



Saint John School

Parent and Student Handbook 2024-25

42 Maynard Road

Old Saybrook, CT 06475

860-388-0849

2024-25

Dear Parents and Students,

*“What a greater work is there than training the mind
and forming habits of the young?”*
(Saint John Chrysostom)

Welcome to Saint John School. In choosing Saint John School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

This Parent and Student Handbook reflects the policies of Saint John School. By enrolling in Saint John School, you and your family are committing to abide by the policies of Saint John School, as set forth in this Handbook, and as may change from time-to-time at the direction of the Diocese of Norwich or the discretion of the Principal.

Our faculty and staff look forward to working with you and your family to promote academic excellence and spiritual development, in a nurturing environment, in the context of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

In His Love,

Mother Elaine, S.C.M.C. Principal

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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

Saint John School is a Roman Catholic School serving Grades Pre-Kindergarten to Eight in Old Saybrook, Connecticut, and surrounding communities. We provide challenging academic, extracurricular, and spiritual programs that encourage the following of Jesus as set forth in the Gospel. Recognizing that we are disciples of Jesus, teachers and families are working together to inspire individual growth, self-discipline, confidence and Christian service.

The inherent and basic purpose of Catholic Schools is to assure that Catholic truths and values are fully incorporated into the student's life and academic program. Doctrines and practices that are specific to the Roman Catholic Church are taught to all students during daily religion classes and very often included in secular subjects. "The Catholic School must be distinguished by its unique curriculum which strives to integrate religious truths with life. The curriculum should be designed to provide instruction, not only in human knowledge and skills, but also in religious truths and values." (Diocesan policy 6140). 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 applying for their children's enrollment in our school should understand and appreciate this religious dimension of Saint John School.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Saint John School introduces the growing child into a community of love, learning and living. This introduction is implemented by an actively believing staff, in cooperation with the parents, to form a community of living faith and of love for and in service to others, a community that not only looks in upon itself, but also looks outward to all people. In an atmosphere which fosters Christian moral values and Catholic tradition through positive adult role models and effective discipline, students are encouraged to use their individual and unique talents to share the message of Jesus Christ with their families and all those with whom they have contact. At Saint John School we are mindful of the educational mission of the Roman Catholic Church as stated so clearly in the Documents of Vatican II and reflected in the document of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "To Teach as Jesus Did." Through education the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate

this proclamation into action. (To Teach As Jesus Did)

We, therefore, endeavor:

- To prepare the students to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel, to grow in Christian values and to embrace Christian Tradition.
- To develop the students' talents: spiritual, intellectual, and physical- so that they can contribute to society and prepare for their eternal destiny.
- To guide the students to the realization that all life is sacred and that they are created in the image and likeness of God.
- To experience Catholic Christian community so that the students will be able to build community in their own lives and in the lives of others.
- To develop social awareness in the students and to work for peace and justice in the world.

At Saint John School, our aim is "to grow in our commitment to service of God, to one another, the Church and the general community." (To Teach as Jesus Did # 107)

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.

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.

THINGS PARENTS AND CHILDREN CAN DO TO CREATE SAFE ENVIRONMENTS (SEE ADDENDUM III)

VISITORS

All visitors, including parents, are to report first to the school office upon entering the school building. Please have your ID ready when entering the office.

No one is to visit a classroom without the Principal's permission. No one will be permitted past the school office without specific permission.

Visitors are permitted to observe classes only with the express consent of the Principal and with prior notification of the teacher. Consent will be given only when a visit will serve a valuable purpose and will not unduly disturb the class at the discretion of the Principal.

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/FIRE 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 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.

COMMUNICATIONS

Notices to parents/guardians are found on the Saint John School website in the Eagle Eye News Letter that is updated on the Wednesdays of the school year. Other material that cannot be sent out electronically, such as invoices, picture flyers, handouts from outside the school, marketing posters, etc., typically go home with the youngest child in the family.

Teachers are available to parents throughout the school year to keep the lines of communication open in the best interest of the students. Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled throughout the school year if necessary. Parents should privately contact a teacher with any concerns before seeking intervention of the school Principal.

Timely and accurate communication between home and school is important in providing a successful school day. Parents are expected to read the information contained in the Eagle Eye Newsletter completely and carefully.

Parents and Guardians may use the main office phone, 860-388-0849, teacher or school office e-mail, or send written notes to school as a vehicle of communicating with your child's teacher or school office. In most cases a parent should receive an answer within 24 hours of school days. Appointments may be made for an in-school conference directly with the faculty member or through the school office. Since the teacher needs to give his/her full attention to address a parent's concern, please refrain from spontaneous classroom visits or conferences. Parents are requested not to call teachers and other school personnel on their home or cell phones.

