



PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

Saint Mary Interparochial School

Fifth and Locust Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Phone: 215-923-7522

FAX: 215-923-8502

www.saintmarys.us

Dear Parents and Students,

The mission of Saint Mary Interparochial School is to challenge our diverse student body to grow morally, academically and socially into passionate, confident and Christ-centered leaders of the 21st century. To achieve our mission, we provide a comprehensive curriculum that integrates academic, technological, artistic, and cultural programming. Recognizing the unique qualities of every student, we build on a strong foundation to prepare students for an ever changing world. In partnership with parents and the community, we strive to foster an environment where students want to learn and see the benefit of their learning.

In choosing Saint Mary Interparochial school, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education. The Parent and Student Handbook reflects the policies of Saint Mary Interparochial for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement indicates your compliance with the policies of Saint Mary Interparochial School during the 2019-2020 school year.

The faculty and staff of Saint Mary Interparochial School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. Thank you for choosing Saint Mary Interparochial School.

Many blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayda Pugliese". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jayda Pugliese, M.Ed, ABD
Principal

Founded in 1782 to educate the children of middle class Philadelphians, Saint Mary Interparochial School exists today to teach children how to live and work as Catholic Christians in the twenty-first century. Saint Mary, an elementary school of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, assists children in finding their niche in today's world by cultivating their religious, academic, and service potential. All of this is accomplished within the context of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher, the foundation of all learning at Saint Mary Interparochial School.

Our school is part of a community of faith which includes the home, where parents and guardians are the primary educators. Within this community of faith, we hope to nourish the spiritual development of each child. Our strong belief in the Gospel message of Jesus allows this community of faith to develop. Through active worship and prayer, students and teachers work together to practice the lessons of Jesus. The spirit of Jesus allows us to live the Gospel message through our service to others in our school and our community.

Educating the whole child within this Gospel context is a task undertaken by Saint Mary's faculty and staff. The spiritual development of each child is the focus of each day's lessons and interactions. From this religious foundation, the academic and social pieces grow.

Saint Mary Interparochial School strives to provide an outstanding academic program for our students. The curriculum is based on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia guidelines and is further enhanced by the faculty to ensure that it meets the needs of our student population. The principal and faculty work together to determine which teaching strategies will maximize individual performance. We emphasize the teaching of basic skills, problem solving strategies and reading and writing across the curriculum. At Saint Mary, we want to provide each student with skills that will be the foundation for continued success as lifelong learners.

The Saint Mary Interparochial School faculty and staff are firmly rooted in our calling as Catholic educators. We believe in the message of Jesus and serve as role models for the students in conveying that message. Each of us view the school as an integral part of the larger Catholic Church and as such we regard ourselves as dynamic instruments who collaborate, support, and challenge one another. The members of our school community take a positive view of the efforts of one another and support those efforts through cohesive actions. The spirit of Saint Mary Interparochial School is one of living out our Baptismal call; to love, honor and serve God through His children.

Mission Statement:

Saint Mary Interparochial School challenges its diverse student body to grow morally, academically and socially, into passionate, confident, Christ-centered leaders of the 21st century.

History:

The rich academic and historic heritage of Saint Mary Interparochial School dates to the early days of Philadelphia, as Catholics and Protestants engaged in a spirited debate over educational practices. Founded in 1782 by the Jesuit fathers of old St. Joseph's Church, Saint Mary is known as "The Mother School of Catholic parochial education" and is credited with influencing Catholic educational patterns in this country.

Situated in Independence National Historical Park, Saint Mary is within walking distance of several key sites pivotal to our nation's founding, including Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Carpenter's Hall, the First Bank of the United States, and Washington Square, the location of the Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier. St. Mary served children from the early days of Philadelphia for more than a century before closing in 1902 after a devastating fire. In 1969, the school was re-opened by the Sisters of Notre Dame to serve a growing and diverse population of young students from all parts of Philadelphia. The school's historic associations extend to its parish churches as well. Saint Mary was originally the official parish school for Old St. Mary's Church, Old St. Joseph's Church and Holy Trinity Church, however, today it receives its unique inter-parochial status by receiving students from parishes across the region.

Philosophy:

Saint Mary Interparochial School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

1. To develop the total Christian personality by instilling in students a respect for life and reverence for Christian living
2. To develop within the school a strong religious educational program based on Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life
3. To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods such as small and large group instruction, departmental classes, and other tools for basic knowledge and formation; and
4. To aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities

It is the consensus of the faculty that every human being has a right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability, regardless of background or sex. In the early years, education is of the utmost importance because through education and guidance the children of today become the Catholic citizens of tomorrow.

