

## **St. Joseph School**

305 Elm Street  
Oradell, NJ 07649

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Principal's e-mail:  
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Dear Family Member,

Welcome to the St. Joseph School community! We are happy to have you with us and we look forward to another year of excellence as we partner with you in providing a solid Catholic education for each of our students.

In this handbook you will find the answers to many of your questions and the general procedures that we follow. Please take the time to read through it and to become familiar with its contents. By enrolling your child(ren) in St. Joseph School, you have agreed to abide by the contents of this handbook and to be familiar with the school requirements. If any questions arise as you go through this information, please contact the school office.

Throughout the year you will have many opportunities to become involved with school activities. You will also be kept well informed of school happenings through our weekly newsletter, The St. Joseph School News. Please check with your child each Friday for this packet, which will contain all the important news for the following week. You will also find this information posted on our school website, along with detailed calendar information, daily homework, lunch menus, etc.

Again, welcome to St. Joseph School and may God bless each and every family as we start this new year together!

Best Wishes,

Colette Vail,  
Principal

Revised August, 2009

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

St. Joseph 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 at the school. St. Joseph School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

### **Purpose and Use of Handbook**

The Student Handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of St. Joseph School. To meet this objective, the school administration is given flexibility and the ability to exercise discretion. **In appropriate circumstances, the Principal has the discretion to take actions other than those specified in the Handbook.** This Handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students or parents/guardians.

~Archdiocese of Newark

### **Amendments To Handbook**

This Handbook is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the school administration. If changes are made to the handbook, parents/guardians will be notified promptly.

### **Accreditation**

St. Joseph School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. Our school website, which is updated on a regular basis, is [www.sjsoradell.com](http://www.sjsoradell.com)

You will find many useful links that will answer your questions on a variety of topics, including curricular information.

### **ABSENCE AND LATENESS**

Prompt, regular attendance is essential to academic success. The parent/guardian is expected to foster these good habits in the student, both for the benefit of the student's current academic achievement and to encourage mature adult behavior in the future. Absence and lateness also becomes a part of the student's permanent record. In the event that something prevents a student from being present, parents must telephone the school office by 8:15 A.M. When the student returns to school, a written note must be handed in, stating the reason for the absence. Any absence of 3 days or longer that is the result of illness requires a doctor's note upon the student's return to school. Parents may request homework assignments for an absence that extends beyond one day. Please note that vacation is considered an unexcused absence. Make-up assignments may not be available beforehand and all work must be made up once the student returns. If a student is going to be gone on a trip longer than 3 school days, a Temporary Absence Permit must be filled out and filed in the school office.

In the Upper School, students who arrive after locker time must report to the office for a late slip. Students in the Lower School who arrive after 8:05 must report for a late slip. Students who are late consistently will be scheduled for a detention.

#### **ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR LEAGUE SPORTS**

All students are required to maintain a "C" average for participation in athletics. (This includes cheer leading.)

#### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

Whenever available spaces are limited in any given grade level, preference will be given to registered parishioners of St. Joseph Church for new admissions. All other available spaces will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, according to one's placement on the waiting list for each grade.

#### **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT**

Parents are notified via the "Year At A Glance" Calendar that is a part of the August school packet of all of our Back To School Nights. These are held on separate evenings for the Preschool, Kindergarten, Lower School and Upper School. At least one member of each student's adult family should be in attendance for these important informational meetings.

#### **BICYCLES**

Students in grades 5-8 may ride bicycles to school. They must be parked and locked in the bike racks provided and no riding is permitted on the playground, in the interest of safety. Please remember that State Law

requires all riders to wear appropriate helmets. St. Joseph School will not be responsible for any loss or damage to bicycles brought to school.

### **BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT**

Each student is responsible for the proper care and return of all books and equipment received from the school. **Books are to be covered** and marked with the student's name and grade. Anything lost or damaged beyond repair while out on loan must be paid for in full before the end of the school year. Students will be charged a \$30 fee for each book returned in poor condition. All students are required to carry a book bag of some type to and from school, clearly marked with each one's name and grade.

### **CAFETERIA**

Each building has its own cafeteria for student use at lunch time. Students have the option of going home for lunch or remaining at school. (Lunches that are brought from home should be clearly marked with the student's name.) The school hot lunch/a la carte program is available 5 days per week. Tickets are sold every Monday and each student should put his/her name on every ticket once they are received. There is no credit given for lost tickets. Students who arrive at school without a lunch or lunch ticket will call home. Students who remain at school may purchase a non-soda beverage from one of the vending machines or may use the milk option which is available. Monthly, the PTO hosts a Pizza lunch and students in the Upper School may participate in monthly Beta Club lunches. Students in both school buildings also have the option of purchasing snacks. Price information will be sent to each family at the start of school and monthly menus may be downloaded from our school website. **Please note that glass containers are not permitted to be brought to school, for safety reasons and that no food or beverages are permitted to be brought outside during lunch recess.**

Conduct while in the cafeteria is expected to follow the normal rules of good order and table manners. The rules for good order are posted in each cafeteria and all teachers go over these at the start of the school year. Students consistently corrected for their behavior in the cafeteria may be assigned a specific seat or asked to go home for lunch. Table areas should be left in a neat and orderly fashion and all trash deposited in the proper receptacles. Students who remain at school for lunch are not permitted to leave the school grounds without written permission from a parent. Students may not enter the school building during outside recess time without the permission of a teacher or the outside supervisor.

