

**SAINT MARY’S CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2020-2021**

*“Show Courage, Seek Wisdom, and Share the Love of God.”*

**School Colors: Navy Blue and White**  
**School Mascot: Blue Knights**



## **Welcome to Saint Mary's Catholic School**

Dear Parents,

It is our plan to serve you well by assisting you in the religious, moral, and academic aspects of educating your children. We are aware that we have a big task in maintaining the proper discipline needed for a quality school. This will be a major priority in the coming year, and we need your full support. It is our hope that our efforts, in partnership with yours, will accomplish this goal.

In light of this, we require, after careful study of the Handbook with your child, that you sign the Parent Acknowledgement Page. Please read and acknowledge by 06 August 2019. If there are areas that you feel you cannot support with enthusiasm, you need to discuss these with the principal prior to 06 August 2019.

St. Mary's Catholic School retains the right to amend this Handbook in accordance with new policies of the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Written notification of changes will be sent home and emailed to parents' RenWeb addresses.

Please read and acknowledge no later than 13 August 2020.

## **HISTORY**

In 1945, Saint Mary's Parochial School was founded through a shared vision by a people of faith committed to excellence, responsibility to the community, service, and religious values. At the request of Archbishop O'Hara, the Dominican Sisters from Adrian, Michigan, agreed to staff the school. The Lumpkin House, a 100-year-old building situated on Terrace Hill overlooking the Oostanaula River on West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, was converted into a school. The school opened on September 17, 1945, with fifty-one students in grades 1-11.

In 1960, the Archdiocese obtained a portion of the Cooper Estate, and a small school with eight classrooms, library, kitchen and cafeteria was erected at 401 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The enrollment at that time was 185 students in grades 1-8.

The Dominican Sisters, who had served the school since 1945, were forced to withdraw from the school in 1970 because of the many demands on their time and the decline of religious vocations. For one year, the staff was served by a lay faculty as the parish worked diligently to secure a new religious order.

In 1971, the Daughters of Charity, based in Emmitsburg, Maryland, were assigned to staff the school. For twenty-two years, the Sisters lovingly served the school as enrollment increased and waiting lists developed for most grades. Twenty-six of the Daughters served the school, along with Principals Sister Patricia, Sister Mary Catherine, Sister Kathleen, Sister Miriam and Sister Regina, who are remembered fondly by many of Saint Mary's faculty, parents, and alumni.

Responding to a growing need, 1980 saw the addition of a new wing which housed a library, gymnasium, music room and two new classrooms. Kindergarten was added and enrollment increased. In 1987, a "temporary" modular unit was attached to the school allowing three new classrooms to accommodate expanding enrollment.

Due to demands on their community, the Daughters of Charity were forced to withdraw from the school in 1993, and Saint Mary's School has since been served by a lay principal and staff.

In the fall of 2001, after remarkable efforts by the school community, Saint Mary's opened a beautiful new building on the existing site. The school is nestled in a residential community and can accommodate up to four hundred students. The new facility includes a Chapel that serves as a prayerful gathering place, expanded fine arts, an air-conditioned gymnasium, full-service kitchen, media center, computer lab, and room for two classes per grade level.

Today, St. Mary's Catholic School enjoys an excellent reputation as it serves several counties in Northwest Georgia and Northeast Alabama. St. Mary's Catholic School serves students from all regional parishes: St. Mary's Catholic Church of Rome, St. Clement's Catholic Church of Calhoun, St. Bernadette's Catholic Church of Cedartown, and St. Francis' Catholic Church of Cartersville.

## **MISSION STATEMENTS**

### **Mission Statement of Saint Mary's School**

St. Mary's Catholic School continues a tradition of academic excellence as we embrace a faith-filled future. Our Courage shines as we live the Gospel, always seeking the Wisdom to understand God's will as we Share the Love of God with all people.

### **Show Courage, Seek Wisdom, and Share The Love of God.**

### **Mission Statement of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta**

We, the faithful of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, are a people of prayer, love and joy who are dedicated to the salvation of all. As disciples and believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we proclaim the good news and grow in faith, hope, love and service to others. We are unified in our commitment to sacramental life, pastoral care and life-long formation in our Roman Catholic faith. We express our love through evangelization, fellowship, Catholic education, social services and charity in the full pursuit of effective discipleship.

### **Mission Statement of the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Atlanta**

The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Atlanta serve a vital role in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing quality education in an environment of spiritual, intellectual, and moral formation in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

### **Statement of Public Assurance**

Schools in the Archdiocese of Atlanta admit students of any race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to all students at the school. Saint Mary's is in full compliance with all archdiocesan policies set forth in the archdiocesan schools' policy manual. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, loan programs and athletics or other school administered programs.

Archdiocesan schools include: Blessed Trinity High School, Christ the King, Holy Redeemer, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Mercy High School, Our Lady of the Assumption, Our Lady of Victory, Queen of Angels, St. Catherine of Siena, St. John Neumann Regional, St. John the Evangelist, St. Joseph – Athens, St. Joseph – Marietta, St. Jude the Apostle, St. Mary, St. Peter Claver Regional, St. Pius X High School, and St. Thomas More.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Saint Mary's Catholic School provides a Catholic-Christian education through which Gospel values are presented, lived, and fostered. The administration, faculty, and staff believe our Catholic faith is evident in everything we do. Our community is committed to the success of the school.

Our implementation of the curriculum is based on *best practice* research. Parent education is vital for the success of our instructional pedagogy. Our curriculum is implemented by highly credentialed and experienced teachers and administrators. Students' learning is facilitated by teaching that is direct and systematic.

## **ACCREDITATION**

The Archdiocese of Atlanta holds District Accreditation through AdvancEd. All Archdiocesan schools, including Saint Mary's, are thereby accredited through this agency. Saint Mary's also holds membership in the National Catholic Educational Association and the Georgia Independent School Association.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Working together, the members of the St. Mary's Catholic School community strive to educate children who not only can function as productive students, but who will grow into responsible members of their family, their community, their church, and their world.

Our objectives consist of the following:

1. To bear witness to the values and attitudes consistent with basic human dignity;
2. To help those with whom we work develop to their greatest potential
  - a. by stimulating in them intellectual curiosity which will give them a desire for lifelong learning,
  - b. by encouraging in them creativity, initiative, responsibility, and self-direction, and
  - c. by assisting them to develop an adequate self-concept;
3. To bring to educational endeavors qualified personnel who strive to provide challenging, innovative programs through updated curriculum, ongoing study and in-service training in order to provide the best possible education;
4. To foster apostolic consciousness and Christian awareness in our students, their parents, and one another by encouraging activities that give witness to Christ's justice and love inside and outside the school situation;
5. To prepare those we serve for the part they will play in society and to foster in them an awareness of their responsibility toward the economically deprived of the world.

## **ADMISSIONS**

In the admission of students to Saint Mary's Catholic School, consideration is given to these criteria, in order of priority:

- All students that are currently enrolled and are eligible for re-enrollment;
- Siblings of currently enrolled students;
- Students who are children of school employees;
- Students who are members of Saint Mary's Parish;
- Students from regional parishes, active status;
- Students transferring from another Catholic School (out of town);
- Students from regional parishes, non-active status;
- Students of another religious affiliation.

Factors to be considered in the decision to accept any student are academic performance, effort, behavior, work study habits, and the school's ability to meet the student's needs.

Applications for the upcoming academic year may be submitted as early as August prior to the year the student will begin at Saint Mary's Catholic School. Applications will continue to be accepted as long as there is space in the class, but because there is limited space in many classes, it is wise to submit the application as soon as possible. A student is not considered to be enrolled until the registration fee is paid. Students whose registration fees are not paid by the time that the class reaches capacity will forfeit their spots. This includes all incoming students in pre-kindergarten through seventh grade.

### **State and Archdiocesan regulations require that:**

- Students must be three (3) years of age (must be potty trained) on or before September 1 to be enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten 3-year olds.
- Students must be four (4) years of age (must be potty trained) on or before September 1 to be enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten 4-year olds.
- Students must be five (5) years of age on or before September 1 to be enrolled in Kindergarten.
- Students must be six (6) years of age on or before September 1 to be enrolled in First Grade.
- All Pre-K and Kindergarten students will be given a readiness evaluation prior to their acceptance at Saint Mary's School.

It is also standard practice to expect incoming second, third, and fourth graders to be seven, eight, and nine years of age respectively by September 1. An entrance assessment **will be** given to each student prior to his or her acceptance. Students will be placed at the appropriate grade level based on age, current academic standing (derived from report cards and standardized test scores) and entrance test results. Students entering sixth and seventh grade may be required to

take a placement exam in math, writing and reading. The Admissions Committee will determine grade placement. All new students are accepted on a probationary status for the first semester.

**Applicants MUST provide the following records:**

- Birth certificate
- Copy of previous year's report card and current report card
- Copy of standardized test scores (if applicable), for example, the Georgia CRT, ITBS, etc.
- ***Immunization Record (GA Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 or Medical Report Form 5320).***
  - In the rare case that a student cannot receive immunizations due to a life threatening condition, a medical waiver, signed by the child's pediatrician, will be accepted.
  - There are no religious exemptions.
- Certificate of Eye, Ear, and Dental Examinations. This must be obtained from the GA Department of Human Resources or family physician.
- ***Archdiocesan Physical Examination form, signed by a physician.***
- Custody papers, if applicable
- Catholic students should provide Baptismal Certificates, and First Communion Certificates, if applicable.

Falsification of records (birth certificate, report card, etc.) or the withholding of pertinent information (including IEP, behavior interventions, evaluations completed by doctors/diagnosis, SST meeting notes, 504 plans, medication, allergies, etc.) regarding the student **will** result in denial or revocation of admission to St. Mary's Catholic School.

**ADVANCEMENT**

Throughout its history, St. Mary's has been sustained by the generous financial and volunteer support offered by parents, parishioners, friends, and alumni. The Advancement Office is responsible for coordinating and implementing a comprehensive advancement program comprised of the annual fund, honorariums, memorials, matching gifts, gifts-in-kind, scholarship funding, capital gifts, equity donations, and planned giving. Given the considerable impact that alumni have on the area of development, the St. Mary's Advancement Office is also responsible for cultivating and strengthening the school's alumni relations program.

**Annual Fund** - The Annual Fund is the cornerstone of giving to St. Mary's. As with most private schools, tuition does not cover the full cost of educating our students. Each year the

Annual Fund is an indispensable part of the school's operating budget, enabling the school to fulfill its commitment to faculty salaries and academic programs. Certainly, the total amount raised is an important part of the Annual Fund goal. **Equally important, however, is strong participation from faculty, staff, alumni, parishioners, and of course, parents.** As a Christ-centered, mission-driven community, it is our collective goal to achieve 100% faculty and parent participation each and every year. **By achieving 100% participation in the Annual Fund, our community affirms its conviction that Christ's message of hope and love is central to our human purpose and thus central to our children's classroom education.**

**Matching Gifts** - You can double or even triple your gift by including your company's corporate matching form.

**Gifts of Stock** - An excellent way to maximize the tax benefits of giving is to donate a gift of stock. By giving stock, you can take a tax deduction of the stock value on the gift date and forgo paying taxes on the gain on your investment.

**Honorariums and Memorials** – St. Mary's Catholic School offers a unique way to pay tribute or respect to a loved one. Opportunities exist within the school to honor or memorialize a family member or friend. A recognition card will be sent to the family or honoree and acknowledgement to the donor.

**Gifts-In-Kind** – Donated goods, commodities, or services are a giving option. Significant gifts have included printing and graphic services, technological support, computers, and landscape enhancements.

**San Juan Diego Scholarship Fund** – Patrons interested in helping a student who needs financial aid can become a sponsor of the San Juan Diego Fund. Contact the Church or Development Office for more details.

**Planned Giving** – St. Mary's Catholic School welcomes planned gifts in the form of Bequests, Real Estate, Trusts, and Life Insurance. Donors can make these gifts with beneficial tax advantages, and such giving will make a significant difference to the school in the future.

**Endowment Fund** – The *St. Mary's School Endowment Fund* is held and managed by the *Catholic Foundation of North Georgia*, an independent organization of the Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta. The fund is designed to provide funding for student scholarships in perpetuity. All monies deposited into this fund are kept intact and only the interest earned is used to underwrite scholarships. Contributions may be made to the endowment fund through the Advancement office.

## **CHILD CUSTODY**

In cases of joint or sole custody arising from a divorce or separation, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to submit appropriate legal documentation to the school detailing court-mandated custody arrangements. If duplicate records (report cards, etc.) and/or communications (newsletters, etc.) are needed, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the

preferred method of delivery (mail, email, etc.). Students must be enrolled under their full legal name. Any name change requested must be accompanied by a court order.

### **CONTINUING ENROLLMENT**

Continued enrollment of the student is subject to the student and parent(s) abiding by all school rules as set out in the school handbook including, but not limited to, general behavior, academic performance, and attendance.