Absences:

Regular school attendance is essential to a child's academic development. Parents and guardians must notify the school when their student is absent. **When your student is absent from school, a parent must call the office by 9:00 AM each day of the absence.** You may leave a message on voicemail at any time (215-923-7522) or send an email to schooloffice@saintmarys.us. A student who has been absent from school is required by Pennsylvania law and by school policy to bring a written note upon his/her return signed by a parent or guardian stating the reason for his/her absence. In lieu of a written parent note, an attending physician may fax a notification to the school office (215-923-8502). The notes are kept on file by the homeroom teacher during the entire school year.

For absences that extend three consecutive days, a physician's note is required. After nine (9) absences which are accumulated throughout the school year for illness related incidents, for which a parent writes an excuse note, the 10th absence for illness must be accompanied by a physician's note. All planned early dismissals must also have a written note or email, informing the school of the reason for the early dismissal. If the early dismissal is medically-related, the student should bring in a note from the physician's office the following day. In the absence of a physician's note, the early dismissal is not excused and will be recorded as an unexcused absence. For the safety of all students, all phone calls should be made through the main office unless otherwise directed. If students contact parents directly for early dismissal (using their personal cell phone, through student email, etc.) *without a teacher or principal consent*, they will receive a consequence for inappropriate use of technology. If a student sickness occurs during the school day, parents will be notified and the child may be picked up at the school office.

Any student with excessive absences, tardiness or early dismissals (10 or more) that do not have a doctor's note can be subject to a school disciplinary meeting which could result in academic probation, grade retention, or dismissal from Saint Mary Interparochial School. The school shall give ten days notice of intended disciplinary action. All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the principal, pastor delegate, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

If a student sickness occurs during the school day, parents will be notified and the child may be picked up at the school office. In order to arrange for assignments of children who are absent due to illness, please call the school office before 10:00 AM. This work may be picked up at the school office no earlier than 2:00 PM. It is the responsibility of the student to complete work and tests that have been missed due to an absence.

Academic Information:

Curriculum

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of Pennsylvania guidelines are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The entire curriculum for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is posted at <https://www.aop Catholicschools.org/elementary-schools/curriculum/>

Saint Mary Interparochial School offers students opportunities for growth in the following areas:

- English Language Arts
- Fine Arts
- Handwriting
- Mathematics
- Music
- Library Skills
- Physical Education
- Religion / Faith Formation
- Science
- Social Studies
- Spanish
- STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Eginigerring, Arts, Math)
- Technology
- Writing Skills

Academic Probation:

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two week improvement plan. At the end of the two week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. Students whose average is an F will not be allowed to participate in any sport, academic competition, or other related privileges until the grade has improved to a passing grade, effective at the distribution of progress reports and/or report cards.

Admission Information:

Nondiscriminatory Policy

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

Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by August 31st. Students will be conditionally accepted into Kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on space, displayed readiness on the Kindergarten entrance test and our “Kindergarten Readiness” Session.

Requirements include:

- Permission letter from Pastor giving authorization for child to attend St. Mary Interparochial School.
- Health Records
- Immunization Records
 - All students entering must have current immunizations. The only exception to the policy is in the event that a student has an illness that would compromise his/her life by being immunized. Documentation of a compromising condition, such as, but not limited to, leukemia must be presented prior to acceptance.
- Birth Certificate (original)
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Report Cards (if applicable)
- Standardized Test Results (if applicable)
- Record of IEP (if applicable) or evaluation
- Teacher letter of recommendation (strongly recommended but not required)

Students applying for Admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of current and past report cards, standardized test results and a teacher letter of recommendation. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at Saint Mary Interparochial School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student and a grade level placement test is part of the admission process.

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one trimester in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are academic, behavioral, and other related concerns, a student can be dismissed from Saint Mary Interparochial School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final.

Saint Mary Interparochial School is limited in its human capital resources and will make reasonable accommodations for learning differences when possible. Saint Mary Interparochial School cannot accommodate students who have significant learning differences. If after admission, the educational, behavioral, and/or medical needs of a student exceed what Saint Mary Interparochial School has the capacity to accommodate, the student may need to be separated from Saint Mary Interparochial School. This decision will be made in order for students to receive the appropriate educational, behavioral, and/or medical accommodations and modifications. If the decision to separate the student from Saint Mary Interparochial School is made by the school, the student's tuition due would be prorated. All separation actions are at the discretion of the principal, pastor delegate, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of Saint Mary Interparochial School will be accepted. Non-Catholic students are expected to attend all religious observances.

Allergy and Asthma Policies:

Saint Mary Interparochial School recognizes that an allergy is an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with allergies. This school encourages children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff and pupils. Teachers and new staff are also made aware of the policy. All staff who come into contact with children with allergies are provided with training on allergies from the school nurse who has had specialized training. Training is updated as needed.