### **Lunch/Recess Schedule**

Lower School: 11:45 - 12:30 Grades K - 4

Upper School: 11:51 - 12:31 Grades 5 - 8

There are two lunch shifts in the Lower School, with students having alternating 20 minute periods for eating and playing outdoors. Because 20 minutes of eating time should be more than sufficient and to prevent the danger of students choking on food while running around or playing, no food is to be eaten on the playground during recess time. The Upper School also has two lunch shifts, following the same alternating pattern of eating and outdoor time. During inclement weather, Upper School students return to their homerooms for indoor games and students in the Lower School have recess in the Gym.

Lunch supervision is done by the faculty and staff or by parent volunteers, on occasion. All playground supervisors act with the authority of the administration in order to provide an orderly and enjoyable recess.

#### **CHANGE OF INFORMATION**

If any of your pertinent family information changes during the school year, please contact the school office with the new information. That way, our records will remain up to date and you will be assured of receiving the proper notification for school information.

#### **CHEATING/PLAGIARISM**

Cheating, copying homework or presenting other work as your own is a violation of honor and will be dealt with severely. Consequences of this behavior may include receiving demerits, having to redo the work, serving a homework detention, or even in-school suspension, depending on the particular offense. Parents are reminded that the completion of a special class project is the student's responsibility, not the parent's.

#### **CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS**

Parents are welcome to schedule a classroom observation visit at least 24 hours in advance, out of courtesy to the teacher. We also request that no other children accompany you on your visit. If you have lengthy questions to address to the teacher once the class has finished, please make a separate appointment. Due to our many end of the year activities, no observations will be scheduled after May 1st.

#### **CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

A variety of extracurricular activities are offered to the students of

St. Joseph School. These may change from year to year, but typically include the Junior Beta Club, H.O.P.E., Upper School Magazine, Junior Choir, Hand Chime Choir, Drama Club, Yearbook, Cultural/Language Clubs, Bowling Club, Martial Arts, Scouts, Intramural Athletics and team sports. Our team sports are sponsored by the St. Joseph Athletic Association and are open to any student in the Parish. Information on all of our offerings will be available to students at the start of each school year.

Any student in grades 5-8 who fails two or more subjects in any marking period will be unable to participate in any St. Joseph School activity. Once the failure has been rectified on the next report card, this prohibition is lifted. If a student is absent during the day, they may not participate in a school event that evening, in most cases.

#### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

State health regulations require the exclusion of children from school if they are found to have certain contagious diseases. These include, but are not limited to: influenza, measles, whooping cough, strep throat, pink eye, lice, scarlet fever, chicken pox, mumps, ringworm, and tonsillitis. **A doctor's note will be required in order for the student to return to school following one of these illnesses.** If you have any questions concerning this, please contact the school nurse.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

St. Joseph School has an excellent vehicle for maintaining communication with our families in the form of the weekly St. Joseph School News. Any group needing to relay information may submit it to the school office to be included in the newsletter. News items must be received by Wednesday morning in order to make the Friday edition. Newsletters will be sent home every Friday, via the oldest child in school, unless you request another child to take it home. It is also available for download on our school website. **If your child does not give you the newsletter on Friday, please check their school bags and back packs!**

#### **COMPUTER USE**

No student is permitted to use classroom or lab computers without an adult present. (This holds true for indoor recess time as well.) A signed acceptable use policy is also required from each student. Students are reminded that any computer activity that includes behavior deemed to be unacceptable by the school administration will result in disciplinary action.

#### **CONFERENCES/APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS**

Formal Parent Teacher conferences are scheduled for the middle of the first trimester, as listed in the school calendar. If you wish to make an

appointment to see a teacher at some other time, please contact the school office and make your request known. The staff will notify the teacher, who in turn will contact you directly to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

**Because teachers have a very limited amount of time during the course of a school day, it is not usually possible to honor requests for "walk-in" meetings.** If you or your student has a concern about a discipline situation or something else within the classroom, please contact the teacher to make an appointment to discuss your concern. If you still have questions following that, make an appointment to speak with the principal.

#### **COURSE OF STUDY**

St. Joseph School follows the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Newark in setting up the curricula for all courses. Parents can access our website for a concise summary of every course offering at each grade level.

#### **DISCIPLINE**

The General Discipline policy outlined by the Archdiocese of Newark is as follows:

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority, and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. They must take seriously their obligation to develop lifetime habits of self-control and concern for the well-being of others. Home and school will work together to help students learn and live the qualities of responsible behavior and the elements of good citizenship.

