



Saint John School

Parent and Student Handbook 2026-27

42 Maynard Road

Old Saybrook, CT 06475

860-388-0849



2026-27

Dear Parents and Students,

Our Parent-Student Handbook is designed to serve as a guide and reference as we work together in the sacred mission of Catholic education.

As a Catholic school, we believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. It is our privilege to partner with you in this responsibility, supporting the faith, values, and habits you are forming at home. Together we strive to nurture each child's spiritual, intellectual, and personal growth in a safe, supportive, and Christ centered environment.

This handbook outlines policies and procedures that help us build a community rooted in faith, respect, and excellence. I encourage you to refer to it often, as it reflects our shared commitment to ensuring the success and wellbeing of every student.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. I look forward to working closely with you this year and to watching your children grow in knowledge, faith, and virtue.

With Gratitude
Mrs. Poeschl <><
Principal

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RIGHT TO AMEND

Saint John School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via e-mail communication.

History

History of Saint John School

Saint John School first opened in 1964 with seventy students in grades 1 and 2. Each year a class was added, and in 1972 the first 8th grade class graduated. However, Saint John School did not open in the fall of 1972 due to financial difficulties and the departure of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

For the next twenty years the Saint John School building served as the parish center, CCD classes, and the Shoreline Soup Kitchen.

In 1993, surveys showed growing support for the re-opening of Saint John School. With the support of Dr. Howard Bennett, Superintendent for the Diocese of Norwich, local parents and families of the Saint John Church community, Bishop Daniel Riley granted permission to reopen Saint John School in the fall of 1994 with 216 students. Under the direction of Father Joseph Hanks, and the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother of the Church administering and teaching, Saint John School was the only Catholic elementary school to open in the United States that year.

The Saint John School Building Committee was established in 1996. They raised \$1 million and in 1999 added a new wing to meet the needs of the enrollment of 230+ students.

Saint John School recently celebrated its 30th anniversary with a gala honoring both the rich history of the school and the bright future ahead. Many alumni parents and students returned to join in the celebration. In 2025, after 30 years of dedicated service, the Sisters of Charity concluded their ministry at SJS, and the school welcomed its first lay principal, marking an important new chapter in its story. With deep gratitude for the past and hope for the future, Saint John School looks forward to continuing its mission of faith, academic excellence, and community for generations to come.

Vision Statement

Saint John School strives to be the Catholic school of choice on the Connecticut Shoreline and in the Lower Connecticut River Valley, where every child is known, challenged academically, nurtured in faith, and prepared to serve Christ and the world.

I. INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. John Catholic School is to provide an opportunity for students, parents, and staff to foster a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Infused with our faith, we strive to provide challenging academic programs in which dedicated, professional educators and families work together in a safe environment to inspire individual growth, self-discipline, confidence and Christian service.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

As a Catholic school, we are first and foremost a community of faith. Our mission is to provide a Christ-centered education that forms students academically, spiritually, and morally in the light of the Gospel.

Saint John School is a Roman Catholic School serving grades pre-kindergarten to eight in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, and surrounding communities.

We strive to integrate Catholic values into every aspect of school life—classroom instruction, prayer, liturgy, service, and daily interactions. Students are encouraged to grow in their relationship with God, to deepen their understanding of Catholic teaching, and to live out their faith through acts of respect, compassion, and service to others.

Although students not of our faith are not expected to adhere to Catholic beliefs, they are expected to regard our practices and beliefs with respect. Everyone is expected to participate in class discussions and complete all religion class assignments. Non-Catholic students are expected to accompany their classmates to Church.

Parents, as the primary educators of their children, partner with us in fostering an environment where the Catholic faith is taught, celebrated, and witnessed. Together, we work to form students who are prepared not only for academic success, but also for lives of discipleship, leadership, and service in the Church and in the world.

Parents applying for their children's enrollment in our school should understand and appreciate this religious dimension of Saint John School.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

As a Catholic school, we believe that parents are the primary educators of their children and we partner with them in the sacred responsibility of forming young people in faith, knowledge, and virtue. Rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and guided by the traditions of the Catholic Church, our school seeks to nurture the whole child—spiritually, academically, socially, and emotionally.

We are committed to:

- Faith Formation – Helping students encounter Christ daily through prayer, liturgy, sacramental life, and service to others.
- Academic Excellence – Encouraging intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning, while maintaining high academic standards.
- Moral Development – Instilling Gospel values and a strong sense of integrity, responsibility, and respect for the dignity of every person.
- Community – Fostering a welcoming environment where students, families, faculty, and parish work together in a spirit of faith, love, and service.
- Personal Growth – Developing the unique God-given gifts of each child and encouraging them to use those gifts to make a positive difference in the world.

Our philosophy is to educate the mind and the heart, preparing students to live as disciples of Christ and responsible citizens who will bring hope and light into the world.

ACCREDITATION

Saint John School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the State of Connecticut.

ADMINISTRATION

Principal: Saint John School will have a full-time Principal who meets the requirements of the Diocesan Board of Education. The principal works with the diocesan school office, pastor, school board, clergy, parents, faculty, staff, school community, and public sector, as set forth in more detail in this Handbook and in accordance with the Policies and Procedures of the Diocesan Board of Education.

Assistant Principal: One teacher has been designated to assume the position of Assistant Principal. The primary task of the Assistant Principal is to assume the responsibility for any emergencies that might arise in the absence of the principal. In addition to the teacher's regular instructional duties, he or she may be assigned other minimal administrative duties and tasks designated by the principal. The Assistant Principal does not have the authority to hire, terminate or discipline members of the faculty.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of Saint John School to promote equal educational opportunities for all students and to prohibit discrimination because of race, color, national origin, gender, or physical disabilities. As a Catholic school, Saint John School gives preference in admission to Catholic students. Non-Catholic students are welcomed, as space is available and at the discretion of the principal.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at Saint John School. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist are the core of instruction in Grade 2. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist.

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.

II. SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

VOLUNTEERS

The Diocese of Norwich and its parishes, schools, and other affiliated institutions is committed to providing safe environments for children, young people, and adults. Safe Environments refers to environments that are created and maintained in an effort to provide all people with the safest possible place in which to minister, study, and work. The Diocese of Norwich has created and implemented Safe Environments Programs and Policies. All those who work, assist, and volunteer in the Saint John School Community, whether or not in the school building, and including at all school related activities, including, but not limited to, athletic events, field day, and field trips, must go through the Safe Environments Program. Please contact the school office or the Diocese's Office for Safe Environments for more information.

In accordance with the Safe Environments Program, the following information is required of all volunteers who may have contact with children. These forms are available in the school office.

- Volunteer Application Form and Authorization for Release of Information— All volunteers in the Diocese of Norwich must fill out a Volunteer Application Form. The Office of Safe Environments will use this information to conduct a background check through the State Police criminal records.
- The Authorization for Release of Information allows the Office of Safe Environments to conduct a background check through the Department of Children and Families.
- Volunteer Disclosure Form
- Volunteer Authorization Form

Please return the Volunteer Application Form, Authorization for Release of Information, Volunteer Disclosure and Authorization Forms to the school office.

Volunteers are required to complete a series of on-line videos prior to handing in their Volunteer Application. Anyone who wishes to volunteer in any capacity, including chaperoning field trips, must complete training.

These requirements and policies are necessary if we are to provide a safe environment for the children at Saint John School. The policies are mandated by the Diocese of Norwich and comply with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The Diocese is subject to audit by the National Review Board to ensure that every Catholic Church, School, and Institution complies with these national standards.