CUSTODY

Court orders affecting contact with, or custody of, students will be followed by Saint John School.

It is the duty of parents or guardians to inform the school office of joint custody of children and to request distribution of progress reports, report cards, and/or notices to multiple parents or guardians. Saint John School will normally provide non-custodial parents access to academic records and other school information upon written request, absent a court order. A copy of any court order pertaining to custody must be provided to the school.

Parents are requested not to call teachers and other school personnel on their cell or home phones.

OFFICE HOURS

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

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 p.m., 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 p.m. on, is extremely disruptive and does not allow for the appropriate time necessary for the dismissal process or the individual's needs/requests.

III. ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for satisfactory work and for the student to make the most of his or her education. Absences from class may cause the student not to master material taught.

Therefore, the student and parents/guardians should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Students must attend school a minimum of 4 hours per day to count as an attended day of school.

Excessive absence (20 days or the equivalent of 20 days) can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year. In order for a student to be eligible for promotion, it is required by Diocesan Policy that the student be in attendance no fewer than 160 days.

Therefore, no student may accumulate more than (20) excused/unexcused absences for the entire school year. When a student is absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent to contact the office by **no later than 9:00 AM** each day of the absence. Extreme medical absences may be excluded from the 20 days at the discretion of the Principal, and in consultation with the Diocesan superintendent, when necessary.

Diocesan Policy #5113: “Principals shall be responsible for the regular school attendance of students.”

Diocesan Policy #5113.1: “A written request from parents or guardians is required for a pupil to leave school before the time of dismissal. The request must state clearly the reason for early dismissal. No pupil should be released from school during the school day without the written request of a parent or guardian. Elementary school pupils should be released only to parents or to someone whose name is on the emergency cards. A pupil who is ill will only be released to his/her parent/ guardian or other authorized persons on their emergency card.”

The school day begins at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 2:55 p.m.

Doctor’s appointments should not be made during school hours except in emergency. Early dismissal is disruptive to the classroom and does not have a positive effect on students’ academics. Teachers are not required to give the student who is being dismissed early homework that will be missed on that day. Early dismissal should be rare, but if it is necessary for a child to leave early, a written note must be sent to the office. A parent/guardian must come to the school office to sign the student out.

Frequent absence is extremely detrimental to the student’s academic progress. Therefore, extended periods of absence for vacations should be avoided so as not to impede the student’s academic program or place your child in violation of Diocesan Policy. Such absences must be approved by the Principal. Homework and/or class assignments that are due during these periods of absence will be made available upon the student’s return to school. No assignments will be given in anticipation of the vacation. It is the responsibility of the parents and students to be sure to complete all work missed during absences. After one (1) or two (2) days absence, work will be made-up within one day of return for each day absent. Work must be completed within five (5) school days upon return from an extended absence of three (3) or more days. Vacation days are not considered excused absences.

Missed assignments are the responsibility of the student and family.

In the event of an absence, or if the student is going to be tardy due to an appointment, or for any other reason, parents are requested to contact the school office before 9:00 a.m. and give the reason for the absence/tardiness.

Notes from parents are required for all absences upon the return to school by the student. In the event of three or more consecutive days of absence due to illness, a doctor’s note needs to be provided to the office for the child to return.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is disruptive and should be avoided. Unexcused tardiness is disrespectful to the teacher and the other students in the class. School begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. Students who are not in their classrooms by 8:45 a.m. are tardy (unless the school bus is late). When arriving after 8:45 a.m., please use the Administration Entrance and go to the office for a tardy slip.

When a student is tardy three times in a Trimester, he/she may receive a detention. At the discretion of the Principal, detention may be held at 7:30 a.m. If detention is to be served after school, the student must be picked up at 4 p.m. Students not picked up at 4 p.m. will be brought to After Care for sign out. After Care fees will be applied.

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.

MORNING/AFTERNOON CAR-LINE

Management of the car-line in the morning and afternoon is a safety concern and is handled at the discretion of the Principal. All students in Grades K-8 are to be dropped off in Car-line (between 8:20 and 8:45). It is important that everyone follow the car-line and afternoon pick-up rules. The primary goal of car-line is the safety of our children. **Please keep your speed to a minimum** and your eyes open for small children. Please watch the car-line attendants for a signal to stop or come forward. Car-line monitors will help the children exit from the **passenger-side** of their car. Please stay in line and do not exit your car. Passing the line is extremely dangerous. Under no circumstances are parents to walk their children past or through the car-line drivers.

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.