A student who chooses to disrupt the good order of the school or to violate a policy or regulation will have to accept the consequences of those irresponsible choices. Appropriate discipline is within the discretion of the Principal. Accountability for uncooperative, disruptive or unsafe behavior may take the following forms: warnings, punishment assignments, denial of privileges, detention, in school suspension, out of school suspension or expulsion.

Harassment is any sort of continuing behavior that is annoying, including inappropriate Internet communication. It can be words, gestures and actions, which tend to annoy, alarm and verbally abuse another person. A person commits a petty misdemeanor if, with purpose to harass another, he or she: (1) makes a telephone call without purpose of legitimate communication or (2) insults, taunts or challenges another in a manner likely to promote a disorderly response; or (3) makes repeated communications anonymously or at extremely inconvenient hours or in offensive, coarse language; or (4) subjects another to an offensive touch; or

(5) engages in any course of alarming conduct serving no legitimate purpose of the actor.

Harassment occurs then, when one person makes repeated verbal, written or physical contact with another person who does not want this contact. Bullying is a particular type of harassment that generally involves some force, whether overt or subtle. Exclusion is widely considered to be a form of bullying, even though there may be no apparent contact. By ignoring or excluding an individual from participation in some group activity, the bully demonstrates his or her force of power.

Actions that violate the law, threaten or cause harm to other students or staff members, disrupt or impede the welfare and progress of the school community, or bring discredit to the school will not be tolerated. Such actions or other severe violations of school rules may result in immediate expulsion. If a student persists in violating basic obligations of courtesy, consideration, respect, cooperation or safety, a conference will be scheduled with the parents, students and school administration. All subsequent discipline, counseling, consultation and corrective action plans will be viewed as positive home-school efforts to help improve student behavior. If these cooperative efforts of parents and school staff prove ineffective, the student will be subject to expulsion or may be denied readmittance to the school.

In addition, the St. Joseph School code of discipline further states that our aim is to provide a disciplined learning environment which meets the needs of both students and teachers. Christian courtesy, respect, and responsibility are the hallmarks of this system. Classroom discipline is ordinarily handled by individual teachers. Rules and other guidelines are formulated after careful deliberation and much thought. Without such rules and guidelines, our school could not run in a safe, orderly and efficient manner. All students are expected to conduct themselves according to the following principles:

1. To be honest in all dealings with students, teachers and administrators
2. To respect the rights and values of all individuals
3. To cooperate positively with all members of our school community
4. To treat each member of the school community in a caring, Christian manner, in keeping with our Gospel values

In both buildings, teachers make known their classroom expectations at the start of the school year and inform both students and parents of the general rules of the classroom. Additionally, if the need arises, students may be

referred to the principal for repeated infractions of classroom rules, or for situations that are out of the ordinary. Parents will be contacted as each situation warrants.

In the Upper School building, housing grades 5 - 8, a demerit/detention system is in place. Students know exactly what is expected of them and are guided to choose appropriate behaviors that allow for a classroom environment conducive to learning. If a student's behavior is generally disruptive and uncooperative, the recommendation may be made to the parent(s)/guardian to seek out an alternative educational environment. Our responsibility as educators is to the class. We cannot sacrifice the good of the class for the sake of one individual who is not able to operate within the parameters of our system. In addition, if a parent visitor/volunteer feels that there is a disciplinary situation that needs to be addressed, please notify the school office. No parent should be speaking to any child other than their own about a behavior issue.

**Demerit/Detention System:**

At the start of the school year, students are informed by their teachers of the rules of conduct and behavior expected of students in the Upper School. Failure to comply with any of these guidelines results in a verbal warning. If the infraction occurs again, the result is the issuance of one or more demerits or detention, depending on the situation. Please note that academics are separate from behavior. Failure of a student to do homework, complete an assignment, or anything else of an academic nature is handled by giving them a lower rating or grade. The consequence for minor infractions, i.e. dress code violations or chewing gum in class, is a lunch detention, which will be given after the student has had one warning. The demerit/detention slip must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the teacher, who in turn will give it to the Principal. You may not agree with the demerit/detention, but it must still be signed and returned. These slips are kept on file for the entire year.

**The demerit/detention slip looks like the following:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Noncompliance with Teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inappropriate Language/Behavior
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bullying/Bullying Behavior (see below)\*\*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Fighting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disrespect
- \_\_\_\_\_ Harassment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dress Code Violation (detention)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chewing Gum in school (detention)

**Demerit Consequences:**

3 Demerits = Conference with Homeroom teacher + Detention\*

5 Demerits = Conference with Principal\*

10 Demerits = Conference with Principal and Parent(s)\*  
Class Trip Priviledges Voided

15 Demerits = Behavioral Probation (Contract signed by Parent(s),  
Principal, Pastor, No Activities or Beta, Weekly  
Conference with Teacher/School Adult of Choice,  
School Community Service\*

20 Demerits Recommendation To Withdraw Possible

**\*Please note that once 3 demerits have been received,  
Detention is automatic for each and every subsequent  
demerit, along with the other stated consequences.**

\*\*All students receive instruction in the meaning of bullying and bullying prevention. Bullying is defined as an intentionally cruel incident, designed to make another child feel uncomfortable, insecure or threatened. It usually has three common features: it is deliberate, hurtful behavior; it is repeated often, over a period of time; it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are three main types of bullying: physical, (hitting kicking or taking belongings); verbal, (name calling, taunting, insulting) and indirect (spreading stories, excluding others from a group).