VISITORS

Saint John School welcomes parents and visitors who support the mission of our Catholic School Community. For the safety and well-being of all students, all visitors must report to the main office upon arrival, sign in, and obtain a visitors pass before proceeding to any area of the school.

Out of respect for the privacy and confidentiality of all students, requests to visit, monitor, or observe a classroom will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Such requests require the approval of the principal and will be referred to Diocesan Leadership for final determination.

Visitors are expected to maintain an atmosphere of respect and discretion at all times. The administration reserves the right to limit or deny visits that may disrupt the learning environment or compromise student privacy.

The principal reserves the right to refuse to permit access to Saint John School or its students to any Visitor or Volunteer, for any reason.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT / EMERGENCY DRILLS

Saint John School has a Crisis Management Plan devised in collaboration with the Old Saybrook Police Department. The Plan is reviewed annually. A copy of the Plan is kept in the school office. All who volunteer at Saint John School should review the Crisis Management Plan.

Fire Drills and Lock Down Drills are held regularly in accordance with Connecticut law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in their classrooms and always follow directions given by teachers and/or the principal.

INSURANCE

Saint John School is enrolled in an accident insurance policy. This policy is a supplemental insurance to your own insurance, including your own health insurance. Your insurance company(ies) covers costs first, and then the school insurance may provide the remainder of the coverage. If you do not have health insurance, the school insurance may cover full benefits as outlined in the policy.

If any accident occurs during school hours or at a school-sponsored event, you must immediately contact the school office and complete all required accident report forms.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATION POLICY

At Saint John School, we believe open, respectful, and timely communication between home and school is essential in supporting the growth of every child in mind, body, and spirit. We are committed to fostering a strong partnership with parents, grounded in our shared Catholic values of respect, honesty, and charity.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- Communication between parents, students, faculty, and staff should always reflect the Gospel values of kindness, respect, and understanding.
- Concerns should be addressed at the appropriate level, beginning with the teacher or staff member most directly involved. If further clarification is needed, parents may then contact the principal.
- Confidentiality will be respected in all communication.

TEACHER–PARENT COMMUNICATION

- Teachers may be contacted by email or written note. Please allow up to 24 hours on school days for a response.
- Teachers are not available to take phone calls during instructional time. Parents may leave a message with the school office, and the teacher will return the call as soon as possible.
- Parents should not to call teachers and other school personnel on their home or cell phones.
- Meetings with teachers should be scheduled in advance. Drop-in visits during the school day are not permitted.

SCHOOL–PARENT COMMUNICATION

- Important announcements and updates will be shared through the school's primary communication channels (email, newsletters, or website).
- Emergency notifications will be sent via the school's alert system.
- Parents are responsible for checking communication regularly and staying informed about school events, policies, and procedures.

STUDENT–SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

- Students are encouraged to express their questions, concerns, or needs respectfully to their teachers or school staff.
- Students should not use personal devices during school hours to contact parents. In the case of an emergency, communication will be facilitated through the school office.

RESOLVING CONCERNS

- Concerns should be raised promptly and respectfully.
- Parents are asked to model constructive problem-solving for their children by approaching school staff in a spirit of cooperation and partnership.
- In keeping with our Catholic mission, we ask all members of our community to seek understanding, extend grace, and work together for the good of each child.

CUSTODIAL RIGHTS

It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreement will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address. It is a great benefit to the child to have both parents involved in his/her education.

OFFICE HOURS

Regular office hours are 8:00 AM until 3:15 PM. (until 1:15 PM on early dismissal days). The Before/Aftercare staff will be available to answer the phone and allow access into the building to drop off/pick up students who are in Before/Aftercare.

If you are coming in to the office to take care of business at the end of the school day (before picking up your student), please arrive early, preferably by 2:30 PM, as not to conflict with dismissal procedures. Walk-ins, phone calls and e-mails at the end of the day, particularly during the dismissal period from 2:45 PM on, is extremely disruptive and does not allow for the appropriate time necessary for the dismissal process or the individual's needs/requests.

IV. ATTENDANCE

BUSES

Old Saybrook residents are permitted to ride the Old Saybrook public school buses and are responsible for following the rules and regulations of the Old Saybrook public schools and school bus transportation. Behaviors at the bus stop and while riding the bus must be courteous at all times. Students are to remain seated and keep their hands, head, and objects in the bus at all times. No food or drink is permitted on the bus at any time. The rules and regulations for students riding the public-school buses are available from Old Saybrook Public Schools.

In the morning, students will be picked up at their designated spots and brought directly to Saint John School. In the afternoon, buses will come to Saint John School, pick up all students and go to Goodwin School. Once at Goodwin, the students will get off that bus and onto their designated bus for transportation home. On early dismissal days (if the Goodwin School has a full day) buses will come directly to Saint John School, pick up the students, and take them home. On such days, the time students return home may be a little earlier than usual. Please contact the Old Saybrook Public School bus company for more information. At the discretion of the principal, students will face detention or other action if any school bus infraction is reported to the school by any bus driver, aid, or the office of the Old Saybrook Superintendent of Schools. Students may also be suspended from the use of the bus as a result of such infractions. In that event, it will be the responsibility of the family to transport the student to school.

SCHOOL HOURS

- Arrival: 8:45 am – Students are expected to be in their classrooms no later than 8:45 AM. Teachers begin picking students up from the gym by 8:30 AM, and students may have morning work to complete. Therefore, please make every effort to drop your child off between 8:20-8:40 AM so that your child can be unpacked and ready to start the day.
- Dismissal: 2:55 PM following closing prayer.
- Students not picked up 15 minutes after dismissal are brought to Aftercare. Aftercare fees are assessed as of 3:10 PM on normal school days and 1:10 PM on early dismissal days.

ABSENCES/PROMOTION

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to a student's academic success and spiritual growth. At Saint John School, we believe that consistent presence in the classroom not only strengthens a child's learning but also builds community, responsibility, and respect for the value of education. Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, disrupt the learning process and can affect academic performance, classroom participation, and the development of good study habits. In order to be eligible for promotion, the Diocese of Norwich requires that a student be in attendance no less than 160 days in a school year.

- Parents/guardians must notify the school office by 8:45 am if a student will be absent, stating the reason.

- Please utilize the Home to Office Communication form located on the home page of the Saint John School Website.
- Absences due to illness, family emergency, or medical appointments are considered excused. Vacations during the school year are strongly discouraged and are considered unexcused.
- If a student is absent 3 days consecutively due to illness, a note from a doctor's office or clinic is required. Frequent absences will require a doctor's note or meeting with administration.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences are considered excused when they are due to:

- Illness of the student
- Medical or dental appointments (when they cannot be scheduled outside of school hours)
- Death in the family or funeral attendance
- Other serious family emergencies communicated to and approved by the school

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences are considered unexcused when they are not covered by the reasons listed above. Examples include:

- Family vacations taken during the school year
- Absence without notification to the school
- Any absence not supported by an acceptable explanation

Unexcused absences may result in missed classroom instruction, inability to make up certain assignments, and administrative follow-up.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

- Excessive absences or tardies may impact academic progress and promotion.
- According to diocesan and state guidelines, if a student is absent more than 10 days in a school year, the school will schedule a conference with the parents/guardians to discuss the impact on the child's learning. Continued excessive absences will affect honor roll (for Grades 5-8), progress, promotion, and enrollment status.

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as an intentional, unexcused absence from school without the knowledge or permission of the parent/guardian or school. Truancy is a serious matter and will be addressed promptly.

