

PARENT STUDENT HANDBOOK



OFFICE HOURS
MON-FRI
7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.



- 📍 2211 E Lakeview Drive
Johnson City, TN 37601
- 📞 (423) 282-3397
- 📠 (423) 282-0224
- 🌐 www.school.stmarysjc.org
- 📘 St. Mary's Catholic School,
Johnson City, TN
- 📺 #SMSJCTN

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DIOCESE OF KNOXVILLE

Mission Statement

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Knoxville prepare SCHOLARS, LEADERS, and SAINTS.

Vision Statement

Empowered by the Holy Spirit and recognizing the vital ministry of Catholic education to the future of the Church and nation, we will provide a learning environment that emphasizes quality education and spiritual growth for all.



SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Beginning over a century ago, St. Mary's Catholic Church had a humble start in downtown Johnson City. Deeply embedded in the history of Johnson City, St. Mary's Church has contributed to the formation of the community since 1888. In 1911, the Sisters of Mercy from Nashville arrived to open St. Mary's Catholic School in the old house at the top of a hill overlooking Johnson City. In 1954, a school building and convent were built on that site.

The school has continued to grow and change over the years. Progress can be seen in the addition of new grades and the construction of new facilities. In 1988 the seventh grade was added followed by the addition of the eighth grade in 1989. The most significant move was made in the fall of 1990 when St. Mary's relocated to Lakeview Drive. A new school, worship center, and rectory were constructed.

It is the hope and prayer of the administration that our heritage will enable us to continue to convey the same message of hope and deep faith that has kept St. Mary's Church alive and growing as a vibrant faith community.

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint parents and students at St. Mary's Catholic School with our philosophy and goals and to provide helpful information to foster cooperation with efforts and objectives set by school personnel. More detailed information regarding school operation and student rules and regulations is contained in the St. Mary's Catholic School / Faculty Handbook. The Principal retains the right to amend policies contained herein. If changes are made, parents and students will be notified immediately.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Christ is the foundation of the Church's whole educational endeavor. Catholic schools present to their membership the principles of the Gospel and the values of Christ as their educational norm, internal foundation, and final goal.

Catholic schools provide the fullest and best opportunity for the realization of this goal. The Catholic school is committed to the development of the whole person since, in Christ, the perfect person, all human values find their meaning. This development of the full person is realized through relational and inter-relational experiences. Such opportunities provide for and motivate the building and living of a faith community which are the prime, explicit goals of the Catholic school.

Because growth in faith is central to the purpose of the Catholic school, it is primarily in such a school that children and young people experience learning and living fully integrated in the light of faith. "This integration of religious truth and values with life distinguishes the Catholic school from other schools." (*To teach as Jesus did*)

This "wholeness" approach to learning and living, culture and faith is brought about not only by its unique program of studies but more importantly, by the presence of educators who express and exemplify this integrated means of learning and living in their private and professional lives.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Mission Statement

Anchored in love, St. Mary's Catholic School exists to promote Gospel values, academic excellence, and service to others.

Vision Statement

St. Mary's Catholic School, as a Christian learning community, is led by the love, acceptance, and caring expressed in the life of Jesus Christ. We encourage our students to be life-long learners with compassionate hearts and a deep commitment to serving others.

Belief Statement

The Catholic Christian community of St. Mary's Catholic School believes:

Each child is a gift from God endowed with unique gifts, talents, and abilities.

The home, school, church, and community support the total educational experience of the child, with the parents having the primary role.

A superior academic curriculum based on the needs of diverse learners stimulates students intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually.

Students recognize and respect diverse beliefs, abilities, and the cultures of others, becoming global citizens well prepared for our ever-changing world. Daily prayer and weekly liturgy are essential to our school climate.

The school community models a safe, tolerant, and peaceful atmosphere where self-esteem can flourish.

We demonstrate our Catholic Christian values by offering our support and service to the community.

PASTOR

The Pastor is the spiritual leader of the parish faith community and of the Christian Educational Community within the parish and St. Mary's Catholic School. While he is not involved as a staff member in the administrative details of the school, his communication with the school staff makes it possible for his ideals and ideas to be reflected in the school's structure, operation, and programs.

PRINCIPAL

The instructional leader of St. Mary's Catholic School is the Principal. She is directly responsible for the administration, supervision, and structure of the school and is responsible for policy implementation. The Principal assumes leadership for creating an environment which fosters healthy relationships with teachers, staff, students, parents, parish staff, and the local community. She is responsible to the Pastor in the administration of the school.



SECTION 2

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

CURRICULUM

Core subjects taught at St. Mary's Catholic School are religion, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. The curriculum also includes physical education, technology, art, and music.

Religious Instruction

All students will take part in classroom religious instruction and participate in a weekly liturgy conducted by the priests of St. Mary's Church. Each class, grades PreK–8th, has the privilege of being responsible to plan for a Mass. This includes the hymns to be used, petitions, and special offertory gifts.

They may also participate as cantors, lectors, and altar servers. Parents are encouraged to attend the children's Mass and morning prayer which includes the Cube of Love.

PreK

A full day PreK program for children who are three to five years old by August 15th of each new school year. Emphasis is on making the child's first experience with school successful and happy while maintaining developmentally appropriate curriculum. Students are encouraged to work and create independently and in a group setting. Religion, physical education, library, art, music, and science are also included. A computer literacy program for grades PreK–8th in a multimedia, networked PC computer lab.

Kindergarten

A full day Kindergarten program for children who are five years old by August 15th of each new school year. Emphasis is on making the child's first experience with school successful and happy. Students are encouraged to work and create independently and in a group setting. In addition to the core curriculum, studies in religion, physical education, library, art, music, and science are also included. A computer literacy program for grades PreK–8th grades in a multimedia, networked PC computer lab.

Grades 6th–8th

Strong traditional core curriculum in religion, language arts (emphasis on literature, writing, and vocabulary), math (including algebra), science, social studies, music, art, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics). The fully developed physical education curriculum includes a variety of sports and overall physical fitness. Student's leadership skills are encouraged in Student Council and other extracurricular and service activities. A computer literacy program for grades PreK–8th in a multimedia, networked PC computer lab.

Supplementing the core-curriculum, St. Mary's Catholic School affords students with a myriad

of opportunities for cultural, artistic, and social enrichment through various on-campus and off-campus experiences. School sports teams include wrestling, cross-country and Kids Run The Nation. All other sports played through Johnson City Parks & Recreation. St. Mary's Catholic School is a Member of TSAA. Service projects and charity work are an integral part of St. Mary's Catholic School.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments may include a continuation of work done during the day as a means of learning / retention, reading of material in preparation for class, study of material covered in class, and research projects which require a longer period of time for completion.

Students should expect to spend, on average, the amount of time listed below on homework based on the student's grade level. This recommended average does not include studying for tests and AR reading.

PreK	none
K-2	15 to 30 minutes
Grade 3	30 to 45 minutes
Grades 4 & 5	1 hour
Grade 6	1 hour to 1.5 hours
Grades 7 & 8	1.5 to 2 hours

These time allotments for homework must, of necessity, be flexible. All children vary in their ability to perform any task. Parents are urged to help their child realize that study and review of assignments are as vital as any written work. If a child chronically exceeds the amount of time listed when doing homework, please contact the teacher. If after speaking with the teacher, the problem persists, please contact the Principal.

PROMOTIONS & RETENTIONS

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social, and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering retention are:

- 1 indifference or lack of effort on the part of a capable student
- 2 physical or social immaturity
- 3 frequent or long absences
- 4 academic deficiency

It is evident that no hard-fast rule can be made to cover all cases on non-promotion. Each individual case is to be judged on its own merits. In the last analysis, the ultimate decision in regard

to non-promotion must be a joint one between the Principal and an academic panel, based on concrete data. Refer to the *Diocesan Policy on Absences* (Appendix A, page 28).

RECORDS & RECORDS RELEASE

School records are kept on file in the school office. If address or telephone numbers change, the office should be notified immediately. Cumulative records are available for parents to review upon request. When a child transfers to another school, copies of all records of his/her progress will be sent to that school. A parent or legal guardian must sign the *Diocesan Request for Record Release* form before the school can transfer academic or health records; Academic records and report cards will not be released until all tuition and fees are paid in full and school property (i.e., textbooks, library books, etc.) has been paid for or returned.

REPORT CARDS & INTERIM REPORTS

For grades K-8th, report cards are issued online at the end of each of the nine-week grading periods.

Letter grades or number grades represent, to the extent possible, the academic achievement of the student. Grades are also given for conduct and effort. The grades for each period are based on different forms of assessment such as, but not limited to, daily work, assignments, and tests.

Grades are always available online through RenWeb.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Every student will periodically be taught by a substitute. All substitute teachers are required to successfully complete the *VIRTUS: Protecting God's Children* training prior to being asked to substitute at St. Mary's Catholic School. The most common reason for using substitutes occurs when the classroom teacher is ill. However, substitutes are also called in when a teacher takes a personal leave day, attends a professional conference, or has a family emergency. Students are expected to be extra courteous to substitute teachers. Any classroom misconduct will be dealt with immediately.

TESTING

Each Spring, all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Knoxville administer a series of standardized tests (Iowa Test of Basic Skills). These tests are administered as a means of assessing each child's progress and abilities thereby improving the instructional program as it relates to the child as an individual and to the class as a whole. Testing is for grades 1st–8th. Students who miss testing will be tested at the discretion of the Principal.

STAR (reading and math) is administered three times per year in the computer lab. ACRE is administered in 5th and 8th grade religion classes.