In addition to demerits, there may be times when the nature of an offense warrants suspension or expulsion. Please see that section of the handbook.

**DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

To insure a safe and accident free dismissal, a set of orderly procedures has been put into place. Students in Pre-K and K will be dismissed from their own exterior classroom doors. The teacher or aide will be on duty to insure that every child is met by a designated adult. In the unforeseen event that a ride is late, then the parent/adult must meet the child in the Main Office, where they will be waiting. Students in grades 1-3 will be escorted to the side playground exit door. Students in grade 4 will be dismissed from the side door leading to the inside courtyard play area. Students in the Upper School will be dismissed from their classrooms and will exit the building from the doors nearest to their locker areas. Students in the Upper School waiting for rides should be instructed to stay near the front door. Students

in the Lower School will wait in the Main Office. **In the interest of student safety, if a ride is very late and school personnel must leave the building, those still waiting for rides will be instructed to go to the Aftercare area, where appropriate charges will apply.** No parking is permitted in the school parking lots at dismissal time. Please park in the appropriate areas on the side streets to wait for your student. **No parent is permitted to take any child other than their own, at any time, unless the school has received direct written or verbal notification from the other parent.**

### **DRESS CODE**

Care, cleanliness and neatness in regard to dress and appearance are required of all students. The prescribed school uniform is to be worn by all students in Kindergarten through Eighth grade, beginning with the first day of school. (Students in Pre-K or Transition Kindergarten do not wear the school uniform.) Violations of the Dress Code result in demerits, which lead to detention, etc. Please review the Demerit section of this handbook for further information.

Jewelry, with the exception of Religious medals, etc., is not a part of the school uniform but small earrings may be worn by the girls, limited to one earring in each ear. (Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.) There is no make-up allowed, with the exception of colorless lip protection and only clear nail polish may be worn. Nails must be neatly trimmed and no longer than “sport length”, i.e. 1/8” from base of finger.

Sneakers, work boots or heavy shoes that extend up the ankle may never be worn in the classroom. Solid color dress shoes, (no brand logos) are required and they must be of standard style. Mod platform shoes, clogs, backless shoes or shoes with very high heels are not permitted, for safety sake. Mocassin style shoes are not permitted. Black sneakers are not permitted in lieu of dress shoes. Snow boots, including Uggs, may not be worn all day long.

Hairstyles for both boys and girls should be neat and clean. Hair ribbons or other accessories are to be color coordinated with the school uniform.

**The altering of natural hair coloring and fad type haircuts (i.e. portions shaved to the skin, uneven hairline, etc.) are not permitted. Hair length should not obstruct a student’s vision. For boys, hair should not extend below the shirt collar.**

All school uniform items should be purchased from the uniform company. No "off the rack" substitutions are permitted. Dress shoes should be in black, navy blue or brown

**Grades K - 3**

**Girls:** Blue Plaid Jumper, Plaid Tie, Blue Blouse, Navy Knee Socks and Dress Shoes.

Girls are permitted to wear navy tights with their regular school uniform.

**Boys:** Navy Slacks, Blue Shirt, Blue Plaid Tie, Dark Socks and Dress Shoes

**Grades 4 - 8**

**Girls:** Navy Kilt, White Blouse, Navy Knee Socks, Knit Vest, Color Coordinated by Grade and Dress Shoes. Girls are permitted to wear navy tights with their regular school uniform.

**Boys:** Navy Slacks, with Belt, White Shirt, Navy Tie, Knit Vest, Color Coordinated by Grade, Dark Socks, and Dress Shoes

Shirts with standard shirt tails must be tucked in for both boys and girls!

During the months of September and May students have the option of wearing the St. Joseph School logo golf shirt, which is available with either a banded shirt bottom or with standard shirt tails. Students are also permitted to wear the COED Uniform dress Bermuda shorts during warm weather. The St. Joseph School Golf shirt is worn along with the shorts, white socks and sneakers.

In the Winter, a coordinating school sweater is available. Students are not permitted to wear sweatshirts or jackets while in the classroom, unless the teacher allows it for some specific reason.

All students may wear their Gym uniforms to school on Gym days. Consequently, **only regulation Gym attire is permitted.** Students who come to school in non-uniform athletic clothing will not be permitted to participate and will not receive credit for class that day. If your student wishes to wear an additional shirt under their Gym clothing, it should not be visible.