Continued enrollment in any given school year, and re-enrollment in any subsequent years, is subject to the parent's/guardian's continued support of the mission of the school as documented in the school handbook, the maintenance of a demonstrably effective and supportive relationship between the school and the parents/guardians, and the timely payment of all debts owed to the school. Re-enrollment in any subsequent year is subject to mutual agreement. The student, the parents, or the school administration, with or without cause, may withhold that agreement.

### **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE**

Parents who wish to withdraw a student from St. Mary's Catholic School during the school year are required to notify the school in writing prior to withdrawal. The student's transcripts will be forwarded to the new school upon written request from the new school. Tuition and all other financial obligations must be paid in full before transcripts are released.

### **TRANSCRIPTS**

Transcripts, health records, and attendance records are forwarded directly to the new school the child will be attending. Transcripts are not given to parents. Parents wishing to send transcripts to various schools to which they have applied may do so at no extra cost. Saint Mary's Catholic School follows the guidelines of the Buckley Amendment (FERPA). *Specifically, parents have the right to review their children's records at any time, and those records are kept private within the guidelines of the law.*

### **TUITION SCHEDULE 2020-2021**

The annual tuition rates for students in Pre-K3 through Eighth Grade are listed below. In order to verify eligibility for the Catholic student tuition rate, a Parish Verification Form will be requested from the parish in which your family is registered.

#### **Catholic Students – Active Parish Members**

**Per Student Elementary.....\$8211.00**

**Per Student Middle School.....\$8575.00**

#### **Non-Catholic Students and Inactive Catholic Students**

**Per Student Elementary.....\$9357.00**

**Per Student Middle School.....\$9722.00**

**Catholic and Non-Catholic Pre-Kindergarten 4-year olds  
Per Student.....\$8211.00**

**Catholic and Non-Catholic Pre-Kindergarten 3-year olds  
Per Student 5-day Full day.....\$7102.00**

### **REGISTRATION AND FEES 2018-2019**

**These fees are required at the time the application is made and are non-refundable. The student's name will not be placed on the school roster until the required fees are paid.**

**Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
\$275 per Student**

**6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade  
\$375 per Student**

### **TUITION PAYMENT INFORMATION**

St. Mary's Catholic School depends upon tuition to meet operating expenses. If a problem paying tuition arises, please call the Principal for help in finding a solution. All tuition payments must be made through the **FACTS** tuition service (a link to their site is posted on our website.)

Tuition may be paid in full or by the month. **No discount will be given for tuition at the Catholic rate if a Parish Verification Form is not on file.** Tuition paid by the month can be paid over an eleven (11) or ten (10) month period. Payments through FACTS begin in July or August on a date of your choosing through FACTS. The Registration Fee secures the student's place in the school.

**An 8<sup>th</sup> grade student must be current in tuition/incidental payments in order to graduate one month prior to the graduation date. Tuition and all other financial obligations must be current for the student to receive a report card each quarter.** Any family that is 30 days behind in tuition will be asked to meet with the Business Manager or Principal to make payment arrangements. Any family that is **60** days behind in tuition and has not set up a payment schedule or any family that is not honoring the terms of the payment schedule ***could have their child's access to class denied.***

Families with an unpaid balance greater than or equal to the equivalent of three months of tuition at the end of the school year will not be invited to re-register unless the balance is paid in full.

### **CATHOLIC TUITION AND TUITION ASSISTANCE**

In order to be eligible to receive the Catholic tuition rate and to apply for Archdiocesan-funded

tuition assistance, the Archdiocese of Atlanta requires that a parent or family be considered an active family. A Parish Verification form will be submitted to the parish office at the church in which your family is registered. This form must be signed by the Pastor, indicating that the requirements for active status have been met. The parishioner or family is then eligible to receive the Catholic tuition rate and to apply for Archdiocesan-funded tuition assistance.

**Standards for determining Active Status:**

- 1. An annual stewardship card is on file in the parish that reflects a good faith effort on the part of the parishioners to support the parish financially along with time and talent.**
  - a. Parish registration and financial support is presumed. The use of a stewardship card is required as an objective determination of support.
  - b. The “good faith effort” is seen as more than a token amount of support simply to comply with the minimum requirement. While this is a somewhat subjective judgment, there are various indicators (jobs, property, lifestyle, etc.) that may be considered. The annual contribution of the individual or family in relation to the average annual contribution in the parish is also a measure of the good faith of the individual seeking Catholic tuition and tuition assistance.
- 2. The parishioner uses envelopes and/or checks for the offertory that verify attendance at Mass in the parish at least 65% of the time.**
  - a. The most practical way to determine this minimum requirement of Mass attendance at least 65% of the time is by the use of envelopes and/or checks which are posted weekly.
  - b. Those who wish to give monthly, quarterly, or annually can place an empty envelope in the collection each week as an indication of attendance and make their contribution as they wish.
- 3. The parishioner is re-assessed periodically for eligibility for the Catholic tuition rate and tuition assistance, and at least annually through the Parish Verification form.**
  - a. A new Parish Verification form must be submitted each year since eligibility for the Catholic tuition rate and tuition assistance does not automatically transfer from year to year.
  - b. In cases where a “good faith effort” is not maintained, a review may be made prior to the annual Parish Verification Application.
- 4. School age children of the family who do not attend the Catholic School must be enrolled in the Parish School of Religion (PSR)**
  - a. It is inconsistent for a child or children to attend the Catholic School if other children in the same family do not attend the appropriate religious education programs (PSR). Catholic education for **all** children and teens in a family is the

responsibility of the parent(s) and required for the Catholic tuition rate and tuition assistance for any children.

- b. The exception to this requirement is “blended families” where children may be of different religious backgrounds.

**If parents wish to explain any special circumstances, they should submit a letter to the principal.**

The following policies and procedures were developed by the St. Mary’s Catholic School Finance Committee and the school’s administration to establish objective guidelines for awarding tuition assistance.

1. The school will announce the availability of tuition assistance applications through its usual methods of communication – quarterly school newsletter, automated school calls, web site announcements, RenWeb and e-mail. It is the applicant’s responsibility to request an application or complete the application online.
2. A completed FACTS application must be on file and completely processed by FACTS before an applicant’s request for tuition assistance will be considered. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that FACTS receives all required documents in a timely manner.
3. Applications must be submitted to FACTS on or before the published deadline in order to receive consideration for tuition assistance. Applications submitted to FACTS after the published deadline will be considered only after all on-time applications have been processed.
4. FACTS will process each application and calculate an estimated need based upon data supplied by the applicant and supported by tax returns and other applicable financial documentation.
5. When possible, the school will reserve a portion of available tuition assistance funds (to be determined annually by the principal) for the express purposes of funding possible appeals and providing assistance to qualifying new families who apply for admission to the school after the published deadline date for tuition assistance requests.
6. Tuition assistance may be awarded from several funding sources. With the exception of the Grizzard Scholarship for Southeastern Mills employees, all tuition assistance is needs based. *Additionally, tuition assistance funds provided through the Archdiocesan Block Grant are restricted for use by Catholic families only.*
7. Tuition assistance awards are determined as follows:
  - a. Applicants must have a calculated need of \$500 or more in order to be considered for tuition assistance
  - b. For returning students who are first-time applicants for financial assistance, the maximum amount of aid allowed is 80% of the tuition rate, based on financial need according to FACTS calculated need.

- c. For new Catholic students, including siblings of currently enrolled students, the maximum amount of aid allowed is 80% of the tuition rate, based on financial need according to FACTS calculated need.
  - d. For new non-Catholic students, including siblings of currently enrolled students, the maximum amount of aid allowed is 80% of the tuition rate, based on financial need according to FACTS calculated need.
  - e. Applicants with a recent bankruptcy will not be considered for tuition assistance.
  - f. *\*\*Applicants with a past due balance on their school account will not be considered for tuition assistance unless arrangements are made to pay down the balance before the start of the upcoming school year.*
  - g. In the event that the overall need for all applicants exceeds the amount of available tuition assistance funds, the principal, in consultation with the St. Mary's Catholic School Finance Committee and with the final approval of the Pastor, will adjust the amounts awarded to achieve an equitable distribution among all applicants with a demonstrated need.
8. All applicants will be notified by **email** of the amount of tuition assistance awarded, if any. Applicants will be required to accept online by the stated deadline indicating that they accept, decline, or wish to appeal the award. If a tuition award is declined, that money is returned to the tuition assistance fund from which it was disbursed for future use. If an award is appealed, a written explanation of extenuating circumstances must be submitted to the Principal. Parents may also request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the matter personally, but a written appeals request must still be submitted. All appeals requests will be reviewed and discussed with the Pastor and/or his designee, at which time variances from the criteria stated in #7 above may be granted. Responses to the appeals requests will be sent by **email**, and applicants will once again be asked to sign and return a form indicating their decision to either accept or decline the award. No further appeals will be considered.

Qualification for financial assistance does not imply acceptance into the school program; Admission to the school is a separate process.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Vernon and Gaynelle Grizzard** - This scholarship fund (managed by the Catholic Foundation of N. Georgia) was established in 1993 to provide scholarships for qualified students to attend St. Mary's Catholic School. Priority is given to students whose parents and grandparents are employees of the Southeastern Mills Corporation, but funds may also be available for any student who is a resident of Floyd County. To apply for this scholarship, please send a letter to the Principal by April 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the year attending.

**Knights of Columbus** - The St. Mary's Parish Knights of Columbus give this scholarship for

any student of St. Mary's Catholic School. To apply, contact the office for an application.

**Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance** - Archdiocesan tuition assistance is to assist active Catholic families with the cost of education. Tuition assistance is awarded on the basis of need and availability of funds. All families qualify through FACTS Grant and Aid.

**St. Mary's School Fund** - A limited fund is set aside each year from the Annual Fund donations to assist Catholic and non-Catholic students with financial aid. To apply for this assistance, families must complete the PSAS application.

**GRACE Scholars** – The GRACE organization provides needs-based scholarships for students transferring in from the public school system or who are entering Pre-K 4 or Kindergarten.

Applications and more information is available at [www.gracescholars.org](http://www.gracescholars.org).

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued four times each school year, and they reflect what the student has accomplished over the course of the nine-week marking period. Parents may make inquiries as to the assessments which result in a cumulative grade on a report card. However, grade changes will not be made unless academic evidence warrants such a change. Parents must notify the office within five (5) days upon receipt of the report card if there is a concern with a grade.

## **INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports in grades 2-8 are issued at the midway point in each nine-week quarter, allowing students ample opportunity to address any areas of weakness. Progress report distribution dates are listed on the school calendar.

## **GRADING SCALES**

Each grade level has various components of evaluation that are appropriate for the grade level of the children. In Pre-Kindergarten, student grades are determined by class work, classroom performance, and formal and informal evaluation.

**Pre-Kindergarten:**

<b>A</b>	Always
<b>S</b>	Sometimes
<b>N</b>	Not Yet

### **Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade:**

Student grades in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade are determined by class work, classroom performance, and formal and informal evaluation.

**S= Secure-** Student has acquired strategies needed to perform with minimal teacher support. Student can apply the skills or concepts correctly and independently.

**D=Developing-** Student is gaining confidence and requiring less teacher support. Student shows some understanding, however, errors or misunderstandings still occur. Reminders,

hints, and suggestions are necessary for completion of work.

**B=Beginning-** Student is beginning to explore with considerable teacher support. The student cannot complete the task independently. Student requires continued support and instruction.

**I=Insufficient Progress-** Student requires more than grade appropriate instruction and teacher support. The student cannot complete the task even with assistance. Student requires instructional support in addition to that of the classroom teacher.

**X=Not assessed at this time**

Student grades in second through eighth grade are determined by class work, classroom performance, projects, long and short-term assignments, and formal and informal assessments.

### **Second through Eighth Grades:**

#### **Academic**

<b>A</b>	90-100
<b>B</b>	80-89
<b>C</b>	75-79
<b>D</b>	70-74
<b>F</b>	69 and below

#### **Conduct**

<b>S</b>	Satisfactory
<b>NI</b>	Needs Improvement
<b>U</b>	Unsatisfactory

**Specials classes** - Art, Music, Physical Education, and Library will be graded on a Meets Standard (MS)/Needs Improvement (NI) scale.

**Special Classes-** Spanish and Computer will be graded on the regular evaluation scale. They will receive letter grades in second through eighth grade.

### **HONOR ROLL**

Students in the second through eighth grades are eligible for recognition on one of the school's two Honor Rolls. **Honor Roll** recognizes students who have earned all A's in all academic classes, **including Spanish and Computer class, and a grade of MS in all other specials** and no lower than an 'S' in conduct. **Merit Roll** recognizes students who have earned A's and no more than two B's in all academic classes, including Spanish and Computer class, and a grade of MS in all specials, and no lower than an 'S' in conduct.