SECTION 3

ADMISSION CRITERIA & POLICIES / PROCESS

No Catholic child shall be denied admission to a Catholic school because of the parent's inability to pay tuition (Diocese of Knoxville Policy #1060). St. Mary's Catholic School admits students after evaluation of the following criteria: Class size, admission priorities, operating budget, age requirement, class make-up, pre-existing concerns, and proper documentation.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

ADMISSION PRIORITY

Students will be registered at St. Mary's Catholic School in the following order:

- 1 Current students
- 2 Siblings of current students
- 3 Members of St. Mary's Church
- 4 Catholic non-parishioners
- 5 Non-Catholic students

CATHOLIC TUITION RATE

The cost of tuition for Catholic students is shared between the parents (tuition) and St. Mary's Church (subsidy). For parishes without schools, the Knoxville Diocesan Policy #2110 states that parishes shall pay to the school in which their children are educated the difference between the cost of education and tuition. In order for Catholic families to receive the parish rate of tuition, each family must adhere to the following criteria:

- Parents must be registered members and maintain an active status in St. Mary's Church
- Children and their Catholic parents must attend Holy Mass weekly and other Holy Days of Obligation, as confirmed by their parish priest
- Parents must contribute to their parish, as appropriate for circumstances of parents; time, talent, and treasure

If a family is Catholic, but not meeting these criteria, they will not be eligible for parish assistance.

POLICY TO ADMIT NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS

Non-Catholic students will be accepted on a space available basis as determined by the admission priorities of the school. Returning non-Catholic students in good standing are automatically counted in the class rolls for the next year upon return of their registration packet and registration fee. Re-registration and fees are requested in Spring. St. Mary's Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made available to students at the school.

STUDENTS JOINING OUR ST. MARY'S FAMILY

To ensure that St. Mary's Catholic School can best serve all its students, the following criteria will be considered regarding students transferring into St. Mary's Catholic School:

- Academic history
- Conduct history
- Attendance history

A screening is done for the review of the Principal and teachers. Each applicant's history and situation will be carefully evaluated on an individual basis. No student will be accepted until all documentation from his/her previous school

is submitted to St. Mary's Catholic School and reviewed.

Individual readiness screening for PreK and Kindergarten is required and administered by St. Mary's Catholic School staff. Academic Placement Screening is administered for new students grades 1st-8th by St. Mary's Catholic School staff.

DOCUMENTATION

In order to process a student's application, the following must be provided:

- Completed Admission Application
- Copy of Baptismal Certificate
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Copy of Custodial Agreement, if applicable
- Copy of student's most recent standardized test score, if applicable
- Copy of student's most recent and previous school year's progress report / report card
- Copy of student's Special Education file, if applicable
- Any other pertinent information

Failure to submit all of the necessary documentation slows the application process. Please submit all the necessary information when submitting the application. Failure to provide pertinent information may result in the student being denied admission.

CHILD CUSTODY

Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the Principal's office. For the safety of your child, this will be shared with faculty and staff and kept in strict confidence. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known.

WITHDRAWAL PROCESS

When a student is withdrawn during the school year, the following steps should be completed.

- 1** Notify the Principal in writing of the effective date of withdrawal.
- 2** Contact the school office at 423-282-3397 to assure that all accounts (tuition, cafeteria, and AfterCare) are paid in full and all textbooks and library books are returned to the school. This step must be completed before records are released to the new school.
- 3** Sign the *Authorization for Release of School Records* form at St. Mary's Catholic School or at the new school the student will be attending.

- 4** A parent exit interview may be requested; however, parents are under no obligation to participate.



SECTION 4

AFTERCARE PROGRAM

GENERAL INFORMATION

St. Mary's Catholic School is pleased to have a State of Tennessee accredited AfterCare program. This is a service provided for families who do not have someone at home between school dismissal and 5:30 p.m.

The AfterCare program is available from 3:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and every Wednesday from 2:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. AfterCare is not available on days when the school is not in session, closed due to inclement weather, observed holidays, early dismissal days, and staff development days. Reminder announcements are always posted on the school website as well as in the weekly *Family Bulletin*.

Students who stay for AfterCare are expected to report to the caregivers of the program after school ends. Coaches and Scout Leaders are not to be used in place of going to AfterCare. If a practice or a meeting occurs during this time, children will be dismissed to participate then they should return to AfterCare. No child will be permitted to "hang out" on his/her own on the parish or school grounds in place of going to AfterCare.

Tennessee State Law requires the parents of children in the AfterCare Program to sign their child(ren) out of the program daily when they pick them up.

REGISTRATION

Registration is required to use the AfterCare program. Our state requirements mandate the program have adequate child / caregiver ratios, therefore we ask that you indicate which days you plan to use AfterCare on your registration form.

RATES

Refer to the AfterCare Handbook for current childcare hourly rates.

3:15
5:30

Additional fees for the AfterCare program will be applied as follows:

Registration fee	\$25.00 registration fee per child will be charged to cover processing costs
Late Pick-Up fee	\$1.00 will be charged per child for each minute past 5:30 p.m.

St. Mary's Catholic School AfterCare program ends promptly at 5:30 p.m. AfterCare charges will be applied to your family account, billed monthly and collected through the school office.

DISCIPLINE

All St. Mary's students are accepted into the AfterCare program. All students will be expected to follow the same behavioral code of conduct as required during school hours. We are committed to positively reinforcing desirable behaviors and we support our students in any way that we can. AfterCare staff will work with students and parents regarding misbehavior however, continual behavior problems will result in the student being prohibited from the program.

ARRIVAL & PICK-UP PROCEDURES

- 1 All children not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be placed in AfterCare and charged for the first half-hour.
- 2 Parents must come into the school building to pick-up their children. Children will not be allowed to go look for their ride or leave on their own. If we are not in the AfterCare room at the time, there will be a note on the door.
- 3 Children will only be released to the person(s) listed on the authorization form. This form must be updated annually. To ensure the safety of all children, anyone picking up the child for the first time will be asked to show some form of photo identification.



SECTION 5

ATTENDANCE

CALENDAR

A calendar of yearly events is provided at the beginning of each school year. It can also be found on the school website. It is the policy of St. Mary's Catholic School to adhere as strictly as possible to

the calendar so that parents can make long-range plans for special events, with minor exceptions.

ABSENCE

Frequent tardies and/or absences disrupts class and impedes the learning process. In the event a student has been absent more than ten (10) days (excused and unexcused), a conference will be scheduled between the parents and the Principal to discuss the absences. The Superintendent of the Diocese of Knoxville will also be notified.

Since class participation comprises a significant portion of the grade, in the event that a student has 20 absences (excused and unexcused) during a school year, the Principal, in consultation with the teacher, will determine whether or not the student is retained in the same grade level. Refer to the *Diocesan Policy on Absences* (Appendix A, page 28). When a student is absent from school, the parent or guardian is expected to notify the school of the reason for the student's absence on or before the date of the absence. Upon the return of the absent student, parents should send a note to the school explaining the reason for the student's absence. It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to call or email the school office with the reason for the student's absence or the absence will be marked as unexcused.

If a student is absent for any reason for a half day or more, they may not participate in any extracurricular activities at the school or at which St. Mary's Catholic School is represented. This includes school dances, sporting events, practices / rehearsals, etc.

Excused Absence

- 1 A student may not be absent more than three days without a doctor's note verifying serious illness. The administration reserves the right to determine that excessive absence (30 per year) has rendered satisfactory completion of the grade level impossible. In such a case the student will be retained. Refer to the *Diocesan Policy on Absences* (Appendix A, page 28).
- 2 Illness or a death in the family are automatically excused absences. A note from the parent explaining the nature of the absence must be sent to school on the day that the student returns to class.
- 3 The length of time to turn in make-up work due to illness is determined by the length of absence of the student. For every day of absence, one make-up day is allowed. (Refer

below "Making Up Missed Work Due to Absence" for further explanation.)

- 4** Absences for reasons other than those stated above must receive Principal approval. Parents should send a note to the office one week prior to the planned absence. For absences before or after a school scheduled holiday, please see the following section.
- 5** Exceptions to the rule will be permitted only under unusual circumstances and only with the prior approval of the Principal / teacher involved.
- 6** Participation in academic school-sponsored events such as Spelling and Geography Bees, Science Fairs, etc.
- 7** Reasons of extenuating circumstances to be judged by the Principal. These reasons must be submitted to the Principal/all classroom teachers in writing 24 hours prior to the absence to be considered excused. Any day after the approved days is an unexcused absence.
- 8** Five days will be approved for personal family time only if it is submitted to the Principal in writing prior to the absence.

Unexcused Absence

Absence will be considered unexcused if a student is absent for reasons other than those listed as excused.

Excessive Absences & Tardies

St. Mary's Catholic School is required to report excessive absences and tardies to local public school authorities and the Diocese of Knoxville.

Vacations

Vacations should not be scheduled when school is in session. Teachers will not give work prior to extended absences.

Making Up Missed Work Due to Absence

Excused Absences Only — As stated in Diocesan Policy #1360, it is the responsibility of the student to make up assignments missed. Students have the number of days missed plus one (1) to make up and turn in missed work. Upon returning to school, the student is responsible for seeing the teacher(s) concerning missed class and home assignments. This pertains to students in grades 1st–8th. The procedure for picking up books for absent students is outlined in the next section.

Unexcused Absences — Unexcused absences and tardies are those which are not excused by the administration. Out-of-school suspensions are unexcused absences.

Picking Up Books for an Absent Student

The student is responsible for assignments and class work missed during an absence. Make-up Work should be turned in within the time specified by the teacher. In the case of an extended absence, it is the policy of St. Mary's Catholic School to send work home after the second day of absence. Parents should contact the office to arrange for a specific time to pick up books and assignments. Please do not call and ask teachers to gather work the day of an absence.

ABSENCES BEFORE & AFTER SCHEDULED SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

All absences prior to or after a scheduled school vacation that are not illness, death in the family or medical appointments will be handled by the following procedure:

- 1** A note from the parent regarding the absence must be sent with the child a week prior to the absence.
- 2** Absences before and after scheduled school holidays, homework will not be given out before the holiday by the teacher. The child or parent is responsible for obtaining the assignments upon return.
- 3** All tests must be taken on the day of return unless an exam make-up day is provided.
- 4** Students that are absent may not attend school functions.

TARDINESS

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure students arrive at school on time.

Parents of students who arrive late to school are required to sign the student in at the main office before the student may report to his/her classroom. Parents may not accompany their child(ren) to his/her classroom once they are signed in.