**Please Note: Knee socks and slacks must be the standard uniform issue. Girls skirts should be no shorter than 4" from the back bend of the knee.**

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

IPOD's, Radios, Gameboys, etc. are not permitted in school. (There may be exceptions to this rule during the long Winter months when students have many consecutive days of inside recess. If so, it will be announced.) These items cannot be replaced if lost or damaged and are better left at home. **Cell phones, pagers, blackberries or any other type of electronic device used for texting or any other type of communication are prohibited as well. If any parent wishes his/her child to have a cell phone or other device for emergency use, it must be stored in the school office during the day and retrieved at dismissal.** Please place the device in a clear, zip lock bag, clearly marked with your child's name, grade and class. Homeroom teachers will collect the bags at the start of the day and distribute them again at dismissal. Students who use these in any way during school time are subject to receiving both demerits and detention. In addition the item will be held in the office until a parent can pick it up. A second offense of this policy will result in the device being prohibited in school.

## **EMERGENCY DISMISSAL**

In the event of an unplanned, emergency early dismissal, parents will be notified via the Honeywell Emergency Communication system and a notice will appear on the school website. Please insure that you have a back-up plan for your child if your work situation would prevent you from coming to school. In the same vein, please be sure that your work telephone number is current in the school records.

## **EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM (AFTERCARE)**

St. Joseph School provides Extended Care before and after school on all school days for the benefit of our working parents. **(This program is not designed to accommodate play dates among groups of children.)** Parents may use it daily or on occasion, but if the program becomes too crowded, then preference will be given to those who need this service on a regular basis. Aftercare is available from 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM to accommodate all students from Pre-K - 8. An informational brochure listing current rates and other highlights of this program is available in the school office. Billing is done on a monthly basis, although families who are chronically delinquent with Aftercare payments may be required to pay on the day service is provided. The Aftercare area is located in the basement of the Religious residence, across the playground from the Upper School. Entrance is made through the side door on Grant Street.

Before School Care is available in the Lower School from 7:30 AM - 8:00 AM for students in grades K-8, by private arrangement with the teacher running that program. You may contact the school office for more information. Pre-school Before Care is available in the Lower School from 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM. We must have a minimum of 5 children

enrolled in the service in order to offer it in any given year. Pre-K 3 charges are \$4.00/week and Pre-K 4 charges are \$6.00/week. Fees are charged on a weekly basis only, but there is no charge for days during the week that school is not in session.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Yearly field trips for the students are scheduled from time to time in order to enhance our educational program. Participation is not , however, automatic. Students are considered to be eligible to participate in field trips as long as they maintain a satisfactory classroom discipline record. Students who have received an external suspension greater than one day or who have 10 or more demerits will void their field trip eligibility. Field trips are further guided by the following principles:

1. No child shall be excluded from a field trip because of inability to pay.
2. Parents shall be informed in writing of all pertinent details.
3. Parent written permission is required before any student is taken on a field trip.
4. Private cars shall not be used without the permission of the principal. (All drivers must have the required insurance information on file in the main office).
5. The classroom teacher is the primary chaperone for all class field trips. If necessary, additional parental help will be solicited, through the class chairperson. It is impossible to accommodate every parent's wish to participate in field trips. Please keep in mind that these trips are designed to be **class** outings for a specific educational purpose. They are not parental outings.
6. Parents who, for some reason, do not wish their child to participate in a scheduled field trip will be responsible for them that day. It will be counted as an unexcused absence from school.
7. Students needing special medical attention as determined by the school nurse, must have a parent with them on all field trips.

### **FINAL EXAMS**

Students in grads 6-7- 8 have final exams at the end of May. The exam schedule is set and published in September of each year. No changes will be made in order to accommodate outside activities.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

New Jersey School Law requires two fire drills per month in each school. The objective of these drills is to evacuate a building in the shortest possible

time, in an orderly manner. They last from 5 - 8 minutes each and will not be held when the weather is inclement.

#### **FIRST AID AND MEDICINE**

Day to day mishaps will be attended to by our full-time school nurse. Prompt treatment will be given and parents will be notified if it is an emergency situation, as determined by the nurse. In addition, parents will also be notified if the student has sustained a blow to the head or any other area that could develop complications. **Please be sure that you have an up-to-date emergency card on file in the school office.**

All medicines, including nonprescription items and cough drops, are required to be kept in the health office and dispensed by the nurse, with a doctor's note on file. (Cough drops, kleenex, and throat lozenges are not provided by the health office.) Medicine must be in the original container, clearly marked with the child's name and dosage information.

**No medications will be dispensed without the doctor's note. Parental notes do not suffice.**

#### **FUNERAL ATTENDANCE**

Students may be dismissed to attend funerals with parental permission. Please send a note or call the office, as you would for any other dismissal.

#### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The following is a summary of some of the health services that are provided to the students of St. Joseph School:

1. Dental - Topical dental screening is done annually in grade 1.
2. Hearing - Students in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8 are tested annually.
3. Height and Weight - All students height and weight are recorded annually.
4. Vision - All students tested annually.
5. Physical Examination - In keeping with the School Health Act, all students are required to have physicals three times within the years of school, i.e. entering Kindergarten and grades 3 and 6. Physicals are also strongly encouraged for students entering Pre-K.
6. Scoliosis Screening in grade 6

#### **HIGH SCHOOL VISITATION**

Students in grade 8 are given three days of excused absence for the purpose of visiting the different local high schools. If students in grade 7 wish to visit a high school, the day will also count toward that total. Any visitation days beyond three will be counted as a regular absence.