TARDINESS POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to student success and minimizes disruptions to the learning environment. Students are expected to arrive at school on time and prepared for the school day.

Definition of Tardy

A student is considered tardy if he or she arrives after 8:45 AM.

Tardiness Procedures

- Students arriving late must report to the school office before going to class.
- Tardies will be recorded in the student's attendance record.
- Excessive tardiness may affect academic performance, classroom participation, and eligibility for recognition programs, leadership opportunities, and other school privileges.

Consequences for Excessive Tardiness

- 1–3 tardies in a calendar month: Parent notification may be issued as a reminder of the importance of punctuality.
- 4 tardies in a calendar month: Student will receive a lunch detention.
- Each additional tardy in the same month: A parent or guardian must accompany the student into the school office and sign the student in.
- 8 or more tardies in a calendar month: A conference with the parent/guardian and administration may be required to develop a plan for improving punctuality.
- Continued excessive tardiness may result in additional administrative action at the discretion of the principal.

Habitual Tardiness

Students who accumulate excessive tardies during the school year may be subject to:

- A parent-administrator conference.
- A written attendance improvement plan.
- Loss of eligibility for perfect attendance or punctuality awards.
- Restrictions on participation in certain extracurricular activities, field trips, leadership positions, or special privileges if tardiness becomes chronic.

EARLY PICK-UP

- If a student must leave early, parents/guardians must utilize the Home to Office Form located on the Home Page of the Saint John School website. Please make every effort to give as much notice as possible so that we can have your child ready for dismissal.
- The parent/guardian must sign the student out at the office. Students will only be released to individuals listed on the emergency contact form unless prior written notice is provided.

MISSED WORK

Students are responsible for making up all missed assignments, tests, and classwork due to absence.

- No assignments will be given in advance of a vacation, and students will work out with the teacher how missed work will be completed and submitted.

V. MORNING / AFTERNOON PROCEDURE

MORNING ARRIVAL

- Time: Students may be dropped off beginning at 8:20 - 8:40 AM
- Location: All vehicles must use the designated drop-off line located by the gym doors. Do not park or exit vehicles in the drop-off line.
- Procedure:
 - Pull forward as directed by staff/volunteers.
 - Students should exit from the passenger side only.
 - Parents should remain in their vehicles to keep traffic flowing.
- School day begins at 8:45 AM. Students should be in their classrooms and ready to begin their day at this time.
- Tardiness: Students not in their classroom at 8:45 AM must report to the main office to receive a tardy slip. (See Tardiness under Attendance for additional information.)

Only Pre-K students should be walked directly to their classroom door from a parking space. In such case, parents should park their car in one of the designated parking spaces and, taking the child by the hand, walk them carefully and directly to the Pre-K door. In the event a student in Grades K – 8 needs additional assistance for any reason, the parent of such student, must use the Administration Entrance.

STUDENT RELEASE

Students will be released to a parent or guardian or other authorized person only after the student is signed-out in the main office. Whoever picks-up the student must show ID and sign the student out. Any changes to the list of persons authorized to pick-up a student must be done in person, in writing, by the parent/guardian of the student. Changes of authorized individuals will not be taken over the phone.

DISMISSAL

If someone other than a parent or guardian will be picking up your child on a regular basis, please submit a signed note or Home to Office Communication to the school office at the beginning of the school year. Please be sure to send in a signed note if someone other than the parent or regular pick-up person will be picking up your child. No child will be released to someone other than a parent or guardian unless the school has a written, signed note or a Home to Office Communication is received.

If a change occurs during the school day, a note must be submitted to the office by email, facsimile or hand delivery. **Phone calls will not be accepted to release a child to someone other than a parent/guardian or individuals listed on the student's emergency card.** If an unplanned emergency arises during the day, please contact the office as early as possible, but **no later than 2:30 PM** Phone calls and emails at the end of the day during the dismissal process is extremely disruptive.

When arriving for afternoon pick-up, you may enter the car-line no more than 15 minutes before dismissal time (i.e. 2:40 PM on regular dismissal days and 12:40 PM on early dismissal days). For the safety of all children, you may not open the gates to enter the lot before this time period.

Walkers leave through the Administration door. Occasions have arisen when parents would like their children to walk to the town library or another location on a regular basis. If this is the case, a signed note or Home to Office Communication and permission of the principal are required. Absent of either a signed note or a Home to Office Communication and permission of the principal, children will be sent to Aftercare. Children should always leave the school grounds in their uniform, unless they are attending a sporting or other school-sanctioned event.

After school, all children are to leave when dismissed. There is to be no loitering in the hallways or elsewhere on school grounds. Once students are dismissed and have left the school, there is no returning for access to lockers and desks.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

- Time: Dismissal begins promptly at 2:55 PM following our closing prayer.
- Parking: Parents/guardians must park in the school lot before proceeding to their child's dismissal door.
- Sign-Out: All students must be signed out by a parent/guardian (or an authorized adult listed) at the classroom's designated dismissal door. Staff will release students only after confirming the adult's identity.
- Students not picked up 10 minutes after dismissal are brought to Aftercare. Aftercare fees are assessed as of 3:10 PM on normal school day and 1:10 PM on early dismissal days.
- Dismissal Locations:
 - Middle School (Grades 6–8): Double doors to the right of the Pre-K 3 classroom
 - Pre-K 3: Pre-K 3 classroom door
 - Pre-K 4 & Grade 5: Pre-K 4 classroom door
 - Grades 3 & 4: Grade 3 classroom door
 - Kindergarten, Grades 1 & 2: Kindergarten classroom door

EARLY PICK-UP

Students leaving before the end of the school day must be signed out through the main office.

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Drive no more than 5 mph in the school parking lot at all times.
- Follow the directions of staff and volunteers.
- Cell phone use is prohibited while driving in the parking lot.
- Supervise younger siblings during arrival and dismissal.
- Please exit the school property by 3:30 PM on normal school days and 1:30 PM on early dismissal days after picking up your child so that the Aftercare Program can use the playground.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal time is 12:55 PM following closing prayer. There will be early dismissal on the First Friday of every month, as well as on Parent/Teacher Conference days. Aftercare on early dismissal days will be available from 12:55 PM until 5:30 PM

CANCELLATIONS

Saint John School follows the Old Saybrook Public School System with regard to cancellations, delays and early dismissals.

VI. HEALTH POLICIES

Saint John School has a nurse assigned by, and is an employee of, the Town of Old Saybrook, CT. The nurse works full time beginning at 9 AM – 3 PM every day. The school nurse maintains all health records required by the state. A physical examination must be recorded on each student's health record for Pre-K, Kindergarten, Grade 6, and as otherwise required by State Law. Children may not attend school if they have not met the immunization requirements of the State of Connecticut, including specifically but without limitation, for measles, polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, rubella and mumps. Student's health records must always be up to date. A physical must be recorded on a student's health record in accordance with State Law.

The School Nurse may administer medication in accordance with State Law. Medication will be given only upon a written order from the physician to the school nurse and written parental permission. The parent of the child must assume responsibility for any reaction to the medication. Medication (in the original bottle) must be brought to the school office or to the Nurse's office by the parent or guardian of the child, in accordance with State Law. Medicine should never be sent with a child. Cough drops are considered medication and may not be brought to school.

Children should report all injuries sustained on school property or during school-related activities to the teacher or supervising staff member and the School Nurse, and, in the Nurse's absence, the principal.

If a student's activities are limited due to an injury or a health issue, a written note from a doctor is required. Students will not be excused from physical education classes without a note.

