Environment**

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Those persons who work with or have regular contact with the children at school must be trained through the Diocesan Safe Environment Program. If you plan to assist in the classroom, serve as a chaperone for any school function, or volunteer to work with students in any way, you must be certified through the Safe Environment Program. Both initial and on-going recertification training are available online at the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux website at [www.htdiocese.org](http://www.htdiocese.org).

## **Organizational Structure**

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St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School is a state-approved parochial elementary school operating under the auspices of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux which is nationally accredited by AdvancED that provides educational facilities for children in Pre-K through seventh grade. A certified principal staffs the school with qualified, dedicated teacher-ministers committed to Christian educational excellence. It must be emphasized that the mission of St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School is the shared responsibility of parents, students, the principal, school staff, pastor, parish priests, and parishioners. To facilitate this process of co-responsibility, the following structures exist:

### ***St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School Consultative School Board***

The Board shall be advisory to the principal and pastor in school matters including, but not limited to, mission, planning and policy, buildings and grounds, finance, advancement, communications, marketing, and enrollment. Proposals and/or recommendations shall be subject to the approval of the principal and pastor. The Board consists of the pastor (ex-officio), the principal of St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School (ex-officio), and other members appointed by the pastor and principal. The Board meets once a month except in June and July. Meetings are open to the members of the parish and to all parents of children receiving their education under the auspices of St. Joseph Co-Cathedral Parish. Those persons seeking to address the Board at a monthly meeting must contact the school office and be placed on the agenda at least one week in advance.

### ***St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School P.T.C.***

The objectives of this association:

1. To support the educational and strategic planning goals of St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School
2. To promote cooperation and understanding between the home and the school
3. To provide a channel of communication and interchange between parents and teachers
4. To strengthen home-school-parish-community ties
5. To provide a vehicle for community ties

## **Admissions**

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### ***Admission Policy***

The schools of the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to all. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, policies, scholarship and loan programs, admission policies, and other athletic or school-administered programs. A child entering Pre-K must be four years of age by September 30th of the school year of entry, be potty-trained, and able to take care of their personal bathroom needs. A child entering kindergarten must be five years of age by September 30th of the school year of entry. A child entering first grade must be six years of age by September 30th of the school year of entry. The pastor and principal will determine jointly how many sections of each grade level are warranted each year. The current estimate of the maximum capacity of the school is three sections per grade level. Registration is conducted annually. All new students are admitted on a probationary basis and may be tested prior to admittance. Tuition refund for withdrawal of a student prior to the completion of the school year is as follows: Weeks 1-4, 75% reimbursed; Weeks 5-9, 50% reimbursed; Weeks 10-13, 25% reimbursed; After 13 weeks, no reimbursement.



### Order of Admissions:

1. All students currently enrolled in St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School
2. Siblings of students currently enrolled in St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School
3. Catholic students registered in St. Joseph Parish
4. Children of St. Joseph Alumni
5. Catholic students registered in other church parishes
6. Non-Catholic students

### Records required of all new students:

1. Birth and Baptismal Certificate
2. Immunization Certification
3. Report cards and standardized tests of previous grade (for students entering grades K-7)
4. Copy of Social Security Card
5. Completed Registration Form

Registration fees are nonrefundable.

In the event that a family defaults on a school guaranteed loan, the family will be responsible for paying full tuition by the tuition deadline for subsequent years.

Non-parishioner families from church parishes other than St. Joseph are advised to contact the pastor of their home parish with reference to the subsidy the Diocesan Catholic Elementary School Support Policy requires of these students. If this assessment is not already met by the parish, it must be paid by the parents. The fee is a per-pupil cost billed to the home parish. A parishioner verification form must be signed by the pastor and sent in with registration.

### ***Transfer Policy***

Parents seeking to transfer their children from one Catholic school to another, or from a public and/or private school, must request that the child's records be forwarded to the new school.

### ***Parent Cooperation as a Condition of Enrollment***

The Principal may recommend dismissal of a student when parents have been persistently and overtly uncooperative with school staff, policies, regulations, or programs, or have interfered in matters of school administration or discipline to the detriment of the school's ability to serve their own or other children.

## **Office Procedures**

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Parents and students can assist in helping our school operate in a safe, efficient, and effective manner by adhering strictly to the following:

### ***Messages***

Only messages of vital importance will be relayed to students during school hours. Please make children aware of any changes in routine dismissal before he/she leaves home in the morning. A note should be sent to school informing the teacher of the change in the child's normal routine.

A change in dismissal must be called into the office before 1:00 PM.

In order to make students responsible for their own actions, students will not be permitted to call home nor will parents be allowed to deliver school items that were forgotten. Plants, flowers, balloon bouquets, etc. are not allowed to be delivered to students.

## ***Visitors***

Visitors should ALWAYS enter the school through the main gate on Cardinal Drive, report to the office, sign in, and receive a pass upon entering the school building. Appointments with teachers should be made in advance by sending a note/email to the teacher. Visitors are required to wear appropriate attire when coming to school. This serves as a reminder that school is a special place. Visitors are required to sign out in the office before leaving campus.

## ***Student Emergency Information Needed***

Parents are expected to inform the administration and classroom teachers concerning students having physical, emotional, or mental conditions that require special considerations. In order to keep emergency information current, parents are required to notify the office, in writing, of any change of address, home, cell, and/or work number. If parents become divorced and custody of the child is part of the decree, a copy of the court decree must be secured as part of the student's file. This notification should be an official court document signed by a judge.

## ***Appointments***

Students who have medical or dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours should bring a written excuse to the teacher at the beginning of the school day stating the time and reason for dismissal. Parents must come to the office to sign their child out. A doctor's excuse must be submitted to the office upon return.

## ***Checkout Procedure***

Requests for student checkout must be made in writing or in person at the school office. Parents are discouraged from checking out students early for after school activities. Students will be marked tardy if checked out early for convenience. Students can only be released to adults listed on the student's sign-out card. Students may only be signed out in the office; adults may not pick up students directly from the classroom.

## ***Party Invitations and Birthday Treats***

Invitations to private parties cannot be distributed at school unless all children (at least same-sex children) in the class receive one. Birthday treats should consist of a small, wrapped treat that can be brought to the classroom by the student rather than delivered to the office. No drinks are allowed. Plants, flowers, balloon bouquets, etc. are not allowed to be delivered to students.

## ***Money***

Any money sent to school for payment of any fee or bill must be placed in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with the child's name, grade and section, purpose of payment, and teacher's name. Each fee should be in a separate envelope.

Students whose parents owe school fees for tuition, cafeteria, before/after school care, or other will not receive final grades or be officially registered until accounts are cleared.

# Attendance

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Instructional time is of vital importance, therefore prompt and regular attendance at school is essential. Arriving at school on time is ultimately a parental responsibility-every effort should be made to have your child arrive before the first bell rings. In order to be promoted to the next grade, elementary students shall be in attendance a minimum of 168 days a school year. Absences are not to exceed 10 days. This is in accordance with Louisiana state-adopted policies for non-public schools. Exceptions may be made only in the event of extended illness as verified by a physician or at the discretion of the principal. In the latter case, documentation of reasons for absences must be presented. Therefore, parents should monitor their child's school attendance very closely. A doctor's excuse should be obtained any time a child is taken to the doctor.

## **Tardiness**

Students arriving after the first bell has rung (7:43 A.M.) are considered tardy. Once the duty teacher closes the gate, parents must escort their child to the office to sign in. Parents will be asked to sign a tardy excuse.

Any tardy is considered unexcused, unless a doctor's excuse is presented. Extenuating circumstances may be granted at the discretion of the principal.