## **HOMEWORK**

Students are assigned Homework on almost a daily basis. Homework is designed to reinforce the work done in class and may include both written and study assignments. Students have the responsibility of recording daily assignments in the Homework Assignment Book that was given to them in the beginning of the year, along with their other school supplies. Homework should be neat, complete and on time. Homework Assignment Books may be spot checked for completeness and parents may be asked to sign specific assignments as an indication that they have been seen. In addition, homework assignments are also posted on the school website and should be updated daily. Please note that copying homework is considered to be cheating. All parties involved will be sanctioned according to the policy on cheating found in this handbook.

## **HONOR ROLL**

Students in grades 6-8 are eligible to be a part of the St. Joseph School Honor Roll, published in both schools and in the parish bulletin. In addition, teachers may also give Subject Awards for outstanding effort or a particular level of achievement to those students who do not qualify for the Honor Roll.

The following categories are in effect:

**Outstanding Citation** - Average of 97% or above in all major subjects, with no grade lower than 92%

**Principal's List** - Average of 92% or above in all major subjects, with no grade lower than 92%

**First Honors** - Average of 88% or above in all major subjects, with no grade lower than 83%

**Second Honors** - Average of 83% or above in all major subjects, with no grade lower than 83%

## **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Please contact the school nurse for any questions concerning immunization requirements.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of a school closing, or delay, as dictated by the local public schools of either Oradell or New Milford, families will be contacted by the Honeywell Emergency Communication System and it will be posted on the school website. The public schools also broadcast this information over many of the local radios. This is another source of information for you. If

either Oradell or New Milford has a cancellation or delay, we will generally follow suit.

### **PARENTAL RIGHTS TO SCHOOL RECORDS AND CUSTODIAL PRIVILEGE**

St. Joseph School abides by the provisions of applicable law with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary and upon request, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the student's essential academic records. If there is a court order specifying the rights and responsibilities of individual parents, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. Also, please note that the school will permit only the custodial parent or his/her designee to pick up the child during or at the end of the day. The non-custodial parent will not be permitted to pick up the child without prior authorization from the custodial parent. When joint custody is in effect, please provide the school office with a written schedule for emergency contact.

**For the sake of your children, please do not put the school in the middle of situations that should be handled between parents.** School should be a place where the children are free from the tensions that arise in these difficult situations.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

St. Joseph School has an active PTO which meets on the second Tuesday of the month, on at least a quarterly basis. All parents are considered to be members of the PTO, which functions to promote or sponsor school culture, family activities and services, community outreach to school families in need, informational speakers, etc.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

School pictures are taken in the Fall of every year and families have the opportunity to purchase the end result. Group photos are also taken of each activity and sport for the school yearbook, which is also available for purchase. Students are permitted to wear their regular clothes on individual school picture day, providing they follow the guidelines given. If the student's attire is deemed inappropriate, he/she will be sent home to change. For class pictures all students are to wear the regular school uniform.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students in grades K- 8 have physical education class every week. The official St. Joseph School gym uniform is required attire for all students and consists of a light blue T-shirt, navy shorts and sneakers. (Gym uniforms may be purchased through the regular uniform company.) During the winter months, students may substitute the school sweat suit for the T-shirt and shorts. Students in all grades may wear their Gym clothes to school

and remain in them during the course of the day. (The only exception to this rule will be for the Upper School students having Gym on First Fridays. Students must wear the regular school uniform on all First Fridays.) Students not having proper uniform attire will not be permitted to participate in the class and will receive no grade for that day. Repeated situations of this nature will effect the report card grade.

A written excuse by a parent, doctor or the school nurse is the only reason a student will be exempt from taking part in our physical education program. All such notes must be submitted to the teacher and the school nurse, who will keep them on file. If a student has been out of gym for an extended period of time under doctor's orders, a doctor's note will be required before (s)he may participate again. No student may participate in physical education if they have any type of cast or brace.

### **PLAYGROUND**

While on the playground, students are to be courteous and respectful at all times. Games that involve pushing, tackling or shoving are not permitted, for obvious reasons. In the Lower School, classes will be allowed to take turns using the play structure and basketball hoops. In the Upper School, students may use the basketball hoops or play other games using nerf type balls. In the morning, students should gather in the general area where each class lines up. This is not a time for running around or playing with balls or other equipment.

**Students may never leave the playground area for any reason without the permission of the playground supervisor on duty.** This also applies to going after balls that might have been kicked off the playground accidentally. The supervisor has the authority to discipline any student found to be in violation of these rules.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

In order to keep the lines of communication open between parents and the school regarding student progress, mid-term progress reports are sent home every trimester. These reports are self-explanatory and will indicate what areas the student needs to concentrate on. If the teacher feels that a parent conference is needed, that will also be indicated on the report. If a student's progress declines after mid-term, teachers may still mail home progress reports, up to one week before Report Cards are given out. No student will be given a failing grade if the parent has not been notified.