Excused Tardies

A tardy will be considered excused for the following reasons:

- 1** Medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled other than during school hours. Students must present

a note from the doctor or dentist office upon arriving at school for the tardy to be considered excused.

- 2 Students attending speech classes at another school.
- 3 Personal illness.
- 4 Extreme weather conditions.

Students must present a note from the doctor or dentist office upon arriving at school for their tardy to be considered excused.

Unexcused Tardies

Tardies will be considered unexcused if a student is tardy for reasons other than those listed as excused.

All students who are not in school when the 8:00 a.m. bell rings will be marked tardy. After 8:00 a.m., a parent must sign in a student at the office. Students detained in the office or by a teacher should ask for an "admit pass" from the person who detained them.

Each student's attendance record is noted on each report card. At the end of the year, the total becomes part of the permanent record.

Make-up work will not be provided for unexcused tardies.

Morning prayer is an important part of our day. If possible, please have your child(ren) present for morning prayer at 7:50 a.m.

CHECKOUTS

A note is required to be sent to the school office in the event a child needs to check out of school at a time other than the normal dismissal time. The note may be sent in writing, by fax or email.

A child will be released from school only to his/her parents or to persons authorized by parents on the *Authorization / Pick-Up* form, which is kept in the school office. Parents must send a handwritten note to school if someone other than those listed on the form is to pick-up their child. St. Mary's Catholic School reserves the right to request a picture ID before releasing the child from school.

Parents, or the person authorized on the appropriate form or note, must sign a child out. A parent coming to school to sign-out a child must report to the office; the staff will call the child from the classroom.

Excessive early check outs will be addressed by the Principal.

To maintain a smooth school dismissal, children should not be checked out after 2:40 p.m. on regular dismissal days or 1:45 p.m. on 2:00 p.m. dismissal days.

SCHOOL HOURS

PreK-8th Grade 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The tardy bell rings at 8:00 a.m. Prayer service in the gymnasium begins at 7:50 a.m.

Students may arrive at 7:30 a.m. and report to their classroom. All students not in school when the 8:00 a.m. bell rings will be marked tardy. Students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. (Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri) or 2:15 p.m. (Wed) will be sent to the AfterCare Program.

8:00

3:00

INCLEMENT WEATHER

On days of inclement weather, please listen for school closing information on the following television stations:

- WJHL-TV
- WCYB-TV
- WKPT-TV

Parents who provide their cell number will receive text alerts for closings, schedule changes, and emergencies.

The decision to return to school or have a delayed opening is made by the Principal. **Please always determine the safety of your own travel.** Do not bring your child to school if your own neighborhood or driveway makes it unsafe. Please contact the school office if you have made this determination. Students whose parents have determined it was unsafe for them to attend because of weather will be allowed to make up any work or test.



SECTION 6

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

To the parents and students of St. Mary's Catholic School...

God has given each of us unique and special talents. If we choose to discipline ourselves and nurture these gifts, the rewards will be magnificent. It is our utmost desire that you will endeavor to take the challenge and use your abilities and the fruits of the Holy Spirit to soar like an eagle.

We at St. Mary's Catholic School believe discipline should be directed at fostering and

maintaining Gospel values conducive to learning and teaching. Remember that discipline comes from the word **disciple**. At St. Mary's Catholic School, we promote individual discipleship which requires us to love one another. To love one another, each child must grow in good judgment and become a self-disciplined member of the church community. Only a disciplined student body can enjoy a faith environment of creative learning, mutual respect, trust, and cooperation.

We are confident that parents offer their children responsibilities and duties at home that promote positive disciplinary habits. Together, parents and school staff share the goal of developing a well-disciplined character within each child. During the school day, the teachers and the administration are primarily responsible for providing and implementing guidelines for good behavior. Students, who disregard the teacher's stated directions and safety regulations are subject to disciplinary consequences.

We are committed to treating you with respect and we expect you, in return, to show respect to:

- **Staff** — St. Mary's Catholic School staff members include administrators, teachers, teaching assistants, secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, and volunteers. Respectful cooperation with requests made by any one of these people is expected.
- **Students** — The rights, feelings, reputations, and personal property of others should be respected at all times by avoiding the following: pushing, scuffling, horseplay, hazing, harassing, and name-calling.
- **Visitors** — When visitors are present at St. Mary's Catholic School, treat them as honored guests by using your **best** "company manners". Visitors include speakers, parents, volunteers, staff evaluators, workmen, etc.
- **Yourself** — Self-respect is an essential quality of a successful person. To possess this quality, you must set high standards for both your **mind** and your **body**, and refuse to lower them. You should exclude any action that would show disrespect to your mind or body.

With appreciation from the faculty & staff of St. Mary's Catholic School

CODE OF CONDUCT

For any school or organization to be operated in an efficient and orderly manner, there must be a *Code of Conduct*. There are general school expectations that are set for all students during

school hours as well as at school functions, both on or off school grounds including, but not limited to, Facebook, email, etc. These expectations are outlined below.

School-Wide Expectations

- Respect yourself and others
- Follow instructions the first time given
- Move in a quiet and orderly manner
- Keep personal space by keeping hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Use equipment appropriately

Dismissal Expectations

- Stay in designated area with supervising adults
- Keep food, electronic devices and other belongings in book bag / backpack
- For the safety of our students, teachers are unavailable for conferences or discussion until after 3:15 p.m.

DISCIPLINE — GENERAL

The approach to discipline will be of a positive nature. The object of discipline is to correct a behavioral problem and not simply to punish the child. Our goal is to assist children in internalizing respectful, responsible, and ethical behavior. Behavioral problems will be dealt with individually. The age of the child and the nature of the offense will be taken into consideration when correction is necessary. Parents are asked to cooperate with the school when disciplinary action is taken.

Suspension will be used when necessary. Expulsion will be used only in extreme cases.

The administration reserves the right to impose or waive any disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE — GRADES PREK–5TH

All students are expected to maintain a standard of behavior that is appropriate for their age level in a Christian school. Therefore, unkindness, dishonesty in any form, foul language, fighting, destruction of school property, etc., will not be permitted.

DISCIPLINE — GRADES 6TH–8TH

The school staff strive to create an environment favorable to students' development of self-discipline. The middle grades, 6th-8th, use a demerit system for minor discipline issues. More serious offenses are handled by the administration according to the school discipline policy.

Demerits are used as a deterrent and to correct behaviors. Refer to Appendix B, page 29, for a detailed list of consequences.

Students will receive a demerit:

- Off task: Disruption of instructional time
- Homework: Assignments not completed
- Disrespect: Towards any adult or peers including Level 1 bullying
- Unprepared: Not having required materials for class
- Inappropriate Behavior: Determined by the teacher
- Candy/gum: no candy or gum in class

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the educational process at St. Mary's Catholic School, we ask parents 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 class assignments on time
- Keep lunch account payments current or pack a healthy lunch every day

To actively participate in school activities such as Home & School Association, Parent-Teacher Conferences, and fundraising.

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 is tardy.

To notify the school office of any changes of address or important telephone 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 annual fundraising activities such as the Walk-A-Thon and Annual Auction.

To support the religious and educational goals of the school.

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

To treat teachers, administrators and the entire school family with respect and courtesy.

STANDARD DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The primary responsibility for discipline is given to the classroom teacher. Corporal punishment is not permitted at St. Mary's Catholic School.

If a problem persists, an appointment will be made for the parents, Principal, and teacher. The Principal will designate the appropriate, agreed-upon action.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CODE

The essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline. Positive concepts for discipline are built on a belief in the dignity of each person. A climate of mutual understanding, respect, and trust based upon faith in the worth and dignity of each individual does much to promote this self-direction. The School Board, administration, and faculty are committed to maintaining and improving the positive learning environment of St. Mary's Catholic School. This environment can be maintained when appropriate conduct is achieved by the combined cooperation of the student, faculty, and parent or guardian.

The following *Code of Conduct* will define the responsibilities of all parties (or of each of these groups). This code will apply uniformly to all students without exception.

There are three (3) levels of misbehavior and appropriate discipline. All misbehavior occurring anywhere on the St. Mary's Catholic School and/or Church grounds is included in this code. This includes areas such as classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, trips, assemblies, or anytime the student is under the care of a staff member of St. Mary's Catholic School.

Level 1

Level 1 misbehavior is a disturbance requiring immediate intervention by a supervising staff member who observes the behavior. Examples of this level of misbehavior would include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Touching, pushing, horse playing, chewing gum
- Tardiness (excessive)
- Non-defiant failure to complete assignments, carry out directions, or to bring material to class
- Dress Code violation
- Eating in unauthorized area(s)
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices

Level 1 — Procedural Options

- Immediate intervention by staff member
- Parent conference with teacher and Principal
- Careful documentation of all major disciplinary proceedings (i.e., reported in writing by any supervising adult to Principal)

Level 1 — Disciplinary Options

- Verbal reprimand
- Time out in classroom
- Special duties
- Removal from classroom
- Detention
- Withdrawal of privilege to attend next class trip
- Confiscation of electronic device

Level 2

Level 2 misbehavior is a frequent or serious violation that disturbs the learning environment of the school. Examples of this level of misbehavior would include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Repeated violation of misbehavior listed in Level 1
- Misconduct on field trip
- Damage of personal or school property
- Any conduct detrimental to the school's reputation
- Cheating
- Tampering with fire alarms
- Abusive language
- Disrespect to staff, students, adults, or administration
- Disruptive behavior

Level 2 — Procedural Options

- Meeting between the Principal, teacher, parent and student. Principal decides the appropriate response
- Parent notification
- Careful documentation of all major disciplinary proceedings (i.e., reported in writing by any supervising adult to Principal)

Level 2 — Disciplinary Options

- Conference with teacher, administrator, and student
- Parent included in above team conference
- Parent attendance for one full day of school with student
- replacement and repair of any damaged objects
- After School Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension

Level 3

Level 3 misbehavior is a very serious act of misbehavior that is handled by the Discipline Committee. Level 3 misbehavior could include the proper law enforcement agency. Examples of this level of misbehavior would include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Repeated violation of misbehavior listed in Level 2
- Vandalism
- Threats to other students by students and/or parents and/or faculty & staff
- Verbal assault
- Physical assault
- Theft
- Unauthorized leaving of campus or cutting class
- Weapons at school
- Cyberbullying

Level 3 — Procedural Options

- Principal decides the appropriate response
- Student written and oral statement
- Witness oral and written statement. Notification to authorities, if required

Level 3 — Disciplinary Options

- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Review the privilege of remaining at St. Mary's Catholic School
- Expulsion
- Charges filed under Tennessee Civil or Criminal Code

Note: Any other misconduct that is violating the rights of others through injury, abuse or any threatening behavior will be considered a Level 3 misbehavior.