### **RETENTION POLICY**

Most students will be successful in the school's regular program of sequential learning. However, testing, diagnosis, and actual performance may indicate that some students cannot complete a year's work in that time. Therefore, it may become necessary to retain a student for an additional year in a particular grade. Parents of students who are in danger of being retained will be notified **by January 1st.**

Should a student fail two or more core subjects in an academic year, retention or alternative educational placement may be required. Students in grades 2 - 8 who have failed no more than one core subject during an academic year, will be required to receive remediation over the summer. Failure to successfully remediate according to school guidelines indicates the parents' choice to seek alternative educational placement. Students who have received appropriate remediation may return to the school in the following year with the status of academic probation. Alternative educational placement may be required if a student fails one or more core subjects (final year average) while on academic probation.

For students in grades PK through 1<sup>st</sup>, retention may be considered based on the following criteria:

The student is functioning below grade level in reading and/or mathematics;

The student's maturity level is sufficiently below what is expected for the particular grade in question and is seriously affecting academic progress.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Official Parent-Teacher report card conferences are held at the end of the first and third quarters and are scheduled by the teacher. The dates are published in the school calendar. Parents will receive information as to the times available for the conferences. Parents are strongly urged to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss their student's progress with their respective teachers. All other conferences may be held as requested by the parent or the teacher.

### **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Frequent and meaningful communication between home and school is essential to the success of the academic program at St. Mary's. All teachers will publish a weekly newsletter, and the Development office will publish a quarterly newsletter. Parents may receive other forms of communication from their child's teacher, administrative staff, or other faculty members, as needed.

### **FACULTY/STAFF AVAILABILITY**

Faculty and staff members may be contacted at school by one of the following methods:

A written message left at the front office;

E-mail (first initial and last name of faculty/staff member @smsrome.org (i.e., Jane Doe – [jdoe@smsrome.org](mailto:jdoe@smsrome.org));).

Voice mail is available for all administrative staff

Please check with your child's teacher regarding his/her preferred method of communication.

Teachers have 24 hours to respond to an email, phone call, etc. This does not include weekends. For example, if you send home communication on Friday afternoon, you may not hear back until the following Monday.

The most effective method of addressing concerns is to communicate *directly with your child's teacher*. If a question or problem arises which the teacher is unable to resolve, the Principal should be contacted. To schedule a meeting with a teacher, the parent should leave a message or send a note or email to the child's teacher. To schedule a meeting with any administrator, call the school office or send an email or note directly to the administrator.

**Parents with a scheduled appointment are to sign in at the main office and receive a visitor's badge. No one is permitted to go to a classroom or other part of the building to speak with a teacher during the school day without a scheduled appointment.**

## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum of St. Mary's Catholic School includes religion, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign language, media, art, music, computer and physical education. Students are required to participate in every subject taught in their grade level.

St. Mary's Catholic School's commitment to the learning process is reflected in a curriculum that adjusts to the unique needs of individual students while respecting the rights, interests, and personal dignity of each child. The school's sound academic curriculum prepares students to become productive members of society in an increasingly competitive world.

**Religion** is the heartbeat of St. Mary's School. The goal for the religion curriculum is to instill in students an enthusiasm for living an active Christian faith, while providing an in-depth religious education, including experiences in prayer, the sacraments, and service. Religion is integrated throughout the curriculum. Students participate in liturgies, celebrating a variety of themes directly relating to everyday living, as well as special occasions such as feast days of saints.

The **Language Arts** curriculum incorporates: reading, writing, speaking, listening, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary in assisting students in the acquisition of effective language skills. In addition to focusing on reading and comprehension, the linguistic approach to reading emphasizes word attack, language skills, and vocabulary. Phonics programs encourage the use of decoding strategies, and spelling is taught as both a reading and phonics skill. An emphasis on vocabulary development begins in the primary grades.

The study of **Mathematics** as a means of exploring the world plays an integral role in the education of each student. While contributing to the development of the whole person, mathematics enriches life and provides students with practical tools for daily living. A hands-on approach to the basic mathematical ideas and concepts encourages children to experience mathematical relationships and interconnections.

The **Science** curriculum provides students with a basic knowledge of science as it relates to their own experiences. Students utilize a hands-on, inquiry-based science program that integrates and develops basic knowledge, investigative experience, and curiosity through student involvement.

K-8 grade students have the added benefit of laboratory experience.

The school's ***Social Studies*** curriculum focuses on historical understanding, citizenship, geography, and economics at all grade levels. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum places an emphasis on American History, specifically looking at settlement, Native Americans, the Revolutionary War, the Constitution, and Slavery. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade places on emphasis on World History. A more detailed study of U.S. History and Georgia State History completes the curriculum in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

***Foreign Language*** is offered to enrich the curriculum. Spanish is offered for all grades and focuses on vocabulary building in the elementary grades and progresses to grammar, sentence structure and conversational use of the language in the upper elementary and middle school.

The ***Computer Lab*** features computers for class use. The technology curriculum includes instruction in keyboarding, software applications, and Internet usage. Computers within the lab are networked for both the school's intranet and for Internet access. The school's Internet policy will govern computer and Internet usage.

***Physical Education*** classes assist in the development of physical, motor, and developmental skills, while teaching the importance of teamwork and providing lifetime fitness skills.

The ***Guidance Program*** plays a vital role in the school's curriculum. Through individual and group guidance, students are assisted in developing the self-confidence, responsibility, and social skills necessary to become productive members of their community.

Students are encouraged to visit the ***Media Center*** and check out books on a weekly basis. The ***Media Center*** provides a wide range of teaching materials that play an integral role in enhancing the school's instructional program. Use of these valuable resources helps to develop each student's ability to effectively conduct research and retrieve information.

The ***Fine Arts*** curriculum develops and stimulates the artistic qualities inherent in all children. Art and music develop many valuable skills, including physical and mental coordination, self-expression, group participation, and cooperation.

In general, materials and resources shown to be in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and/or that have a valid educational purpose will be approved for use within the school. Parents who object to any materials used in the delivery of curriculum or any resources available to the students in the school may formally challenge the use of those materials by submitting a written letter to the school principal indicating the material(s) in question and the reason for the objection. The materials and resources in question will be reviewed by the school administration, including the pastor, for appropriateness and educational validity.

Please direct any questions about the Curriculum to the Principal.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM**

Each year, St. Mary's Catholic School assesses the achievement of its students. Students in first

through eighth grade take the IOWA Assessments (formerly known as the ITBS exam). In addition, students in second, fifth, and seventh grade also take the *CoGAT* (Cognitive Abilities Test). This program enables the administration and faculty to evaluate the school in light of the established beliefs, objectives and programs. Finally, students in grades 5 and 8 will take the ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) assessment, which measures the effectiveness of our religion program.

### **CLUBS, COMPETITIONS & ORGANIZATIONS**

St. Mary's Catholic School has many clubs and organizations in which students are encouraged to participate. Clubs, organizations, and activities that are usually offered include, but are not limited to: student government, choir, Beta Club, Drama, Altar Society, basketball, soccer, volleyball, cross country, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Berry College Mathematics League, Archdiocesan Oratorical Contest, Environmental Quiz Bowl, recycling program, and Spelling Bee. Most clubs meet after school, and separate arrangements must be made for transportation.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework refers to an assignment that is completed outside of class. It is assigned to extend the learning process, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create interest on the part of the student. Homework is a learning activity, which will increase in amount with the grade level of the student. It should be an independent activity in grades three through eight. It will be coordinated between teachers at each grade level and between all middle school teachers. It is not to be used as a form of punishment and will be graded by the teacher.

Homework is generally not assigned on weekends. Time on weekends should be used to read, review, etc. We feel strongly about family time, but also recognize that review and studying are sometimes necessary. There will be less homework on certain event nights as determined by the school administration.

Long-term project assignments will include directions as to how much time is expected to complete the project and a description of what the project should look like when complete.

Failure to complete homework assignments will impact the student's grade in that subject.

Homework turned in late, without teacher approval, will result in appropriate consequences including, but not limited to, deduction of points, after school detention, loss of recess, and/or loss of privileges.

Although parents will be advised when students are not keeping up with homework assignments, it is the student's responsibility (in grades 3-8) to keep up with assignments not turned in on time.

***PLEASE NOTE: If your child consistently has trouble completing homework assignments, please notify the classroom teacher as soon as this becomes a problem.***

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY**

### **Purpose**

Technology is a valuable and real world educational tool. Our school is committed to teach its students, faculty, administrators, staff, and school community to work and to learn effectively with technology and to ensure responsible use of technology. The policy outlined below applies to all technology use including but not limited to Internet use. *The Acceptable Use Policy for Technology* applies to all students, faculty, administrators, staff, volunteers or community members allowed access to school technology resources. In some cases outside or personal uses of technology may be applicable under this policy.

### **Scope Of Use**

We recognize that the digital world allows anytime, anywhere access. Uses mentioned in this policy apply to **inside school** use and may in certain instances apply to personal technology use and/or uses **outside of school**. Where personal **outside** use of technology threatens a likelihood of substantial disruption in school, including harming or interfering with the rights of other students or teachers to participate fully in school or extracurricular activities, these activities may be viewed as a violation of the Acceptable Use Policy and may be subject to the disciplinary measure found herein.

The types of electronic and digital communications referenced in this AUP include, but are not limited to, social networking sites, cell phones, digital cameras, text messaging, email, voice over ip, chat rooms, and instant messaging.

### **Goal**

The school's goal is to prepare its members for life in a digital global community. To this end, the school will:

- integrate technology with curriculum to enhance teaching and learning
- encourage critical thinking, communication, collaboration and problem solving skills
- facilitate evaluation and synthesis of information
- encourage ethical practices and provide education for internet safety and digital citizenship
- provide a variety of technology based tools and related technology skills

### **Responsibilities Of User**

St. Mary's Catholic School will make every effort to provide a safe environment for learning with technology including Internet filtering and safeguards. The students, faculty, administrators, staff, and school community are granted the privilege of using the computer hardware and software peripherals, and electronic communication tools including the Internet. With this privilege comes the responsibility for appropriate use. At St. Mary's Catholic School, we use information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways. We embrace the following conditions or facets of being a digital citizen.

### **Respect One's Self**

Users will select online names that are appropriate and will consider the information and images that are posted online.

### **Respect Others**

Users will refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people.

### **Protect One's Self and Others**

Users will protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications.

### **Respect Intellectual Property**

Users will appropriately cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.

### **Protect Intellectual Property**

Users will request to use the software and media others produce and protect license agreements for all software and resources.

## **TECHNOLOGY USE GUIDELINES**

### **Educational Purpose/ Appropriate Use**

- School technology is to be used to enhance student learning. Students must not access social networking sites or gaming sites, **except for educational purposes** under teacher supervision.
- Unsupervised use of any computer-related equipment is strictly prohibited. Use of the printers must be authorized by the teacher.
- Students must keep devices flat on desk – visible to teacher when in use.
- Proper care of the equipment will be taken at all times. No food or beverages are permitted near school technology at any time. Fees will be charged for the repair and/or replacement of computer-related equipment damaged by a student.
- The use of personal storage devices, such as DVDs flash drives, or zip drives, is permitted under the direction of the classroom teacher. If applicable, such devices must be scanned prior to use in school.
- Students will login with their personal login name and password and will refrain from sharing this information with other students.
- Students will use only school supported search engines. Access to the internet is limited to educational sites approved by the teacher.

### **Examples of Unacceptable Uses - Users are not to:**

- Use technology to harass, bully, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
- Post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane or sexually

oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude or threatening language.

- Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about any persons, students, staff or any other organization.
- Use a photograph, image, video or likeness of any student, or employee without express permission of that individual and of the Principal.
- Take photos or videos during school hours unless instructed to do so by the teacher.
- Use of the recording feature of electronic devices to record a teacher without his/ her permission.
- Create any site, post any photo, image or video of another except with express permission of that individual.
- Attempt to circumvent system security, alter the school's computer system and/or network, delete files or programs, or install unauthorized games or copyrighted software.
- Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives.
- Violate license agreements, copy CDs/DVDs, or other protected media.
- Use Technology for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed.
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school or system employees.
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school or system in the community.
- Transmit any material in violation of any local, federal and state laws. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material and threatening or obscene material.
- Use devices during transition time between classes.

### **Copyright/Intellectual Property and Identity**

All sources obtained for teacher and student work should be properly cited. Users are to respect the rights of and the intellectual property of others in accordance with Federal Copyright Law. Transferring copyrighted material to or from a school without expressed permission of the owner is a violation of Federal Law.

### **Electronic and Mobile Devices, Cell phones**

Users must adhere to school policy that further defines uses of mobile devices, such as cell phones and electronic readers. Please reference the appropriate section of the Parent-Student Handbook for policy regarding use of such devices at school.