### **PROLONGED ABSENCE**

In the event of prolonged absence, defined as two or more weeks, a student is required to take part in a home tutoring or supervised study program to make-up and continue the work of the class. If achievement is evaluated to be below class level at the end of the term, retention may be recommended. Parents/guardians may arrange for the tutoring sessions through the Main Office.

#### **PROMOTION/RETENTION**

In the case of a failure in one or two subjects in the final average, either summer school or tutoring by a certified teacher will be required over the summer months before a student is admitted into the next grade. If a student receives a failing average in three or more subjects, it will be necessary for (s)he to be retained in the current grade level.

Students in the eighth grade must pass all major subjects in order to receive a diploma during the graduation exercises. If one or two subjects have been failed, (s)he must attend summer school before final school records will be sent to the high school and the official diploma picked up in the school office. Failure to pass three or more subjects will result in the student being retained. Retained students do not participate in any closing activities, i.e. the dance, class trip, etc.

#### **REGISTRATION**

First time registration at St. Joseph School is held during Catholic Schools Week, the last week in January. These dates are well publicized in both the St. Joseph School News and in the Parish bulletin. Current students are asked to re-register by May 1st of each year, so that books and materials may be ordered and families on the waiting list may be accommodated. Detailed instructions concerning the registration process is available in the Registration Booklet, which may be obtained in the Lower School office or on the school website.

#### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES**

The non-Catholic student is welcome at St. Joseph School. The non-Catholic student is expected to understand and agree that the school exists to educate in the framework of Catholic values. Non-Catholic students must participate in the Religion classes and liturgical services scheduled for students during the school year.

#### **REPORT CARDS**

Report Cards are distributed three times per year to Grades 1-8 and two times per year to Kindergarten, Transition Kindergarten and our Pre-School students. Letter grades are used exclusively, according to Archdiocesan policy. Students must return the Report Card envelope promptly, with the

signature of a parent or guardian, indicating that they have seen the report. All Report Card distribution dates are listed in the school calendar.

### Report Card Grading System

E Exceeds	A+ (97 - 100)	C+ (78 - 82)
S Secure	A (92 - 96)	C (73 - 77)
D Developing	B+ (88 - 91)	D (70 - 72)
B Beginning	B (83 - 87)	U Below 70
N Not Yet Performing		

In addition, there are other codes for several other areas. Please see the school website for a complete listing.

### SCOOTERS/SKATEBOARDS

Scooters/skateboards may not be used during school time and should not be brought on campus.

### STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The statement of compliance, found in the August packet, indicating that you and your child are familiar with the contents of this handbook, must be returned to each class teacher on or before Back To School Night.

### SUPERVISION

The school's responsibility for supervision of students begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 2:45 PM. For students properly enrolled in Before/After Care, the school's responsibility for supervision begins at 7:30 AM (or the time the student is brought to the Beforecare classroom), and ends at 6:00 PM, (or the time the student is signed out of the Aftercare area.)

**Please note that students who are on school property before 8:00 AM and after regular school hours do so at their own risk. Once school personnel leave for the day, any student remaining will be sent to Aftercare.**

### SUSPENSION/WITHDRAWAL

In the case of serious/repeated violations of school regulations, a student may be temporarily suspended from school/classes. The parent(s)/guardian must meet with the principal before the student is re-admitted to class, in order to resolve the situation. Grounds for suspension may include, but are not limited to: cheating, smoking or lighting matches on school property, stealing, deliberately causing bodily harm to another individual, gross insubordination to a faculty or staff member, being in possession of any

variety of drugs, alcohol or weapons while on school property or at a school sponsored event and truancy. Students under suspension are not permitted on school grounds and may not participate in school sponsored events until they return to school. A repeated occurrence of suspension will lead to the recommendation that the student withdraw from St. Joseph School.

Students who have received more than one day of external suspension void their Field Trip eligibility. Violation of the policy governing controlled dangerous substances may also lead to the recommendation that a student withdraw from St. Joseph School.

Please note: In some cases, in-school suspension may be required versus out of school suspension.

### **TAG DAY**

From time to time, students will be given the opportunity to participate in a “Tag Day”, which means that they do not have to wear the regular school uniform that day to school. Tag day attire will be announced before the actual day and may be thematic in nature. (Ex. Christmas colors or green for St. Patrick’s Day.) No T-shirts with offensive words or images are permitted. Tube tops, strapless tops, off-the-shoulder tops, tank tops, or any style of clothing that allows the stomach to be seen is not permitted. Likewise, short shorts or mini skirts are not appropriate for school wear. Pants must not drag on the ground. Jeans, sneakers and sandals are permitted. If attire is judged to be too revealing or offensive, the student may be asked to return home for something more appropriate. Flip flops and high heeled shoes pose a tripping hazard and are not appropriate footwear for school at any time. This includes Tag Day. Repeated violations of Tag Day guidelines may result in non-participation in the future.

### **TATTOOS**

No student is permitted to have tattoos.

### **TELEPHONE CALLS**

Both school offices are staffed and available for telephone calls between the hours of 8:00 AM and 2:45 PM. After 2:45 PM the telephone may be answered, if someone is within earshot. The voice mail system is always on and it is checked frequently throughout the day. If you receive the voice mail prompt during the day, it generally means that both school lines were busy at the time of your call.