- **Asthma Medication**

Immediate access to reliever inhalers is vital. Children are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler. Parents are asked to ensure that the school is provided with a labeled spare reliever inhaler. All inhalers must be labeled with the child's name.

- **Record Keeping**

At the beginning of each school year, or when a child joins Saint Mary Interparochial School, parents are asked to submit a child's medical record. From this information the school keeps its asthma registry which is available to all school staff. If medication changes in between times, parents are required to inform the school.

- **The School Environment**

The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favorable to children with asthma or allergies. As much as possible, the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma. Saint Mary Interparochial School is not a peanut-free school at this time.

- **Food Allergy Policy**

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

- **Classrooms**

Teachers must be made familiar with any Emergency Action Plan of students in their classes, and will respond to emergencies as per the emergency protocol documented in the Emergency Action Plan. In the event of a suspected allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history), the emergency medical services will be called immediately.

Information will be kept about students' food allergies in the classroom and in the substitute emergency folder, accessible by teachers, substitutes or other responsible adults. All teachers and substitutes will be educated about the risk of food allergies. A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent or guardian. Tables will be washed with soap and water following any food related events held in the classroom. Proper hand cleaning techniques will be taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food.

- **Field Trips**

Students with allergies who participate in school sponsored field trips may face challenges to their physical health. Saint Mary Interparochial School will make reasonable accommodations for all students and will inform field trip chaperones regarding a student's allergy issues. Every effort will be made to provide a safe learning experience for all students. A field trip generally occurs in a less controlled environment where allergen triggers may be present. In the event that a parent is concerned about a child's presence on a field trip due to his/her special health needs, a parent may choose to keep their child at home on the day of the field trip.

Birthday Observances:

We ask that parents who wish to celebrate their child's birthday or other special occasion with the class to please consult with the teacher before sending in treats to the classroom. Some children have food allergies and will not be served any given food or treats if cross contamination could be suspected. When sending in any food items, please consult with the teacher for specific directives. One recommendation for those with allergies is to send a small inedible trinket to celebrate your child's special event. Holidays can be overwhelming in classrooms and we ask again that classroom parents take turns providing snacks throughout the year so that there is not an excess of food in classrooms at any one time.

Blogs, Messaging, and Social Media:

Engagement with blogs, messaging and social media may result in disciplinary action if the content of the student or parent's social media includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, students, parents, or community members. Any inappropriate content posted, whether inside or outside of school, including but not limited to threats of violence, vulgar pictures, and other content deemed inappropriate may be grounds for immediate dismissal, regardless of previous disciplinary record. It is important to note that all online content has no statute of limitations; therefore, as long as a given student or parent is still current member of the school, disciplinary action will occur. No parent should open a social media account under the name of the school or a particular grade or organization, without prior permission from the school. A student or parent who chooses to create such an account may subject his/her child(ren) to significant disciplinary action and could result in dismissal from the school.

Buckley Amendment:

Saint Mary Interparochial School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts.

Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address.

Be advised that if a teacher is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will need to pay the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, parking, food, etc.).

Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Safe2Say Something:

Saint Mary Interparochial School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. As a school, we are committed to creating and sustaining a comprehensive coordinated effort to improve the overall safety and well-being of our students and educators. Recently a new initiative was passed in Pennsylvania called Act 44. This initiative is mandated in all schools within the state and is called "Safe2Say Something" (S2SS).

"Safe2Say Something" (S2SS) is an anonymous reporting system. It's a multi-faceted program that teaches students, teachers and administrators how to recognize the warning signs and signals within social media, especially, of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others. Secondly, the program hopes to encourage individuals to *Say Something* to a trusted adult OR use its anonymous reporting system. Verbal, written, or physical threats made against the well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats may face detention, suspension, and/or dismissal.

Buses:

The School District of Philadelphia provides St. Mary Interparochial School with free transportation for students in grades 1st through 8th. To ensure the safety of our students and the bus drivers, below you will find general information and rules for school bus transportation.

- Use only the bus and bus stop that is assigned. The school bus picks up students at pre-assigned locations along a defined route. The School District of Philadelphia and the bus company is responsible for all pick-up/drop off locations and bus routes.
- Orderly behavior is required at all times to insure the safety of all passengers. Riders should remain seated, facing front, when the bus is in motion. Riders are expected to keep their head and arms inside the bus at all times. Riders should not eat, drink, or chew gum without prior permission from the bus driver.
- Students are not permitted to change their assigned bus arrangement unless the school has prior written or verbal permission from a parent and/or guardian.
- Students will be held responsible for any damage which he/she may cause to the bus. This includes, but is not limited to, physical damage, graffiti and littering.
- Families should be at their bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to pick up and drop off. There are many factors that may affect the time a driver arrives at a given stop. Please be mindful that the bus company's policy is to drop off all students at their given bus stop, even if an adult may not be present.
- If your child is encountering an issue with another student on the school bus, the student and/or parent must follow these steps before contacting the school:
 1. Inform the bus driver of the concern and/or issue that is occurring.
 2. The bus driver must document this issue with an incident report ("write-up").
 3. Once the school receives documentation from the bus driver, the school is able to investigate and take further action, if needed.
 4. Infractions documented with incident reports/write-ups could result in the suspension or denial of transportation services.