Suspension — Students who are given an In-School Suspension will be required to report to school each day and work with a substitute teacher paid for by the suspended student's parents. Students who receive an *Out-of-School Suspension* will not be allowed on the campus or attend school functions during the time of their suspension.

Final decisions regarding disciplinary options are made at the discretion of the Principal.

BULLYING PREVENTION PROCEDURES

As a school focused on living our mission statement, anchored in love and promoting Gospel

values, it is the desire of the school community to provide all students with a safe and loving school environment. Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Behavior is repeated over time. Traditionally, bullying has involved actions such as: hitting or punching (physical bullying), teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying), or intimidation through gestures or social exclusion. In recent years, technology has given children and youth a new means of bullying each other.

The faculty and staff, under the direction of the Principal, have developed this policy pertaining to bullying and cyberbullying prevention procedures. These procedures will apply uniformly to all students without exception.

Level 1 — Bullying Offense, verbal or written

Examples of this level of misbehavior would include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Name calling
- Exclusion
- Put downs
- Gossip / rumor / lying
- Teasing

Level 1 — Bullying Procedure

- Document incident and send form home the same day requesting signature
 - Document and obtain necessary signatures, photocopy, send a copy home for signature and a copy in notebook
- Immediate intervention by staff member
- Right the wrong
- Student / Teacher Conference

Level 2 — Bullying Offense

- Repeat violation of misbehavior listed in Level 1
- Damage to personal or school property
- Conduct detrimental to school's reputation, including but not limited to, cell phone, social media, email
- Abusive language
- Cyberbullying

Level 2 — Bullying Procedure

- Document incident and send form home the same day requesting signature
 - Document and obtain necessary signatures, photocopy, send a copy home for signature and a copy in notebook
- Immediate intervention by staff member
- Right the wrong
- Student / Teacher / Principal Conference

- Silent Lunch

Level 3 — Bullying Offense

- Repeat violation of misbehavior listed in Level 1 or 2
- Physical or verbal assault / threats

Level 3 — Procedure

- Document incident and send form home the same day requesting signature
 - Document and obtain necessary signatures, photocopy, send a copy home for signature and a copy in notebook
- Right the wrong
- Student / Teacher / Principal / Parent Conference
- In-School Suspension paid by parent

Level 4 — Bullying Offense

- Repeat violation of misbehavior listed in Level 1, 2, or 3

Level 4 — Procedure

- Document incident and send form home the same day requesting signature
 - Document and obtain necessary signatures, photocopy, send a copy home for signature and a copy in notebook
- Right the wrong
- Immediate phone call to parent
- Out-of-School Suspension

CYBERBULLYING

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Usually, it is repeated over time. Traditionally, bullying has involved actions such as: hitting or punching (physical bullying), teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying), or intimidation through gestures or social exclusion. In recent years, technology has given children and youth a new means of bullying each other.

Cyberbullying, which is sometimes referred to as online social cruelty or electronic bullying, has been defined as "an aggressive, intentional act carried out by an individual or group of individuals, using electronic forms of contact".

Cyberbullying can involve:

- Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images
- Posting sensitive, private information and/or lies about another person
- Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad

- Intentionally excluding someone from an online group
- Teasing

Children and youth can cyberbully each other through:

- Emails
- Instant messaging
- Text or digital imaging messages sent on cell phones
- Social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter
- Web pages, blogs
- Chat rooms or discussion groups
- Other cyber technologies

No matter where or what computer is used, if your child uses it to bully / harass a student and/or school based adult, if reported, disciplinary sanctions must be taken by the school administrator.

SUBSTANCE USE, ABUSE, OR POSSESSION

A student shall not possess or receive, buy, transmit, sell, or be under the influence of any non-prescription controlled substance. No drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or weapons are to be brought on to school property by students.

A student shall not possess or receive, buy, transmit, sell, or be under the influence of any counterfeit controlled substance. A counterfeit controlled substance is any substance that is made to look like a controlled substance or that a student believes to be a controlled substance.

A student shall not buy, sell, transfer, or use any drug, medication, inhalant, or other substance which can be taken internally where the student or students involved cannot show a legitimate health or other reason for the use of such substance. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- On the school grounds during and immediately before or after school hours
- On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school or non-school group
- Off the school grounds at a school-related activity, function, or event
- In vehicles when students are being transported to or from a school related function, activity, or event

Use of a drug authorized by a registered physician and in accordance with his/her

instructions, is not in violation of this rule.

However, such drugs are administered to the students through the school office under supervision.



Students in violation of this policy shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

WEAPONS

No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any object(s) that can be considered a weapon or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student at school. This includes any type of toy or device that resembles a weapon (including toy guns, knives, swords, Nerf guns, etc.). This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- On the school grounds during and immediately before or after school hours
- On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school or non-school group
- Off the school grounds at a school-related activity, function, or event
- In vehicles when students are being transported to or from a school related function, activity, or event

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, toys, trading cards, unauthorized electronic devices, laser lights, or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time including AfterCare.

The school administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school.



Items that are taken away from students will be returned to the parents / guardians on the last day of the school year.



SECTION 7

EMERGENCY & ILLNESS

Emergency information must be maintained in the school office for each student. Any changes in emergency contacts or telephone numbers should be promptly reported to the school office.

If a child becomes ill during school hours and needs special attention, the school office will

notify the parent / guardian. If unable to locate the parent, the name and number noted on the emergency form will be called. In the event that there is still no response, an attempt will be made to call a relative or friend. No child will be sent home without parental permission or a person previously designated to take the place of the parent.

In the event of an emergency occurring at school when neither parents nor emergency contacts can be reached, the school will seek appropriate medical attention for the injured child, as authorized annually on the *St. Mary's Catholic School Medical Release* form. Efforts to reach parents will continue.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

When a suspected case of chicken pox, measles, impetigo, hepatitis, mumps, conjunctivitis (pink eye), streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever), head lice, or other communicable disease is reported, parents will be called immediately to take the child home. A head lice check of all students may be conducted at school periodically as needed.

If a child has been ill with fever, fresh cold, sore throat, skin rash, skin eruption, or vomits, he/she should not be in school. **A child should be free of contagion and/or fever for twenty-four hours before returning to school.**

When a child has confirmed strep throat, he/she should remain out of school for at least 36 hours after treatment of either oral antibiotics or injection (weekend days would count as time away from school). When the student returns, he/she should have a written and signed note from the physician stating that the child should no longer be infectious. These notes should be turned into the office. **Please do not send your child to school while waiting for the results of his/her strep throat test** because of the risk of exposing other students. **The school office should be notified immediately when a communicable disease is diagnosed.**

MEDICATION

Schools shall not dispense prescription medication to students except when prescribed by a doctor and provided the parent. A designated staff member, either the child's teacher or office personnel, must always dispense this medicine.

Students taking prescribed medication either at home or during school hours must also take this

medication when participating in off-campus trips (day trips and overnight trips).

If a child is on medication (either prescription or non-prescription "over-the-counter" medication) **that is administered during school hours or while on off-campus trips, the parent must submit the appropriate Medication Authorization or Non-Prescription Medication Authorization form.** Both forms are available in the school office. These forms must be completed and signed by the parent.

Both prescription and non-prescription medications should be brought to the school office in the original packaging or prescription bottle. The pharmacist may be instructed to dispense the medication in two bottles; one for home and one for school.

All medicines, including cough drops, must be brought to the school office by the parent. **The only exception to this policy is as stated below in paragraph "Asthma Medications".**

ASTHMA MEDICATIONS

In 2002, the General Assembly passed KRS 158 that permits the self-administration of medications by a student with asthma if the student's parent or guardian:

- Provides written authorization for self-administration to the school.
- Provides a written statement from the student's health care practitioner that the student has asthma and has been instructed in self-administration of asthma medications. The statement shall also contain the following information: name and purpose of medications, prescribed dosage, time(s) when the medications are to be regularly administered and under what additional special circumstances the medications are to be administered, and the length of time for which the medications are prescribed.
- The statement shall be kept on file by the school.
- The parent / guardian of the student shall be informed that the school and its employees and agents shall incur no liability as a result of any injury sustained by the student from the self-administration of asthma medications. The parent / guardian shall sign a statement



Students may not carry medicines on their person during the school year and/or school-related functions.

acknowledging that the school shall incur no liability and the parent / guardian shall indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees against any claims relating to the self-administration of asthma medications.

- The permission for self-administration of medications shall be effective for the school year in which it is granted and shall be renewed each following school year. The necessary forms can be found in the school office.

EPIPEN

Use of EpiPen should be discussed at the beginning of the school year with office, teacher and parent.



SECTION 8

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION

The Pastor and Principal, under advisement of the School Board, Parish Council and Parish Finance Committee, determine tuition rates on a yearly basis.

REGISTRATION & MATERIALS FEE

Fees are assessed for each student which covers textbooks, technology, and miscellaneous fees.

FINANCIAL AID

If financial assistance is needed, Catholic families are asked to complete an online student aid form at the time of registration. St. Mary's Catholic School utilizes the services of FACTS Tuition Management to help assist in the management of our financial aid program. The FACTS management team strives to use its expertise to provide an objective and uniform need evaluation. FACTS provides our school with the results of their calculations and their recommended tuition assistance amounts. St. Mary's Catholic School reviews this information and forwards it to the applicant. Each applicant can be assured that the decision made on their financial aid application is based on a fair and objective evaluation. **Each family applying for**

assistance must complete an online FACTS Student Aid Form on the FACTS website. There is a fee for processing your application. Student aid forms must be completed and received by FACTS by May of each year.