After 4 unexcused tardies per semester, the parents and student will conference with the Dean of Students and formulate a plan of action going forward.

## **Absences**

Parents are requested to call the school office before 8:15 A.M. if a student will be absent. An email or written excuse from the parent or doctor must be sent to school on the day the student returns from an absence, even though the phone call has been made. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.

Students who are absent for the day are NOT allowed to come to school to take scheduled tests.

Any student who misses more than 50 minutes of a school day (excused or unexcused) will not be able to participate in any school related clubs or sporting events for that day. Extenuating circumstances must be reported to the Dean of Students.

## **Excused Absence**

If a student is absent for a justifiable reason such as an illness or death in the immediate family, an excuse must be secured in advance by submitting a written request to the principal and signed by the parent/guardian. The student is responsible for making up any work or tests missed. Excused absences may be granted to students who must go out of town to attend a funeral, wedding, graduation, or other special event of a member of the student's family. Excused absences for other out of town travel will not be granted except under extreme circumstances.

Tests and/or school work WILL NOT be given in advance.

## **School-Related Absence**

If the student is absent due to a school related activity, the student is not counted as absent, but is responsible for the work missed.

## **Unexcused Absence**

If the student is absent from school for an unjustifiable reason or matter of convenience such as a family trip, vacation, or outing, the absence is unexcused. The student will have the opportunity to make up graded work for 100% of the grade earned upon returning from the event. The student is

responsible for all subject matter missed and assignments must be handed in. Students will have 3 days to take missed tests and turn in graded work. Failure to do so will result in a grade of "0". Excessive unexcused absences can result in student dismissal. All out-of-school suspensions will be unexcused.

### Half-Day Absence

The student is considered absent one-half day if they miss more than two hours. By the same token, they must be present for at least two hours to get half-day attendance.

### Missed Assignments

Parents of students in KN-2nd can request that missed assignments be gathered for absences. This request must be made by 8:15 A.M. by calling the school office. Those assignments will be located on the shelves near the office and picked up between 2:45 and 3:30 P.M. Grades 3-7 will utilize Google Classroom for missed assignments. For all grades, homework and test dates will be posted daily in Google Classroom.

### Make-up tests

Make-up tests will be administered on Tuesdays – Fridays in Room 204 for 3rd through 7<sup>th</sup> grade students before school from 6:55-7:45AM. Students have 3 days to make up tests when they return.

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## Transportation

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### **Parking**

The turn-in area on Cardinal Drive is designated as the "School Bus" loading and unloading zone. Loading and/or unloading from automobiles on Cardinal Drive is prohibited and parking is never permitted in this area. The turn-in area on Menard Street across from the cemetery is the "Automobile" loading and unloading zone. Please do not park in the drive-in area. All the streets around the school allow for parking. Please do not block driveways or take homeowners' parking places.

All St. Joseph visitors should observe the parking policy of University Baptist Church. Visitors will be allowed to park only in the back side of the University Baptist Church parking lot. Do not park in the field or on the side of the lot closest to the church's building. Please be aware that parking in any unauthorized space will result in your vehicle being towed at owner's expense..

### **Morning Drop-Off Procedure**

- **Bus**  
Bus transportation is provided by the Lafourche Parish School Board for St. Joseph students to and from their home address only according to boundaries designated in L.P.S.B. policy. A teacher is on duty at the bus unloading area on Cardinal Drive beginning at 7:15 A.M. each day. An EDW teacher may drop off their child/children in the bus area.
- **Car Riders/Walkers**  
Children who walk to school or are brought to school by private vehicle are not to arrive before 7:15 A.M. as no supervision is provided prior to this time. When students are brought to school by private vehicle, they are not to be dropped off at or near the bus stop area on Cardinal Drive. They must be dropped off on Menard Street in the car rider turn-in area. Pre-K and Kindergarten will utilize the carline near the Pre-K/Kinder building. Siblings of

EDW students and children of EDW faculty are allowed to walk to St. Joseph in the morning via the sidewalk on Cardinal drive.

## ***Dismissal***

If a change in departure is necessary, a note must be brought from home by the student. The school will not change a customary departure method on a child's word alone. In emergency situations, please contact the office no later than 1:00PM.

- **Walkers**  
Students who walk home will be escorted to the campus boundaries from the assigned area and should stay on city sidewalks as they walk home.
- **Car Riders -**  
Parents are NOT allowed to park in the school parking lot or the neighboring Baptist Church parking lot. Students who are picked up by car must be picked up in the drive-thru areas by 3:00 P.M. Students will only be placed in cars with an official St. Joseph car rider sign. Students who are not picked up as of 3:00 P.M. will be brought to the After Care program and parents will be charged the After School Care fee. No student will be released except to a parent or carpool driver as they drive through the pick-up areas. Parents may not walk to this area to pick up students nor park on adjacent streets and have students walk to meet them. As cars leave the pickup area, no left turn is allowed; cars must continue down Menard Street towards Nicholls State University. When students are brought to school by private vehicle, they are not to be dropped off at or near the bus stop area on Cardinal Drive.
- **Bus Area -**  
Students going home by bus are released to the bus pick-up area on Cardinal Drive where they await bus pick-up under the supervision of duty personnel. If a permanent bus change is required, please contact the office for directions. Piano lessons, Cub Scout meetings, gymnastics, etc., are not valid reasons to request a bus change. On days when Lafourche Parish schools are not in session, students who ride buses will be picked up by car in the bus area.
- **Children of EDW faculty**  
Children of EDW faculty are allowed to remain in the bus area until EDW dismissal at 3:00PM. Students must be picked up no later than 3:05 P.M. Faculty members are also allowed to drop children off in the bus area in the morning. Prior to the 3:00 PM EDW dismissal, no student will be allowed to walk to EDW unless accompanied by an adult.
- **Siblings of EDW students**  
Siblings of EDW students can be picked up in the bus line until 3:05 P.M. EDW students cannot drop off siblings in the AM bus line. Prior to the 3:00 PM, EDW dismissal, no student will be allowed to walk to EDW unless accompanied by an adult.

## ***Before School Care/After School Care***

Before/After School Care is an optional program provided at an additional cost per child/per day/per session. Parents must register their child annually at a designated time. Students are monitored by faculty members and are expected to follow all school rules and policies. Before School Care begins at 6:30 A.M. The After School Care Program, consisting of a supervised homework period, daily snack, and a monitored free play session, begins after dismissal and ends at 5:30 P.M. After 5:30 P.M. there is an additional charge of \$1.00 per child for every minute the child remains. Parents or their designee must sign their child out each day. Payment is to be remitted on a weekly basis for the days the child has attended.

## ***Emergency School Cancellation or Dismissal***

In the event of emergency situations regarding cancellation of classes or early dismissal of students, information will be disseminated via news and social media, email/text messages. Usually, Catholic schools follow the direction of the local civil parish. Depending on the situation, lessons, assignments, and assessments may be provided to students via Google Classroom.

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## **Curriculum**

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School is a state-certified diocesan parish school that stresses religion and academics. Instruction fosters religious formation and academic excellence. The curriculum includes classes in religion, mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. It also includes physical education, band, technology instruction, music, and library.

### ***Religion Program***

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School exists to provide a Catholic education for its students. The religious activities are the core of the total school program and attendance/participation is required of all students. Religion is taught on a daily basis. The religion program is a comprehensive religious educational experience achieved through school liturgies, Sunday liturgies, reconciliation, service projects, and special events such as Christmas, Easter, Catholic Schools' Week, and St. Joseph Day. Through examples of prayer, Christian love for each other and reflection on God's importance to us, St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School students are afforded the opportunity to experience a nurturing Christian community as the foundation of their education. As parents, you are called on to act with a consciousness of Christ's presence in your family life. Since the home is the center of family life, it is of the greatest importance that parents attend mass on weekends with their children.