### **Reporting**

Users must immediately report any damage or change to the school's hardware/software that is

noticed by the user, or any violations of the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

### **Administrative Rights**

The school has the right to monitor both student and employee use of school computers and computer accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of Technology, St. Mary's Catholic School reserves the right to amend or add to this policy at any time without notice.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE**

Social Media encompasses the various cyberspace ways that persons can communicate with each other. Social Media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter, Instagram, etc. While the school does not prohibit the use of social media, **conduct, whether inside or outside the school, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school can result in disciplinary action. Therefore, defamatory or threatening statements made on social media may result in discipline of the student account holder. Likewise, parents/guardians are expected to conduct themselves in a productive, positive, and Christ-like manner when discussing the school, school programs, and/or school personnel on social media. The school and the parents/guardians are partners in the education of our children. If, in the opinion of the administration, that partnership is no longer viable, the school reserves the right to require the parent/guardian to withdraw the student from the school.**

**The school name, logo, motto, or mascot may not appear in any form on any type of social media used for promotion of products or published on public social media not "owned" by the pictured child's family. Social media postings should always reflect the values of St. Mary's School. The school name, logo, motto, or mascot may not appear in any form of clothing or paraphernalia, e.g. putting the school name or crest on t-shirts, without the express written permission of the principal.**

*Parents are reminded that the minimum age requirement to create accounts on many of these sites is at least 13.*

### **Policy Violations**

Violation of the above rules will be dealt with by the administration of the school. Violation of these rules may result in any or all of the following:

- Loss of use of the school network, computers and software, including Internet access.
- Issuance of demerits/detentions, if applicable.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.

## **STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (SST)**

The Student Success Team exists to support the teachers in their efforts to serve the students. Team members do this through the consultation model and/or by providing direct services to meet the student's academic, behavioral, or emotional needs.

The Student Success Team is comprised of the school guidance counselor, resource teachers, classroom teachers, and administration. This team meets regularly to discuss student achievement and progress as well as alternative strategies as a first or ongoing step in meeting individual student needs.

An established process is followed in supporting the needs of individual students: the classroom teacher shares with the appropriate Success Team personnel concerns about students who are exhibiting academic, social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties; the teacher and the Success Team members develop a plan of assistance to help the student which may include but are not limited to classroom and instructional strategies and interventions, observations of the student, parent conferences, and consultation with other staff members who work with the student; support strategies and interventions are evaluated for effectiveness and additional steps are taken if needed.

## **ATTENDANCE**

St. Mary's Catholic School will be in session from 8:15 AM until 3:15 PM, Monday through Friday. As a security measure, parents or guardians must call or email the school office by 9:00 AM to report any student who will be absent or tardy. Parents may leave a message on the answering service (**706-234-4953, Ext. 201**). If you choose to email your child's absence please include the school secretary and classroom teacher. Do not send notes or verbal messages with another child regarding absences or tardies. These procedures are in place to ensure the safety and well being of all students. Assignments and books will be sent to the school office to be picked up **after dismissal time (3:45-4:00)** if requested **by phone or email** before 9:00 AM.

Students called to be picked up early for appointments will not be called to the office until the parent arrives.

## **ARRIVAL (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandate changes...notification of amendment will be emailed.*)**

Students may arrive at school as early as 7:00 AM. Students arriving between the hours of 7:00 AM and 8:10 AM must report to *Before School Care* in the cafeteria/outside. There is a charge for this service from 7:00-7:50 AM. After 7:50 AM Before School Care has no additional fee. The school will have morning announcements in the classrooms at 8:15 AM. Students arriving after the 8:15 AM bell are to report directly to the school office. Students not in the classrooms for morning announcements are considered tardy.

7:00 - 7:45 School Cafeteria (PreK-8)

7:45 - 8:10 Outside or School Gym (weather permitting)

8:10 - 8:15 Classrooms - Morning Announcements

**DISMISSAL TIME** (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandate changes... notification of amendment will be emailed.*)

Children are to be picked up promptly at dismissal time, 3:15 PM on a regular day, or as communicated to parents or if the school calendar indicates that dismissal time be different for a particular day. At or around 3:30 PM, students still waiting to be picked up will proceed to *Extended School Care*. **After 3:30 PM, the After-Care rates will be charged on your FACTS incidental billing. The only families allowed to park and come in to pick up their child(ren) are those who have purchased the parking spots sold at our school auction. All families need to be in carline to pick up unless you have purchased a spot or there is a family emergency.**

**TRAFFIC PLAN** (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandate changes... notification of amendment will be emailed.*)

The majority of students are transported to and from school by their parents or in carpools. Parents are to drop off and pick up children in the areas designated for this purpose. Drivers are to adhere to the established traffic patterns and follow the directions of faculty and staff. ***Please note that left turns into the parking lot are prohibited between the hours of 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM.***

Students are dismissed at 3:15 on a regular school day. When students in a carpool participate in an after school activity, parents are to make alternate transportation arrangements and are to be prompt in picking up the student.

**BUS RIDERS**

Parents of students who will be riding the buses to and from school are required to complete a *Bus Information Form* provided on Orientation Day or upon acceptance to the school.

The information is kept on file in the office.

As a security measure, parents are to write a note to the teacher **and** call the office if a student will not be riding on the bus on a specific day. The student will then be permitted to go to the appropriate line or stay after school for an activity. **Students may not utilize any other form of transportation if a note is not presented.**

Students who ride the busses are bound by the school code of conduct while on the bus. Disciplinary issues will be handled by the bus driver and/or the principal. Students with consistent disciplinary problems may be suspended or removed from riding the bus.

**ABSENCE AND TARDY POLICY** (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandate changes... notification of amendment will be emailed.*)

It is the shared responsibility of the school and the home to assist students in developing desirable habits of punctuality and attendance. Students are expected to attend school regularly in

compliance with the law for compulsory attendance.

Absences are sometimes necessary due to illness, death in the family, a doctor or dental appointment, or whenever the principal considers that exemption from attendance is in the best interest of the child. **Such absences must be recorded in the legal attendance records. All absences and tardiness will be recorded and reflected on all school records.** Doctor appointments and school visits will be marked as “excused” if a note from the doctor or name tag from the school visited is presented to the school *when the student first returns from the appointment or visit.* **NOTES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS TIME.**

**A satisfactory explanation from the legal/custodial parent or guardian for the absence of the student from all or any part of the day is required. Parents must call the school before 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence.**

The success of the school day is greatly influenced by the student’s prompt arrival. The school day begins at 8:15 and *students who arrive on campus after 8:15 are considered tardy.* After ten (10) times tardy, the homeroom teacher will notify the school counselor and, in turn, the school counselor will contact the parent. After fifteen (15) times tardy, the student will be referred to the principal. Students who are repeatedly late to school, or to class, may receive disciplinary consequences including, but not limited to, after school detention, work detail, or the loss of a school privilege or activity.

Grade promotion of students tardy and/or absent 30 or more days is made at the discretion of the principal.

All late arrivals are marked tardy. Early releases are also marked tardy. Vacations not on the school calendar are discouraged. If parents choose to take students on family vacations during the school year, the student is marked **absent (unexcused)** for those days missed.

The principal/designee may release a student during the school day upon written request of the legal/custodial parent or guardian. Such absences must be recorded in the official school records.

If a student enters 3 hours after school begins or leaves 3 hours before the end of the day, he/she shall be considered half day absent.

If the student is being released to someone other than the parent/guardian, the “Authorized Emergency Card” will be consulted for name verification. **The parent/guardian of the student must also provide written permission for pick up. Photo ID is required.**

**Students who did not attend school during the day may not participate in after-school activities. This includes, but is not limited to, scouts, drama, sports, chess club, school dance, etc...**

Students may only be checked in and out of school in the front office by a parent or person authorized by the parent on the emergency information form. We ask parents NOT to go directly

into a classroom.

**Please note:** five (5) or more absences in a quarter will result in an “excessive absences” comment on the quarter report card.

Families have two different choices to obtain their missed work and make it up for **excused absences.**

Choice One: Students are given one school day for each day missed to make up assignments upon return to school.

Choice Two: Collect the work **before** the absence occurs and **all** work is due the day of return, including all test prep.

Excused absences are granted for student illness, a death in the student’s immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.), or approved school-sponsored or school-related educational activities.

## **VACATIONS**

Please note that vacation days taken during the academic year are defined as ***UNEXCUSED*** absences. It is strongly recommended that parents give serious consideration before planning vacations during the school term. In spite of the fact that students may have the ability to make up their work, it does not replace the formal instruction given by the teachers. In the event that parents do take children out of school for extended vacations, they are expected to notify the homeroom teacher and the main office with separate notes to explain how long their children will be out of school. *Please note that these absences are recorded as unexcused*, which may result in the student not receiving credit for any work missed. **It is the parent’s responsibility to contact the classroom teacher BEFORE the vacation occurs to arrange for work.**

**If the work is collected/requested before the vacation occurs all work is due the day of return, including all test prep.**

**Students may also receive extra days to complete assignments if the work is not given out before the vacation, and only at the discretion of the classroom teacher.**

**In the event of absences due to family vacations, the parents/guardians assume the responsibility for student learning. Teachers are not expected to meet with students outside of the normal school day to make up work due to absenteeism resulting from family vacations.**

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

In specific instances of excessive absences, the Principal may request a written note from a doctor explaining the severity of the child’s illness. Any child who is absent for twenty (20) days in a school year is subject to retention. The Principal, based on the consideration of individual circumstances, may make an exception to this policy.

**VISITORS** (*Currently due to COVID-19 this is not applicable at SMS. No visitors will be allowed in the building.*)

**Parents/guardians or other adults must check-in at the school office and receive a volunteer/visitor badge upon arrival.**

Alumni (under the age of 16) may visit during lunch and recess, however, they are not permitted to remain on campus beyond the scheduled lunch times, attend classes, participate in class parties, or field trips, and must have a parent/guardian remain on campus during the visit. Graduates are also welcome to visit with faculty members following the afternoon dismissal. **Non-related students from other local area schools are not permitted to visit without the principal's prior approval.**

*Parents/guardians, visitors, and volunteers may never be alone with a child (other than their own) in a classroom, office, or bathroom. Visitors must use the adult bathroom by the cafeteria during the school day.*

### **FLYERS, BROCHURES, NON-SCHOOL RELATED ADVERTISING**

No person is permitted to post or distribute any flyers, pamphlets, or other written communication on school grounds without the authorization of the Principal. All school-related flyers must be pre-approved by the Principal. Ordinarily, only advertising from organizations or individuals that support the school and its programs is considered. This is required as a courtesy to our generous sponsors, however, it should be noted that the school does not endorse or guarantee satisfaction with the advertised services or products.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Emergency drills (Fire, Lock-Down, Severe Weather) are held in accordance with all state and local laws. In instances of severe weather, when watches and warnings have been issued by the National Weather Service, it is imperative that telephone lines to the school be left open in case conditions warrant emergency response. *Parents are requested not to call the school as we will communicate with families through our automated messaging system.*

### **AUDIO/VISUAL RECORDING POLICY**

No audio/visual recording devices may be used to record *conversations or photographic images*, either in person or by telephone, by or among students, parents, teachers, or school administrators on school property or on the school telephone without the express consent and knowledge of all parties involved. The administration reserves the right to restrict or prohibit the use of audio/visual recording devices during school functions and events.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

A field trip is a first-hand experience that supplements classroom instruction. It is an observational experience having definite educational objectives. Field trips may be taken only with the approval of the Principal who, in cooperation with the classroom teacher, approves safe procedures and determines whether the trip is a *contributing activity to the students' learning*

*experience. Any child not attending a field trip will need to stay home for the day and may be required to complete an assignment. This absence will be unexcused.* A permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before any child is permitted to participate in any field trip. **Only original signatures will be accepted. No faxed or electronically received permission slips will be accepted. Handwritten slips are not permission slips and will not be accepted.** Parents are encouraged to volunteer as chaperones; however, chaperones are not permitted to bring other siblings or children not enrolled at SMS on a field trip. Chaperones are required to complete the volunteer application process prior to attending any field trips. Each chaperone must have a criminal background check on file with the school and must have completed Virtus Training. Generally, the SMS Bus is used to transport children. Private cars may not be used to transport children on field trips. Parent chaperones may not ride on the bus to and from the field trip. ***All field trips must originate and terminate at the school. Students will not be allowed to meet their class at the field trip site, nor will parents be allowed to take their child home from the field trip site.*** Students can be denied participation in field trips if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

**In general, school uniforms must be worn on field trips** unless the type of field trip warrants different attire (touring a barn, visiting wetlands, etc.). Attire for field trips, other than school uniforms, requires approval by the Principal.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of inclement weather, St. Mary's Catholic School will follow the directives of the Floyd County and/or the Rome City School System. If an emergency situation arises, our automated call system will contact each family to relay the information regarding the conditions at school. Parents are asked not to call the school. School closings will be announced on local radio and posted to the school's **Facebook** site.