**Lower School Office: 261-2388**

**Upper School Office: 261-5397**

In an emergency, students may ask to use the school office telephone to call home. **Please be sure that your child is clear about what they are doing after school, in terms of rides, activities, Aftercare, etc.** It is very difficult to make telephone calls at dismissal time for students who are uncertain about what they are to do.

### **TESTING**

Standardized testing is done at St. Joseph School in every grade level, beginning with Grade 1. These tests are a measure of the student's academic potential, achievement and basic skills, as individuals and as compared to students in the Archdiocese and across the Nation. Testing dates are announced well in advance in order to keep families informed and to insure that students are present in school.

Grades 1 - 7: Terra Nova III Achievement Test

Grades 4 & 7: Terra Nova Writing Assessment

Grades 5 & 8: Assessment of Catholic Religious Education, I & II  
(ACRE)

Grade 8: Catholic High School Entrance Exam (CO-OP Exam)

### **TRANSFER PROCEDURE**

To facilitate the transfer of a student from St. Joseph's to another school, please notify the school office several days in advance. A transfer card will be completed and given to you to bring to the new school. The school will request the student records from us, and they will be forwarded directly to the new school. **No student records are given to the family.**

### **TRUANCY**

A student who is absent from school or who leaves the school property without the consent of a parent/guardian is considered truant. This is recorded as an unexcused absence in the student record and a conference with the Principal is required before a student will be re-admitted to class. Truancy may be cause for suspension and time lost from the school day must be made up.

### **USE, POSSESSION, AND DISTRIBUTION OF CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES**

#### ***Definitions:***

Controlled Dangerous Substances are defined in sections I through V of the NJ Criminal Code. They include but are not limited to marijuana, heroin, and anabolic steroids. The term controlled dangerous substance shall also include alcohol.

Under the Influence: a student is judged to be under the influence whenever s/he exhibits physical or physiological symptoms (including but not limited to unsteady walk, dilated pupils, slurred speech, erratic or uncharacteristic

emotional reactions) which are commonly associated with the use of controlled dangerous substances.

Possession is defined as knowingly or purposely obtaining or possessing, actively or \*constructively, a controlled dangerous substance or drug paraphernalia:

- A. On or off school property
- B. On the person
- C. In an accessory (including but not limited to purse, book bag, gym bag or knapsack)
- D. In a locker or desk
- E. In a privately or school owned vehicle

\*Constructive possession refers to a student who intends or has the capacity to exercise control over the drug/paraphernalia even if s/he does not have physical possession of the item. For example, one who hides drugs on school property or asks a classmate to hold drugs for him/her, constructively possesses the drugs.

Distribution is defined as sharing, selling or dispensing a controlled dangerous substance:

- A. On or off school property
- B. With or without receiving payment
- C. To individuals enrolled or not enrolled in the school

Possession with Intent to Distribute applies regardless of whether or not a student intended:

- A. To receive payment
- B. To distribute the controlled dangerous substance to an individual enrolled or not enrolled in school and
- C. To distribute the controlled dangerous substance on or off school property

***Policy:***

1. A student shall be considered in violation of school policy if s/he is observed :
  - A. To be under the influence
  - B. In possession
  - C. Engaged in distribution or
  - D. Have possession of a controlled dangerous substance
2. Such a student shall be subject to the following provisions and to the general discipline policy stated in this handbook.
  - A. When a student is identified as being “under the influence” “in possession” of a controlled dangerous substance, the principal MAY refer the matter to local law enforcement officials.

B. When a student is identified as “distributing” or “in possession with intent to distribute” a controlled dangerous substance, the principal **MUST** refer the matter to local law enforcement officials.

3. A student suspected of violating the policy governing controlled dangerous substances will immediately be placed under suspension for an indefinite period of time. The student and parents/guardians shall be given reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations quickly as possible.

4. If the principal determines that there

- A. Was no violation of policy, the student will be permitted to return to school.
- B. Was a violation of policy, the principal may discipline the student according to the general discipline policy stated in this Handbook up to and including expulsion.

5. The principal may require the student to participate in an appropriate treatment or counseling program as a condition of the student’s eventual return to school.

6. When violation of this policy involves “distribution” or “possession with intent to distribute”, the discipline imposed will normally be expulsion.

### **VANDALISM**

Students and families are responsible to make restitution for any act of vandalism, **including damage to school books**, supplies, equipment, buildings and grounds or the destruction of another student’s property. Vandalism can be a cause for suspension.

### **VISITORS**

All persons entering the school building at any time are required to enter through the main front door, report to the school office immediately and to sign in. This includes visits to the cafeteria and/or playground. If you, by chance, have the need to drop off a forgotten item, please leave it in the appropriate school office and it will be delivered to your child.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

We are fortunate to have a large group of volunteer help at St. Joseph School and we welcome the addition of new members to this group! All

volunteers have scheduled times to be at school and are required to report to the office first, according to the general sign-in policy.