### ***Academic Enhancement Program***

The Academic Enhancement Program services students with special needs and learning differences. Formal plans stating accommodations and modifications are utilized to enhance the learning process and provide continuity of student services. St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School uses the *Guidelines for Catholic Schools in the State of Louisiana for Addressing Individual Student Needs* for remediation and accommodations to the standard instructional program. The Individual Needs Committee determines eligibility of a student for academic enhancement services. The committee assists in recommending and/or requesting a student evaluation by a licensed evaluator and for implementing formal accommodations based upon receipt of a completed evaluation.

Procedure: A five step process is utilized to identify and establish accommodations for individual needs.

- Step One: Identification of specific needs by the classroom teacher.
- Step Two: Classroom teacher utilizes various techniques for differentiation, refers the student to the school's resource center for targeted intervention, and conducts a parent/teacher conference.
- Step Three: After monitoring progress once intervention has begun, the classroom teacher refers the student to the Individual Needs Committee for review and further recommendations.
- Step Four: If deemed necessary, the parents are referred to a private evaluator. All evaluation paperwork must be turned in to the AE/INC chairperson for the student's grade level. Once the parent submits the school's Release of Information form, the classroom teacher has three working days to complete the evaluator's paperwork. The AE/INC chairperson collects and mails the completed forms to the evaluator. If needed, a modified provisional plan is put in place for a specified time period.
- Step Five: The parent turns in the evaluation report to the AE/INC chairperson. Once it is reviewed by school personnel, parents and teachers meet to discuss the report. Based

upon the findings and diagnoses, along with the accommodations that St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School offers, the student's individual accommodation plan is completed and put into place. The accommodation plan remains in effect for that school year and is revisited and rewritten annually.

In cases of unexcused absences, all Academic Enhancement provisions and test accommodations are forfeited.

Accommodations must be in place by the last school day in February in order to be utilized for standardized testing.

## ***K-7<sup>th</sup> Resource Center***

St. Joseph's K-7<sup>th</sup> grade Resource Center provides support to all of our students. The goal is to help meet individual needs, improve student achievement and aid students in becoming independently successful with the grade level standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students receiving this service do not miss any whole group, in-class curriculum lessons and go to the grade-appropriate Resource Center at a scheduled time during the school day to receive a "boost" in the academic area or skill of concern. Instruction in the Resource Center is aligned with the classroom objectives while also being provided with targeted instruction in the deficit areas. All students are eligible to participate based on standardized test scores, classroom test scores, classroom performance, teacher or parent recommendation and various other collected data. Student progress is monitored on a regular basis to ensure success.

## ***Evaluation of Student Progress***

Evaluation is an important component of the educational program. No single method of evaluation can present an adequate profile of strengths, weaknesses, accomplishments, and the potential and creativity of an individual student. Therefore, evaluation of a student's work involves parents, teachers, and the student. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers at any point during the school year when they wish to discuss their child's progress. If a problem arises, parents are asked to communicate with the teacher first. If a conference is needed, the time and place will be jointly scheduled by the teacher and parent. Appointments can be made by sending a note/email to the teacher. Communicating with faculty and staff concerning school matters via social media, text messaging, or cell phone is prohibited by the Diocesan Electronic Communication Policy.

## **Grading**

### Pre-K, Kindergarten and G.R.A.C.E. Program

Students will be evaluated in all areas listed on the report card with symbols indicating levels of achievement.

### Grades 1-7

Daily work, including activities, homework, projects, assignments, as well as quizzes and assessments given during the nine-week period, constitute the student's grade. Graded assignments, assessments, and averaging in the content areas will be calculated numerically.

GRADING SCALE	
A	100-94
B	93-86
C	85-78
D	77-70
F	69 and below

Academic progress can be continually monitored by parents and students online via Plus Portals.. Report cards are issued four times a year for kindergarten through seventh grade. Pre-Kindergarten report cards are issued at mid-year and at the end of the year. In addition, students in Kindergarten through 7 grades are administered a standardized assessment (typically in the Spring) which is part of the Diocesan Testing Program. Students are required to participate in this assessment.

### **Test Papers and Other Student Work**

Teachers will keep tests, quizzes, or other samples of student work on file. Test papers and assignments requiring a parent signature should be returned to school in a timely manner.

### **Honor Roll**

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School maintains two Honor Rolls each nine weeks to honor academic achievement in grades 1-7.

Principal's List

A or Satisfactory in all subjects

Honor Roll

A, B, or Satisfactory in all subjects

Additionally, students are honored for academic achievement at the end of the year based on final grades as follows:

Honor Roll – student maintained Honor Roll status for all four nine-week periods with no grade lower than a “B” or “S”

Principal's List – student achieved a FINAL GPA of 4.0 with no grade lower than a “B” or “S” in any 9-week period

Pastor's List – student achieved a FINAL GPA of 4.0 with “A” and “S” in every subject each 9-week period

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## Promotion / Retention Policy

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All decisions regarding promotion and retention will be made by the INC Committee which will be composed of the parents of the student being considered, St. Joseph staff, and administrators.

In the best interest of the student, he/she is not allowed to repeat two grade levels and remain at St. Joseph.

Kindergarten Promotion Consideration Criteria:

Starred(\*) Assessments shall be considered for promotion to 1<sup>st</sup> grade. All of the indicators will be assessed at an independent level, without prompting or assistance. Fields blacked out are not assessed at the time of the assessment.

### **Promotion/Retention – Grades 1-7**

- a. Average Grade for the School Year – The average grade for the school year shall be computed by taking the quality point values of the letter grades for the four nine weeks, adding them, and dividing by four to get the quality point average. If the quality points average more than one and the fraction is  $\frac{1}{2}$  or more, the letter grade given shall be the higher of the two grades. If the quality point value is  $\frac{3}{4}$ , the final grade shall be “D” provided the last nine weeks grade is not “F”.



- b. In grades 1, 2, and 3, a student who fails Reading will be retained. In addition, a student in grades 1, 2, and 3 who receives a grade of F in reading in the second semester may be retained based on the decision of the INC committee.
- c. In grades 1 through 7, a student who fails two or more major subjects will be retained.

Major subjects are as follows:

Grades 1-3 Reading, Language, Math, Social Living, and Religion

Grades 4-7 Reading, Language, Math, Social Studies, Science, and Religion

## ***Homework Assignments***

We believe that homework is a natural extension of the curricular programs as it is an integral component of instruction. The purpose of homework is to: 1.) practice newly taught skills, 2.) review previously mastered skills, 3.) develop independent study habits and 4.) extend and enrich the curriculum. Homework is also intended to serve as a vital link between the school and family.

The following are policies relating to homework at St. Joseph Catholic School:

Daily lessons will be posted to Google Classroom for grades 1st – 7th. Homework will be posted on the grade level homework page in Google Classroom. Homework is assigned on a regular basis on Monday through Thursday nights. Tests will not be given on a Monday or the first day we return from a holiday.

### Grading Homework

Since homework contributes to academic progress, assignments will assume credit toward the student's quarterly grade. Homework assignments are worth 1 point. The assignment will be checked and the student will be given credit for fully completed assignments.

Homework grades affect the quarterly average, however assessments and special projects constitute the greater part of the student's grade.

### Student Responsibility

- Using necessary materials, research, and/or ability, homework is to be completed as accurately as possible.
- All written assignments are to be neatly completed in traditional blue or black ink or pencil as indicated by the teacher.
- Homework should not be done on the school grounds before school or at recess.