Children need fresh air and unstructured play; however, recess will be held inside if it is raining, if it is lightning, if the wind chill or actual temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, if the heat index is above 104 degrees Fahrenheit, or if other hazardous conditions exist.

### **CLINIC**

*A clinic visit notification slip will be sent home whenever a student visits the nurse.*

The school nurse may be reached at 706-234-4953 ext. 212.

**Medical Information Cards:** Cards must be complete and on file with the school nurse before the student may attend classes.

**Immunization forms: Form 3231 must be on file for every student annually by July 31st.** Students may not attend school without this form on file. Forms need to be signed by your child's Pediatrician. There are no religious exemptions from immunizations. *Please note: Middle School attendance requires that students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade have two doses of Varicella (or proof*

*of disease), two doses each of Measles and Mumps, and one dose of Rubella vaccines. Middle School attendance requires that students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade have Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) and MCV (meningococcal conjugate) vaccines.*

### **Head Injury Policy**

If your child should hit his/her head, you will receive a phone call or a note from the school nurse. In the case of a note, please sign and return it to school.

### **Head Lice Policy**

Head lice are highly contagious. If the school detects lice, you will be notified. Your child should be treated at home and he/she may return to school after the first treatment if the head is clear of lice and/or nits. Please notify the nurse if you have treated your child at home. The school nurse will re-check your child upon return and for approximately 7-10 days after the first home treatment. If you discover head lice, please inform the school nurse immediately so that all parents in the grade level of your child can be notified of the outbreak. No names will be used in this communication.

### **Communicable Diseases Policy**

Notify the school nurse if your child has a communicable disease. You will be notified if your child has a temperature of **100 or above**. He/she will be kept in the clinic until you are able to pick him/her up.

In the case of a communicable disease (i.e.: measles, chicken pox, TB, etc.) a release card from the local health department, or a letter from a physician indicating that the health department regulation has been satisfied, must be presented to the main office before the child can return to school. Notes from parents/guardians are not accepted as assurance that the health department regulation has been satisfied. In the case of head lice or other parasitic infestation (i.e.: ringworm, etc.), students will be sent home until there are no longer any visible signs of infestation.

St. Mary's School pays student insurance so that all students have accident insurance in case they are injured at school and/or a school sponsored event. The insurance is secondary to a family's health insurance coverage.

**48 hour Policy:** A child must be free of fever and/or vomiting for **at least 48 hours unmedicated** before returning to school.

### **Pick-Up Policy**

If the school nurse calls you to pick-up your child due to illness or injury, pick-up must occur within 30 minutes. We will call the next emergency contact person after 30 minutes. Please ensure your "approved pickup" list is up to date.

### **Physical Examinations**

A comprehensive physical examination is required for all new students. This must be **signed, not stamped**, by a licensed physician or designee working under the directions of a licensed physician. Physicals must be completed after June 1st of entering year.

### **Medication Permit Form**

A medication form will be sent home with each student for the parent/guardian to sign. Please read carefully the medication permit form required by the Archdiocese of Atlanta for medication dispensing at school, as multiple changes have been made.

*Please note: Medication is defined as prescription medications as well as over-the-counter products as directed by physician.*

### **Medication Permit Form**

All medication should be given outside of school hours if possible. Three-times-a-day medications should be given before school, after school and at bedtime for optimal coverage. If necessary, medication can be given at school only under the following conditions:

1. If medication is needed while the student is in school, this form must be completed by the parent/guardian, **signed by the physician**, and returned with the medication to the school office or nurse.
2. All necessary medication prescribed for a student by a doctor or dentist must have this Medication Permit Form signed by the physician and parent. All prescription medication must be in the original prescription bottle and labeled with a current pharmacy prescription label. "Over the counter" medication must be in original labeled container. Medications sent in baggies or unlabeled containers will not be dispensed.
3. The **parent** is responsible for bringing all medication to the clinic/office and for picking up unused medicine. Unused medications left at school will be destroyed.
4. Experimental medication/dosages will not be given. Herbal medication, dietary supplements, and other nutritional aids not approved as medication by FDA will not be administered at school.
5. School personnel will not give antibiotics to students. If the parent feels the antibiotic must be given during the school day, the parent may come to the school office/clinic and administer it.
6. All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet/drawer in the school office/clinic and administered in the school office/clinic.
7. Students may not keep any medications on their person with the exceptions of inhalers, which may be carried by the student if 1) the appropriate forms (as detailed above) are on file, 2) the student is determined to be correctly self-medicating, and 3) the student reports to the clinic immediately after self-medicating to allow recording to the medical log. Failure to follow the above procedures will result in loss of the privilege.

8. Only the **parent or adult designee** may perform nebulizer treatments in school.

### **ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION**

Saint Mary's School is certified as free of asbestos and asbestos-containing materials. The certification is on file in the principal's office.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

It is very important to notify the main office if there is a change in home address, e-mail address, or in home, work, cell numbers.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are important to the success of school life. Most volunteer opportunities are coordinated by the St. Mary's PTO, such as class party coordinators and help with our school auction. Classroom teachers request volunteer assistance for field trips. The Media Center and the Advancement Office also request volunteers as needed for projects and events.

Volunteers must contact Terri Borchardt, Business Manager, at [tborchardt@smsrome.org](mailto:tborchardt@smsrome.org) to request a link to initiate the screening process. Upon completing the background check and volunteer application, all volunteers are **required** to complete the VIRTUS Program, which is a 3-hour live training session. Volunteers may find the VIRTUS Program training schedule on the Archdiocese of Atlanta website at [archatl.com](http://archatl.com), click *Ministries and Services*, then click *Safe Environment*. Sessions will be held at St. Mary's Catholic School and Saint Mary's Catholic Church as well as listed sessions at other parishes and schools throughout the Archdiocese.

*Volunteers must complete the entire Safe Environment program, including the VIRTUS Program, before volunteering at St. Mary's School or any other Archdiocesan entity. Background screening and VIRTUS training are required every five (5) years.*

*Parents/guardians, visitors, and volunteers may never be alone with a child (other than their own) in a classroom, office, or bathroom.*

*All approved volunteers should secure their name badge upon entering the school, and must sign out upon exit.*

### **ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The purpose of the Advisory Council is to:

- Support effective administration, operation and maintenance of the school;
- Provide a means of communication;
- Review and discuss programs in light of the administrative vision for the school;
- Develop and strengthen the financial functioning and viability of the school;

Assist the administration in the implementation of the policies of the Archdiocese of Atlanta;

The council is an advisory, not policy-making board, and does not determine the school's approach to discipline, educational curriculum, or personnel.

The Advisory Council and its subcommittees are charged with providing input to the administration in the following areas: Mission Effectiveness, Public Relations and Marketing, Development, Facilities, and Finance.

**PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandated changes to some traditional PTO events and programs through the 2020-2021 school year.*)**

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a volunteer service organization designed to help connect home and school by providing support to the students, parents, administration, faculty, and staff of St. Mary's Catholic School. The PTO is committed to enhancing the educational programs offered to students through a variety of student activities, family activities, and fundraisers. We encourage all of our families to become members of the Parent Teacher Organization. The many committed parent volunteers are the heart and soul of the organization.

**SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS**

The Development Department publishes the *Knight Vision* newsletter on a quarterly basis. Teachers send home weekly newsletters. Non-custodial parents who wish to receive a copy of newsletters or other publications are welcome to pick them up at school. The newsletters are also available on RENWEB, the school's password-protected web portal, and by email.

Each family will receive a hard copy of the St. Mary's Catholic School Student/Parent Handbook during orientation. An emailed copy will be sent out in late July for families to read. **Each year during orientation you will be required to sign that you have read the school handbook.**

The St. Mary's Catholic School Yearbook may be purchased during the school year and is distributed at the end of the school year. The book chronicles the school year in each grade.

**LUNCH**

Students may bring a lunch or they may eat in the cafeteria. Parents wishing to purchase a lunch may do so through **SCHOOLHOUSE FARE, LLC**, at their website: [www.schoolhousefare.com](http://www.schoolhousefare.com). You may go to that site, establish an account, and order lunches. Parents prepay these lunches by using a credit or debit card.

Milk and bottled water are available to all students at a cost of \$.50. Ice Cream is available to all students at a cost of \$.75. Costs for these will be billed through your FACTS account.

If a student forgets his lunch Saint Mary's will provide a lunch and your FACTS account will be charged.

**Drinks in glass bottles may not be brought to school for any reason.**

Parents are welcome to bring and eat lunch with their child in the cafeteria.

**EXTENDED SCHOOL CARE (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandated changes... notification of amendment will be emailed.*)**

Extended school care (ESC) is available to currently enrolled St. Mary's Catholic School students both before (7:00AM – 8:10 AM) and after (3:15-6:00 PM) school hours. Contact the school office for current rates. Enrolled siblings of students involved in school-sponsored activities that take place immediately after school and occur on school grounds may attend the ESC program at no charge until such time as the school-sponsored activity has ended. Students not picked up by the end time of the school-sponsored activity will be charged current ESC rates.

**PLAYGROUND**

Students are allowed to play on the playground equipment or in the designated play area during their recess time under the supervision of a faculty/staff member.

**Students may not play unsupervised in the playground areas before or after school.**

**CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS (*Infectious Disease Policy may mandated changes... notification of amendment will be emailed.*)**

Teachers should be contacted in advance to ensure minimal classroom disruption. Treats should be simple and should be for the child's class only. Please refer to the guidelines below.

**Birthdays**—PK and Kindergarten birthdays are to be scheduled with the classroom teacher. Food should be restricted to cupcakes, cookies, or other similar treats. Note: We have several students that are highly allergic to different foods. PLEASE CHECK WITH THE CLASSROOM TEACHER! Outside entertainment (clowns, ponies, bounce houses) is not allowed for birthdays. Students in grades 1-8 may bring cupcakes or cookies to be shared during lunch. Although we are not “nut-free” please use caution when bringing in treats for birthdays. Store bought is best so the ingredients are listed. Even if your child's classroom has no allergies we all share the cafeteria. **No balloons, flowers, etc. are to be delivered to the school. If a delivery is received at Saint Mary's the item (s) will be held in the school office until the end of the school day.** *In order to avoid hurt feelings, invitations to a child's party outside of school time may be distributed in class **only if the entire class is invited.***

**Holiday and End-of-Year Parties**— Parties normally begin at 2:30 PM unless otherwise noted. In addition to an end-of-year party, classes may celebrate the following holidays: Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's. PK may also have an Easter egg hunt. Approved party dates will be noted on the school calendar. Neither off-campus parties nor outside entertainment are allowed nor is the collection of money to fund classroom parties. It is suggested that homeroom parents organize volunteers to donate party supplies and food items.

**GENERAL STUDENT APPEARANCE**

It is our goal that SMS students reflect the values and traditions of a Catholic school. The

expectation is that our students' appearance is conservative and NOT a distraction to themselves or to those around them. With that in mind, Saint Mary's Catholic School has the following policies:

We encourage a simple hairstyle which is consistent with the simple, tailored appearance of our school uniform. **We reserve the right to control extremes in hairstyles. Girls' hair must be neat and (with the exception of bangs) off the face. The maximum acceptable length of hair for boys is above the eyebrows, above the top of the collar at the back, and above the top of the ears.**

The following hairstyles are **not** permitted:

**While bleached, dyed, highlighted, or chemically altered (including KoolAid®) hair may be considered appropriate for adults, it is the belief of St. Mary's Catholic School that students should be more natural in their appearance. Therefore, chemically altered hair, shaving all or part of the head, shaving patterns in the hair, cutting or shaving one part of the head and leaving hair long on other parts, excessively teased hair or hair that is unkempt in appearance, ponytails worn by boys, and unusual or trendy hairstyles are not permitted. Headbands with long tails, scarves, and kerchiefs are not acceptable to wear to school with or without uniforms.** Students in violation will be given one week to cut their hair. Failure to comply may result in the student not being allowed to return to school until he is in compliance. Boys should NOT have facial hair. Beach style beads and hair wraps are not allowed.

Girls may wear only clear fingernail polish. Middle School girls may wear light makeup. Light makeup is defined as skin tone foundation, a light blush, clear lip-gloss, and brown or black mascara. **Eye shadow, eyeliner, glitter make-up, and acrylic nails are not permitted.** Hair accessories should coordinate with the school uniform. Scarves, headband scarves and bandannas are not allowed.

## **JEWELRY POLICY**

Boys and girls may wear:

- One religious medal or one thin Cross on a thin plain gold or silver chain around the neck
- One small watch
- One small ring per hand

No bracelets of any kind are permitted. Girls may wear one small stud earring or tiny hoop earring per ear. Boys may not wear earrings. All jewelry should be conservative in size, color, and nature. Tattoos, temporary or otherwise, and body piercings are not allowed.