REGISTRATION

Registration packets for returning St.

Mary's Catholic School

students are sent home in March of each year. A registration fee per child is collected at this time in order to reserve a space for your child(ren) for the upcoming school year. The fee is non-refundable unless St. Mary's Catholic School, for any reason, is unable to accept a student or if a family relocates out of town.



SETTLEMENT OF FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Before student records will be forwarded to other schools, all parish financial commitments must be current.

Please note that all accounts in arrears by the end of the school year may be turned over to a collection agency and students may be denied enrollment for the next school year. There will be a \$10 returned check fee. If legal action is taken, attorney fees may be added to the balance.



SECTION 9

GENERAL INFORMATION

BIRTHDAY PARTIES & GIFT GIVING

Parents having a party for their child to which the entire class is not invited must extend invitations by telephone or by mail and not distribute them at school. When the entire class (or all the boys to a "boy's only" party and all the girls to a "girl's only" party) is invited, the invitations may be distributed in the classroom but the student, not the teacher, will be responsible for distributing them.

Special birthday arrangements should not take place on school grounds (i.e., limousines, costumed characters, etc.). If there are any

questions, please call the school office. Students will receive a birthday sticker on their birthday and teachers will acknowledge birthdays in an age appropriate manner.

CAFETERIA


Lunches are ordered in the classroom each day. The teacher will send a lunch count to the school office. **All students must pack a lunch or eat a school lunch. Parents may not bring lunches from carry-out restaurants.** The cost of lunch is as follows:

All grades	\$3.60 per lunch
Beverage	\$.50 each (white milk, chocolate milk, bottled water or juice)
Side	\$1.00

Lunch accounts are updated on a daily basis. A cafeteria statement will go home at the beginning of each month, along with the tuition and AfterCare statements in the family envelope.

Family members wishing to purchase a hot lunch are asked to call the school office by 8:30 a.m. in order to be included in the total lunch count.

Students with food allergies must bring a note from their physician which will be kept in the student's permanent file.


Please do not send birthday gifts to school or arrange for them to be delivered to school (i.e., flowers, balloons, candy, etc.)

COMMUNICATION

St. Mary's Catholic School makes every effort to communicate with parents. This is accomplished through several different methods:

School to Parent

- Weekly Family Bulletin emailed on Tuesday
- Report cards
- RenWeb for Grades K–8th
- Minutes of Home & School Association meetings
- Parent-Teacher conferences
- Notes to parents
- Telephone call to parents
- Meetings with teachers
- Meetings with the Principal
- Grade level meetings and other meetings as scheduled
- Frequent informational emails

Parent to School

- Send a note with your specific request or concern addressed to whom it is to be delivered (i.e., office, teacher, etc.)
- Telephone call to school and leave a message for the person with whom you wish to speak
- Parent meetings or conferences (in order to prevent interruption of valuable class time or to prevent interruption of teacher's schedule, even brief meetings should be by appointment)
- Participation in Home & School Association meetings
- **Questionnaires / Surveys / Ballots** — these are sent home as needed. All parents are asked to complete and return them
- Email appropriate teacher, office, etc.

DOOR-TO-DOOR FUNDRAISING

All school organizations desiring to engage in fundraising must receive the permission of the Pastor and Principal in accordance with local Parish Council and School Board policy. **Students shall not engage in door-to-door solicitation** (Diocesan Policy #1310).

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS & OUTINGS

Educational trips serve as an important aspect and privilege of our school curriculum. The trip usually has direct application to a unit of work studied by the students in a certain grade level during the school year. Adequate preparation for the trip is made with the class to indicate the nature of the trip, its purpose, things to be observed and/or recorded, and any special plans or requirements for the trip.

Extra stops on field trips, when transporting students on a field trip are not permitted. No siblings not in grade participating can attend the field trip per Diocesan policy.

The parent of each child who participates in any field trip must sign the *Diocesan Field Trip* form. (Diocesan Policy #1182). **Verbal permission by telephone will not suffice for any field trip.** If a child lacks this permission, he/she will not be permitted to leave the school grounds.

Students taking prescribed medication, either at home or during school hours, must also take this medication when participating in off-campus trips (day trips and overnight trips). Please communicate with the trip coordinator, in writing, and include directions on how the medication is to be dispensed. **All medications must be provided in the original prescription container(s).**


Trips are considered a privilege rather than a right; the administration — with faculty consultation — reserves the right to deny a student a particular trip for disciplinary reasons or for the common good or safety of the group. When paying for field trips, please send a check or the exact amount of money (for each child) in an envelope with the child's name, the amount enclosed, and the name of the field trip on the outside of the envelope.

Any parent serving as a chaperone for an educational trip / outing must have a signed *Liability Waiver* on file with the teacher (Diocesan Policy #1185).

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

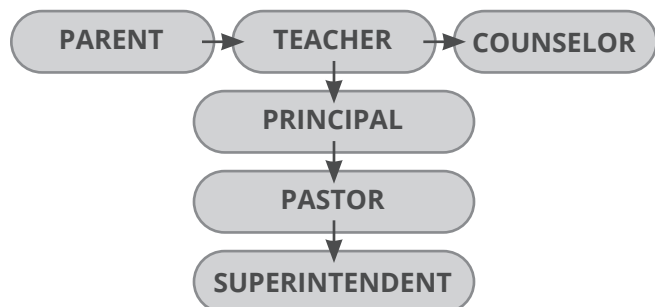
The Diocese of Knoxville recognizes the right of parents to appeal school decisions affecting their child(ren).


In keeping with the Catholic Church's Principle of Subsidiary, problems, concerns, and questions should be solved / directed to the **lowest level whenever possible**. Before initiating a formal appeal, the person is encouraged to dialogue with the individual against whom they hold the grievance. **Failure to comply with this policy could result in delay of the resolution of any grievance** (Diocesan Policy #3045).

Should a question or concern arise, the parent should contact the teacher involved  before discussing the matter with anyone else. Often times, a problem can be solved in a few minutes at the grassroots level.

If at any time a parent desires a conference, write a note to the teacher or call the school office and leave a message for the teacher and he/she will contact you for an appointment. **Do not call teachers at their home, unless the teacher indicates otherwise.**

Parents participating in school trips must complete all components of the Diocesan VIRTUS Training as outlined on page 25.



- If there is a grievance with a teacher, parents should first consult with the teacher before conferring with the Principal.
- If there is a grievance with the Principal, parents should first consult with the Principal.
- When attempts at dialogue do not result in a resolution at the local level, the case  may be formally appealed to the Pastor and Superintendent, in said order.

Please do not come in to see the teacher before, during, or after school without an appointment.

HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Home & School Association of St. Mary's

Catholic School is composed of parents of students at St. Mary's Catholic School, faculty members, and other interested parishioners. The officers of the organization include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, past President, and Staff Representative. Ex-officio members include the Principal, Pastor, and Associate Pastor(s).

- The purpose of the Association is to be of service to St. Mary's Catholic School and to provide a better understanding between home and school. To accomplish this, the Association has set the following objectives:
- To promote open communication among the parents, faculty, and administration. To promote clearer understanding of the mutual educational responsibilities of parents and teachers.
- To encourage families in the involvement and participation of spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical programs of the parish and school.
- To be available to offer support, assistance, and advisement to the Pastor, Principal, and the School Board members on policies and improvements designed for the enrichment of school life.
- To offer thorough, well-planned programs, information, and entertainment of particular interest to parents.
- To encourage and cultivate high standards of Catholic family life.
- To engender a greater appreciation of Catholic school education.
- To foster the political action of parents as advocates regarding national, state, and local legislation that affects Catholic schools as well as the lives of students and parents.

The Home & School Association is solely supported by the volunteer efforts of its membership. Please take an active role in your child's education.

MESSAGES

In order to avoid disruptions in class and to support a smooth flow at dismissal times, we ask that parents not call the office staff to deliver messages to their children unless an emergency occurs. Please communicate carpool information, appointments, etc. with your child(ren) prior to school hours.

OFFICE HOURS

Regular office hours are **Monday–Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Only faculty and staff should be in the school building before or after these times unless a conference has been previously scheduled. Any child in the building after being dismissed must be accompanied and supervised by an adult, or will be placed in AfterCare.

SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board serves as an advisory body to the Pastor and the Principal of St. Mary's Catholic School. The School Board is consultative in nature and shall advise in the following:

- **Planning** — To participate in the establishment of a school mission statement, goals and future plans (strategic planning). To recommend policies relating to the planning, operating and maintenance of currently owned facilities and equipment. To serve as a planning and building committee for new educational facilities.
- **Policy Development** — To review and recommend school policies on an annual basis that give general direction for administrative action.
- **Development** (Public Relations / Marketing) — To create and maintain a successful development program.
- **Finance** — To develop an annual operating budget and perform periodic reviews in addition to setting policies for financial management.
- **Principal Search Committee** — To assist the Pastor in constituting a search committee for a new Principal.

The School Board is composed of nine (9) voting members, one of whom is elected chair. Voting members of the School Board shall consist of:

- Six (6) members appointed at large, to serve three year staggered terms.
- Three (3) lay members appointed by the Pastor.

The Board is comprised of voting members and ex-officio members. Membership at large is open to parents, alumni, and parents of alumni. Interested parties may request to be considered for membership on the School Board. Elections are held in the Spring through the Home & School Association.

The School Board meets monthly. Non-members wishing to address the board should submit a written, signed petition setting forth the matter to be addressed to the Principal or Chair fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting. Speeches shall be limited to five (5) minutes. Matters of the moment may be placed on the agenda immediately with the approval of the Chair.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

In accordance with Diocesan Policy #1241, no smoking or use of tobacco products is allowed in the school building at any time.

Where children / students are not physically present, smoking or the use of tobacco products is allowed outside on school property. An outside smoking area may be designated. Smoking or the use of tobacco products is allowed in designated areas only by adults age twenty-one (21) and older.