### Grading Absent Student Homework

Any homework assigned to a student who has been absent must be collected and graded for completion. This must be done to ensure a consistent homework grade.

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## **Student Services**

## **Cafeteria**

All students can participate in the daily lunch program sponsored by the Archdiocese of New Orleans Child Food and Nutrition Services. When available, students are allowed to buy extra food and special items with parental permission. Parents are responsible for monitoring the buying of extras. No student is allowed to carry a negative balance in his/her lunch account. Parents are encouraged to sign up for online payments via MySchoolbucks.

We encourage all parents to fill out free and reduced lunch forms on [www.schoolcafe.org](http://www.schoolcafe.org).

Special diets must be completed by September 30th each school year.

## **Computer Lab/Technology**

The use of diocesan technology is a privilege granted to students for the purpose of enhancing academics, and each student is assigned a school-owned Chromebook. Each student is responsible for the general care of his/her assigned device. Chromebooks remain at school and are checked in and checked out daily with the homeroom teacher.

There is no fee for the use of school technology; however, if school administration or a repair technician determines that there has been neglect of care or intentional damage to a device, the student will face disciplinary action and be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement. Repairs can range from \$75 to \$200, and a replacement fee is \$350. A lost device will result in a replacement fee.

Violations of the [Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Catholic School Student Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications Policy](#) may result in the revocation of this privilege. Students may also face disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

The student and the parent agree that the student, not the school, is responsible for his/her actions while using the Internet, and the student and parent agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School, its teachers and staff, for illegal and/or improper use of e-mail or the internet and/or for claims arising from student actions while at school or at home. An Acceptable Internet Use Agreement is signed annually by the student, parent, and school.

## **Library**

Accelerated Reader (AR):

Accelerated Reader is a digital program that helps students and teachers manage and monitor independent reading practice. Students pick a leveled book and read it in a timely manner. When the student finishes the book, they take a short quiz on the computer to check their understanding. As students read and take quizzes, they earn points and track their progress toward their Accelerated Reader goals which have been set for them.

Each student will take AR tests to meet a minimum point goal. Students must score at least 80% in comprehension. Each test can only be taken once. If a student scores below an 80%, they can take an additional test(s) in order to reach their minimum point goal. Students will choose and read books on their grade level or one grade level below. Students will be allowed to read above grade level as long as they are maintaining 80% in comprehension.

There will be reward opportunities for students who surpass their minimum point goal. In addition, the top readers at each grade level will be recognized during awards day at the end of the school year.

A grade level specific electronic correspondence will be sent out at the beginning of the year explaining point goals, grading, and rewards.

## **Band**

The St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School Band offers students in grades 5-7 an opportunity to learn to play an instrument under the direction of a qualified band director. Membership in the band is optional. All fees must be paid prior to the start of classes.

## **Counseling Services**

Counseling services are provided to students at St. Joseph and include individual sessions, small groups, and classroom lessons. Teachers, faculty members, and/or parents may request counseling services for a student, or students may request services for themselves. If you do not wish for your child to be seen on an individual basis by the school counselor, you will need to send a signed and dated letter annually stating your wishes.

## **Class Trips**

Class trips are planned by the teacher to enhance the instructional program and to motivate student interest in the subject matter. Parental consent slips are required for all students participating in the trip. Parents are asked to please remember that class trips are for the students and are not meant to be a family outing. Chaperones are secured by the individual teachers and must be Safe Environment certified. Students not meeting the school's standards of discipline will, at the discretion of the teacher and/or administration, lose class trip privileges. All students must report to school on the morning of the trip and ride the bus with their class to the trip destination. Students may ride home from the trip with their parents only.

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## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

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St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School provides an extra-curricular program to afford students opportunities for growth in all areas-spiritual, intellectual, moral, and physical. The faculty and staff believe that the privilege of enabling and encouraging each child to develop to his/her full potential constitutes the greatest responsibility that we have toward the child, his/her parents, and to God. A variety of clubs and activities are offered to students such as Student Council, 4-H, Ambassadors for Christ, Choir, Basketball, Cheerleading, Cross Country, Swim Team, Soccer, and Volleyball. Other activities may be offered as resources and personnel allow.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

Scholastic:

1. To be eligible for the first 9 weeks of the 2023-2024 school year, a student must maintain a C or higher in all core subjects (Math, Reading, Language, Religion, Social Studies, and Science).
2. To be eligible for the second semester of the 2023-2024 school year, a student shall pass all core subjects for the 2023-2024 school year.

**Medical Examination:** A student must pass a physical examination given by a physician licensed to practice medicine and complete an LHSAA medical history evaluation prior to participating.

## **Policies**

**Commitment:** All athletes are encouraged to be committed to their teammates and coaches for the duration of their sport season. If an athlete is considering quitting, he/she must meet with coaches and the athletic director before being dropped from the team. Depending upon circumstances, the athlete may or may not be granted permission to participate in other school sports.

**Injuries:** Unless the injury is an emergency, the athlete should see their family doctor.

**Insurance:** Since our insurance company is a secondary carrier, you must file with your personal insurance company for the claim to be valid with our company. This should be done as soon as possible after the injury. Claim forms are available through the school office.

## ***Athletic Code of Conduct***

We believe that being a St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School athlete is a student choice, thereby a privilege, one that along with being a great honor, carries with it responsibilities. As a St. Joseph Catholic athlete, our young people have a standard to uphold: one of positive leadership, character, responsibility, competitive spirit, and integrity. It is imperative that all students taking part in athletics understand the following responsibilities and rules. The head coach or moderator has the right to remove the privilege of participation.

The following are expected of a St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School athlete:

1. That proper behavior and respect towards others will reflect positively on the team and in the St. Joseph Catholic Community. A positive reflection is the only desirable one for your team.
2. That you understand that individual recognition and accomplishments are the result of teamwork.
3. That you will accept and respect the decisions of your coaches to be in the best interest of the team. Any concerns should be discussed privately and in an appropriate manner with your coach.
4. All athletes must be responsible digital citizens (including but not limited to Facebook, Tiktok, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, BeReal, text messages, etc.).
5. Athletes are expected to uphold a strict policy of no tobacco/nicotine use in any form, no alcohol consumption in any form, no drug/chemical use in any form, and no use of mind altering substances.
6. Athletes are expected to uphold these standards and abide by the Code of Conduct at all times.
7. *Any student who misses more than 50 minutes on a school day will NOT be able to participate in any school related clubs or sporting events for that day (practices/games, etc.). Excused/Unexcused absences will be determined by the Dean of Students.*

**Disciplinary Action:** If there are no prior disciplinary incidents involving a student athlete, the following disciplinary action must be taken by administration. These incidents are cumulative and will follow the child through their years at St. Joseph.

A **first offense** would result in suspension for 10% of the regular scheduled games for the sport that the athlete is playing when the infraction occurred or for the upcoming season, if the infraction occurred outside of an athlete's sport season. The suspension would take effect for the game(s) scheduled immediately after the infraction was detected. The only other consequence may be in the form of additional conditions. The type and amount of conditioning should be explained to the parents and athletes prior to the beginning of the sports season.

A **second offense** would result in suspension from the contests in that particular sport for the remainder of that school year.

A **third offense** would result in suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the athlete's years at St. Joseph.

This contract outlines the major regulations and the type of conduct expected of St. Joseph Catholic athletes. However, it is impossible in any contract to include all of the details of what is appropriate and inappropriate conduct. Any conduct which violates published or announced

regulations of the school, deviates from what is generally considered good behavior, or is contrary to Christian principles may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the school administration.