**Note:** It is advisable for students not to wear jewelry on P.E. days. The P.E. teacher may request a student to remove jewelry for the student's safety. Students should not wear valuable jewelry to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen jewelry.

**Note:** This excludes any necessary medical jewelry including necklaces and medical bracelets.

You must have a doctor's note on file.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The permanent location for lost and found articles is in the storage room just past the cafeteria. **No student or parent may enter this area without a staff member present.** (PTO may use this room for school activities.) Lost articles should NOT be placed in the infirmary. Unclaimed clothing or usable objects may be given away or sold at the Used Uniform Sale.

Money or valuable objects that are found should be turned in to the school office. The school is not responsible for lost articles or money.

We strongly recommend labeling all students' clothing and possessions.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

### **Implemented 2019-2020**

It is a tradition to wear a uniform in Catholic Schools. The student uniform reflects the cohesiveness and unity of the school community. By wearing a Saint Mary's Catholic School uniform, a student immediately belongs to our school. Just as members of the military, police, and fire departments are recognized and respected in their uniforms, St. Mary's Catholic School students are also easily recognized and respected in their school uniforms. When our uniforms are worn in the community, our students thus become walking representatives of Saint Mary's Catholic School. It is our goal that St. Mary's Catholic School students will take pride in their uniforms, looking at them as a way of being a part of a very special family—the Saint Mary's family—and that they will always strive to act and behave in a way that would make the school and their parents proud.

Wearing uniforms serves other purposes, as well. Uniforms prevent the competition associated with brand names and allow students to focus on academics, not peer pressure. Just as nurses and police officers put on their uniforms to go to work, our students put on their uniforms for the same reason—to come to school to learn with as little distraction as possible.

With these ideas in mind, all members of the school community must adhere to the uniform regulations. All new uniforms must be purchased at Uniform Source by calling

**1-770-919-9967, by shopping online at [www.uniform-source.com](http://www.uniform-source.com), or by visiting their store, 2141 Cobb Pkwy NW, Kennesaw, GA 30152**

St. Mary's Parent Teacher Organization conducts a Used Uniform Sale several times a year, selling gently used uniforms at a reduced price. This provides another way for parents to purchase uniforms for their students.

There are three basic uniforms: Summer Uniforms, Winter Uniforms, and Dress Uniforms.

**The Summer Uniform is worn from the first day of school until the Fall time change,**

**and from the Spring time change through the last day of school.**

**The Winter Uniform is worn from the Fall time change until the Spring time change.**

**The Dress Uniform is worn on all Mass Days, Prayer Service Days, and other special announced days.**

**Important Things to Know About the Uniform:**

Only standard athletic shoes that are predominantly **white, black, or gray, or a combination of the three colors** may be worn. **NOTE:** There can be no additional colors present on the shoe, the shoestrings, the sole, or the logo.

Velcro tennis shoes may be worn, but they should be white, black, gray, or a combination of those colors, with no additional colors on the shoe, the sole, the shoestrings or the logo.

Athletic shoes may NOT have blinking lights or similar distracting details.

High-tops and Converse-style shoes may NOT be worn with the school uniform.

Students may wear any shoe sold by Uniform Source, such as navy Mary Janes, Sperry Bluefish or A/O, Merrell Jungle Moc; or traditional athletic shoes that are predominantly solid white, black, or grey, or a combination of these colors. For example: solid black shoe with a white sole is acceptable. Shoelaces must be the color of the shoe, or white. Midsoles must be a standard white, black or gray. No shoes may have brightly colored midsoles or inlays in themed soles. Bright laces and/or midsoles are not allowed. Accent colors must coordinate with the uniform and be white, black or grey -- no pink, green, orange, red, neon colors, glitter, etc.

NO roller shoes, slide-on or slip on tennis shoes, shoes that make noise or blink, Crocs, Toms, Vans or Converse, high top athletic shoes, skater style shoes, cowboy boots, UGGs, shoes with cartoon characters or other unusual styles.

On dress uniform days, it is permissible for Middle School boys to remove ties after Mass, and Middle School girls to remove vests.

Heels of shoes should not be more than one inch high.

Socks for students in Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> Grade should be **standard white** crew-style socks, not low or ankle socks. Crew socks are socks that extend over the ankle and up the calf, approximately 4 inches above the top of the shoe. **No logo should be on the socks including Nike and Underarmour.** Girls may also wear the Uniform Source ankle white socks with the SMS plaid on the ruffle **ONLY**. Only Middle School students may wear the ankle style white socks, **but the socks must cover the entire ankle**. Eighth grade students **ONLY** are allowed to wear the no-show style of ankle socks.

Hats or caps may not be worn with the school uniform during the school day.

Middle School boys **must** wear standard white crew socks on Dress Uniform days.

Middle School girls **must** wear navy knee socks on Dress Uniform days.

Students **must** wear proper shoes on Dress Uniform days: Kids Sizes Sperry Songfish for girls and Sperry Gamefish for boys from Uniform Source. Men sizes must be Authentic Original Sperry Top-Sider in Oatmeal. Women sizes must be Bluefish Sperry Top-Sider in Linen Oat.

Elementary girls may wear navy knee socks or white crew socks with their jumpers. In the winter, they may wear navy tights (not sweatpants).

Only official Saint Mary's sweatshirts or Saint Mary's fleece jackets may be worn in the building or the classroom.

An outerwear coat of choice may be worn outside and on the playground.

Only navy cardigan sweaters may be worn at Mass. Saint Mary's sweatshirts/fleeces are not acceptable attire for Mass.

Shirts and blouses **MUST** be neatly tucked in, not rolled over the top of pants, shorts, or skirts. The belt must be visible. Only the first, top button of shirts and blouses may be unbuttoned.

Pants and shorts **MUST** be worn at the waist. Underwear must not be visible at any time.

Only plain white short sleeve or sleeveless undershirts may be worn under the uniform.

Girls' skirts length should be not more than 2 ½ inches above the knee.

Skirts should **NOT** be rolled at the waistband.

If a garment has belt loops, a belt must be worn.

The entire uniform must be in good, clean condition, and fit properly, with no holes, missing buttons, ripped hemlines, stains, etc. Uniforms should be worn as the manufacturer intended.

### **Boys' Uniforms, Grades K-5**

#### **Summer Uniform:**

White or light blue pique knit short-sleeved **polo** with St. Mary's logo

Navy shorts (Boys in K-2 may wear elastic waist shorts with no belt loops)

Brown leather braided or plain brown leather belt

White crew socks

Appropriate school shoes (see the beginning of this section)

#### **Winter Uniform:**

White or light blue pique knit polo shirt in a choice of short OR long-sleeves with St. Mary's logo

Navy slacks (Boys in K-2 may wear elastic waist slacks with no belt loops)

Brown leather braided or plain brown leather belt

White crew socks

Appropriate school shoes (see the beginning of this section)

\*Please Note: ONLY St. Mary's sweatshirt OR fleece jacket may be worn in the classroom. Heavy outerwear coat of choice may be worn outside only.

**Dress Uniform:**

White pique knit polo shirt in a choice of short OR long-sleeves (depending on the season) with St. Mary's logo

Navy slacks

Brown leather braided or plain brown leather belt

White crew socks

Appropriate school shoes (see the beginning of this section)

\*Please Note: Optional navy V-neck cardigan sweater (note that sweatshirts/fleece may NOT be worn at Mass).

**Girls' Uniforms, Grades K-5**

**Summer Uniform:**

White smooth knit short-sleeved polo shirt with St. Mary's logo

Navy shorts OR plaid skort (Girls in K-2 may wear elastic waist shorts with no belt loops)

Brown leather braided or plain brown leather belt (with shorts)

White crew socks OR Uniform Source white and plaid socks

Appropriate shoes (see the beginning of this section)

**OR**

White short-sleeved Peter Pan blouse Plaid jumper

White crew socks or navy knee socks or Uniform Source white and plaid socks

Appropriate shoes (see the beginning of this section)

**OR**

Plaid Dress for girls in K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades (dress must be no shorter than 2 ½ inches above the knee) with white crew socks or Uniform Source white and plaid socks and appropriate shoes.

**Winter Uniform:**

White smooth knit shirt in a choice of short OR long sleeves with St. Mary's logo Navy slacks (Girls in K-2 may wear elastic waist slacks with no belt loops).

Brown leather braided or plain brown leather belt

White crew socks or Uniform Source white and plaid socks Appropriate school shoes

(see the beginning of this section)

**OR**

White Peter Pan blouse in choice of short or long-sleeved Plaid jumper

White crew socks or Uniform Source white and plaid socks or navy knee socks or navy tights/footless tights with crew socks (sweatpants should NOT be worn under jumpers)

Appropriate school shoes (see the beginning of this section)

**OR**

Plaid Dress for girls in K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades (dress must be no shorter than 2 ½ inches above the knee) with white crew socks or Uniform Source white and plaid socks or knee socks or navy tights/footless tights with crew socks, and appropriate shoes.

\*Please Note: ONLY official St. Mary's sweatshirt or fleece jacket with embroidered school logo may be worn in the classroom.

Heavy outerwear coat of choice may be worn outside only.

**Dress Uniform:**

White Peter Pan blouse in choice of short OR long sleeved (depending on the season)  
Plaid jumper

White crew socks or navy knee socks

Appropriate school shoes (see the beginning of this section)

\*Please Note: Optional navy crew neck cardigan sweater (note that sweatshirts/fleece may NOT be worn at Mass)

**Boys' Uniforms, Grades 6-8 (Middle School)**

**Summer Uniform:**

Red or navy smooth knit polo shirts, short sleeves, with St. Mary's logo Khaki shorts

Brown braided or plain brown leather belt

White crew OR white ankle socks (socks must be visible above shoe tops and cover ankles)

Appropriate school shoes (see beginning of this section)

**Winter Uniform:**

Red or navy smooth knit polo shirt, either short- or long-sleeved with St. Mary's logo  
Khaki slacks

Brown braided or plain brown leather belt

White crew OR white ankle socks (socks must be visible above shoe tops and cover ankles)

Note: While ankle socks are a Middle School privilege, only allowed in Grades 6-8

Appropriate athletic shoes (see beginning of this section)

\*Please Note: ONLY official St. Mary's sweatshirt, hoodie, or fleece jacket with embroidered school logo OR solid navy sweatshirt (no designs) may be worn in the classroom.

Heavy outerwear coat of choice may be worn outside only, not in the classroom.

**Dress Uniforms:**

White oxford-cloth shirt in a choice of short OR long sleeves with St. Mary's logo.

Khaki slacks

Blue and white striped uniform tie

Brown braided or plain brown leather belt

White or navy crew socks (ankle socks are not allowed for Mass) Appropriate school shoes (see beginning of this section)

\*Please Note: Optional navy V-neck cardigan sweater (note that sweatshirts/fleece may NOT be worn at Mass) Optional dress jacket with SMS logo from Uniform Source

**Girls' Uniforms, Grades 6-8 (Middle School)**

**Summer Uniform:**

Red or navy smooth knit short-sleeved polo shirt with St. Mary's logo Khaki shorts OR khaki skirt (no shorter than 2-1/2" above the knee)

Brown braided or plain brown leather belt (with shorts)

White crew OR white ankle socks (socks must be visible above shoe tops and cover ankles)

Appropriate school shoes (see beginning of this section)

**Winter Uniform:**

Red or navy smooth knit polo shirt, either short- or long-sleeved with St. Mary's logo Khaki slacks OR khaki skirt (no shorter than 2-1/2" above the knee)

Brown braided or plain brown leather belt(with slacks)

White crew OR navy knee socks OR white ankle socks (socks must be visible above shoe tops and cover ankles), OR navy tights/leggings.

\*Please Note: Ankle socks are a Middle School privilege, only allowed in Grades 6-8 Appropriate school shoes (see beginning of this section)

\*Please Note: ONLY official St. Mary's sweatshirt, hoodie, or fleece jacket with embroidered school logo OR solid navy sweatshirt (no designs) may be worn in the classroom.

Heavy outerwear coat of choice may be worn outside only, not in the classroom.

**Dress Uniform:**

White oxford-cloth shirt in a choice of short OR long-sleeves with St. Mary's logo Plaid

skort (no shorter than 2-1/2" above the knee)

Navy sweater vest with embroidered St. Mary's logo Navy knee socks

\*Please Note: Optional navy V-neck cardigan sweater (note that sweatshirts/fleece may NOT be worn at Mass) Optional dress jacket with SMS logo from Uniform Source

\*Please Note: Optional Tie with the vest or blazer.

\*Please Note: During the transitional period of the year, it may be cold on mornings when Summer Uniforms are supposed to be worn. If you feel that your child will be cold all day in shorts or the elementary school skort, it is acceptable for your student to wear the Winter Uniform that day. It is NOT acceptable, however, to wear shorts or an elementary school skort instead of the Winter Uniform, even though the weather may be warm. **Shorts and elementary school skorts are to be worn ONLY as Summer Uniforms.**

### **Physical Education Uniform:**

Athletic shoes with non-marking soles and socks as listed under the regular uniform

Students in Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade are to wear their regular school uniforms for P.E.