The School Nurse maintains accident reports. The Nurse will notify parents to pick up a sick child. Parents must sign out the child in the school office.

Generally, students should stay home from school if the student is suffering from any of the following conditions:

- Fever greater than 100° F. Students should be fever free for 24 hours without Tylenol or Motrin.
- Episode of vomiting or diarrhea. Student should have no vomiting or loose stools for 24 hours before returning to school
- Any student on any medication for a contagious infection must be on the medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Student who does not eat before school and is complaining of stomach pain.
- Excessive nasal discharge, which is colored and continuous.
- Sore throat or swollen glands and fever.
- Earache with continuous pain.
- Rash of unknown origin or blisters and/or discharge.

ALLERGY POLICY

Saint John School recognizes that an allergy is an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with allergies.

This school encourages children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff and pupils. Teachers and new staff are also made aware of the policy. All staff who come into contact with children with allergies are provided with training on allergies from the school nurse who has had specialized training. Training is updated as needed.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

No emotional animals will be permitted in school unless a student's IEP specifically states the need for such an extraordinary accommodation.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE POLICY

In keeping with our mission as a Catholic School, we are committed to providing a healthy, safe, and faith filled environment for all students. The use, possession, distribution, or sale of illegal or controlled substances is strictly prohibited on school property, at school sponsored events, or any time when a student or parent is representing the school.

DEFINITION OF ILLEGAL AND PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

For the purposes of this policy, "illegal or prohibited substances" include but are not limited to:

- Controlled substances prohibited by law (narcotics, hallucinogens)
- Marijuana, cannabis products, or THC in any form. Although marijuana is legal in CT for adults ages 21 and over, it remains illegal for minors and is strictly forbidden in all school related settings.
- Alcoholic beverages
- Tobacco products, including vaping devices or e cigarettes.
- Misuse of prescription medications
- Misuse of over-the-counter medications, inhalants, or other substances for the purpose of intoxication.

EXPECTATIONS

- Parents are expected to partner with the school in ensuring that students are not exposed to or involved with substance use.
- The presence of marijuana, alcohol, or other substances on school grounds or at school functions will not be tolerated, regardless of their legal status for adults outside the school environment

CONSEQUENCES

- Violations of this policy are considered very serious and will result in immediate disciplinary action, which may include:
 - Suspension or expulsion.
 - Possible referral to law enforcement if required by law.

SEARCH

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

VII. DRESS CODE

UNIFORMS

Outer jackets, sweatshirts, hoodies, etc. are not to be worn in class. Saint John School ¾ zips, cardigan sweaters, V-neck sweaters, spirit wear purchased from SJS Spirit Wear Store, and vests are the only acceptable outerwear that may be worn in classrooms. The gym sweatshirt is acceptable only with the gym uniform. Only apparel purchased from Donnelly's Clothing Stores or the SJS Spirit Wear Store may be worn. Please visit www.DonnellysClothing.com or call the office for more details. Donnelly's also offers optional wear with logos that include backpacks, and jackets among other items. Please visit their website to view these options.

UNIFORM POLICY

As a Catholic school community, we believe that a school uniform promotes equality, minimizes distractions, and fosters pride in both our school and ourselves. All students in Pre-K through Grade 8 are expected to be in full uniform each school day unless otherwise directed by the principal. Parents are responsible for ensuring that students arrive at school in proper uniform.

Warm weather uniforms may be worn: August-October 10 / April 13-June

Formal uniforms worn: October 10-April 10 and as otherwise noted.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- Uniforms should be neat, clean, and in good repair at all times.
- Shirts must be tucked in and belts worn where required.
- Only school-approved sweaters, fleeces, or sweatshirts may be worn in the classroom.
- Jewelry should be simple and limited. Hoop earrings, dangling earrings, and excessive accessories are not permitted for safety reasons.
- Hairstyles must be neat, clean, and not distracting. Hair should be natural in color. Girls may wear headbands that are the school plaid. Beads and fancy accessories are not permitted.
- Make-up, nail polish and fake nails are not permitted.
- Students may not wear hats inside the building.
- All clothing should be labeled with the student's name.

PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN

- School gym uniform may be worn daily (school t-shirt, school sweatshirt, school sweatpants or shorts, sneakers).
- Students should wear Velcro sneakers (not laces) until they can tie their own shoes. Shoes may not have lights, wheels or make noises.

GIRLS GRADES 1–5

- Donnelly Jumper (with modest length) with white short sleeved or long-sleeved blouse OR
- Grey Donnelly shorts (warm weather months only)/ skirt with white blouse/polo
- Maroon cardigan, fleece, or school sweatshirt (optional)
- Maroon knee high socks or tights
- All black shoes or sneakers (no boots, sandals, crocs)

GIRLS GRADES 6–8

- Plaid Donnelly skirt with white short or long-sleeved blouse
- Skirts must be knee-length
- Uniform tie
- Maroon Donnelly cardigan or fleece
- Maroon knee length socks or tights
- All black shoes or sneakers (no boots, sandals, crocs)

BOYS GRADES 1-8

- Warm Weather Uniform (see warm weather uniform dates) Grey Donnelly shorts with maroon or white SJS polo shirt
- Formal Uniform (see warm weather uniform dates): Grey Donnelly Pants with white button down short or long-sleeved shirt, maroon cardigan or fleece
- Belt and Uniform Tie (grades 1–8)
- Dark colored socks
- All black shoes or sneakers (no boots, sandals, crocs)

GYM UNIFORM (GRADES 1–8)

- School gym t-shirt and/or sweatshirt
- School gym shorts (see warm weather uniform dates) or sweatpants
- Sneakers
- Gym uniforms are to be worn only on designated PE days

SCHOOL MASS UNIFORM (GRADES 1-8)

- Students are to wear their formal uniform on Mass days

OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAYS

On designated dress-down days, clothing should be modest, neat, and appropriate for a Catholic school setting. Clothing with offensive language, logos, or images is prohibited.

The principal reserves the right to make all final decisions related to the attire of students on out of uniform days.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Students who are not in compliance with the uniform policy may receive a reminder notice, and repeated infractions will require a parent conference.

Students with more than three uniform infractions in a month will serve lunch detention. During this time, students will eat lunch in a designated supervised area. Lunch detention provides a structured consequence while minimizing the loss of academic instructional time. Students serving lunch detention will still be able to participate in recess after the lunch period.

VIII. ADMISSION AND ACADEMICS

ADMISSION POLICY

Saint John School welcomes students of all faiths who are willing to respect and support the Catholic identity, mission, and values of our school. We recognize parents as the primary educators of their children and partner with families to provide a strong academic foundation rooted in faith.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Saint John School admits students of any race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, physical disability, gender, or religion to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or disability in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, or other school-administered programs.

ADMISSIONS PRIORITY

When applications exceed available spaces, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Siblings of current students
2. Children of active parishioners of Saint Pio
3. Children of Catholic families from neighboring parishes without schools
4. Children of non-Catholic families seeking a Catholic education

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

- Completed application form and registration fee
- Copy of the child's birth certificate and baptismal certificate (if applicable)
- Updated health and immunization records in compliance with Connecticut state law
- Completed health packet for Saint John School
- Academic records and/or standardized test scores (for students entering grades 1–8)
- Teacher recommendations (if requested)
- Parent and student meeting with the principal (required for grades K–8)

CONDITIONS OF ENROLLMENT

- Families agree to support the mission of the school.
- Students are expected to comply with school rules and policies.
- Parents/guardians agree to meet financial obligations in a timely manner.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All new students are accepted on a probationary basis for six weeks from first day of attendance. During this time, academic progress, behavior, and social adjustment will be reviewed to ensure a good fit between the student and the school community.