At the conclusion of after school activities, parents are asked to be prompt in picking up their children.

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## **Student Dress**

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By enrolling in St. Joseph Catholic School, the student and his/her parents accept the rules governing dress and agree to abide by these rules. When a student is not dressed properly for school, it is understood that it is the responsibility of the parents to bring proper attire. The administration is the official interpreter of uniform/dress guidelines. Anything that distracts from the learning environment or is not in keeping with the intentions of these regulations is prohibited. Parents should check with the administration of the school before purchasing any school clothing that does not conform exactly to these regulations.

### ***Uniform Regulations***

All clothing should be modest and should not be too tight or revealing. Articles of clothing should be clean, neat, and properly mended. The only authorized decoration on any article of clothing is the official St. Joseph school emblem. All articles of removable clothing should be labeled with the child's full name.

### ***Jewelry***

Jewelry should be kept simple. Girls and boys may wear traditional wristwatches (with no beeping sound) and only small thin chains of gold or silver (or single strand leather/rope cord) with a cross/religious medal. Rings, bracelets, hair bands on wrists, or any type of wristband (including any type of fitness monitoring band or Apple-type watch) may not be worn. Small earrings of gold or silver may be worn by girls only and must not protrude below the lobe of the ear. No hoop earrings are allowed. Only one earring may be worn in each earlobe. Body piercing in any other form is in violation of dress code. Teachers may confiscate any non-uniform jewelry. Confiscated jewelry will be turned in to the office.

### ***Hair***

Hair style should be a traditional, well-blended cut in its natural color. Boys' hair must be cut clean around the ears, above the top of the eyebrows when combed, and at least one inch above the collar. No strange or bizarre cuts are allowed including partially shaved heads, bowl-type, or undercuts. Girls' hair must not obstruct their vision. This means hair should be above the top of the eyebrows or pulled away from the face. Girls may wear ribbons, bows, ties, or headbands of white, navy blue, yellow, or the color/fabric of the uniform. Traditional barrettes, clips, bands, and other hair accessories must be navy blue, white, brown, silver, or gold. Haircuts/hairstyles/hair accessories are subject to the approval of the administration.

### ***Makeup/Fingernails/Tattoos***

Makeup, lipstick, lip-gloss, fingernail polish, artificial fingernails, and tattoos are considered to be in violation of the standard dress code.

## Basic Uniform

### Boys

- Shirts: Navy uniform shirt with the St. Joseph logo on left chest, short or long sleeve. Shirts are to be tucked in pants at all times. No long sleeve shirts are to be worn beneath short sleeve school uniform shirts. Solid white undershirts are allowed under the uniform shirt but cannot exceed the length of the outer sleeve.
- Pants: Must be regular long or short khaki uniform pants with belt loops. Pants must be worn at the waist. Pre-K students must wear pants/shorts with a full elastic waistband (no belt). Uniform shorts may not be shorter than three inches above the knee when kneeling.
- Belts: A plain, flat brown, black, navy, or khaki belt must be worn at all times and must be the type that fits through the belt loops in Kindergarten – 7<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Socks: Solid white calf-crew socks (free of logos or decorations) must be worn properly. Socks should not be rolled or stuffed into shoes. Ankle/tennis/no-show socks are not allowed.
- Shoes: Solid black tie, low-quarter shoe. Any brand is acceptable; however, the entire shoe must be solid black, including the shoe logo. Shoes must have a rubber sole. Pre-K and Kindergarten students must wear black shoes with Velcro fasteners. A Velcro fastener is allowed in grades 1-7 ONLY if a black tie is also used.

### Girls

- Blouses: White oxford cloth button-down collar (rounded collars are not acceptable) and gray polo (A+-Ash Gray) brand with the St. Joseph logo above left pocket, short or long sleeve, to be worn tucked in the skirts, shorts, pants, or jumpers. No color trim monograms allowed. All buttons with the exception of the top one must be secured in an effort to protect a student's modesty. Solid white undershirts are allowed under the uniform shirt but cannot exceed the length of the outer sleeve. All undergarments must be nude or white. White blouses **MUST** be worn on ALL Mass days.
- Skirts/Jumpers/Shorts:  
Pre-K-3rd Grade-Uniform plaid jumper or plaid shorts (Pre-K shorts must have a full elastic waistband)  
4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Grade-Uniform plaid pleated skirt or plaid shorts (skirt or shorts must be worn at the waist)  
KN – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade - The length of the above uniforms must not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee when kneeling. If shorts have belt loops, a plain, flat navy or black belt must be worn.
- Shorts: Regulation uniform PE shorts must be worn under skirts (purchased from Jakes or Three Stitches).
- Long pants: Navy long pants shall be made of polyester/cotton blend (no leggings). If pants have belt loops, a plain, flat navy or black belt must be worn (in KN-7<sup>th</sup> grade).
- Socks: Solid white, calf-crew, or knee-length socks (free of logos or decorations) must be worn properly. Socks should not be rolled or stuffed into shoes. Ankle/tennis/no-show socks are not allowed. Solid white, navy, gray, or black opaque tights/leggings may be worn under the skirt in cold weather if needed. School socks must be worn over the tights/leggings.
- Shoes: Solid black tie, low quarter shoes. Any brand is acceptable; however, the entire shoe must be solid black, including the shoe logo. Shoes must have a rubber sole. Pre-K and Kindergarten students must wear black shoes with Velcro fasteners. A Velcro fastener is allowed in grades 1-7 ONLY if a black tie is also used.

## **Gym Uniform**

- Boys: Shirt: Plain white t-shirt or school uniform navy shirt  
Pants: Regular school uniform pants or shorts
- Girls: Blouse: School uniform shirt  
Shorts: Regulation PE shorts or uniform plaid walking shorts must be worn as outerwear during gym class (purchased from Jakes or Three Stitches) .

Girls are not allowed to take off skirts after school and wear just shorts to wait for their bus or ride home.

## **Cold Weather Regulations**

### Lightweight Garments:

Garments worn in the school building or outside must be one of the following:

- Navy blue zip-up fleece jacket with official school logo
- Navy blue or gray pullover sweatshirt (without hood) with the official school logo
- Navy blue lined zip-up windbreaker (with hood) with the official school logo
- Navy blue zip-up sweatshirt (with hood) with the official school logo
- Solid navy blue or gray cardigan sweater
- Sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets are to be worn correctly and not tied around the waist.

### Heavy Coats:

Heavy coats for extremely cold weather may be worn outside only and may be any color (preferably a solid color). Blue jean (denim) coats, athletic or starter jackets, military-style (camouflage) jackets, quilted vests and sleeveless jackets are prohibited. Logos on coats must be small and inconspicuous.

## **Dress Down Day Guidelines**

1. No open shoes, platform shoes, sandals, Crocs, or boots can be worn; shoes must be closed.
2. Socks must be worn.
3. Usual rules for jewelry and makeup apply.
4. School spirit shirts or when designated, holiday-related or theme-related shirts/sweatshirts may be worn. Other T-shirts are allowed but must not advertise drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other inappropriate/offensive subject matter. No sleeveless shirts or spaghetti straps are allowed.
5. Jeans, slacks, capris, wind pants, sweatpants, uniform shorts, or walking-type shorts (at or below knee) are allowed. Leggings, jeggings, spandex, yoga pants, or other exercise type pants/clothing ARE NOT ALLOWED with or without shorts or skirt covering them. Jeans/pants must not be tight-fitting or too baggy. If a skirt is worn, it must conform to regular uniform skirt length.
6. Clothing must completely cover the student's torso. No skin should be seen between shirt and pants when arms are raised or when seated.
7. Caps may be worn outside of the buildings only.
8. Holiday/theme-related bows, hair ribbons, and/or socks are allowed.