No smoking is allowed on school field trips where children are physically present (before, during, or after school hours).

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

In accordance with Diocesan Policy #1560, students must be supervised while at school and/or school-sponsored activities. Supervision must be provided as follows:

- Before / after school care, if applicable
- During normal school hours
- During school-sponsored activities on and off-campus

Students may be dropped off at school at 7:30 a.m. There is no supervision for students before 7:30 a.m. Any unsupervised student(s) in the building after 3:15 p.m. will be escorted directly to the AfterCare Program.

CELL PHONES

Please do not send your child(ren) to school with a cell phone, unless it is absolutely necessary for communication after school hours. Students

7:30
3:30

have access to office phones during the school day and if they stay after school, a staff member will let them use the office phones.

Our policy states that students may carry cell phones, if they keep them turned off in their backpacks. They may not use them during school hours or in AfterCare, and may not take pictures with their electronic devices at any time.



SECTION 10

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

PHILOSOPHY

The St. Mary's Catholic School uniform is a visible reminder of our identity as a Catholic community with cherished traditions and values.

Wearing the St. Mary's Catholic School uniform emphasizes an atmosphere of respect, courtesy, and responsibility. It establishes a feeling of community and equality within the school, minimizes distraction in the classroom, promotes self-discipline, and encourages high personal standards.

Students are expected to adhere to the uniform code everyday throughout the entire school year. It is the responsibility of both the parent and student to see to it that students follow the uniform code.

School uniforms must be purchased from Lands' End, Educational Outfitters, or our used uniforms (inside the school library).


GENERAL DRESS CODE

Make-Up

Light make-up is permitted for 7th & 8th grade girls only. The appropriateness of the make-up will be determined by the administration. Make-up in grades PreK-6th is absolutely not allowed.

Jewelry

The entire earring (including the post) must fit within the circumference of a nickel and must be appropriate to a Catholic school environment. Boys may not wear earrings. Watches with alarms or electronic abilities should not be worn.


Please do not drop your children off before 7:30 a.m. Teachers are not required to be in the school before 7:30 a.m. therefore there is not ample supervision for your children before 7:30 a.m.

Sunglasses may not be worn in the building. No lapel buttons may be worn on any part of the St. Mary's Catholic School uniform. No more than two (2) bracelets may be worn at any time. No body piercings. No tattoos.

Hair

General guidelines to be used: (1) hair is clean and well groomed, (2) hair is not in the child's eyes, (3) boys' hair must be above the collar, (4) hair may not be a distraction and must be a natural color. Combs, picks, or brushes should be kept in purses or pockets.

Sweaters

Students may wear **solid navy blue** or St. Mary's Catholic School sweaters in class, church, or halls. Sweaters must fit properly at the wrist.

Sweatshirts & Fleece Jackets

Girls or boys in any grade may wear a **solid navy blue** sweatshirt or fleece jacket or a St. Mary's Catholic School sweatshirt or fleece jacket. Sweatshirts and fleece jackets must be worn over the prescribed shirts or blouses. Sweatshirts must fit properly at the wrist.

Shirts & Blouses

No oversized or tight blouses or shirts are permitted, unless fitted uniform blouse is chosen. Shirts and blouses are to be **tucked in** at all times. No logos are permitted on shirts and blouses other than the knit shirt with the St. Mary's Catholic School logo.

Skirts & Skorts Length

Grades PreK-8th skirts and skorts are considered appropriate in length if the hem is no more than 2" above the knee. Shorter skirts and skorts are not uniform and **will not be permitted**. Rolled up skirts are **not** permitted.

Walking Shorts

Cargo-style shorts (shorts with pockets on the outside) are **not** permitted. Grades PreK-8th shorts are considered appropriate in length if the hem is no more than 2" above the knee. Shorter shorts are not uniform and **will not be permitted**.

UNIFORM CODE

Girls

- Full Dress uniform is to be worn **every Wednesday** during the school year unless otherwise notified by the Principal.

- The St. Mary's Catholic School logo patch is required on all girls' jumpers in grades PreK–5th and on navy cardigan sweaters for girls in grades 6th–8th.
- A black, brown or navy blue belt must be worn with slacks or walking shorts. The St. Mary's Catholic School logo patch is optional on polo shirts.
- Turtleneck shirts are not permitted.
- Girls in grades 5th–8th must change into PE clothes for each PE class.
- Girls may wear blue, black, or white leggings (ankle length) under dresses or skirts.
- PreK–5th must wear tennis shoes or sneaker hightops.
- Grades 6th–8th must wear appropriate school shoes — no sandals or clogs — shoes must be closed toed and full back. Shoes must be flat. No boots.

Purchasing Information

- All uniform items must be purchased through Educational Outfitters, Lands' End or from our used uniform sale.
- The St. Mary's Catholic School logo can be embroidered directly onto items purchased

from Educational Outfitters and Lands' End prior to shipping. Ask for this option when placing your order.

- The St. Mary's Catholic School embroidered school logo must be on jumpers and vests. It is optional on sweatshirts and polo shirts.
- PE uniforms should be purchased through St. Mary's Catholic School Booster Club from the school office.


Boys

- Full Dress uniform is to be worn **every Wednesday** during the school year unless otherwise notified by the Principal.
- Full Dress uniform for boys in PreK–5th grades includes the navy blue sweater vest. The St. Mary's Catholic School logo patch is required on all boys' sweater vests.
- Boys in PreK–5th must wear a white button-up oxford shirt (short or long sleeve) with their navy blue sweater vest on Wednesdays.
- Full Dress uniform for boys in 6th–8th grades includes a plaid tie.
- Boys in 6th–8th grades must wear a light blue button up oxford shirt (short or long sleeve) with the plaid tie on Wednesdays.

GIRL

GIRL (ALL DAYS, ALL GRADES)

white or navy blue socks
tennis shoes

 <p>white shirts long or short sleeved</p> <p>navy pants, shorts or skirts</p> <p>blue, black or white leggings are okay</p> <p>PreK–5th UNIFORM</p>	 <p>plaid jumper</p> <p>PreK–5th FULL DRESS</p>	 <p>light blue shirts long or short sleeved</p> <p>khaki pants, shorts, skorts, or skirts</p> <p>6th–8th UNIFORM</p>	 <p>plaid tie</p> <p>khaki skirt, double pleats</p> <p>6th–8th FULL DRESS</p>
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- The St. Mary's Catholic School logo patch on polo shirts is optional.
- A black, brown or navy blue belt must be worn with slacks or walking shorts.
- Turtleneck shirts are **not** permitted.
- Cargo-style pants and/or shorts are **not** permitted.
- Boys in grades 5th–8th must change into PE clothes for each PE class.
- Students may wear tennis shoes or appropriate school shoes. Plain white t-shirts are okay **ONLY** under uniform shirt.
- PreK–5th must wear tennis shoes.
- Grades 6th–8th must wear appropriate school shoes — no sandals or clogs — shoes must be closed toed and full back. Shoes must be flat.

Purchasing Information

- All uniform items must be purchased through Educational Outfitters, Lands' End or our used uniform sale. Some items must be purchased directly from these suppliers.
- The St. Mary's Catholic School logo can be embroidered directly onto items purchased from Educational Outfitters and Lands' End prior

to shipping. Ask for this option when placing your order.

- The St. Mary's Catholic School embroidered school logo must be on jumpers, vests, and cardigans. It is optional on sweatshirts and polo shirts.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE) UNIFORM CODE

Students in grades 5th–8th will be required to change into a PE uniform before their PE class. PE uniforms should be purchased through St. Mary's Catholic School Booster Club from the school office. Girls in PreK–4th grade should wear shorts under their jumpers on PE days. All students are required to wear socks and sneakers.

PE Uniform (Boys & Girls in Grades 6th–8th)

- Tennis shoes (required). Tennis shoes must fit the foot and laces must be tied. If a student does not wear tennis shoes, student will not participate in PE.
- "Heelies" (sneakers with recessed wheels) are strictly prohibited.
- Tennis shoes are required for PE on Fun Dress and Free Dress days.

LANDS' END Educational Outfitters

BOY

BOY (ALL DAYS, ALL GRADES)

black, brown, or navy blue belt
white or navy blue socks
tennis shoes



SCOUTING UNIFORMS

Boy / Girl Scouts are allowed to wear their appropriate full uniforms to school on the day of a scheduled meeting or scout field trip. When Boy Scouts wear their scout uniforms to school, they should be worn with the scout uniform pants or school uniform pants. The Tiger Scouts have only t-shirts and these should be worn with their school uniform pants.

DRESS CODE FOR NON-UNIFORM, FREE DRESS, & FUN DRESS DAYS

On non-uniform days, students are expected to dress appropriately for the school environment and maintain the same level of modesty and neatness that is required throughout the school year.

- Students may not wear tank tops, halter tops, sun dresses or tops with spaghetti straps.
- No skirts, shorts, or jumpers shorter than two inches above the knee.
- No wide-legged or “sagging” pants / shorts may be worn.
- T-shirts with reference to beer or alcohol or other inappropriate slogans and pictures may not be worn. Oversized t-shirts are not permitted.
- Nice jeans are permitted but they must not be patched or torn. Tight shorts or slacks are not permitted.
- Tights and/or leggings without skirts or knee-length shorts are not permitted.
- Shoes or sandals must fully enclose the foot.
- Midriff must be covered.
- Notification of specific off-campus experiences having different dress codes will be provided to parents in writing.
- No hats.

A student coming to school dressed inappropriately will be required to call his/her parents for a suitable change of clothes. The student will remain in the school office until the change of clothes is provided. The decision of the Principal or their designee as to the definition of “appropriate” will be final.