ACADEMICS

The Diocese of Norwich curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of Connecticut guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. Saint John School offers a rigorous curriculum. We follow the Archdiocese of Hartford's curriculum standards.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are distributed three times a year. The report card may include information regarding the student's academic achievement, attitude, behavior, and attendance. Students earn grades not only in written work and tests, but also by participation in class discussions, giving reports, and completing homework and projects. Work must always be completed on assigned dates and done neatly and as prescribed by the teacher. Turning in materials late or in a manner not accepted by the teacher will result in a reduced grade. Report cards are to be signed by the child's parent or guardian and returned to school within 5 days of distribution.

GRADING SCALE – Grades 3-8

A+	100-98	B+	89-87	C+	79-77	D	69-65	F	Below 65
A	97-94	B	86-83	C	76-73				
A-	90-93	B-	82-80	C-	72-70				

GRADING SCALE – Grades PreK – Grade 2

5 - Consistently exceeded grade level expectations.	I - Incomplete work
4 - Consistently achieved grade level expectations.	* - Indicates improvement is needed for that skill.
3 - Approaching mastery of grade level expectations.	N - Not Assessed
2 - Approaching proficiency toward grade level expectations.	
1 - Difficulty meeting grade level expectations.	

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

- Parents of students in Grades 6–8 are encouraged to view current grades at any time by logging into EduConnect. This allows parents to follow-up with their child on any missing or late submissions that may affect the final grade on their report card. Parents may request a meeting with the teacher at any agreeable time to talk about student progress and grades.
- Progress Reports are issued midway through each marking period to provide parents with an update on academic performance and effort.
- Report Cards are distributed three times each year, at the end of each trimester.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

- Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year (fall and spring). These meetings provide an opportunity to review student progress, celebrate growth, and discuss areas for continued development.
- Additional conferences may be arranged as needed by the teacher or parent to support student learning and well-being.
- In all conferences, we strive to collaborate as partners, keeping the best interests of the child at the center of the conversation.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

NWEA Map Tests and MAP Fluency are administered in Grades 1 through 8 three times a year, and in the kindergarten 2 times a year. The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) is a Portland-based nonprofit that develops academic assessments for students in grades pre-K through 12. The MAP Growth assessments are utilized in over 50,000 schools and districts across 149 countries, affecting more than 16.2 million students.

The ACRE Test (Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education) is given to students in Grades 5 and 8. Benchmark assessments include unit testing; and other formative and summative assessments.

TIME ALLOTMENTS

The time allotment for each subject shall follow the norms established by the Diocesan School Office. Each grade's schedule has been carefully planned by the classroom teacher in accord with the time allotments stipulated by the Diocesan School Office. These may differ from other schools.

STUDENT RECORDS

A cumulative record may be maintained for each student. The conditions to access student records shall comply with the Right to Privacy Act of 1974 and other applicable law. Saint John School will use the cumulative record forms furnished by the Diocesan School Office.

Report cards and official records may not be released until all financial obligations are met.

HONOR ROLL

Students in Grades 5 – 8 who achieve all A's earn the Principal's List.

Students in Grades 5 – 8 who achieve all A's and one B earn High Honors.

Students in Grades 5 – 8 who achieve A's and B's earn Honors.

Eligible grades for any level of "Honor Roll": **Core Grades** nothing lower than a B (excluding Principal's List – all A's)/ **Specials Grades** only 1 C is acceptable.

Inappropriate behavior or lack of respect, as determined by the principal, may prevent students from being placed on the Honor Roll.

Excessive absenteeism also prevents a student from being on the Honor Roll.

Honor Roll Eligibility and Tardiness

For students in Grades 5–8, punctuality is considered an important component of academic responsibility.

- Students who accumulate more than 5 unexcused tardiness in a trimester will not be eligible for Honor Roll recognition for that trimester.
- Excessive absenteeism in a trimester also prevents a student from being on the Honor Roll.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two-week improvement plan. At the end of the two-week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed.

Students will not be allowed to participate in any sports or after school activity until the grade has improved to at least a "C".

HOMEWORK

Homework should serve a positive purpose and be closely related to class work. It should provide review and reinforcement as well as opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. In Grades 1 through 8, homework will be assigned daily.

The following are the suggested total time for homework assignments per grade level:

Primary Grades 1, 2, 3..... 30 minutes
Grades 4 and 5 50 minutes
Grades 6, 7, and 8..... 1 ½ to 2 hours

Each student has different capabilities and interests making it difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. These total times are meant to provide a general guide. For questions or clarification, please contact the teacher through the method suggested by the teacher, which may include email, in accordance with the policies set forth in this Handbook. Please help students by providing a quiet, comfortable, structured environment in which to complete homework.

Homework may be given on days before holidays, “no school” days, or weekends. Projects may be assigned that may extend over a vacation period.

Teachers will provide work for students who were absent due to illness or other excused absence upon their return. Students are to make up work missed due to absence.

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

Every effort will be made to place pupils at an appropriate grade level that provides for the continuous progress of pupils from grade to grade.

Advancement to the next grade at Saint John 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. The administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes off site as a requirement for promotion, when after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such an action would better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

Students may also be transferred to the next grade. It may also be recommended or requested that a student not continue as a student at Saint John School.

All promotion, retention and transfer decisions are in the final discretion of the principal.

IX. EXTENDED CARE

MORNING CARE/AFTERCARE

See the Morning Care/Aftercare handbook

X. AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT POLICY

Saint John School offers a variety of afterschool enrichment programs to support the growth and development of our students beyond the classroom. These programs are designed to provide opportunities for creativity, physical activity, and academic enrichment in a safe, faith-filled environment.

ELIGIBILITY

After-school enrichment programs are open to currently enrolled Saint John School students in the grades designated for each specific program. Enrollment may be limited based on space and staffing.

REGISTRATION

Parents/guardians must complete the registration form and submit payment (if applicable) by the stated deadline. Students will not be permitted to attend a program without prior registration.

SUPERVISION AND DISMISSAL

All enrichment activities are supervised by school staff or approved program instructors. Students must be picked up promptly at the end of the program. Late pick-ups may result in additional fees or removal from the program after repeated occurrences.

PARENT/GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERS

The success of our programs includes having two adult individuals in attendance at the time the After-school Enrichment program is held. Parent volunteers are these second individuals. A lack of volunteers impacts the ability to hold a program. Volunteers are Safe Environment trained. Contact the office if you are in need of training.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to follow all school rules and demonstrate respectful behavior during after-school programs. The same Code of Conduct that applies during the school day applies to all enrichment activities. Failure to meet behavior expectations may result in dismissal from the program.

CANCELLATIONS

In the event of early dismissal, inclement weather, or unforeseen circumstances, after-school programs will be canceled. Parents will be notified as soon as possible through the school's communication channels.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

All emergency contact information and health needs must be up to date in the school office prior to participation. Parents are responsible for notifying program staff of any medical conditions or allergies.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Participation in after-school enrichment is a privilege. The school reserves the right to modify or discontinue programs based on enrollment, staffing, or other factors.

XI. PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO RELEASE

Saint John School would like to use photos, and occasionally video clips, to show the wonderful things that are happening at the school. Images could be of a particular in-school activity, such as the Christmas Posadas or science project, student artwork, athletic event, or other school activity. The image may be a single student, small or large groups of students, or completed student work, taken by parents, teachers, or staff during the school year. The school would like to post news and announcements of school happenings on the website homepage or teacher's classroom pages. Know that all of the school's website material is accessible to the public and is public record.