When arriving after 8:45 a.m., you must use the Administration Entrance, and students must report to the office for a tardy slip before going to their classroom.

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

DISMISSAL

If someone other than a parent or guardian will be picking up your child on a regular basis, please deliver a signed note 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. 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 p.m. Phone calls and emails at the end of the day during the dismissal process is extremely disruptive.

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 After Care. 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.

Dismissal – End of Day Dismissal - parents (or approved individuals noted on registration form) are to come to the doors of the school as noted below to sign out students. Licenses **MUST** be presented everyone at the time of sign out.

- **Kindergarten and Middle School** students via the double doors to the right of the Pre-K 3 door
- **Pre-K 3** via pre-K 3's door
- **Pre-K 4 and 5th** via pre-K 4's door
- **1st and 4th** via grade 1's door
- **2nd and 3rd** via grade 2's door

Old Saybrook bus riders leave by the front door. Parents may not take their children out of bus lines.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal time is 12:55 p.m. There will be early dismissal on the First Friday of every month, as well as on Parent/Teacher Conference days. After Care on early dismissal days will be available from 12:55 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.

CANCELLATIONS

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

NURSE

Saint John School has a nurse assigned by, and is an employee of, the Town of Old Saybrook, CT. Saint John School has a nurse full time nurse beginning at 9 a.m. 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 Principal 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.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Any form of illegal substances (drugs) to include CBC laced foods, weed gummies, medications not belonging to a student, etc. are prohibited to be brought into Saint John School or to be brought onto or used on the school property. Students found with any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia are to be brought to the Principal's office. Parents are to be notified and if necessary legal authorities to be contacted. Students will be suspended for such action. Backpacks and lockers are subject to future check upon return to school for a period of time to be determined by the Principal.

DRESS CODE

UNIFORMS

The wearing of a uniform is specifically designed to encourage and promote learning and Christian values. Uniforms are worn from the first day of school to the last. Students are to arrive at school and leave school in proper uniform. Students are expected to comply with the School Dress Code in action and intent. Students are expected to avoid deliberate attempts to achieve appearances that are conspicuous or attention-getting. Dress or appearance that is disruptive to the learning process will not be tolerated.

When in school, students are expected to be neat, clean, and in uniform. No hats or caps may be worn. Shirts and blouses must be tucked-in, top buttons must be buttoned.

Outer jackets, sweatshirts, hoodies, etc. are not to be worn in class. Saint John School ¼ 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.

All items of clothing worn in school should be clean, not torn, and appropriately sized.

Only apparel purchased from Donnelly's Clothing Stores the SJS Spirit Wear Store may be worn. Please visit www.DonnelysClothing.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 by clicking on the name of the item.

The following points outline the specifics of the school uniform:

Pre-K and Kindergarten: Gym uniform with sneakers (without lights, wheels, or noises) and white socks.

Boys in Grade 1 – 8: Grey dress pants, **dark color socks**, white dress shirt, uniform tie, optional maroon V-neck pullover sweater or vest.

Pants and shorts must fit properly at the waist and must not hang loosely on the hips. A belt must be worn with any pair of pants or shorts that has belt loops. Pant legs should touch the shoe, but not drag on the

floor.

Shirt sleeves may not be rolled-up.

Girls in Grade 1 -5: Plaid jumper, white blouse, maroon knee socks or maroon tights, optional maroon crewneck cardigan.

Girls in Grade 6 – 8: Plaid skirt, white blouse, uniform tie, maroon vest or maroon sweater vest, maroon knee socks or maroon tights. Navy uniform pants may also be worn with the SJS polo shirt. Girls' clothing must not be tight-fitting. Skirts and jumpers should go to the knee.

Hair: Students are not to dye or highlight their hair. Hair is to be off the face, out of the eyes and neat. The Principal has the final say in this matter. Boys' hair must fall naturally above the eyebrow and not below the ears. Hair may not be tucked behind the ears. Hair in the back must hang at the nape. No hair below the shirt collar line. Trendy hairstyles that may be distracting to other students are not allowed. This includes Mohawk hair. Girls may wear headbands that are the school plaid. Beads and fancy accessories are not permitted, and beads may not be braided into the hair. Hair should not be in a students' face.

Shoes: All students in Grades 1-8 must wear a shoe or sneaker that has a solid black top. Any sneakers (except for those that light up, make noise or have rollers) are allowed with the gym uniform. Cleats may not be worn in the school building. On no occasion, even dress up or down days may open shoes or heels be worn, this includes sandals and flip-flops.