Cafeteria:

The cafeteria is a place where good social skills can be developed. Here each student is expected to practice general rules of good manners – the same manners a child uses at home. Some simple rules of courteous behavior are:

- Observing good table manners
- Leaving the table and surrounding area clean and orderly.
- Remaining seated while eating and using “inside” voices to talk with friends at the table.
- Not wasting food.
- Being polite to the staff and any aides who work in the lunchroom.
- **No glass bottles.**
- **Soda is not permitted.**

Hot lunch is served on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from mid-September to mid-May. All students may purchase hot lunch. Orders are placed a full week in advance and must be accompanied by payment. Any lunches that have been forgotten may be left at the school office. Student’s name and grade should be written on the bag or box. We will notify you if your child is not eating the lunch you send in or the hot lunch that you purchase.

Pretzels are sold at recess each day. Juices are not permitted in the classrooms – bottled water only at recess. Once a month, cupcakes are sold to support our sports’ teams. When cupcakes are sold, pretzels are not sold that day.

Cell Phones and Smart Devices:

If a student has a cell phone, smart watch, or any other accessible device, all devices must be kept in the student's book bag either on silent mode or turned off. At times, students may be given permission to use their device in school for an activity, but it is strictly at the teacher’s discretion. If a student is found contacting any individuals (including parents) via their device without prior permission, they will be subject to disciplinary action.

Cheating:

Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat, or help another student cheat, will receive a failing grade and face possible detention, and/or suspension. A student athlete or student involved in extracurricular activities who is involved in cheating will be unable to participate in sports and/or extra-curricular competitions.

Child Abuse Laws:

Saint Mary Interparochial School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Pennsylvania. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS).

Conduct:

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to comply with school policies, which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

Saint Mary Interparochial School implements a progressive discipline model. The goal of progressive discipline is prevention of a recurrence of negative behavior by helping students learn from their mistakes. Essential to the implementation of progressive discipline is helping students who have engaged in unacceptable behavior to:

- Understand why the behavior is unacceptable and the harm it has caused
- Understand what they could have done differently in the same situation
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Be given the opportunity to learn prosocial strategies and skills to use in the future
- Understand the progression of more stringent consequences if the behavior recurs

Saint Mary Interparochial School reserves the right to impose consequences for inappropriate behavior that takes place off campus and outside school hours. Thus, inappropriate use of technology, may subject the student to consequences.

Inappropriate use includes harassment, use of school name, remarks directed to or about teachers, offensive communications and safety threats. Saint Mary

Interparochial School does not actively monitor student use of technology outside of school. While our filtering system establishes some parameters for appropriate use within our building, students and parents/guardians are primarily responsible for the appropriate and ethical use of technology, especially in the home. We are partners with parents in their children's education. We will notify parents of concerns about student life or behavior, even when not in school.

When the school addresses inappropriate conduct, the school evaluate the totality of the circumstances surrounding the conduct. The following facts will be considered prior to determining the appropriate disciplinary measures:

- The nature, severity, and scope of the behavior
- The student's age and maturity
- The circumstances/context in which the conduct occurred
- The frequency and duration of the behavior
- The student's disciplinary record (including the nature of any prior misconduct, the number of prior instances of misconduct, and the disciplinary and guidance intervention measures applied for each)

Consequences for such actions may include but are not limited to, warnings, detention, suspension, and dismissal from Saint Mary Interparochial School. All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the principal, pastor delegate, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

Conduct (Consequences):

- **Detention**

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. For lunch detentions, parents may or may not be notified due to the level of severity. For after school detentions, parents will be provided with a detention form with written notification of the detention. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the teacher who monitors the detention. Detention is mandatory and parents/guardians must make the appropriate arrangements with the teacher.

- **Suspension**

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work in the principal's office. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but failing grades will be recorded for this work.

- **Expulsion / Dismissal**

If a student is recommended for expulsion/dismissal, families will receive prior written notice as well as an opportunity to meet with the school about the given issue. All decisions regarding expulsion or dismissal from Saint Mary Interparochial School are at the discretion of the principal, pastor delegate, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

- Students whose parents have violated the Parents as Partners agreement in this handbook may also result in having their children dismissed from Saint Mary Interparochial School.