The Marketing Committee would also like to share images of the special environment of Saint John School with the community in press releases, brochures, posters, and various other means of publication. We are seeking your permission to use those images that include your child(ren).

Descriptive text or commentary that accompanies the image will be in a general context and will not indicate the name of the child(ren) or family, unless specifically approved by the parents/ Mrs. Poeschl, or her authorized designee, prior to release on the school website or for other publication. Signed photography/video release will be kept on file by the school office.

A separate Photography & Video Release form must be returned for each child. This document is an agreement that is effective as of the date signed. If you do grant Saint John School permission to use photo or video images of your child on the school website or in other print or electronic media, you may revoke that permission at any time by visiting the school office and signing a new form indicating that you do not grant such permission. Likewise, should you choose to withhold your permission now, you may later grant such permission by visiting the school office and signing a new form allowing the use of your child's image.

XII. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE POLICY

At Saint John School, discipline is understood as an opportunity for students to grow in self-control, responsibility, and respect for others, in keeping with our mission as a Catholic school. Rooted in the Gospel values of love, justice, and forgiveness, our goal is to guide students to make choices that reflect their dignity as children of God and their responsibility as members of a faith community.

PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

- Discipline is not simply about rules, but about forming disciples of Christ.
- We seek to foster virtues such as respect, honesty, responsibility, and compassion.
- Positive behavior is encouraged and reinforced through praise, recognition, and consistent expectations.
- When students make mistakes, we provide opportunities for reflection, restitution, and reconciliation.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to:

1. Respect themselves, their peers, school staff, and all members of the community.
2. Follow directions from teachers and staff promptly and respectfully.
3. Demonstrate care for school property, personal belongings, and the belongings of others.
4. Use appropriate language and behavior at all times.
5. Practice honesty and integrity in all academic and social settings.
6. Contribute to a safe and peaceful school environment.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Discipline will be age-appropriate, consistent, and focused on helping students learn from their actions. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal reminder or redirection (especially common in early grades)
- Reflection time (quiet time to consider better choices)
- Loss of privileges (recess, classroom roles, activities)
- Restorative practices (apology, repairing damage, service to the community)
- Lunch Detention (for repeated or serious infractions)
- Parent/guardian contact and/or conference
- Behavior contract (signed agreement with student, parent, and school staff)
- In-school suspension (student completes work under supervision away from class)
- Out-of-school suspension (reserved for serious or repeated offenses)
- Expulsion (only in extreme circumstances, following diocesan policies)

SERIOUS INFRACTIONS

Certain behaviors are considered serious and may result in immediate suspension or referral to the principal, including:

- Physical aggression or fighting
- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (in person or online)
- Possession or use of illegal substances, weapons, or dangerous objects
- Willful destruction of property
- Repeated defiance of authority
- Behavior that threatens the safety or well-being of self or others

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children and play an essential role in supporting the school's discipline policy. Open communication and collaboration between school and home are vital in helping students learn from mistakes and grow in virtue.

APPEALS

Disciplinary decisions may be reviewed by the principal. In cases of suspension or expulsion, diocesan policies will be followed.

DETENTION

A detention requires that a student stay after school or arrive before school begins. Detentions are given for violations of school policies and rules, missing homework assignments and may be assigned by the principal or classroom teacher. Students are given twenty-four-hour notice of a detention period. A slip explaining the reason for detention goes home to be signed by the parents/guardian and is to be returned to the teacher/Principal the following day. The length of detention varies depending upon the seriousness of the offense and the age of the child.

Middle school students will be given an after-school detention after 2 days of not turning in their homework. Students will stay until 4 PM with one of the middle school teachers. The student must be picked up at 4 PM. Students who are not picked up at 4 PM will be brought to Aftercare for sign out. Aftercare fees will be applied.

SUSPENSION

A suspension requires the exclusion of a student from classes and school activities for a stated period of time. Suspensions are given for serious violations of school policies and rules or when lesser detentions are not a deterrent to problem behavior. Suspensions are assigned by the principal. The parent or guardian of the student will be notified of the suspension and the reasons for it. Suspension may be served "In-school" or "Out-of-School" at the discretion of the principal. For In-School suspensions, the student will be doing all class assignments away from his/her class and will not be allowed contact with classmates. Normally this suspension will be served in the principal's office, but may be served elsewhere at the discretion of the principal.

During Out-of-School suspensions, the student is not allowed to participate in any school activities or functions until the day he/she returns to regular classes.

Additionally, the Principal reserves the right to restrict any student's or family's attendance at any school function or activity, at any time, for violation of any school rules.

EXPULSION

Expulsion from school is the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons. There are instances when a family may be asked to remove their child(ren) from Saint John School for non-disciplinary reasons. Such instances are not an expulsion and do not fall within this section of this Handbook. A student who is expelled from school may not attend classes, and will not be allowed on school property or be permitted to attend any school-sponsored functions. Expulsions may be assigned for very grave violations of school policies and rules or when all attempts at correcting problem behaviors have been exhausted. Expulsion is determined by the principal, in consultation with the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools and the Pastor, and may be appealed to the Diocesan Board of Education. In determining an expulsion, the student and his/her parents/guardians will be granted a hearing with the principal. If it is determined that expulsion is the necessary and appropriate result, the principal will notify the family in writing and a copy of this notice will be added to the student's cumulative record.

Expulsion will be deemed necessary and appropriate in circumstances including, without limitation, repeated suspensions, possession or use of alcohol, possession or use of tobacco, possession or use of marijuana, possession or use of any illegal drug such as cocaine, ecstasy, methadone, methamphetamines, etc., and threats or acts of violence.

Notwithstanding anything in this section, any student found in possession of a weapon on the property of Saint John School, Saint John Church, St. Mark Church, or during a school-related activity anywhere, will be immediately expelled from Saint John School and may be referred to law enforcement officials. The principal retains final authority in determining what constitutes a weapon. However, all the following will be considered weapons: firearms, guns (including BB guns), knives, lasers, tasers, ammunition, explosive devices, fireworks, slingshots, mace, and pepper spray. **Replica weapons are also considered weapons.**

BULLYING POLICY

As a Catholic school, we believe that every child is created in the image and likeness of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Our community is called to reflect Christ's love in our words and actions. Bullying of any kind is contrary to Gospel values and will not be tolerated.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of written, verbal, electronic, or physical behavior directed at another student that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm,
- Places a student in reasonable fear of harm,
- Creates a hostile school environment, or
- Substantially disrupts the educational process.

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal taunts, name-calling, or threats,
- Spreading rumors, gossip, or exclusion from groups,
- Physical aggression such as pushing, hitting, or damaging belongings,
- Cyberbullying through text messages, email, or social media.

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

- Students are taught Christian virtues of kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.
- Age-appropriate lessons will be provided to help students understand respectful behavior and conflict resolution.
- Teachers and staff model and reinforce positive interactions.

REPORTING

- Students and parents are encouraged to report suspected bullying to a teacher or the principal.
- Reports may be made verbally or in writing.
- All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

RESPONSE AND CONSEQUENCES

- The school will address each incident in a fair, timely, and consistent manner.
- Consequences will be determined based on the severity and frequency of the behavior and may include: verbal warning, loss of privileges, parent conference, detention, suspension, or expulsion.
- Support will be provided for the student who has been bullied, as well as guidance and corrective measures for the student engaging in bullying.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We recognize that parents are the primary educators of their children. Together, we share the responsibility of teaching and reinforcing respectful behavior at home, in school, and in the community.