Gym Day: On gym days, the students may wear Donnelly's gym uniforms the entire day. This is the maroon shorts or sweatpants with school logo, shirt with school logo and sneakers and white socks. Students may wear the Donnelly's school sweatpants over the gym shorts during the day. "No show" gym socks are not permitted.

Notes: No nail polish, fake fingernails, hairspray, tattoos, perfume, cologne, make-up, lip stick, lip gloss, or after shave lotion is allowed. Girls with pierced ears may wear one small, simple stud in each ear. Boys may not wear earrings or studs. For safety reasons, earrings that are studs but also have a dangling part, may not be worn. Except for a small cross or religious medal, no jewelry may be worn. All uniform items should have the pupil's name on them.

The school reserves the right to make the final decision whether a student's grooming and uniform is in accordance with the School Dress Code. The determination will rest with the discretion of the Principal.

Gym shorts and uniform shorts with the SJS logo may be worn from the opening day of school until October 15th and from April 15th until the end of school, except on the days that the students go to Mass during school and any other important days that the Principal may ask the students to wear the formal uniform. These days may include, but are not limited to, the days that the Bishop or Mother General visit. The Principal reserves the right to change the dates for wearing the casual uniform.

The Principal reserves the right to adjust the uniform policy as necessary or appropriate. All interpretations of the School Dress Code are subject to the discretion of the Principal.

NO UNIFORM OCCASIONS / DRESS DOWN DAY

Occasionally during the school year students may have a “no uniform”/”dress down” day. When this occurs, students may wear casual clothes. Casual clothes must be neat. Attire appropriate for recess and gym should be worn. Students should dress with an awareness of his or her self-respect. If parents are in doubt about the suitability of what their child should wear, they should check with the office.

Nice jeans and Capri pants may be worn. Oversized, baggy pants are not allowed. Clothes may not have frayed edges or holes in them. During warm weather, the only shorts that may be worn are basketball length shorts. **Pants and shorts may not be tight-fitting. Leggings and yoga/exercise pants are not allowed.**

Tee shirts may be worn, but no offensive or suggestive words or graphics may be imprinted on them. No make-up, halter-tops, spaghetti straps, sleeveless, or low cut shirts or mini-skirts may be worn. Midriff shirts are not permitted.

All other aspects of the School Dress Code are to be followed on no uniform days/dress down day.

The Principal reserves the right to make all final decisions related to the School Dress Code and the attire of students on no uniform days/dress down day.

UNIFORM VIOLATIONS

The first uniform infraction may result in a verbal warning or a written uniform deficiency notice that the student must have signed by a parent and returned to school.

Parents may be required to bring appropriate clothing/uniform to school for the student to change into.

After the first written notice, a detention may be issued for all subsequent infractions. Detention may take place in the morning or afternoon, at the discretion of the Principal.

IV. ADMISSION AND ACADEMICS

ADMISSION

Admittance to Saint John School is at the discretion of the Principal, who will adhere to the School Non-Discrimination Policy.

Students who have previously attended another school or were homeschooled may be tested or required to provide appropriate records related to reading level and competence in mathematics to determine appropriate placement, prior to admittance and/or enrollment. Academic records may be reviewed by the Principal.

A parent or parents of the student may be interviewed prior to admittance. A registration form and registration fee may be required. Chronic medical problems or identified learning disabilities must be described on the registration form. A birth certificate and baptismal certificate (if applicable) should be presented.

Interested students applying for admittance for grades 1 through 8 may spend a day in the school, and may be tested for placement during that day.

To enroll in Kindergarten the child must be five years of age no later than December 31st of the current school year.

All Connecticut State health requirements must be met before admission. The Principal will make the final determination regarding admission.

Following admission, all students will be given a 90 consecutive calendar day trial period in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this period, the Principal determines that the School cannot adequately meet the needs of the individual student, or that the student is unable to adjust to the academic, behavioral, or social climate of the school, the student may be asked to withdraw from Saint John School.

No child will be admitted to Saint John School if, in the judgment of the administration, it is determined that the educational and/or developmental needs of the child cannot be met by the school. Further, if after admission to Saint John School, it is ever determined by the Principal that a student's educational and/or developmental needs are not being met, the family may be requested to remove the child from Saint John School and/or the student may not be admitted for the following school year. In addition, if it is ever determined by the Principal that a student, or the student's family, is not adhering to the values or the policies of Saint John School, then, in the Principal's discretion, the family may be requested to remove the child(ren) from Saint John School and/or the student(s) may not be admitted for the following school year. The Principal has the final say in such matters.

Re-registration of current students for the next school year is necessary on an annual basis for children to retain admission to the school. Re-registration usually occurs in January. A tuition deposit may be required to retain admission.

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.