Counselor:

A certified counselor serves the needs of students and parents through class and individual consultation. The counselor may also be used for conflict resolution.

Custodial Rights:

It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. It is a great benefit to the child to have both parents involved in his/her education.

Drugs and Alcohol:

Students who possess drugs and/or alcohol on school property or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion.

Emergency Drills:

Fire Drill:

Pennsylvania State Law requires that fire drills be held monthly. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Close windows and doors;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
4. Stand in two rows, facing away from the building;
5. Return to building when signal is given.

Lockdown Drill:

Lockdown drills are held every other month. The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the lockdown signal is given, “St. Mary, Pray for Us”
St. Mary, Pray for Us”, “St. Mary, Pray for Us”
2. Close windows, doors, and door shades;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly;
4. Sit still and quiet, out of view until lockdown is lifted.

Shelter-in-Place Drill:

Shelter-in-place drills are held periodically. The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file;
3. Sit, face wall, and put hands over head;
4. Return to the classroom when signal is given.

Evacuation Drill and Plan:

Saint Mary Interparochial School has implemented a “evacuation crisis plan” in case of an emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to one of three secure designated locations:

1. Old Saint Mary’s Church
252 S 4th St, Philadelphia, PA 19106
2. Old Saint Joseph’s Church
321 Willings Alley, Philadelphia, PA 19106
3. Independence Visitor Center
599 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19106
4. An alternative site may be chosen if the situation warrants

Field Trips:

Field trips are encouraged to expand the curriculum and add enrichment to the school program. The school's geographical location gives access to many cultural, social, and historical sites. Written permission from parents, including insurance information, is required for children to participate in trips.

We encourage parents/guardians to give blanket permission for walking field trips in our immediate neighborhood. While we wish all children to benefit from these trips, the principal and the homeroom teacher reserves the right to deny permission to leave the school building to any student who has demonstrated a history of non-cooperation with authority.

Field Trip Reminders

- A field trip is a privilege and not a right.
- Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
- Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience to ensure a successful learning opportunity.
- All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
- Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
- A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. If verbal permission is accepted, a signed permission slip is due in the office twenty-four hours after verbal confirmation.
- Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
- All money collected for the field trip are non-refundable.

- Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
- Parents who are “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Saint Mary Interparochial School risk management insurance company insures the “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students.
- Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring preschool or school-age siblings on the field trip.
- All chaperones must be 18 years of age or older.
- Parents/Chaperones are asked not to bring “treats” for the children on a field trip without consulting the teacher.

Financial Obligations:

Tuition Schedule 2019-2020

Kindergarten

Actual Tuition Rate per child..... \$7,000.00

First Grade - Eighth Grade

Actual Tuition Rate per child..... \$5,400.00

Financial assistance is available and we encourage all families to apply for aid, even if you feel as if you are not eligible. Financial aid forms may be completed online at:

BLOCS (Business Leadership Organized for Catholic Schools):

<https://blocs.org/scholarships-2/>

FACTS Grant and Aid Application:

<https://online.factsmgmt.com/aid>

Children's Scholarship Fund of Philadelphia:

<https://www.csphiladelphia.org/scholarships/apply/>

Tuition Reminders:

- All tuition should be paid up-to-date according to the tuition schedule that works best for you and your family:

Tuition Schedule Options:

- Pay in Full (by June 30, 2020)
 - Biannually: 2 Months: July, January through FACTS only
 - Quarterly: 4 Months: July, October, January, April through FACTS only
 - Monthly: 10 months: July - April through FACTS only
- School records (e.g., Report Cards, TerraNova scores, letters of recommendation, etc.) are unable to be released to schools and families whose tuition is not paid up-to-date.
 - If your family is currently experiencing financial difficulties, and are unable to keep up with your current tuition schedule, please contact the school immediately.
 - If a given family does not make a well documented effort to satisfy outstanding tuition balances (e.g., applying for financial aid, creating payment arrangements, communicating with the school about financial difficulties, etc.), they will be given written notice that if their account is not satisfied by the end of the trimester, they could be dismissed.

Withdrawal/Transfer Policy:

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawing from school. This enables the school to prepare the necessary information and settle accounts.
- Registered students who withdraw before the first full day of school are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw between the first day of school and December 31st are responsible for 1/2 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw after December 31st are responsible for the full tuition amount.
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance. There are no exceptions to this policy.
- A return fee of \$25.00 will be assessed to your account for any returned tuition payment.