UNIFORM CODE ENFORCEMENT STANDARDS

- Shoelaces should be tied at all times.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

- Underwear must never show. Sleeves of undershirts should not be visible below uniform sleeves.
- The backs of shoes must be worn properly; not stomped down.
- All uniform items must be neat, clean, fit properly, and not be frayed or torn. Pant legs are to be hemmed or cuffed; not rolled up.
- The maximum number of buttons on a girl's shirt that may be unbuttoned are the top two buttons.
- Hats are not permitted inside buildings.
- Sunglasses are not permitted inside buildings.
- Only solid white t-shirts may be worn under shirts and blouses. Proper uniform is expected at all times while in the school building.
- No skirts, shorts, or jumpers shorter than two inches above the knee.
- Shorts may not hang out from under skirts or jumpers.
- **Uniforms must fit students.** Overly large shirts, blouses, sweaters, sweatshirts or sagging pants (pants must be worn at the waist) are not allowed. Either a black, brown or navy blue belt **must** be worn.

The Principal will make decisions regarding the St. Mary's Catholic School uniform. All decisions will be final.



SECTION 11

STUDENT ENRICHMENT

St. Mary's Catholic School offers a variety of activities for student enrichment.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

Our enrichment opportunities are designed to broaden students' knowledge and experience. Access to academically enriching activities is an integral part of our school program. A variety of programs designed to develop and utilize a student's problem-solving skills and critical thinking ability are offered to students as an extension of their school day. These programs are developed based on students' interests, available resources and staff, and volunteer commitment. Such programs have included Math Club, Science Fair, National Spelling Bee, DAR Essay, and Monday Club Poetry.

STUDENT COUNCIL CLUB

All students in grades 6th-8th may participate in the Student Council Club. Student members represent the student body by addressing student concerns, deciding on proposed activities and events, and developing fundraising strategies. The Student Council Club is an opportunity for students to take on leadership roles, become active and involved in their community, develop organizational and planning skills, and set and achieve goals.

SCHOOL DANCES

School dances provide our 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students an opportunity to socialize with their peers. The dances are held in our cafeteria and are sponsored by the Student Council Club. Dances are generally held from 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m. and students must remain at the dance until the end unless a parent comes into the cafeteria to pick him / her up. If a parent picks up a student before the end of the dance, the parent must check in with one of the chaperones prior to leaving the cafeteria.



SECTION 12

TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY USE

PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary's Catholic School has access to the Internet. This is a means by which students can get access to information of a truly global nature. It allows all of us in the St. Mary's Catholic School community to find, harmonize, and share information in a variety of ways.

The Internet has come about because people have chosen to network their computers in order to share information. The staff of St. Mary's Catholic School is well aware that some of this material runs contrary to the faith and morals of a Catholic school community. This area of the curriculum will be guided by the same Gospel values that govern every other aspect of school life. The value of good judgment and Christian responsibility in the use of the Internet is expected of all students, faculty, and staff.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Use only with permission of supervising adult.
- Abide by copyright law. St. Mary's Catholic School does not condone and specifically forbids the unauthorized duplication of software and related documentation.
- Never write or share a password!
- Never alter technology equipment unless instructed to do so.
- Never install programs or program files or download files from the Internet without prior approval from the Technology Department or a teacher.
- All network communication must be polite, kind, and free from inappropriate language.
- Electronic communications are not guaranteed to be private.
- Attempts to tamper with other people's data or gain unauthorized access to accounts or files on the network are not permitted.
- Unneeded personal files and electronic mail shall be deleted regularly. File server space is limited.
- Students are asked to provide their own electronic media storage device (i.e., flash drive) in the event they need to download / store information.
- Personal addresses, telephone numbers, and financial information shall not be included in external electronic communication.
- Questions concerning any use of any technology resource should be addressed to the St. Mary's Catholic School Technology Department.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Misuse and abuse of technology privileges (including Internet access) will result in disciplinary action. Lack of good judgment and/or Christian responsibility in the use of the technology will be just cause for serious disciplinary action which will include, but not be limited to, any of the following actions:

- Temporary suspension of technology user privileges
- Denial of technology user privileges
- Detention, Suspension, Expulsion
- Action deemed appropriate by the Principal or designated representative



SECTION 13

TRANSPORTATION

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION

Students will return home at the time and by the mode of transportation indicated on the School Registration Form. Exceptions to this **must** always be accompanied by a written note signed or emailed by the parent / guardian. Verbal messages, via students, will **never** be regarded as valid permission from a parent / guardian.

In cases of an **emergency** that requires a change of transportation, parent / guardian must contact the school office prior to 2:30 p.m. In non-emergency situations, notes and calls should arrive no later than 12:00 p.m.

Students will not be permitted to accompany another student and/or adult home without written permission from the parent / guardian.

PARKING LOT PROCEDURES

Morning Arrival

There is one drop-off location at St. Mary's Catholic School. All students should be dropped off at the designated area by the main entrance.

Students arriving at 8:00 a.m. or later must report directly to the school office. These students are tardy. Parents must walk students in and sign them in at the school office.

Parking in the lane for oncoming traffic is not permitted since it creates a safety hazard. Please do not drop off students before 7:30 a.m.

A staff member, will be on duty at 7:30 a.m. to assist your child(ren) with unloading, if necessary.

If you need to assist your child(ren) with projects to be carried into the school, please park your vehicle in either of the two (2) parking lots and escort your child(ren) into the school building.

Please do not park in the drop-off location or in clearly marked handicap spaces.

Afternoon Dismissal

- No child will be dismissed prior to 3:15 p.m. through the door connecting the school hallway and the gym.

Afternoon Dismissal — Two options

Option 1 Walk to the front door of the school for pick-up

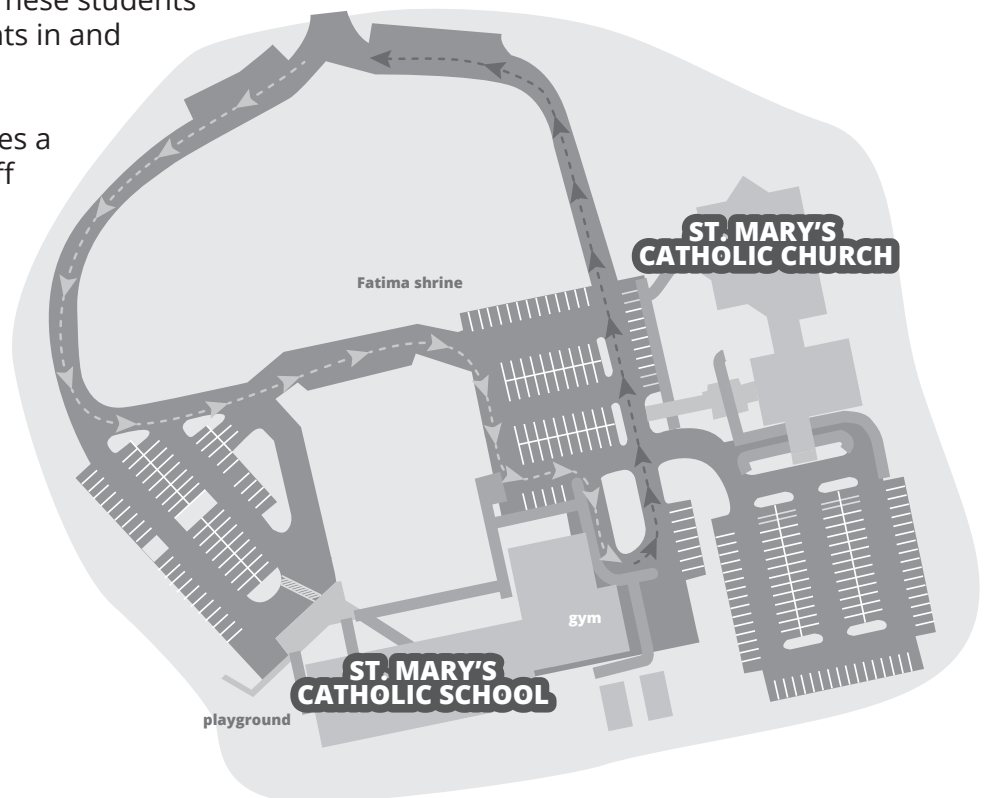
- Park your car in the parking lot by the playground (see map)
- A staff member will meet you at the front door and call your child for dismissal
- Once dismissed to parent, child is not permitted back into the school until 3:15 p.m.

Option 2 Drive through the car line for pick up

- Form a line (see map)
- Once in the car line, all parents must remain in car for pick-up to insure the line moves quickly and safely
- Proceed past playground parking lot and turn right immediately after passing front lawn
- Staff members will call for students and load them in your car at the porch area by the AfterCare doors
- Cars will not be allowed to move until all cars in front of the porch are loaded



Students and their parent must report to the school office if arriving at 8:00 a.m. or later.





SECTION 14

VIRTUS SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

On September 1, 2003 "Policy and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct for the Diocese of Knoxville" went into effect. The policy "provides practical steps to assure the Church that those who represent Christ and His Church will seek to do so responsibly." It applies to all that have contact with children and youth, including teachers, staff, substitutes, and regular volunteers.

St. Mary's Catholic School regular volunteers are required to read and abide by the policy, to attend a three (3) hour VIRTUS "Protecting God's Children" training session and to grant permission for a background check limited to state and federal crime registers to be conducted.

VIRTUS is a nationally recognized professional service that is assisting the Diocese in this effort. It is a name brand of programs that are designed to prevent wrongdoing and promote "right doing" within religious organizations. The word *virtus* is Latin and means "valor, moral strength, excellence, and worth" in ancient times it denoted a way of life and manner of behavior that aspired to the highest, most positive attributes of people and aspects of human interaction.

Early in the school year, the documentation pertaining to the Safe Environment Program is sent home to parents interested in volunteering at St. Mary's. The VIRTUS training is offered periodically by St. Mary's Catholic School and St. Mary's Catholic Church.

Training can also be completed at other churches and agencies within the Diocese of Knoxville. Training dates, times and locations will be announced in the Weekly Bulletin as well as on the St. Mary's Catholic School website.

VIRTUS TRAINING

St. Mary's Catholic School teachers, staff, substitute teachers and volunteers (including

volunteers chaperoning overnight trips) must complete the 3 hour training sessions, "Protecting God's Children". Please go online to register for the training session you would like to attend.