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. Report cards may be withheld from those families whose financial obligations have not been met. 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.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports may be sent home midway through the marking period. Progress reports are to be signed by the child's parent or guardian and returned within one week of their distribution. If a conference is needed, a date can be scheduled through the form of communication(s) with the teacher as the teacher may direct. Concerns should be raised first with the teacher, prior to contacting the Principal.

Middle School students can check their grades on-line on a regular basis.

CONFERENCES

Conferences are typically held in the middle of the first trimester. Conferences with teachers are strongly recommended as often as there is a need. If a parent/guardian has a concern and wishes to see a teacher, a note should be sent to the teacher. If a parent has a concern after meeting with the classroom teacher, the Principal may be contacted.

Parents are requested not to call teachers or other school personnel at their homes or on their cellular phones. Parents should not communicate with teachers or school personnel via text message. Parents should communicate with the teacher through means that the teacher directs, which may include email. Children learn best when parents and teachers work together and support one another.

Parents should not come to school unannounced expecting to speak with a teacher.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

In keeping with the directives of the Diocesan School Office, Standardized Tests are administered to students in Grades 1 through 8 annually. Individual results will be sent to the student's parents/guardians. Class and School averages may be available by making an appointment with the Principal for review and questions.

Students should make every effort to be in school and on time during the standardized testing period. Parents should avoid making appointments during the school day while standardized testing is occurring. To avoid disruption, a student who arrives to school while his/her class is taking a standardized test, may not be admitted to the classroom until the test is complete.

TIME ALLOTMENTS

"The time allotment for each subject shall follow the norms established by the Diocesan School Office" (Diocesan Policy 6111.1, revision 1). 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.

CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS (SEE ADDENDUM I)

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 will earn the Principal's List.

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

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

Eligible grades for any level of "Honor Roll": **Core Grades** nothing lower than a B / **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 and tardiness, as determined by the Principal, may prevent 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. Students are to make up work missed due to absence.

A STUDENT’S PLAN FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS (SEE ADDENDUM IV)

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 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.

V. EXTENDED CARE

MORNING CARE/AFTER CARE

Morning Care opens at 7:00 a.m. Children must report to Administration Door or other designated room in the school building when they arrive. Students will be logged in. All students who report to the Administration Door prior to 8:20 a.m. will be logged into Morning Care and their families will be charged the fee for morning care. Students are to respect and follow the instructions of the morning care staff.

Children in grades Pre K – 5 are not permitted in classrooms during morning care without the prior approval of the Principal.

If there is a delay due to weather or other reason, there is no morning care. If there is a two-hour delay, students should not be dropped off to school prior to 10:20 a.m.

After Care is available from 2:55 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Students who attend should bring their own snacks and drinks. Students are to respect and follow the instructions of the After Care staff.

Students are to go immediately to the After Care room when dismissed by the office and bring their necessary belongings with them as they will not be allowed to return to the classroom. Students who are not picked up by 3:10 p.m. will be placed in After Care and their families will be charged the fee for After Care. Students must be signed out of After Care by a parent/guardian or other authorized individual named on their emergency card or other individual noted on a written note signed by a parent/guardian in accordance with School and Diocesan Policy and this Handbook. Parents who fail to pick up their child by 5:30 p.m. will be charged a \$15 late fee. If someone other than a parent is picking up a student, the parent must state this in writing and pass the note into the office in the morning. This person will be asked for a photo I.D. by the After Care staff prior to releasing the child.

When there is an early dismissal due to weather or other emergency, there will be no After Care. When the school has a scheduled early dismissal, After Care will be available from 12:55 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

There is no After Care on the last day before Thanksgiving and Christmas vacations and the last day of school before summer vacation.

Fees for Morning Care and After Care are as follows:

Morning care:	\$7.00 (1 child)	\$11.00 (2 children)	\$14.00 (3 children)
After Care:	\$10.00(1 child)	\$13.00(2 children)	\$15.00 (3 children)

Bills will be sent home the first and third Wednesday and are due 5 days after receipt. Failure to pay bills in a timely fashion may result in exclusion from Morning and After Care, at the discretion of the Principal.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Saint John School has a hot lunch program for the 2024-2025 school year. When lunch is available through our outside vendor(s), parents must place their child’s order 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.

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.

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/guardian prior to use, such as in the case of an award press release. All images and content will be approved by Mother Elaine, 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. The form is being sent to each family. 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.

VI. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Good discipline is an atmosphere that is created by policy and action, and has a positive effect on both students and teachers. In an atmosphere of good discipline, the focus is upon helping the student to direct his/her efforts effectively toward educational growth and use of his/her God-given talents. Good discipline provides direction as well as limits, in a way that frees the student to learn, and the teacher to teach.