Students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades are to change into the P.E. uniform at school just before P.E. class begins.

Only the SMS P.E. shorts, shirt, and sweatshirts may be worn in P.E. class on P.E. days.

P.E. shorts and shirts are NOT available through the uniform company and must be purchased at the school.

SMS reserves the right to adjust/modify the above stated uniform policy.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION DAYS**

Mission Days are the days in which a student is not required to wear his or her uniform to school. In order to participate in a Mission Day, the student must bring in 25 cents, which is donated to St. Mary's Catholic Church. Mission Days are noted on the school calendar. **Should a day be added during the year, you will be notified in advance through appropriate means of communication.** On Mission Days, students are expected to wear regular casual clothes in a neat and well-groomed manner. Standard policy for shoes, jewelry, etc. is relaxed on Mission Days.

### **The following clothing is *NOT* permitted:**

Short shorts or skirts-----shorts or skirts measuring more than 2 1/2 inches, above the knee.

Strapless or spaghetti strap shirts, halter tops, and tank tops T-shirts or tops that expose

the midriff when arms are raised Jeans or pants that expose navel or lower back

Oversized or baggy jeans worn low or below waist

Any clothing containing words referencing alcohol, drugs, or inappropriate language

Beach shoes or flip-flops

**NOTE: Leggings are ONLY appropriate worn with a dress/skirt/shorts that meet the length requirement.)**

**Note:** Because of the constant changing nature of fashion, the school reserves the right to classify any style of dress as inappropriate.

***Abuse of Mission Day rules may result in any of the following:***

- Loss of Mission Day privileges
- Parent called to bring proper clothing
- If parents cannot be located, student will be loaned a school uniform from the used uniform store

### **Tag Days/Auction Tag Days**

Tag Days are the days in which a student is not required to wear his or her uniform to school. **No money is collected for Tag /Auction Days. ALL Tag and Auction Days are noted on the school calendar.** Should a day be added during the year, you will be notified in advance through appropriate means of communication. On Tag Days, students are expected to wear regular casual clothes in a neat and well-groomed manner. Standard policy for shoes, jewelry, etc. is relaxed on **Tag Days Only.**

**The following clothing is *NOT* permitted:**

Short shorts or skirts-----shorts or skirts measuring more than 2 1/2 inches **above the knee.**

Strapless or spaghetti strap shirts, halter tops, and tank tops T-shirts or tops that expose the midriff when arms are raised Jeans or pants that expose navel or lower back

Oversized or baggy jeans worn low or below waist

Any clothing containing words referencing alcohol, drugs, or inappropriate language

Beach shoes or flip-flops

**NOTE: Leggings are ONLY appropriate worn with a dress/skirt/shorts that meet the length requirement.)**

**Note: Because of the constant changing nature of fashion, the school reserves the right to classify any style of dress as inappropriate.**

***Abuse of Mission Day rules may result in any of the following:***

- Loss of Mission Day privileges
- Parent called to bring proper clothing
- If parents cannot be located, student will be loaned a school uniform from the

used uniform store

## **CELL PHONES & PHOTOGRAPHY**

All student cell phones must be turned off upon entering the building and must be stored in the student's backpack in their homeroom class. Students in Before Care- and After-Care may not use their phones. Students in violation of this policy will have their cell phones confiscated. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones.

***PLEASE NOTE that photography of other students while on campus is strictly forbidden at all times.***

## **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

The primary rule governing the conduct of all the members of the St. Mary's Catholic School community is "The Great Commandment" of our Lord; "*You must love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and you must love your neighbor as yourself.*" (Matthew 2: 37-40). Everything that promotes love of neighbor as oneself is encouraged in the school community, and anything that takes away from the growth of such mutual respect is discouraged.

The expectations outlined by the administration, faculty, and staff seek to facilitate the growth of self-discipline within each student. Students are expected to make proper choices and to accept responsibility for their actions. The faculty will be consistent in emphasizing the application of these expectations.

The faculty, staff, and administration of St. Mary's Catholic School encourage discipline in a positive manner. All members of the community are encouraged to view conduct in light of the Gospel values.

## **CONDUCT GUIDELINES**

Each teacher will establish his/her own Classroom Management Plan. The rules and consequences of the plan are discussed with the students and posted in each teacher's classroom. The rules are designed to help the student grow in responsibility. As the student rises through the grade levels, more responsibility is given, and more accountability for actions is expected. In addition to adhering to classroom rules, the students are expected to follow all school rules. A specific rule need not be written for every variation of behavior that affects the orderly mission of the school. Students are always to conduct themselves as St. Mary's students and to exhibit the behaviors expected of such students.

The school's expectations are:

Courtesy, support, and respect for teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, fellow students, and self at all times;

Respect for the personal belongings and possessions of others and of all school property;

Adherence to safety rules for arrival and dismissal in the mornings and afternoons;  
Punctuality on arrival for each school day and all school classes;  
Respect for the rights of others in all common areas;  
Courtesy, proper behavior and proper table manners in the cafeteria;  
Movement throughout the building in a quiet and orderly manner;  
Obedience to playground regulations regarding designated play areas during recess and non-entry to the building without the permission of a faculty or staff member;  
Eating food only at appropriate times and in appropriate places while on school property;  
Compliance with all classroom schedules under the supervision of a teacher, substitute teacher, or an adult volunteer during and after school;  
Strict adherence to uniform code;  
Receiving parent and teacher permission before bringing expensive equipment to school;  
Having all hardback textbooks appropriately covered;  
Not using cell phones, beepers, or other electronic communication devices during school hours;  
A commitment to study on a daily basis.

## **SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL BEHAVIOR**

### **Guidelines**

We, the Saint Mary's community, strive to provide and maintain an environment that teaches and preserves Catholic Christian values. This environment revolves around structure and self-discipline, which are as fundamental to Catholic education as they are to a Christian way of life. Working together, students, parents, teachers and administrators foster a positive multi-level educational experience encompassing academics, spirituality and social adeptness.

The St. Mary's Catholic School Behavior Guidelines set forth the expectations of each student, parent, teacher and administrator that are required to build and nourish this welcoming, stimulating and respectful environment. This discipline is directed toward developing traits necessary to cope with real life situations, to develop good relationships, to become productive individuals, to accept accountability for personal actions, and to participate fully in the life of our Catholic community. The consistent, fair administration of our Behavior Guidelines will allow St. Mary's Catholic School to maintain a positive educational environment that enables the development of each student.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Shared Responsibilities of the Saint Mary's community are:**

Read, understand, discuss between parents and children and teacher and students the policies and procedures as outlined in the Family Policy Guide and the Behavior

Guidelines.

Adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the Family Policy Guide and the Behavior Guidelines.

Support the decisions of our parish and school administration.

Regard bullying, whether it be physical or behavioral, as intolerable.

**Student Responsibilities:**

Model the actions of Jesus by doing the right thing and treating people right.

Attend and participate in Mass regularly.

Demonstrate honesty in all actions.

Conduct self as a representative of St. Mary's Catholic School in all places.

Respect all adults and peers.

Be accountable for all personal actions.

Be present and on time for school.

Be prepared for school and participate in class.

Follow all school and classroom procedures.

**Parent Responsibilities:**

Model the actions of Jesus by doing the right thing and treating people right.

Attend and participate in Mass as a family on Sundays and Holy Days at your place of worship.

Make certain your child is prepared for school: lunch, homework, uniform and transportation.

Respectfully cooperate with school personnel when addressing concerns and/ or grievances.

Make certain your child adheres to the dress code.

Sign in at the school office when visiting or volunteering at school.

Be responsible with confidential information, especially when working with students or in the classroom.

For safety and liability reasons and the preservation of our facility and property, directly supervise and be responsible for all of your children while attending parish and school functions.

Receive protocol training as requested by the school prior to working with children routinely.

Model and instruct your child on the values of a good Christian citizen.

**Administrators, Faculty And Staff Responsibilities:**

Model the actions of Jesus by doing the right thing and treating people right.  
Attend and participate in Mass as a family on Sundays and Holy Days.  
Strive to help each child to reach his/her academic, spiritual and behavioral potential.  
Create a stimulating learning environment that encourages excellence through diverse teaching methods.  
Respect and encourage students as unique individuals.  
Develop self-esteem by stressing the positive qualities of all children.  
Seek parent conferences to resolve behavioral or academic concerns in a timely manner.  
Effectively and regularly communicate classroom business and student performance and be accessible to parents.  
Consistently and fairly uphold the Family Policy Guide and Behavior Guidelines.  
Continually seek opportunities for professional growth.  
Be responsible stewards of our resources and mindful of the financial impact your requests have on families and the parish.  
Maintain confidentiality of students, parents and each other, except as otherwise required by law.

**School Council Responsibilities:**

Model the actions of Jesus by doing the right thing and treating people right.  
Attend and participate in Mass as a family on Sundays and Holy Days.  
Be supportive of the staff and administration in consistently and fairly upholding the Family Policy Guide and Behavior Guidelines.  
Be accessible to school parents.  
Represent the school community in decisions regarding school policy.  
Maintain confidentiality and fully support all Council decisions.  
Understand the commitment to the Council and be actively involved by being prepared and participating in meetings.

**GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

The students are expected to work on building the Kingdom of God each and every day at Saint Mary's School. The way that each student can build the Kingdom of God is by doing the right thing and treating people right in accordance with the Catholic Church.

Other ways that we encourage our students to do the right thing is by following the individual classroom and school procedures throughout the building and grounds. Here are the school- wide procedures:

### **Arrival Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am joyful and prepared for a new day at SMS!
- I am ready and responsible with my personal belongings for each school day.
- I am using self-control while waiting to be dismissed to my classroom.

### **Cafeteria Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am using self-control while entering and exiting the cafeteria.
- I am patient while waiting for the microwave.
- I am responsible for eating my lunch and cleaning my table area.
- I am using my wisdom by being quiet and ready to listen when I hear the clap.
- I am responsible for using my manners.

### **Assembly Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am using self-control by entering the assembly quietly.
- I am patient while waiting for the assembly to begin.
- I am caring by actively listening to the guest speaker.
- I am giving my best effort to show appreciation at the appropriate times.

### **Hallway Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am using wisdom by walking on the right side of the hallway.
- I am using my best effort to be quiet in the hallway.
- I am using self-control by keeping my hands and feet to myself, in order to respect others and property.
- I am being responsible by following adults' instructions.

### **Mass Manners**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am having courage to sing joyfully, listen actively, and respond faithfully.
- I am using self-control while showing respect in God's house.
- I am showing the love of God by entering and exiting God's house reverently.

### **Recess Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am being honest while playing at recess.
- I am showing the love of God by including everyone.
- I am responsible for all recess equipment.
- I am using my self-control during recess.

## **Restroom Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am waiting patiently in line to use the restroom.
- I am using wisdom when using the restroom facilities.
- I am being responsible with the property inside the restrooms.
- I am demonstrating courage by reporting misbehavior in the restroom to a teacher.

## **Dismissal Procedures**

*Do The Right Thing by:*

- I am showing responsibility and using self-control at dismissal by being respectful of others around me.
- I am showing wisdom sitting quietly while the names are called.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Teachers are in charge of their respective classrooms and are expected to set, explain and enforce their Teacher Discipline Plans that are consistent with our Mission, Behavior Guidelines, and Family Policy Guide.

Upon weighing the circumstances, the results of conduct, and the severity of the incident, the teacher and school administration will determine the appropriate consequences listed below, which may be above and beyond those consequences outlined in the Teacher Discipline Plan.

- a) Warnings
- b) In-class consequences
- c) Parent notification
- d) Behavior plan
- e) Detention
- f) Conferences with all concerned
- g) Suspensions
  - 1) In-school suspension is defined as 1 to 2 days served in the office doing classroom work.
  - 2) Out-of-school suspension is defined as 1-5 days served off school premises doing classroom work. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for proper adult supervision on these days.
- h) Expulsions
  - 1) Expulsion is defined as dismissal from school for the duration of the school year with conditional re-entry for the following year.
  - 2) In most cases, the parents will be contacted for a conference prior to an expulsion. The student may not return to school, however, while such conference is being scheduled.

- 3) The school administration will confiscate any unauthorized items, weapons and/or substances and notify the necessary authorities (police and/or parents).
- 4) If a suspicion arises that a student has any unauthorized items, weapons and/or substances, the school administration may search the student's belongings or clothing.