Grading Scale:

Kindergarten Grading Scale:

3	Achieving	(Applying Independently)
2	Growing	(Progressing Satisfactorily)
1	Emerging	(Beginning to Develop)
N/A	Not Assessed	

1st Grade - 3rd Grade Grading Scale

O	Consistently produces work of high quality and applies learned skills
VG	Regularly produces work of high quality and applies learned skills
G	Frequently produces quality work and applies learned skills
S	Produces work of satisfactory quality and usually applies learned skills
I	Produces work of inconsistent quality and needs frequent reteaching
U	Produces work of unsatisfactory quality

4th Grade - 8th Grade Grading Scale

All grades range from 100% - 0%. Although students may earn a grade lower than 60%, no grade lower than 60% will be displayed on the report card.

Harassment:

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

Home and School Association:

All parents are invited to join the Home and School Association. General meetings are held six times a year at the school. The organization aids in educating parents about school programs, special events, and participation in the school community. Discussion of general school issues is encouraged. Committee chairpersons are always in search of members. Some examples are fundraising, socials, public relations, etc. Criteria for Home and School executive board candidates:

- Candidate must have one or more students currently enrolled in the school;
- Candidate must be a dues-paying member of the organization;
- Candidate must have a letter from his/her religious leader indicating that he/she is registered and active in the church;
- Candidate must have a new clearance from Child Protective Services and the PA State Police or the FBI if not born in PA;
- Candidate must write a letter stating that he or she is in agreement with the mission and philosophy of the school;
- Candidate must make a written declaration by May 1 to the nominating committee of the Home and School that he or she would like to hold office.
- All other paperwork should be completed by May 31.

Homework

Homework, which includes both written and study assignments, as well as special projects, is intended to expand and reinforce learning concepts presented in class. Assuming the responsibility for completing homework assignments is part of the maturing process of a growing child. In the beginning years, the parent must accept total responsibility for the quality of the home assignments. As the child progresses into grades 3, 4 and beyond, he/she should begin gradually to assume greater personal responsibility until he/she arrives at the stage where he/she accepts full control and therefore responsibility for the work assigned. Parental interest and care about progress should never disappear.

The following is a guide for how much time should be allotted for homework assignments:

- Kindergarten – 10 minutes
- Grades 1 and 2 – 20 minutes
- Grades 3 and 4 – 40 minutes
- Grades 5 and 6 – 60 minutes
- Grades 7 and 8 – 80 minutes

Homework due to Vacations/Planned Absences

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Teachers are not required to provide students with work prior to planned absences, if adequate notice is not given. All parents should contact the teacher at least two weeks before the planned absences to see what is the best solution for the missed content. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations.

Homework Policy Due to Illness

When a student is **absent for three or more days**, a parent may call the school office before 10:00 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM. Students may also, receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school. Students will be allowed up to one day for each day of absence due to illness. For example, a student who was absent three days should be given three school days to complete the missed work.

Immunizations

All students enrolled in Saint Mary Interparochial School must have current immunizations. The only exception to the policy is in the event that a student has an illness that would compromise his/her life by being immunized. Documentation of a compromising condition, such as, but not limited to, leukemia must be presented prior to the first day of the school year. Parents and guardians cannot claim religious reasons for non-immunization. The Catholic Church recommends that your family be vaccinated and protected.

Items Brought To School

Saint Mary Interparochial School is not responsible for loss or damage to any items brought to school by a student. This includes, but is not limited to books, toys, scooters, bicycles, and electronic devices.

Library

The school has a well-equipped library and media center. Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and reading, as follows:

1. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition.
2. Books damaged or lost must be paid for by the student before any other materials may be checked out.
3. Children in grades 1-8 may check out library materials; parents of kindergarten students are encouraged to visit the library with their children to check out books.
4. All parents are encouraged to visit the library and select books for their children to read at home.
5. Parents and students are encouraged to browse the online public access catalog to select reading material for school projects and recreational reading.
6. All students should have a library card from the Free Library of Philadelphia, to take advantage of the many educational and recreational resources offered at local branches and online.

Lost and Found

Any items left in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school secretary to be placed in the Lost and Found basket. **Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 15 days. After 15 days, any items are donated to charity.** Students who lose a library book, textbook or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy. Parents are to be advised that many items are actually placed in the Lost and Found by the student when the student would like a different item. Parents are encouraged to look for their child's item in the Lost and Found box.

Medication

If a child must take any medication in school which is prescribed by a doctor, that medication must be sent to the School Nurse in the container received from the pharmacy and must have on its label the following information:

- b. Child's name
- c. Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
- d. Frequency
- e. Dose
- f. Date

All non-prescription medication can be administered by the school nurse with prior written permission.

National Parks:

One of the most beautiful and serene sites that surround St. Mary Interparochial School is the garden of Independence Historical Park. They are tended by the Park Rangers and the Horticultural Society. The gardens contain not just beautiful flowers but also some plants with historical significance. Varieties of roses and trees are descendants of plants brought to Philadelphia centuries ago. It is a matter of great importance, then, that we work to preserve this gift.