Good discipline begins in the home with the responsibility resting with the parents to assist in developing a positive attitude towards study and behavior.

Students are expected to be respectful and courteous at all times while on school grounds, riding buses, and during all school related activities. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to all school personnel in school and outside of school. Students may not refuse any reasonable request made by a staff member, including the completion of homework assignments.

Students must not use rude, profane, obscene, threatening, or improper language or gestures, whether verbal or in writing in school, on buses, and during school related activities. In addition, rude, profane, obscene, threatening, or improper language or gestures, whether verbal or in writing, including electronically, and including through social media, towards any fellow- student, teacher, or other school personnel will not be tolerated at any time. Hate speech, abusive or threatening language or gestures that express prejudice against a particular group of people, including especially on the basis of religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or any kind of disability, whether verbal or in writing, including electronically, and including through social media, will not be tolerated. The judgement of the Principal and Pastor is final on all discipline matters.

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 p.m. with one of the middle school teachers. The student must be picked up at 4 p.m. Students not picked up at 4 p.m. will be brought to After Care for sign out. After Care 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

In keeping with Christian values and recognizing the value of each person, Saint John School insists on respect for each person. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Bullying in any form is prohibited.

Harassment and bullying take many forms and will not be tolerated. Bullying is any act by a student or a group of students directed toward another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student, including, but not limited to: Physical violence; Verbal taunts, name-calling, put-downs, verbal abuse based on gender, race, ethnicity, or national origin; Threats and intimidations; Extortion or stealing of money or possessions; and/or Exclusion from groups. Any student who engages in any act of bullying is subject to immediate and appropriate disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion, and referral to law enforcement officials. This expressly includes "cyber-bullying," e.g. threats or intimidation via e-mail, text messages, instant messages, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, chat rooms, blogs, etc., whether or not such action takes place during school hours. Consequences will be determined by the Principal.

HOW TO REPORT BULLYING (SEE ADDENDUM II)

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

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

Once you have entered into a partnership with Saint John School, we trust that you will be loyal to the commitment. During these formative years, your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop morally, intellectually, socially, culturally, and physically. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. **If there is an incident at school, your first step as parents must be to make an investigation of the complete story, in collaboration with teachers and the Principal.** Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature relationships.

Saint John School believes that the education of your child is a partnership between you and the school. If, in the opinion of the Principal, the partnership is irretrievably broken, you may be required to withdraw your child from Saint John School.

Students whose family members have violated, or indicated that they will not adhere to, any of the policies of this Handbook, may be excluded from Saint John School. This is at the discretion of the Principal.

Any student(s) whose parent(s)/guardian(s) serve, file, or threaten to file a lawsuit against Saint John School, the Diocese of Norwich and/or any of its parishes, the Sisters of Charity, or any agent(s) or employee(s) of any of them, whether or not the lawsuit is or is to be filed on behalf of the student(s), may be excluded from Saint John School. This is at the discretion of the Principal.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation, new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

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.

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. 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.

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.” (Diocesan Policy 6153.1, revision 1).

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.

VII. TUITION AND SUBSIDIES

TUITION, REGISTRATION, SUBSIDY, BOOK 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.

On or about April 1, all registered families will be charged a \$200 non-refundable tuition deposit. All remaining tuition must be paid through the Facts Tuition Management Program, which makes payment over time possible.

Book 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 March. The school will not forward forms to pastors. Pastors may have guidelines or requirements for eligibility for the subsidy. Please confer with your pastor.

REFUND POLICY

Both the registration fee and the book/lab or supply fees are non-refundable. *The \$200 deposit is also non-refundable as noted above.* Tuition refunds may be made as follows:

- Payment is fully refundable if the student withdraws by the first day of the school year, with the exception of the \$200 family tuition deposit;
- 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.

PTO

The Saint John School Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) 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 PTO 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 PTO. PTO 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. PTO 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	30 service hours	\$400.00 assessment
Pre-Kindergarten	15 service hours	\$250.00 assessment

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.

Belief Statements

- We believe children are unique gifts from God.
- We believe that our primary goal is to educate our students spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and physically to meet life's challenges.
- We believe our school community is enhanced by the cultural diversity of students as exemplified by the various socio-economic, ethnic, racial and religious groups.
- We believe that it is our responsibility to provide students an opportunity for spiritual growth and enhancement of Christian values so they may pursue a life centered in Jesus Christ.
- We believe that our curriculum offers students ample opportunities for heightened success and enrichment.
- We believe our commitment is to foster attitudes of respect and dignity for self, peers, and those in authority.
- We believe that it is essential to instill in students a strong sense of responsibility for their own learning and behavior.