COMMITMENT

Our school community is committed to fostering an environment where all students feel safe, valued, and able to learn. Guided by the teachings of Christ, we will work to ensure that bullying has no place in our school.

This expressly includes whether or not such action takes place during school hours or on school grounds. Consequences will be determined by the principal.

XIII. TECHNOLOGY

INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE

Saint John School recognizes the educational value of an interconnected computer and tablet system within the school, including the value of access to the Internet. In order for the school to make its computer and tablet network and internet access (the “Network”) available, all students must take responsibility for responsible and lawful use of this access. Students must understand that one student’s misuse of the Network may jeopardize the ability of all students to benefit from such access. Saint John School teachers and staff make reasonable efforts to supervise student use of the Network, but students must cooperate in exercising responsible use.

Use of the Network must be consistent with the doctrine and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Any use that violates those teachings and practices is prohibited. Each user of the Network has the obligation to use the same in accordance with the policies set forth herein and as may be determined by the principal from time-to-time.

The Network has been established for only education purposes. Saint John School has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material accessed or posted through the Network.

PROHIBITED USES OF THE NETWORK

Students may not use the Network to offer anything for sale or to make purchases, trades or barter.

Students may not download any program or software nor install any program to the Network, unless directed to by a teacher.

Students may not upload any content from the Network.

Among other uses of the Network that are considered unacceptable are the following:

- Uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law.
- Uses that others may find offensive, threatening, or objectionable, including but not limited to, violence, harassment, or bullying.
- Uses that disclose personal information about oneself or any other person.
- Uses that could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
- Uses that include personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory acts.

- Uses that depict false or damaging information about another person or organization.
- Posting chain letters or sending annoying or unnecessary messages to a large number of people.
- Visiting “chat rooms.”
- Plagiarism including using AI to complete your assignments.
- Access of material that is profane or obscene, including without limitation material that is pornographic.
- Access of material that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people, access of hate literature.
- Visiting an unauthorized website.
- Creating anonymous or false accounts for the purpose of violating the heretofore named prohibitions.

The use of the Network is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates the policies set forth in this Handbook, or otherwise promulgated by the principal, shall have his or her access to the Network terminated and may face additional disciplinary action not inconsistent with the policies set forth herein.

All students in Grades K – 8 will receive a Chromebook for use in the classroom. Parents will be required to sign off on a Chromebook Responsibility Form. Please note that the sign-off form you receive will include the inventory control number of the Chromebook issued to your student. If you have previously received and signed a form, you will not receive another.

***FACEBOOK®, INSTAGRAM®, SNAP-CHAT®
TWITTER®, TIK TOK®,
AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA POSTINGS OF STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS***

Saint John School works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. Saint John School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at Saint John School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their person FACEBOOK®, INSTAGRAM®, SNAP-CHAT®, TWITTER®, TIK TOK®, AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA page. Such postings are a violation of the Saint John School’s adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from Saint John School.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING

Plagiarism is the copying of someone else’s work, whether intentionally or not, without giving credit to the original author of the work. Any student who is found to have plagiarized may receive a “zero” on the assignment in which the plagiarized material was found. Other disciplinary action may also be taken. Such infractions will be taken seriously and multiple infractions could result in suspension or expulsion.

XIV. MISCELLANEOUS

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of school property. This includes the school grounds, school building, furniture, and school materials. Students and their parents are expected to make restitution for damage to school property, including the loss or damage to textbooks and library books. Students are also expected to show respect for the belongings of other students. Glass items are not to be brought to school. School books which are the property of Saint John School should be covered.

Saint John School is not responsible for personal property. Your child's name should be put on the inside of his/her school bag, lunch box, sweaters or jackets, uniforms, etc. Lost and found items will be placed in the lost and found container. If the lost items are not claimed, they will be disposed of in a timely manner determined by the principal.

Children who participate in acts of vandalism are subject to discipline. Parents will be notified if his/her child has taken part in any kind of vandalism.

LIBRARY

The school has a well-equipped library. 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.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students shall not use any smart watches, cell phones, paging devices, iPods, or any other electronic devices during the school day and while participating in school activities. If these devices are brought to school, they must be turned off and placed in a designated location in the homeroom/classroom upon arrival at school, and retrieved when the school day is over. Normally cell phones are not allowed during after-school activities either, however if a student needs to contact his/her parent and the school office is closed the student may be granted permission from the adult conducting the after activity. For no other reasons should a student have a cell phone in sight during after school activities. At no time during the school day should a smart watch, cell phone, pager, or iPod be in a student's locker, backpack or on his/her person. If such a device is found with the student or in the student's desk or locker, it will be turned over to the principal. The principal will keep the item until a parent or guardian discusses the return of the item.

GIFTS/INVITATIONS

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. Invitations to birthday or other parties should not be distributed in school unless every member of the class is receiving one.

FOOD, BEVERAGES and LUNCHES

Students are expected to bring a nutritious lunch and healthy snack each day. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child arrives at school with sufficient food for the school day. Failure to provide lunch will result in communication from the school and, if necessary, a meeting with administration.

Saint John School encourages healthy hydration throughout the day. Students should bring a labeled, reusable water bottle to school each day. Water bottle filling stations are available throughout the school building for student use.

Water is the preferred beverage during the school day. Students may bring water for use in the classroom. Juice or milk may be included with lunch; however, students should be limited to one carton or serving per school day. Soda, energy drinks, coffee beverages, and other caffeinated or sugary drinks are not permitted on campus.

Energy drinks, including but not limited to Monster, Red Bull, Celsius, Bang, Alani Nu, and similar products, are prohibited for all students. Any prohibited beverages brought to school may be confiscated, and parents will be notified.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Saint John School has a hot lunch program for the 2026-27 school year. When lunch is available through our outside vendor(s), parents must place their child's order at the school for the upcoming month no later than the due date noted on the order form. Payment is due at the time the monthly lunch order is placed.

Late submission for lunch orders can be placed directly with the vendor and paid in full, including tax, at that time.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

Students are to sit with their classes at designated tables. Food is not to be shared with others due to unknown food allergies. Students are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the area. Food may not be left on the tables or floor. Food may never be thrown. Proper manners and rules of etiquette should prevail. Yelling or speaking loudly is not permitted.

Once students are in the cafeteria they may not return to their classrooms or lockers to retrieve forgotten items. Students should remain seated until dismissed by a staff member.

Food may not be taken outside after the lunch period. Students must obtain permission to leave the cafeteria to go to the restroom.

Students who misbehave, or are disrespectful to the cafeteria workers or volunteers will be disciplined by the principal.

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 specific times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. Lockers may not be decorated inside or out. Student schedules and pencil holders facilitate learning and may be posted on the interior of a student's locker door. Any decoration not keeping with Catholic values are subject to removal.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

At Saint John School, we recognize that parents are the first and most important educators of their children. The family provides the foundation upon which faith, character, and academic success are built. The partnership between home and school is essential to the growth and development of each child.

We ask parents to:

- Support the school's mission and uphold its Catholic identity and values in word and action.
- Foster in their children a love of learning, respect for others, and responsibility for their actions.
- Ensure that their children attend school regularly, arrive on time, and are prepared to learn each day.
- Encourage completion of homework and active participation in school activities.
- Communicate respectfully and constructively with teachers, staff, and administrators.
- Model Christian behavior and cooperation, especially in matters of discipline and school policies.
- Participate in school events, meetings, and volunteer opportunities as able.
- Pray with and for their children and the school community.