Final interpretation of dress rests with the school administration. Students who do not comply with Dress Down Day guidelines will be asked to call home for appropriate attire.

## **School bags**

School bags should be appropriate to the grade level and the size of the student. When choosing a school bag, be sure your child can carry it. No oversized bags are allowed in the lower grades. Backpacks are to be worn over both shoulders and high on the back. Wheeled bags must be carried up and down stairs and onto the school bus. Schoolbag ornaments/tags are not allowed.

## **Lost Articles**

Because articles of clothing are almost identical, sweaters, jackets, coats, etc. should be clearly marked with the student's name in order to facilitate claims. Items unclaimed may be given to a charitable organization or to the P.T.C. Uniform Give-or-Take Program.

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# **Discipline**

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## **Working toward Discipleship**

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary students are expected to display a cooperative, positive attitude and be courteous, honest, respectful, and polite to teachers, school employees, other students, and visitors at all times. The ideal of discipline within all Catholic schools is to help students move from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline to discipleship. Emphasis is placed on the concept of correction rather than punishment. Proper discipline originates with parents as the first teachers and continues in the school through the development of the student's appropriate attitude toward school and respect for authority figures. Qualities that foster growth are closely related to the interpersonal expression of basic gospel values. The St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School Discipline Plan is designed to be proactive and progressive in nature and will help provide for the welfare and safety of all. This includes activities both on and off campus. All attempts will be made by the classroom teacher to correct behavioral problems. If unacceptable behavior continues, more serious interventions outlined in this plan will be utilized.

## **Student Responsibilities**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect credit upon themselves, their parents, and the school at all times.

All students are expected to:

1. Write in cursive unless special accommodations are prescribed (Grades 3-7)
2. Refrain from writing on clothing or on the body at any time.
3. Cover and take care of all textbooks furnished by the school
4. Complete assigned class work and homework on time - this includes reading and studying assignments
5. Take seriously his/her responsibility to deliver messages and communications to parents
6. Refrain from chewing gum on school premises or during school functions
7. Bring candies or snacks from home only when requested by the teacher
8. Properly use restrooms at all times
9. Carry a library-type book to all classes (Grades 1-7) - the book content should be appropriate for the student, thus providing on-task activity as necessary (comic books, catalogs, and magazines are not appropriate)
10. Have all necessary books, supplies, assignments, band instruments, and personal items in their possession at the start of each school day - students will not be allowed to call home for such items.

## **Playground / Recess Rules and Procedures**

Playground rules and procedures should be followed at recess, at aftercare, and any other time the playground is used. The decision to be in the grass will be announced on the PA system or made by the duty teachers.

- All students should remain in designated areas unless given permission by a teacher.
- Do not enter any building without the permission of a teacher.
- Walk to all destinations. Running is only allowed in the grass.
- Be sure to take a turn to get water and use the restroom during recess breaks. Loitering in restrooms is not allowed.



- For recesses during which recess equipment is allowed, the equipment will be brought out by assigned students only. Do not enter the gym without permission to get equipment.
- Only recess equipment provided by the school is allowed. Students are not to bring toys of any kind from home. All playground equipment must be used appropriately and shared. Full court basketball is not allowed during recess.
- For safety reasons, randomly throwing or kicking balls during recess is not allowed.
- Students should not be near any school bags and are not allowed to work on homework or read books during recesses.
- While using the apparatus, climb up the ladder or steps, slide down the slides. Tag games and recess equipment are not allowed on or around the apparatus.
- While using the swings, face forward with feet hanging toward the center of the playground area. Swing areas are for swinging only. Students should not play or visit in this area. Students are not allowed to push another student on a swing. To get off of a swing, slow the swing to stop. Never jump off of a swing.
- Throwing foreign objects (rubber/wood chips, sticks, rocks, dirt, etc.) is never permitted. Never throw a ball at another student with the intent to hit the student.
- Do not pull or hang on the basketball or soccer goal nets.
- Two bells will ring to end recess time. After the first bell, all activity stops, all recess equipment should be placed in storage containers. At this time, students should observe silence as they report immediately to their designated area to get in line facing forward. A school wide silence signal will be used to reinforce silence.
- On the second bell, students will participate in prayer when signaled by the duty teacher.
- All water bottles must be filled prior to the 1st bell at the end of recess.

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## ***General Rules of Discipline***

- Classroom and classroom-related behavior is the teacher's responsibility. As much as possible, corrective action is taken directly by the individual teacher. A student is referred to administration when it is judged necessary because of repeated occurrences or the seriousness of the circumstances.
- Directions given to a student by any staff member including office personnel, teacher aides, substitute teachers, cafeteria workers, custodial workers, duty teachers, or other supervising adults must be followed with courtesy and obedience.
- In cases of minor offenses, the teacher will discipline the student. Minor infractions can result in loss of privileges (including recess detention), extra work, or other consequences deemed necessary by the teacher as outlined in individual classroom policies. Parental contact will be made by the teacher if improvement is not evident.
- When repeated and continuous efforts on the part of the school administrators and/or faculty members fail to motivate a student toward positive results, more serious action may be taken, and a parent/teacher/student conference may be held.
- Students who need to be referred to the office either for a major offense or repeated misbehavior will be documented on a Deficiency/Discipline Form. This form will be sent to the Dean of Students who will meet with the student to determine the action needed. Parents will receive appropriate copies of the Deficiency/Discipline Forms.
- Referral to the school counselor may be a necessary step in the process.

## ***Minor Infraction Policy***

### A. WARNING

Warnings will be issued by faculty members, substitutes, or any authority figure for a student failing to comply with school rules and/or policies.

### B. MINOR INFRACTIONS MAY BE ISSUED AFTER A VERBAL WARNING FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Arguing with another student
- Misbehavior during special events/school programs
- Bothering others
- Misbehavior outside classroom/recess
- Not raising hand/Interrupting constantly
- No belt
- Chair tipping (repeated)

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- Playing with classroom lights, fire extinguisher, etc.
- Gum chewing/candy
- Jewelry violation
- Inappropriate laughing (excessive)
- Out-of-seat repeatedly during instruction/inappropriate time
- Incomplete classwork
- Shirt not tucked
- Lack of participation/Uncooperative
- Talking excessively /Very noisy
- Wasting classroom or personal supplies
- Violations of Dress Code

C. STUDENTS WILL RECEIVE RECESS DETENTION AND AN EMAIL TO PARENT FOR EACH INFRACTION.

## **Major Infraction Policy**

A. AN AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION, BEFORE SCHOOL, OR AUXILIARY DENIAL MAY BE ISSUED FOR THE FOLLOWING VIOLATIONS:

- 3 Minor Infractions
  - Rough Housing (Hitting, Pushing, Kicking)
  - Disrespect of Self, Others, or Authority
  - Willful Disobedience
  - Inappropriate Materials/Object
  - Inappropriate Use of Technology
  - Lying
  - Fighting
  - Inappropriate Language, Gesture, Writing, Actions
  - Rude, Threatening Behavior
  - Leaving Classroom/School without Permission
  - Destruction of School Property/Vandalism
  - Forgery
  - Cheating
  - Stealing
  - Any other behavior deemed inappropriate by faculty/staff/administration
- It is IMPORTANT to note that after two (2) formal Detentions in a one (1) nine-week period, the next (or 3<sup>rd</sup>) Detention may result in an In-School Suspension.
- Any further formal Detention assignments within the nine weeks period may result in an In-School Suspension.
- Parents will receive prior notification of a detention assignment. Students assigned to Detention must report directly to the Detention area at the assigned time. Transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the parent or guardian for Formal Detention assignments.
- Students must bring the form home for parent/guardian signature and return it to the homeroom teacher the following school day. Failure to serve Detention may result in an In-School Suspension.