ADDENDUM I

CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS

To meet the needs of the students, it is sometimes necessary to make modifications to the educational setting. If a classroom teacher determines that a student is having difficulties, the teacher will contact the parents to discuss possible modifications. These modifications can be utilized to determine if a student may need to be referred for further educational evaluation.

In addition, teachers will make modifications to a student's program based on written recommendations of a psychologist, medical doctor, registered medical facility, or registered therapist. Teachers will continue to offer extra, reasonable tutorial help. They will also continue to sign assignment books where necessary to assist in the development of organizational skills of the student.

1. **EYE GLASSES:** classroom modifications other than preferential seating will be made upon recommendation of an educational optometrist or ophthalmologist.
2. **ADD/ADHD:** Once a student has been identified by a medical doctor, registered medical facility, or psychologist as having ADD or ADHD, modifications made on their written recommendations will be implemented by the classroom teacher(s).
3. **LEARNING CONCERNS:** (disabilities, weakness, dyslexia, OCD, Tourette's, etc.) Once a student with a suspected learning concern has been tested and or evaluated by a psychologist, medical doctor, or registered medical facility and the concern has been confirmed, the classroom teacher(s) will make modifications based on written recommendations of the diagnosing party.
4. **EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL CONCERNS:** Based on the recommendations of a student's registered therapist, appropriate classroom modifications will be made until such time as the therapist communicates to the classroom teacher(s) that the modifications are no longer necessary.

ADDENDUM II

HOW TO REPORT BULLYING

1. Arrange a meeting for you and your child with the appropriate school faculty/staff member.
2. Have an in-depth discussion with your child about the incident. Bring to the meeting the facts in writing: date, time, place, students involved and the specifics of the incident(s) and what impact it has had on your child.
3. Work with your child and school personnel on a plan that addresses what your child needs right now in order to feel safe and what to do to avoid being bullied and where help can be received.
4. Inquire what procedures the bully will be going through and what kind of support is expected from the school.
5. If you feel that these steps have not eliminated the problem, contact the principal. If still unresolved, seek assistance from the Pastor or higher authorities.

ADDENDUM III

THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO CREATE SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

The Church teaches that parents have the most serious duty, and primary right, to do all in their power to assure the physical, social, cultural, moral and religious upbringing of their children. Parenting is a difficult and demanding task. It is a task that requires the support and assistance of the entire Christian community. Parents, children, and Church ministers, must all work together to assure the safety and welfare of our most precious resource, our children.

Parents need to take an active, and even proactive, role in the education and social activities of their children. As a parent, you can work with your child(ren) to assure their safety. Among other things, you need to:

- Know your child's teachers as well as those adults who have some supervisory role in relationship to your child(ren).
- Satisfy yourself that the adults having contact with your child(ren) have been carefully screened. If you have doubts about whether or not an employee or volunteer was properly screened, talk with the person in charge of the activity, or your pastor, and communicate your concerns. If your doubts concern a school employee, talk with your child's principal.
- Visit the *classrooms and places* where activities are held to assure yourself that these places are safe environments.
- *Become involved* in programs and activities at church and school.
- Teach your child(ren) that some areas of their bodies are private areas that should be touched only by very few trusted people such as a doctor or nurse. Private areas are those parts of our bodies covered by a swimsuit.
- Encourage your children to speak openly about their experiences and not keep secrets about their relationships with other people. Children need to be taught that they can and should discuss anything that happens to them that makes them feel uncomfortable, confused, or upset in any way. They need to know they can talk to a parent or another trusted adult about feelings such as these.
- Discourage your child(ren) from accepting inappropriate gifts.
- Do not allow your child(ren) to travel unchaperoned or stay overnight with adult non-

family members as part of Church or school related activities *except with your explicit written permission*.

- Insist that your child(ren) not be allowed to travel without *explicit written permission*, given only After Careful review of the travel arrangements.
- *Listen carefully and with a discerning ear* to what children are saying to one another about the adults around them.
- *Be aware of the Pastoral Code of Conduct* in effect for Church ministers and *promptly report any violations of the same to the appropriate authorities*.
- *Strive to live lives of truth, holiness, and virtue*, treating all human beings as human persons and not as objects for gratification, power, or advancement; and teach your children not to treat other people as objects for gratification, power, or advancement.

THINGS CHILDREN CAN DO TO CREATE SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Laws and rules are at the service of a community as well as individuals. Given the unique needs of children and teenagers in relation to the rest of the Christian community, it is not surprising that in the Church we place the needs of our children and teenagers first. Our laws and rules are at the service of our children and teenagers.