In that spirit:

- Any student using the gardens between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. must be in the care of his/her parent or a teacher.
- Absolutely no organized games may be played in the gardens.
- Students may not go into the plantings or bushes when permitted in the gardens. They must stay on the sidewalks and grassy areas. No paper or trash may be left behind after an authorized use of the gardens. Any official activity requires a permit from the Park Rangers.

Off-Campus Conduct:

The administration of Saint Mary Interparochial School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in keeping with the expectations of students during the course of the school day. This off campus behavior includes, but is not limited to cyber-bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, defamatory social media/blog posts against the school, students, parents or community members and threats toward school, students, parents or community members. All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the principal, pastor delegate, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

Office Records:

Parents and guardians are requested to notify the school office in writing or by email of any change of address, custody, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, email addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

Parents As Partners

As partners in the educational process at Saint Mary Interparochial School, we ask all parents and guardians:

To set rules, times, and limits so that your child

- Gets to bed early on school nights;
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time;
- Has lunch and a nutritional snack every day

To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;

To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;

To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;

To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;

To meet all financial obligations to the school;

To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;

To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;

To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;

To support the religious and educational goals of the school;

To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;

To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;

To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems;

To refrain from posting negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration on social media;

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

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Saint Mary Interparochial School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (K-8), your child needs constant support from both parents / guardians and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child's teacher at home will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent.

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

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to achieve his/her personal best.

Promotion Policy/Retention/Transfer Policy:

Advancement to the next grade in Saint Mary Interparochial School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The teacher and administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as a requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally. Students may also be **transferred** to the next grade. A student who is transferred to another grade may not be allowed to continue as a student at Saint Mary Interparochial School, but will not be retained.

Reception of Sacraments of Initiation:

Saint Mary Interparochial is an Archdiocesan elementary school and is governed by the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Current policy for reception of sacraments states: "Individuals are to receive their First Holy Communion and Confirmation in their own parish Church." Exceptions may be made for private and special education schools. Since we are an Archdiocesan elementary school, not a parish or private or special education school, we are not able to apply for an exception.

We take the responsibility of preparing students for their reception of the sacraments of Initiation - Holy Eucharist and Confirmation - very seriously, but children will receive these sacraments at their home parishes in the loving environment of their worshiping community. Parents are asked to notify school after your child has received these sacraments for the first time.

Report Cards/Progress Reports:

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be given three (3) times during the academic school year.

Progress Reports will be given mid-way between each grading period.

School Hours:

Kindergarten: 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM

Grades 1st - 8th: 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

(Students not in their homeroom by 8:00 AM are considered tardy)

At Saint Mary Interparochial School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. Various classes invite parent involvement or visitation on particular occasions. The school doors are open for students at 7:40 AM. Students arriving at that time will go to their classroom. Morning prayers and announcements begin at 8:00 AM.

Prayer and afternoon announcements begin at 2:50 PM each day. Dismissal immediately follows. Please check the school calendar and weekly newsletter for early dismissal dates.

As a reminder, three (3) tardies or three (3) early withdrawals is considered a one-half day absence. Excessive tardies will have a direct impact on a student's academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade. Please reference the absences section for more detailed information.

Saint Mary Interparochial School offers an after school CARES Enrichment program. Students who are enrolled in the program must pay a deposit at the time of registration. A fee is charged for students remaining in the program after 6:00 PM. Please contact the CARES director for a list of current prices and policies.

Students who are not picked up by 6:00 PM (within the CARES enrichment program) will receive:

1. A phone call or in person verbal reminder of our CARES policies.
2. Dismissal from the CARES enrichment program.
3. A registered letter reminding parents/guardians that failure to pick up your child on time constitutes as neglect and Child Protective Services may be notified.

School Office Hours

The school office is open on all school days from **7:00 AM – 3:00 PM.**

School Property

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, building, or personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks rented by the student must have a proper book cover. No writing in textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

School Safety:

Saint Mary Interparochial School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. In the event that the school suspects danger to a student or the school community, the school reserves the right to call the police.

All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the principal, pastor delegate, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

Search:

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

Service Projects:

The purpose of the stewardship program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 is to provide students with the opportunity to make a difference in our Church and surrounding communities through various service and support programs. Each grade will participate in a pre-planned fall and spring service project. A parent coordinator will be assigned to each class and oversee the organization and participation of each project. All grades have been assigned a specific area of stewardship emphasis. **Grades K through 3** will be organizing events directed towards helping other children. Projects in **grades 4 and 5** will emphasize the sick and elderly of our community, and the **6th through 8th grades** will participate in projects directed toward the hungry and homeless.