Forgery, Cheating, and Stealing are unacceptable behaviors in a Catholic elementary school setting. Every attempt will be made to provide age-appropriate guidance toward acceptable behavior. In cases of cheating, the student will receive 50% of the total possible points of the test/assignment. The writing of curriculum notes on any part of the body will be considered an attempt to cheat and be disciplined accordingly. Each case will be reviewed individually according to the following guidelines:

Grades 1-2      1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Discipline Form AND Parent Conference  
                     2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – Detention  
                     3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – In-School Suspension

Grades 3-7      1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Detention AND Parent Conference  
                     2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – In-School Suspension  
                     3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – Out-of-School Suspension

#### B. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Suspension is considered a disciplinary measure that follows serious failure on the part of the student to comply with the rules and standards of behavior. Suspensions are assigned in-school for one or more days. The student is to report to the school office upon arrival. They will complete all class work, tests, and other assigned tasks for the day in a designated area. Parents will be required to come to school for a conference.

AN IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION MAY BE ISSUED FOR THE FOLLOWING VIOLATIONS:

1. Forgery, Cheating, Stealing, Vandalism
2. Any act detrimental to the well-being or safety of students/adults involved with the school
3. Inappropriate/Unacceptable Use of Technology (computer/internet/cell phone/other resources)
4. Any other behavior deemed serious or inappropriate by faculty/staff/administration
5. The third formal detention assignment within a 9-week period results in an In-School Suspension
6. Disrespect for authority

#### C. OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Out-of-School Suspensions are reserved for the most serious offenses and may be for one or more days. In addition, the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) In-School Suspension will result in an Out-of-School Suspension. After one (1) Out-of-School Suspension, any one (1) violation of Section B or C may result in a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Out-of-School Suspension. Once a student receives a second Out-of-School Suspension, they are placed on probation. A mandatory conference will then be held with the student, parents, school counselor, and school administration. Students on probation may not be allowed to attend before school or afterschool programs, participate in extracurricular activities, or attend class trips. A third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Out-of-School Suspension may result in Expulsion. If a student is suspended Out-of-School, the absence is unexcused. Any assessments missed as a result of an Out-of-School Suspension must be made up on the day the student returns. Students suspended out of school forfeit the privilege of any test modifications/accommodations.

#### D. EXPULSION

Expulsion takes place only at the discretion of the principal in extreme cases where the student habitually violates school rules/policies, or the behavior is detrimental to the safety of others and/or the reputation of the school. The criteria for the decision to take serious disciplinary action will always be based on the good of the individual student concerned as well as the common good of others in school.

Deficiency/Discipline Forms accumulate within the nine-week period. In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions accumulate throughout the school year.

# **Office of Catholic School's Bullying Policy**

## **I. Purpose/Rationale**

“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them. It is to just such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs.”  
Mark 10:14

Acknowledging that all of creation is rooted in the teachings of Christ, our Savior, the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux establishes an Anti-Bullying Policy that is rooted in the social teachings of the Church. We recognize these principles:

- God created each person as a unique individual, created in the image and likeness of God and endowed with undeniable dignity. (Genesis 1:27)
- As children of God it is our destiny to grow in “wisdom, age, and grace.” (Luke 2:52)
- Catholic Social Teaching perceives an obligation to work to create conditions in which the unique dignity of each person is respected and all human rights are protected. (Luke 4:18-19)

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is committed to exposing all students to the teachings of the Catholic Church in order that they may reveal Christ to the world. Our goal is to build a worthy upcoming generation that is cooperative, unselfish, respectful, and tolerant of others. Our educational approach is characterized by the integration of Christian truths and values within the framework of the learning experience. Therefore, we are committed to providing a loving, positive, and safe learning environment for all students.

Bullying has a negative effect on the faith community, creates a climate of fear, and inhibits students' ability to learn. Bullying may destroy respect for the dignity of the student, may undermine the Christian atmosphere of the school, and may deprive the student of a safe and caring learning environment. It may touch the bystander by desensitizing them to aggressive and derisive behavior, and may adversely affect the long-term emotional and social development of the bully.

Individuals who are bullied may begin to develop a perceived lack of value and self-esteem and experience feelings of isolation. They may have difficulty learning and worry about their personal safety. A person who is bullied may have trouble establishing and maintaining long-term relationships. Ultimately, someone who experiences bullying may become angry and aggressive or develop deep-seated emotional or psychological problems.

Jesus Christ clearly commands us to “love your neighbor as yourself” in the Gospel of Matthew 22:39. Therefore, the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux adopts an Anti-Bullying Policy in order to preserve the dignity of all and to further promote the Gospel and teachings of Christ.

## **II. Scope**

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux believes that any and all forms of bullying are unacceptable behaviors. Therefore, all statements or actions of student-on-student bullying made at any time, including on campus, during or at school-sponsored events, while traveling to or from a school-related activity, or off-campus, will not be tolerated. All students, teachers, and other school employees shall take appropriate measures within the scope of their individual authority to prevent bullying.

### III. Definition of Bullying

Bullying behavior is defined as repeated and persistent verbal, written, physical, or psychological action, implied action, or communication intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to another person (or group of persons). An imbalance of power between the aggressor and the target is often, but not always involved. Bullying is a means of control and may be carried out directly through physical, verbal, written, or electronic means, or indirectly through social and emotional aggression. Bullying includes any of the foregoing by a person even if the person did not initiate any of the foregoing but perpetuates it.

Examples of bullying, as defined above, may include, **but are not limited to:**

<u>Verbal (overt)</u>	<u>Physical (overt)</u>	<u>Social/Emotional (covert)</u>
Name-calling/Put downs	Hitting	Relational Aggression
Insults	Kicking	Manipulating Friendships
Racial Comments	Spitting	Gossip
Harassment	Pushing	Intimidation
Sexist Comments	Inappropriate Gestures	Written Notes
Teasing/Taunting	Tripping	Electronic Misuse/Text Messages
Threatening/Extortion	Stealing	Social Media (Cyberbullying)

Nor will retaliation in response to bullying be tolerated.

### IV. Reporting Bullying

The principal or the principal's designee is responsible for receiving complaints of alleged bullying. All school-based employees are required to report alleged bullying to the principal or the principal's designee. All other members of the school community including students, parents/guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report bullying.

Any member of the school community who has information that bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying, whether a victim or witness. Any student (and/or the parent or guardian on that student's behalf if the student is a minor) who believes he/she is a victim of bullying is strongly encouraged to report bullying in writing to a school official.

False reports of or retaliation for bullying also constitute violations of this policy.

Administrators/principals' designee(s) should document in writing any complaints about bullying. Confirmed cases of bullying should be documented in the school information system.

## V. Investigating and Responding to Bullying

The Principal bears the ultimate responsibility for investigating complaints of bullying. If the Principal so chooses, she or he may designate another member of the administrative team to act as her or his designee.

Investigation of complaints of bullying should consist of personal interviews with the various individuals who may be involved or have pertinent information regarding the alleged bullying. Interviews with the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator, and all witnesses will be conducted separately. At no time shall the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator be interviewed together.

When interviews are complete and all information collected, the Principal or his or her designee will determine whether the actions complained of constitute "bullying" as defined in this policy and, if so, referral of such to the proper disciplinary authority within the school.