VIRTUS TRAINING BULLETINS

Once you complete the "Protecting God's Children" training, you will be sent periodic emails that will prompt you to complete the short training bulletins. The training bulletins should only take you a few minutes to complete, and they are an important tool in keeping us all aware of the many ways we can work together to keep our children safe in our communities and in cyberspace.

VIRTUS FAQs FOR PARENTS & VOLUNTEERS

1 *What are the components of the Diocese of Knoxville's Safe Environment Program?*

Diocese of Knoxville Policy and Procedure Relating to Sexual Misconduct

www.virtus.org

All employees, regular volunteers and regular independent contractors are required to read and document and sign Appendices D, F, and H.

Position-specific Background Check

All employees and regular volunteers must undergo a limited background check, depending on the position each will fill.

VIRTUS

All employees, regular volunteers and regular independent contractors must attend a three-hour presentation and continuing education online.

Keeping Kids Safe

Ongoing training of children using age-appropriate material done annually in class by catechist or Catholic school teacher.

2 *What is a "limited background check"?*

We ask employees and regular volunteers to authorize (1) a National Criminal Offender Search, which checks for sex offenders, violent offenders and felony drug convictions and (2) a Social Security trace, which serves as an additional identifier for criminal information. Depending on your position, your parish or school may add a motor vehicle check for those who will be transporting children and a credit check for those who will regularly handle money.

3 *Who must comply with the Safe Environment Program?*

Besides employees of the diocese, all regular volunteers must comply.

4 *If one parent participates, is that sufficient for the family?*

No. Both parents need to complete all the steps if both plan to be volunteers.

5 *When is VIRTUS training offered?*

VIRTUS sessions are scheduled periodically, as the need arises. The most important thing to remember is that they are offered only periodically, so you should attend as soon as possible because you will not be allowed to volunteer until you do.

6 *How do I register for VIRTUS training?*

- Go to www.virtusonline.org
- At far left: Click "Register"
- Follow prompts
- Day of training; SIGN IN on paper roster at the site and attend session.
- When individual has done all of the above, he/she will receive an email activating him/her in the system.

7 *How do I complete a training bulletin online?*

After he/she has been activated by the VIRTUS administrator, the individual will begin receiving emails from "**system@virtus.org**" announcing the availability of a new bulletin and giving a link to the site.

- Log on with username and password.
- Click on "My Training" tab.
- On far right, there is a box titled "Training Bulletin Report".
- Click on message that says there are training bulletin(s) to complete. Read the bulletin and answer the multiple choice question to get credit for the bulletin.

8 *I have a new email address. How do I change that information on the VIRTUS website?*

- To change an email address (or any other personal information on the VIRTUS website):
- Log onto www.virtusonline.org using username and password
- Click on "Update My Account"
- After changing personal information, click "Save"

www.virtus.org



9 *I participated in the Safe Environment Program at my parish. I want to volunteer at my child's school. Do I have to go through all the steps again?*

You do not have to attend another VIRTUS session but you are expected to keep your profile updated. You do this by logging onto www.virtusonline.org and updating your profile. You will, however, have to undergo a new background check at the school where are you volunteering and re-sign Appendices D, F, and H of the Diocese of Knoxville Policy and Procedure Relating to Sexual Misconduct.

10 *What is involved in the **Keeping Kids Safe** portion of the Safe Environment Program?*

Annual training is conducted at your child's Catholic school or in religious education classes using age-appropriate material. At the beginning of the school year, parents are given a **Keeping Kids Safe** Acknowledgment Form to complete and return. A parent may acknowledge he/she is aware the training will be offered, or a parent may decline to have his or her children participate. If a parent declines, he/she will have to inform his/her Pastor or Principal **in writing** of the decision.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE

The Diocese of Knoxville is committed to providing a safe environment for all who worship, work, or participate in education and formation opportunities at our parishes and schools. The problem of child sexual abuse is a serious one; a child suffers sexual abuse somewhere in our country every 13 seconds.

Statistics show that the vast majority of children who are abused (93%) know and trust their abusers and the vast majority of abusers (95-97%) are male. Sadly, one in four girls and one in six boys will suffer some form of sexual abuse before age 18. While child abduction by strangers attracts dramatic media attention, the majority of abusers are family members and trusted friends. The stereotype of the pervert in the raincoat is inaccurate; sexual predators work hard to be seen as model citizens.

Because only 29% of parents discuss this issue with their children, providing resources to parents is the first step to protecting our kids. Empowered parents can develop and maintain an environment of trust in the home that allows children to discuss any topic, any fear, and any experience they are having. Potential abusers will avoid children who have such an open and honest relationship with

their parents because abusers depend upon secrecy to avoid suspicion.

On the other hand, perpetrators target children who are most vulnerable to their methods, such as those looking for affection or attention. As one convicted sex offender chillingly told an audience of parents, "If you won't give your kids any attention, I will." Parents, be especially alert to any older child or adult who takes a particular interest in your children, tries to spend time with them in isolation, and seems to lack healthy relationships with his or her peers.

The Diocese of Knoxville is committed to reporting to law enforcement every known or suspected instance of child abuse. When we respond through proper intervention, we provide hope for children to lead healthy and happy lives.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The St. Mary's Catholic School Board has set forth the following policy regarding acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The Board has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The Board established that "harassment, intimidation or bullying that takes place on school property, or at any school-sponsored function is prohibited." **Harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be defined as repeated, aggressive behavior of a verbal, physical or psychological nature. Isolated incidents of aggressive behavior, while to be condemned, should not be described as bullying. Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo's, demeaning comments, drawing cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral or physical actions.** "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

The Board established that this policy in addition to the above stated forms shall cover act(s):

- motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability
- **through cyberspace** via electronic communication that is mean, threatening or humiliating taunts, rumors or photos sent via email, instant message, text message, chat room or web pages or blogs
- that will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property
- has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as set forth in the Board of Education's approved Code of Student Conduct.

Procedures for Noting & Reporting Incidents of Bullying

- All reports of bullying should be noted, investigated and dealt with by the class teacher (in the first instance) so that pupils will gain confidence in telling.
- Serious cases should be referred immediately to the Principal. An Incident Book will be kept in the office for this purpose only.
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) should be informed by the Principal earlier rather than later.
- Pupils must understand that reporting is not "telling tales".
- Individual teachers should record and take appropriate measures in accordance with policy.
- Non-teaching staff should be encouraged to report incidents. Discretion is extremely important.

Examples of Consequences

- Admonishment
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges

- Classroom or administrative detention
- Referral to disciplinarian
- In-School suspension during the school week or the weekend
- After-School programs
- Out-of-School suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion



SECTION 15

VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS

GENERAL POLICIES

All volunteers / visitors must report to the school office upon arrival at the school

(Diocesan Policy #1650). You will be given a name tag to wear and you will be asked to sign a Volunteer / Visitor Log in the school office. The office is notified when anyone who is not an employee is seen in the building without a name tag. This is necessary to maintain the safety of the children, building security, and an orderly operation of the school.

Any school age child who wishes to visit St. Mary's Catholic School on a school day must have the permission of the Principal. The merit of each request will be considered on a case-by case basis.



SECTION 16

RIGHT TO AMEND

St. Mary's Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of the amendments will be sent via the Family Envelope.



SECTION 17

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE

Diocesan Policy #1050 states that School Attendance is required by state law; therefore, schools must keep accurate and complete attendance records on each student. In the event a student has been absent for more than one-third (1/3) of a grading period, the Principal in consultation with the teacher may determine whether or not a grade is assigned for that grading period. Since class participation comprises a significant portion of the grade, in the event a student has thirty (30) absences (excused or unexcused) during a school year, the Principal will determine whether or not the student is retained in the same grade level.

Frequent absences impede the learning process. After five (5) unexcused absences the Superintendent will be notified as stated in Tennessee Code Annotated #49-6-3007. In addition, the local school district is to be notified. The student's absence must be verified according to the school's policy regarding absences. The principal will make the decision as to whether an absence is excused or unexcused. Students may be required to complete missed class or homework assignments as deemed appropriate by the teacher and in keeping with local school regulations.

Students are encouraged to schedule appointments with their doctors or dentists other than during school hours; however, when necessity demands, the appointment should be made as early or as late in the day as possible.



SECTION 18

APPENDIX B

MIDDLE SCHOOL DEMERIT SYSTEM

St. Mary's Catholic School Behavior Management for grades 6th-8th

Respectful and responsible behavior is expected at all times. This includes:

Respect means:

- Peaceful resolution of differences in all situations
- Respect of school property, personal possessions, and property of others
- Proper language both verbal and non-verbal
- Orderly, courteous, and safe conduct in hallways, arrival/dismissal, Mass, special situations, school-sponsored activities.

Responsible means:

- Be in the proper place at the proper time including not visiting lockers at times not approved
- Being on time to class with homework and materials
- Adherence to school policies

Note: For any infraction with a substitute, two demerits are given.

St. Mary's Catholic School uses a tiered system of discipline:

- Demerits will be issued by teachers and other staff for infractions.
- The teacher or staff member will inform verbally the student when a demerit is given and why.
- Demerit slips will be given to homeroom teacher who will register them in RenWeb and send email to parents (teacher giving the demerit can also do this)
- For any 3 demerits given within one nine-week period, an after-school detention is given.
- Free-dress every 4 ½ weeks (mid-way and quarter-end) for students with no demerits.
- Parent will be given 48-hour notice of after-school detention.
- Detention scheduled for Thursdays, 3:15-4 p.m. under the supervision of a middle-school teacher.

- Parents pick up the student 4 p.m. from supervising teacher's classroom.
- Student sent to Aftercare for late arrival from this pick-up.
- Student will complete detention task of writing about his/her infraction which will be signed by parent and kept by homeroom teacher.
- After three detention periods in any one school year and a total of 12 merits, student will serve a one-day in-school suspension. He/she will be responsible for all work assigned during suspension.
- Parent will pay for substitute teacher to supervise suspension if the principal deems needed.
- After the suspension, the demerit count begins again.