Together, parents and educators form a community of faith and learning dedicated to helping every child grow spiritually, academically, and socially.

EXTRACURRICULAR

When a student is absent from school or leaves school early due to illness, that student may not participate in any after school event. Student arriving late to school must arrive before lunch to participate. All students are expected to participate in school concerts during the Christmas season and during the spring.

During the school year extracurricular activities will be announced on the website, handouts at school and/or through email. Good conduct and best efforts are always required. Participation in extracurricular activities such as sports, student council, clubs, etc., is dependent on the student's performance in the classroom, which is the number one priority. Participation is at the discretion of the principal.

ATHLETICS

Students must maintain an average in each subject of at least a “C” to participate in an extracurricular activity or program. If a student’s conduct is not satisfactory in the opinion of any of the student’s teachers, the student’s parents/guardians will be notified and the student given an appropriate period of time to show improvement. Absent improvement, the student will be suspended from extracurricular activities.

Good sportsmanship is expected at all times. Failure in this matter could result in removal from the team.

Final decisions with respect to a student’s participation in extracurricular activities will be made by the principal.

TITLE IX

Saint John School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. Field trips are re-evaluated every year to determine compatibility with curricular goals. A field trip is a privilege, not a right. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advance planning, location, and experience ensure successful learning opportunities. Individual teachers, in consultation with the principal, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct. **A written permission slip, signed by a parent, is required before a child is permitted to attend a field trip activity.** Verbal permission cannot be accepted. A telephone call cannot be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.

Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend the field trip will remain at home with the parent and be marked absent for the day. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day. All monies collected for a field trip are non-refundable. Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher or Principal. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip. All chaperones must be 18 years of age or older and must have gone through the Safe Environment requirements.

School sponsored overnight field trips for students in elementary and middle school grades are prohibited.

MONEY

Collecting money for any purpose is subject to approval of the principal prior to collection. Money sent to school with a child should be in an envelope marked with the student's name and grade level.

GRADE EIGHT

During the eighth-grade year, students have extracurricular events. These include: yearbook, class trip, retreat, class night, and graduation. Fundraisers support these events. If funds do not cover the expenses, then parents may be asked to supplement.

Class Night and Graduation are formal events. Girls should wear dresses of modest length. Boys should wear slacks with button-down shirts and ties. Sneakers may not be worn.

Students who are not advancing to Grade 9 may not participate in Class Night or Graduation.

XV. TUITION AND SUBSIDIES

TUITION, REGISTRATION, SUBSIDY, SUPPLY FEES

Upon registration to Saint John School, a registration form must be completed and submitted together with the registration fee. All current families will be charged a re-registration fee in January.

All remaining tuition must be paid through the Facts Tuition Management Program, which makes payment over time possible.

Supply fees are due on August 1, regardless of whether the family is paying tuition monthly through Facts.

Parishioners of Saint John-St. Mark Church (St. Pio Parish) and all other parishes in the Diocese of Norwich will be permitted to submit a parish subsidy form, which must be signed by the pastor of the parish. Families requesting parish subsidy must bring the appropriate forms to their pastor by May. The school will not forward forms to pastors. Pastors may have guidelines or requirements for eligibility for the subsidy. Please confer with your pastor.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Families should notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawing from the school. To preserve unity and harmony in the classes, once a parent has chosen to remove his/her child from Saint John School, that child will normally not be permitted to re-enter the school, except at the discretion of the principal.

REFUND POLICY

Both the registration fee and the supply fee are non-refundable. Tuition refunds may be made as follows:

- Payment is fully refundable if the student withdraws by the first day of the school year;
- 50% of the total tuition due and owing if the student withdraws by October 30.

If the student withdraws from Saint John School after October 30 for any reason, including voluntarily, at the request of the principal, or due to expulsion, the entire tuition is non-refundable and any remaining tuition payments will remain due and owing to Saint John School.

Notwithstanding anything in this Handbook or elsewhere to the contrary, all tuition must be paid through the Facts Tuition Management Program and all terms and conditions of that Program, including with respect to refunds, apply.

XVI. HSA

The Saint John School Home and School Association (HSA) is an association of parents of students attending Saint John School, alumni, staff, faculty and administration and other interested persons who wish to promote the growth and influence of Saint John School. The aims and purposes of HSA include assisting the principal through fundraising and communication, promoting community through fundraising and social events and activities, promoting and conducting activities to enable Saint John School to maintain and improve its facilities, and proposing and implementing functions to bring about full cooperation between home and school in providing a Christian and Catholic education for students of Saint John School.

All fundraising activities of Saint John School are coordinated through HSA. HSA helps accomplish fundraising goals, helps track donation information and volunteer hours, coordinates dates of activities with the faculty calendar, and communicates needs and suggestions from the parent body. HSA fundraising helps keep tuition affordable and helps parents earn required volunteer hours.

Every family with a child(ren) enrolled in Saint John School is required to participate in fundraising efforts through the required assessment and service hours. The required assessment and service hours for each family must be completed by June 1. Service hours must be self-reported using the appropriate Volunteer Form.

More than one adult family member can accrue service hours for the same event. Families may be excused from service hour requirements if circumstances prohibit volunteer time at the discretion of the principal.

All volunteers must adhere to the policies set forth in this Handbook, including specifically and without limitation the requirements of the Safe Environments Program.

From time-to-time, Grade 8 may hold fundraisers for Grade 8 expenses. Participation in the Grade 8 fundraisers will not apply to the required assessment and service hours.

The following are the current Service Hours and Assessment Requirements for Saint John School families:

Grades Kindergarten through 8	20 service hours	\$400.00 Fundraising Obligation
Pre-Kindergarten	15 service hours	\$250.00 Fundraising Obligation

We strive at Saint John Catholic School to develop a community of lifelong learners and leaders, united in the Eucharist, emulating Christ through sacraments, works, and love.

Student Name: _____

Parent and Student Handbook Acknowledgement - To indicate the importance of this handbook and the policies enclosed, we ask that you sign and return the following form. This assures us that you have read and understand our policies and what Saint John School stands for. Your signature also indicates that you agree to abide by all the rules and regulations stipulated in this handbook.

Cooperation and understanding with parents/guardians are absolutely essential to insure the most effective and complete education for your child(ren). We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Please read this handbook on-line and complete the form below, and have your child return this page to your child's homeroom teacher by **Friday, August 28, 2026.**

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

The foregoing 2026-27 Saint John School Parent and Student Handbook (the "Handbook") contains policies of Saint John School, including policies with regard to safe environments, attendance, dress code, academics, report cards, testing, technology, internet and computer use, student conduct and discipline, bullying, before and after school program, tuition and subsidies, and more. It is important that all Saint John School students and families understand these policies. By enrolling in Saint John School, students and families commit to abide by the policies of the school.

The policies of the school may change during the school year without notice. The Administration will notify students and families of these changes, in writing, when possible, as soon as is practical.

The family of **(print student name(s))** _____ hereby confirms that we have received a copy or copies of the 2026-27 Saint John School Parent and Student Handbook. We further confirm that we have read the Handbook and understand the policies, procedures, practices, rules, and regulations set forth in the Handbook. We understand that all Saint John School students will be held accountable for their behavior and may be subject to discipline as set forth in the Handbook.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the Handbook with the "Photography & Video Release" and understand that it is applicable to all Saint John School students.

Failure to sign or return this form does not affect your child(ren)'s responsibility to act in accordance with the policies set forth in the Handbook.

Parent Name: _____

Signature _____

Date: _____