Conduct that is determined to be bullying in nature will generally warrant some sort of disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy. Disciplinary consequences should be sufficiently severe to attempt to deter violations and to appropriately address prohibited behavior.

In accordance with the school's disciplinary policy, consequences, and appropriate remedial action for bullying may include, but may not be limited to:

- Community service hours
- Counseling
- Loss of Privileges
- Behavior Agreement
- Parent Conference
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

*In keeping with the teachings of Christ, corporal punishment is unacceptable within the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.*

Students found to be engaged in bullying behavior should be referred to counseling to address the underlying causes of the inappropriate behavior.

## VI. Training and Preventive Education

To enhance the education and formation of our students, schools must actively promote positive student behavior while preventing inappropriate behavior. Therefore, schools within the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux are required to:

- 1) Adopt an Anti-Bullying Policy to be included in the school's student handbook consistent with this policy;
- 2) Provide professional continuing education for all faculty and staff that addresses an increased awareness of the problem of bullying and systematic program for addressing the problem in the particular school;
- 3) Educate parents and other school community members, including but not limited to teachers and employees, of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy; and,
- 4) Students should be taught that as bystanders of bullying behavior, they have a moral obligation to defend the target through the use of supportive words and non-violent actions.

The responsibility for implementing the program rests with the Principal in coordination with the Pastor of the Parish, if the school is associated with a parish.

## VII. Yearly Review of Resource and State laws

Principals shall be responsible for a yearly review of their school's Anti-Bullying policy to ensure continued consistency with this policy and state law.

## VIII. Applicability of State Laws

This policy is not intended to supplant state law insofar as certain actions that meet the definition of bullying as defined herein may also result in certain persons who are mandatory reporters having to report certain matters to law enforcement authorities or certain state agencies depending on the circumstances. For example, but without limitation, certain actions may require that they be reported as abuse according to state law. The proper Diocesan authority should be consulted depending on the nature of the alleged actions.

## **Health**

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Parents are advised to give medication (prescription and nonprescription, including cough drops) at home on a schedule other than school hours. If it is necessary that medication be given during school hours, the following procedures must be followed: Students are not allowed to keep any type of drug, prescription or over-the-counter, on their person. This includes cough drops, breath mints or strips, lip balm, and hand cream. Nonprescription medication will not be stored at school. If nonprescription medication is needed, parents must bring it to the office and administer it to their child at the appropriate time. Office personnel will only administer prescription medication to students after the proper paperwork has been completed.

The medicine must be in the original prescription bottle and properly labeled with doctor's orders. A medication log will be maintained by the school for any prescription medication dispensed. All

medication left in the office for more than a week after the last dispensing date will be properly disposed of (exceptions will be made in cases of chronic illness).

### ***Illness/Accident Policy***

The office will notify the parent or the person designated on the emergency card. Arrangements will need to be made by the parent to pick up the child and sign him/her out for the day. No pupil who feels ill will be released without this procedure.

### ***Communicable Diseases***

Parents are asked to report communicable diseases to the school office before the child returns to school. Any child returning to school after having a communicable disease must have a doctor's excuse. Students who have been ill must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

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## **Safety**

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### ***Insurance***

All St. Joseph students are enrolled in the diocesan insurance program that covers accidents that occur at school or during school-sponsored activities. This policy provides supplemental/secondary coverage with limited benefits. Injuries must be reported promptly to the school office and claims must be filed within 90 days. The diocese also offers a 24-hour coverage policy for an additional premium.

### ***Emergency Drills***

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School conducts monthly fire drills. In addition, other emergency drills (such as tornado and lock-down) are conducted periodically. Students are expected to abide by all emergency drill procedures as outlined and practiced.

### ***Campus as Smoke and Drug-Free Zone***

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School is a smoke and drug-free facility.

### ***Asbestos Report***

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School is in full compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Act of 1987. The Asbestos Management Plan for Compliance is on file in the school office and is available for your inspection upon request. We will continue to monitor our physical plant to assure a safe and healthy environment.

### ***Public Domain Policy***

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School strives to have a school where administration, faculty, staff, and parents work together to create an environment of open, honest, and fair communication in working with our children, keeping our parents abreast of the rules and regulations, and the implementation of those rules and regulations. We encourage the use of discretion when posting comments about our school on a public forum website (i.e., email, Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Comments of a negative nature about policies, decisions, schoolwork, or teachers are often visible to those directly involved even though that may not have been the original intent. Comments of this nature have the potential to undermine the goal of open, honest, fair communication and can easily be



misunderstood or taken out of context resulting in a negative atmosphere among parents, teachers, and ultimately students. We invite you to bring concerns you may have about the operations of the school to our attention through the appropriate channel so they may be addressed in a constructive manner. As a courtesy and respect for others' privacy, please refrain from posting photos of school related activities where other children are pictured.

### ***Possession of Firearms***

It is unlawful to carry or possess a firearm, other weapon, or illegal drugs on the school campus.

### ***Possession of Electronic Devices***

Electronic devices such as cellular phones, iPods, iPads, Apple watches, other digital electronic games, and laser pointers are not permitted on campus during the school day or at after school practices.

### ***Bus Regulations***

St. Joseph Catholic School utilizes the Lafourche Parish School Board Transportation system in providing transportation for students to and from school. St. Joseph students must adhere to all bus safety rules as well as policies governing discipline for riders. Improper or unsafe bus conduct may merit disciplinary action, including suspension of bus riding privileges.

### ***Search and Seizure Policy***

A school official may search students' belongings, including but not limited to handbags, cases, and/or book bags for reasonable cause, for the purpose of maintaining discipline and order, or for health/safety reasons. The search may also take place when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will reveal the student has violated either the law or rules of the school.

### ***Student Photo Use Policy***

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School utilizes student photos to publicize the activities of our school and the accomplishments of our students. If you do not wish for your child to be pictured in any media, send a signed and dated letter annually stating your wishes. This letter will be placed on file in the school office and we will make every effort to exclude your child from photographs and publications. By not sending a letter, you are granting St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School and/or the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux the right to publish and print your child's name and/or likeness on the St. Joseph Elementary website and/or school Facebook page and further release, indemnify, and hold harmless St. Joseph Catholic Elementary, the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, the directors, officers, agents, pastors, employees, and insurers from any and all claims and/or damages on behalf of yourselves and your child arising from the publication of your child's name, photograph, or likeness used by the school. This agreement shall remain in force and in effect at all times.

## **School Authority**

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The education of the child is a partnership between the school, student, and parent/guardian who are the primary educators of the child. If in the opinion of the school administration this partnership is irretrievably broken, the school reserves the right to require the parent/guardian to withdraw the child. The ultimate authority in all school matters lies with the principal of St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School. The principal's decisions regarding the implementation of school policy are final.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or any other circumstances which, in the judgment of the school administration, make it infeasible, unsafe, or otherwise imprudent to continue campus-based education, school shall resume as soon as practical via distance learning and/or other methods adopted and/or developed by the school administration and faculty. Due to continuing financial obligations relating to operational costs, including administrative, faculty, and staff salaries, there shall be no suspension, reduction, or refund of tuition or applicable fees.

The principal has the discretion to permit classroom instruction to be streamed live online, recorded, or both, in order to provide remote learning for the benefit of students.

No screenshots, recordings, etc. may be taken of a distance learning lesson/class or an individual participating in the class conducted by a St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School employee.

Parents are deemed by enrolling their child in the school to agree that they and their children will abide by all health/safety guidelines issued by applicable civil authorities, as well as those issued by the school. The school will comply with all health information reporting mandated by civil authorities.