Children can help maintain a safe environment by following certain rules. Children need to know that:

- We can and should discuss anything that happens to us that makes us feel uncomfortable, confused, or upset in any way. Usually we talk to one of our parents, but we can also talk to a teacher, a school nurse, or another adult we can trust.
- Some areas of our bodies are private areas. Private areas are those areas of our bodies covered by a swimsuit. These *private areas* should be touched only by very few people, such as a doctor. If we are touched in a way we do not want to be touched, we tell our parents or an adult we trust. We need to remember that if an adult touches us in a place we do not want to be touched, that adult is wrong. It is never a child's fault when an adult does something wrong.
- We do not talk to or ride in cars with people we do not know. We do not accept gifts from adults we do not know.
- When we go on *field trips*, we stay close to each other, and we do not wander away from our parents or teachers. We always remember to have *permission slips signed* by our

parents or guardians that allow us to go on field trips. If there is no permission slip, then there is no field trip.

-If we see a friend doing something that could be bad for our friend, we *tell our friend to stop*. If he or she keeps doing it, we *tell our parent or another adult*. If a friend tells us that another person is making him or her feel uncomfortable, confused, or upset in any way, we tell this to an adult who can help, like our parents or a teacher.

-If someone around us makes us *uncomfortable or worried*, we should *tell* our parents or another adult we trust.

-We *do not wander off alone to lonely or secluded places*. We always *keep an adult we trust within sight*. Before we leave the area of the adult in charge, we must ask permission of the adult.

-We *treat other people the way we would want to be treated*. We do not treat other people as objects. We do not use other people to get what we want.

ADDENDUM IV

A STUDENT'S PLAN FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Arrange a definite time and place to study in a quiet area without television, radio, phones, Walkmans or MP3 players, etc.
2. Start the most difficult lesson first.
3. Make sure you understand the lessons and the assignments. Ask questions if you don't understand.
4. Keep your assignments in a separate notebook. Students in grades 2-8 must keep long and short-term assignments in the homework notebooks provided. Homework notebooks should be brought to every class attended
5. Learn to form your own judgments, and to solve your own problems.
6. Review lessons frequently to recall points you did not understand clearly.
7. As you study, take notes or make summaries on the main points. Do all your work accurately, neatly, and completely.
8. If you do not have assigned, written homework, use your time to review and "pre-study" for tests.

ADDENDUM V

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Rationale: Safety is of utmost importance. It is Saint John School's responsibility to keep your children safe at all times. Therefore, we will follow these arrival and dismissal procedures:

- Students, with parent permission, are to make prior arrangements with a teacher to stay before or after school. Only one teacher for each block 8:00-8:20 AM and/or 3:00-4:00 PM.
- As per Policy of The Office of Safe Environments for the Diocese of Norwich, (<https://www.norwichdiocese.org/Find/Safe-Environments/Policies>) activities cannot begin before 8:00 AM, and may not continue past 4:00 PM without the express permission from the Principal.
- Before-school help is from 8:00-8:20 AM, and is never offered on a Tuesday.
- Drop off is through the Administration office door.
- Once in the building students are to remain with an adult at all times; That means that they are with the Morning Care supervisor, in the main office, until the teacher they have an appointment with picks them up from Morning Care.
- Under no circumstances is a student ever to be in the hallway without supervision of a faculty member of Saint John School. This includes but is not limited to: arriving early to school, staying after for extra help, after or before school activities, traveling in the hall during school periods. The only exception is if the student received permission from his/her teacher and was given a hallway pass.
- After-school help is from 3:00-4:00 PM. Students are to be picked up promptly at 4:00 PM.
- After-school help is only given to students who require assistance with understanding class concepts.
- Any child not picked up promptly at 4:00 PM at the Administration door, will be brought to After Care.

- The school office closes at 3:15 PM. Although we often work late, the school office is closed to visitors at 3:15 PM.
- Any student who will be staying after school needs to have his/her parents inform the main office using a Home to School Communication found on the web site: <http://www.saintjohnschoolos.org/forms/home-to-school> . This should be done no later than 9AM the day the student is requesting to stay.
- Any student who will be staying before school needs to have informed the main office using a Home to School Communication found on the website the night before. The note should mention which teacher your child has made arrangements to stay with.
- Any student without a note will be sent to After Care or remain in Morning Care.

Please remove this page from this Handbook, read and complete the form below, and have your child return this page to your child's homeroom teacher by **Monday September 16, 2024.**

Student Name: _____

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

The foregoing 2024-2025 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 2024-25 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: _____