Sexting:

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate text, email, photos and/or videos on electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion. In accordance with the law, the Philadelphia Police Department will be notified.

Standardized Testing:

The TerraNova is a series of nationally recognized standardized tests that assess achievement in reading, mathematics, and other core subjects. Students take the TerraNova in grades 3 through 7.

Student Records:

Saint Mary Interparochial School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the U.S. Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school. Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the school office. All forms must be submitted to the school office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. When transferring, it is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided by the courts with the school of choice. **No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial responsibility has not been met.**

Summer Homework (“Save Our Skills”)

Saint Mary Interparochial School wants to ensure that your child retains the academic skills acquired throughout the school year. Therefore, all students are required to complete summer homework for the grade in which they are entering. It is recommended that students complete their homework weekly throughout the summer. Students will be assigned summer reading, content-specific review activities, and project-based learning assignments in ELA, Math, and Religion.

Telephone:

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from the school secretary. Students must submit a note from their teacher. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

Title IX:

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

Uniform Guidelines:

The school uniform is to be worn by all students, grades K to 8, starting on the first day of school in September until the last day of school in June.

Fall/Spring Uniform [Optional] (Opening day until October 31 – Easter until last day)

Boys:

Navy Blue Walking Shorts with black belt
White knit golf shirt with logo
White socks (with shorts only)
White sneakers (tie or no tie)

Girls:

Navy Blue Walking Shorts with black belt
White knit golf shirt with logo
White socks (with shorts only)
White sneakers (tie or no tie)

OR

OR Navy blue pants with black belt
White knit golf shirt with logo
Black, navy or maroon socks
Black or navy dress shoes (no tie or tie)
[Loafers are recommended / no boots allowed]

Plaid Skirt / Skort (**Grades 5-8 only**)
White knit golf shirt with logo
Black, navy or maroon knee socks (w/skirt)
Black or navy dress shoes (no tie or tie)
[Loafers or Mary Janes are recommended]
No boots

***Golf polo shirt must have the school logo, “St. Mary Interparochial”
Bottoms of shoes should be rubber to ensure safety during play on the roof.**

Winter Uniform:

Boys:

Navy blue pants with black belt
White shirt with plaid tie (or plaid bowtie)
OR white turtleneck
Prescott red sweater or sleeveless vest
Black, navy or maroon socks
Black or navy dress shoes (no tie or tie)
[Loafers are recommended / no boots allowed]

Girls:

Plaid Jumper (K-8)
Plaid Skirt / Skort (**Grades 5-8 only**)
White blouse or white turtleneck
Prescott red sweater or sleeveless vest
Black, navy or maroon knee socks or tights
Black or navy dress shoes (no tie or tie)
[Loafers or Mary Janes are recommended]

Students in grades 5 – 8 may wear a black sweater or sleeveless vest if they wish.

Gym Uniform:

Maroon shorts and tee shirt with St. Mary Storm logo
Maroon sweatpants and sweatshirt with St. Mary Storm logo
White socks and white sneakers (tie or no tie)

Visitors

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Visitors may be asked to show identification in the form of a driver's license or other government issued identification. Parents who volunteer to serve lunch or who volunteer in another capacity in the school may not drop in to a classroom to see their child during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

Volunteers

All individuals who volunteer in the school must complete the Volunteer Sign-Up sheet and will be asked to complete a series of mandated background checks. All volunteers are expected to dress appropriately. Clothing should be modest and neat. The main responsibility of a volunteer is to assist the administration or teachers. **For this reason, pre-school siblings are not allowed to accompany parent volunteers to school for meetings, to serve lunches, to assist with class parties, or to decorate bulletin boards.**

Weather Emergencies

Saint Mary Interparochial School will email, call and text you with any announcements of closing, late arrival, or early dismissal. It is imperative that we have accurate and current email and phone contact information for you and your emergency contacts. Please listen to the message before calling school.

If it starts to snow in the evening or in the early morning hours:

- Turn on KYW Newsradio (1060 AM) in the morning at 6:00 a.m., or check St. Mary's website.
- If the announcement is that ALL PUBLIC AND PHILADELPHIA ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED, we are CLOSED.
- If the announcement is that ALL PUBLIC AND PHILADELPHIA ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS ARE OPEN, then we are OPEN.

If snow starts after the children are in school:

- Parents may pick up their children at any time. Call school (215) 923-7522 to let us know that you are coming.
- Listen to KYW Newsradio (1060AM) or www.KYW1060.com to hear if the schools are closing early.
- If school buses take the children home early, we will make every effort to call you. You and your child should have an emergency plan in the event of early dismissal.

Withdrawal of Students

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare the necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another school until your account has been settled.

Right to Amend

Saint Mary Interparochial School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the communication folder or through email communication.