### **Offenses Warranting Disciplinary Action**

- 1) Recognizing that it is impossible to list all types of misconduct, any comparable offenses will be resolved by the teachers and/or administration in a manner consistent with the Behavior Guidelines.
- 2) Offenses inappropriate to the learning environment:
  - a) Disrespect to others through language or actions
  - b) Failure to follow school procedures
  - c) Disruptions to the class
  - d) Lack of preparation for school or class
- 3) Offenses that may warrant suspension
  - a) Bullying or threatening or hazing another child physically or emotionally
  - b) Fighting or causing harm to another student or teacher
  - c) Stealing
  - d) Cheating
  - e) Lying or dishonest behavior
  - f) Foul language
  - g) Vandalism of parish property or another student's property
  - h) Leaving school grounds without the permission of school administration
  - i) Being under the influence, possessing, using or passing any unauthorized substance at school or school-sponsored events
  - j) Any incident deemed serious in nature by the school principal

### **Offenses That May Warrant Expulsion**

- a) Having a gun, knife, or any other weapon on parish property or at school functions
- b) Possessing, passing, using or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol and/or tobacco products on parish property or school functions
- c) Physical action or threats with malicious intent toward a student, staff member, or any other person at school
- d) Repeated offenses or any incident deemed serious in nature by the school principal

In addition to the general school regulations, serious offenses will be handled by administration. These offenses will be handled on a case-by-case basis and may result in suspension or expulsion from school and/or referral to an appropriate agency. All students are entitled to a fair and impartial hearing. Examples of serious offenses are as follows:

Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any drug, legal or illegal, or alcoholic beverages on or near school premises;

Possession of a lighter, matches, or any flammable substances;

Violation of a Behavior Plan;

Public displays of affection;

**Conduct, whether inside or outside of school, that is inconsistent with the mission or policies of the school or that is detrimental to the reputation of the school;**

Habitual truancy;

Immorality in talk or action;

Any violation of state or local laws.

The principal reserves the right to waive and/or deviate from any and all disciplinary regulations for just cause at her discretion.

Students asked not to return the following year for behavior reasons are not considered to be expelled. The student has not been accepted for re-enrollment in the next academic year because of prior behavioral problems. Students not allowed to return due to failure to meet required academic standards are not considered to be expelled.

In those cases where the student has reached or exceeded the allowable number of accumulated infractions, the principal may expel a student after consultation with the superintendent and pastor. A fair and impartial process must be evident during the period of accumulation (i.e.: notification of parents, parent conference, behavioral contract, suspension, etc.). Appeal of expulsion is made to the superintendent by the parents. The student and parent(s) will be permitted to ask and answer questions and present evidence to the principal.

When a specific disciplinary issue arises from outside of a school resulting in direct repercussions for a school of the Archdiocese, the principal will immediately contact the superintendent. The decision for expulsion or other disciplinary action in such cases rests with the Superintendent. Appeal of expulsion is made to the Office of the Archbishop.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The school reserves the right to search all school property including, but not limited to desks, lockers, and cabinets. Additionally, the school reserves the right to search all personal property including, but not limited to telephones, computers, backpacks, and purses.

## **HARASSMENT**

Maintaining an educational environment that encourages optimum human growth and development is imperative. Respect for the dignity of each person is essential to Catholic tradition. It is vital that each school and religious education program maintain a learning and working environment free of any form of harassment or intimidation toward students.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment in any form. Harassment of any student by any other student, lay employee, parent, religious worker, or priest is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner.

A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantial acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's perceived differences including but not limited to race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability, or sex. **Harassment can occur any time during school or during school related activities.** It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

**Verbal Harassment:** Derogatory comments and jokes, threatening words spoken to another person, **which may also include online harassment.**

**Physical Harassment:** Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

**Visual Harassment:** Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, gestures.

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment when:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of a person's educational development;

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for education decisions affecting such individual;

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment as defined above may include but is not limited to:

Sex-oriented verbal "kidding", abuse, or harassment;

Pressure for sexual activity;

Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications;

Unwelcome touching such as patting, pinching, or constant brushing against another's body;

Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades or similar personal concerns.

To file a grievance, the following procedure will be utilized:

- 1) The student must immediately report the harassment to the Principal (or a teacher who will report it to the Principal) or to the Superintendent if the Principal is the subject of the allegation. Additionally, in the case of sexual harassment allegations, the student is free to raise the issue with another same sex administrator if he/she prefers to do so.
- 2) The parents of the student alleging harassment will be notified immediately, and the student will be asked to complete a formal, written complaint. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible;
- 3) The investigation will include a meeting with the person alleged to have harassed, sharing with that person the nature of the allegations as well as the name of the person bringing the allegation. The alleged person may be removed from the school setting during the course of the investigation. If appropriate, the alleged harasser will be placed on administrative leave during the course of the investigation;
- 4) Once the facts of the investigation have been gathered, the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, will decide the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment and determine appropriate disciplinary action.

Filing of a grievance or otherwise reporting harassment shall not reflect upon the individual's status or affect grades.

## **BULLYING & CYBERBULLYING**

Saint Mary's Catholic School takes a strong stance against bullying behaviors and expressly prohibits the bullying of any person by any means or method. Bullying can take many forms including verbal, written, physical and relational.

Verbal bullying occurs when oral communication is used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or that person's reputation.

Written bullying occurs when written communication of any kind (paper and pen, e-mail, text, etc.) is used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or that person's reputation.

Physical bullying occurs when physical contact or the threat of physical contact of any kind is used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or creating an environment whereby the person feels threatened and intimidated.

Relational bullying is when exclusion from, or conditional inclusion in, social groups is used to intimidate, harass, or threaten another person with the intent of causing harm to that person or

that person's reputation.

Cyberbullying is defined as bullying that takes place on the internet through the various **Social Media** outlets, such as *Facebook, Snapchat, Vine, Vimeo, Instagram, Twitter*, etc. Social Media encompasses the various ways that persons communicate with each other. **While the school does not prohibit the use of Social Media by students, conduct, whether inside or outside of the school, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school or is demeaning to a student, teacher, or administrator of the school, may result in discipline of the student account holder.** The school and the parents are partners in the education of children and, if in the opinion of the Principal that partnership is no longer viable, the school maintains the right to require the parent to withdraw the student from the school.

### **BEHAVIOR OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL**

**Out of school behavior which is illicit, immoral, illegal and/or which reflects adversely on St. Mary's Catholic School and which is inconsistent with the school's mission will be handled according to the school disciplinary procedures and may be grounds for suspension or expulsion from St. Mary's. This includes comments posted on social media websites, blogs, texting, etc.**

All incidents of bullying should be reported to a teacher, counselor or administrator. Once reported, the incident will be investigated and disciplinary procedures as stated in the school's disciplinary policy will be implemented if deemed appropriate.

### **SAFE ENVIRONMENT GUIDELINES**

All students entering kindergarten, and all students new to the school, will receive instruction through the Archdiocesan approved Virtus program for children. This program provides guidelines to the students on how to recognize and report problems or people that worry them to a trusted adult. The program is presented with a Christian perspective and is approved by the Archdiocese of Atlanta. If families wish to opt out of their children receiving the required VIRTUS training they should notify the school counselor or the principal by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

Teachers and other school personnel (including volunteers) are bound by the laws of the State of Georgia as Mandated Reporters, to report any *suspected* cases of child abuse or neglect. Please refer to **O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 (c) (1)**

### **PUBLIC MEDIA POLICY**

On occasion, St. Mary's students' written work, projects, names and likenesses/photographs are featured in the local media, the school website, and other school publications. (Including St. Mary's Facebook Page and Private Youtube Page) Parents who DO NOT wish the above items/information released to the media or published on the school website or other school

publications, must notify the school in writing.

No one may use the school name, logo, or motto on any type of social media or in any other way, e.g. putting the name on t-shirts, for example, without the express written permission of the Principal or Pastor.

## **SPORTS**

Students wishing to participate in St. Mary's Catholic School sponsored sports teams must submit a current year sports physical, signed by a physician, dated no earlier than June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

## **RIGHT TO AMEND**

**The principal reserves the right to amend this policy handbook. Amendments will be communicated to the parents in a timely manner.**

## **Updated Policies Due to COVID-19:**

### **5285**

#### **School Closures**

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

### **5375**

#### **On-Demand Transportation Services Policy**

On-demand transportation services (e.g., Uber, Lyft) are prohibited from transporting Archdiocesan students to and/or from Archdiocesan property unless a parent, grandparent, or guardian accompanies the student in the vehicle.

### **5325**

#### **Infectious Disease Policy**

The primary responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious diseases lies with individuals, families and public health authorities. Schools are not responsible for providing expert infectious disease advice or treat students; this is the role of medical practitioners and health authorities.

Attendance at any school may be denied to any student reasonably suspected of or diagnosed with a contagious or infectious disease that could make the child's attendance harmful to the welfare of all other students, faculty and staff.

Schools reserve the right to require a statement from the student's primary care physician authorizing the student's return to school. Schools will respect all students' privacy. Parents of other children attending the school may be notified that their child has been exposed to a communicable or infectious disease in a manner that avoids identifying the particular student identified with the disease to the maximum extent appropriate in each particular circumstance.

Local school procedures will include:

- Prevention techniques – hand washing education, coughing and sneezing education; hand sanitizers in classrooms; sanitizing wipes in classrooms for computers, desks, common areas, etc.; tissues in all rooms; sanitation procedures; and if appropriate, the mandated use of facial masks along with social distancing.
- Preparedness – Schools will comply with CDC, State Department of Health guidelines, and directives from the Office of Catholic Schools.
- Response – Schools will follow the Office of Catholic Schools policy for school closures (Policy 5285) and directives from State and Local (County and Municipal) jurisdictions. The Office of Catholic Schools will provide a written Reopening of Schools Plan specific to the infectious or communicable disease present.
- Recovery – Schools will publish a return to school procedure in accordance with directives from the Office of Catholic Schools which aligns to the Reopening of Schools Plan approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

Students who travel to Level 3 Nonessential Travel Zones or any location identified as a current Hot Spot for an infectious disease by the CDC may be required to quarantine for a period of 14-days. In the case of an identified pandemic or epidemic, the Superintendent of Schools reserves the right to require parents who have travelled to a Level 3 Nonessential Travel Zone (as identified by the CDC) to self-quarantine at home for 14-days before entering school property. This period of quarantine may also be required of students residing in the home.

**St. Mary's Catholic School Staff  
2019-2020**

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Mrs. Joselyn Giles	Pre-K3
Mrs. Katherine Avery	Pre-K4
Mrs. Beth Abbott	Kindergarten
Mrs. Kyser Pritchett	1st
Ms. Melanie Ferguson	2nd
Mrs. Susan Speed	3rd
Mrs. Amanda Fricks Mrs. Lindsey Lynn	4th
Mrs. Marti Miller	5th
Mrs. Julie McCormick	Middle School Social Studies/Religion
Mrs. Kelly Armstrong	Middle School Science
Mrs. Ann Marie Tillery	Middle School Math
Mrs. Martha Karmali	Middle School Literature/Grammar
Mrs. Therese Cox	Technology/ IT Director
Mrs. Megan Hunsaker	Media/Elementary Religion
Mrs. Gordon Powers	Art
Mrs. Leigh Ann Lundy	Physical Education/ Athletic Coordinator
Mrs. Gabriela Zini	Music
Ms. Towers Maddox	Spanish
Mrs. Kay Doss	Extended School Care Director/Classroom Parapro
Mrs. Melissa Johnson	Classroom Parapro
Mr. Andres Flores	Classroom Parapro
Mrs. Angela Vinson	Facilities Director
Mrs. Dee Brewer	Transportation
Ms. Robin Cole, LPN	Transportation
Dr. DeAnn Simon	School Nurse
Mrs. Christa Jackson	Counselor
Mrs. Rebecca Motes	Director of Development & Director of
Mrs. Terri Borchardt	Admissions Associate Development Director
Mrs. Lisa Mazur	Business Manager
Mrs. Jenny Rittgers	Receptionist
	Principal

All teachers and school staff have email: first initial, last name, smsrome.org  
ex.jrittgers@smsrome.org

***We hope this handbook will provide our community with the information, guidelines, and expectations needed to assist the school in accomplishing its mission. Only in working together can we truly achieve our goals. We are delighted to have you as a part of the Sant Mary's Catholic School Community!***

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**PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have received a copy of the 2020-2021 Saint Mary’s School Parent/Student Handbook. I will explain the rules and procedures contained in it to my child(ren). I understand that my family is bound by the rules and policies contained in this handbook.

Family Name: (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I/we agree with and support all that is outlined under expectations of students and parents/guardians.**

**I/we agree with and support all disciplinary standards of St. Mary’s Catholic School. I/we agree with and support all school policies.**

**I/we understand that the school has the right to amend policies. I further understand that I/we will be given written and e-mail notice of any policy change.**

**I/we realize the importance of strong parental support of all school policies and regulations, and understand and support the consequences that will result from a failure of compliance.**

**Please print and sign this page only and return it to your child’s grade level or homeroom teacher no later than August 13, 2020 if you cannot make it for orientation.**