

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. James School is to inspire a Christ-centered community which instills Gospel values nurtured by our beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. Our students' cognitive development is challenged by an education that focuses on academic excellence. This holistic approach enables the students to develop confidence, self-reliance, and a sense of responsibility.

PHILOSOPHY

St. James School is a Christ-centered Christian community, which creates an atmosphere inspired by the Gospel. We are an extension of the Catholic Church's teachings, traditions, and values

Our school community encourages and instills values that affirm the goodness of each person. These values are nurtured by our beliefs, attitudes and behavior. St. James School provides an academic environment which challenges students to develop their cognitive abilities. We build upon each student's innate desire to learn by stimulating his/her intellectual curiosity and creativity. Our curriculum provides opportunities to achieve excellence in knowledge and fundamental skills. St. James addresses the student's educational needs by enhancing the current learning environment with the integration of a technology program and advancing communication skills through community and Christian resources. This foundation contributes to the development and utilization of critical thinking and problem solving techniques.

The individual differences of each student are respected in our academic and Christian environment. We believe that students who have good self-esteem will learn to their fullest potential. This holistic approach enables the student to develop confidence, self-reliance, and a sense of responsibility.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Saint James 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. Saint James 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

This Handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of Saint James School. In appropriate circumstances, the Principal has full discretion to take actions other than those specified in the Handbook. This Handbook is not intended to and should not be considered to create any legal rights for students or parents/guardians. All interpretations of school rules rest finally and exclusively with the Principal.

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.

ACCREDITATION

Saint James School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Location of Middle States home page:

<http://ces-msa.org/>

PROFILE

Saint James School is a private Catholic School for children from Pre-K through Eighth Grade. From its modest beginning in 1965 with 88 first, second and third graders taught in the old Lee Mansion carriage house, St. James has progressively grown. The present building was completed in the 1968-1969 school year. In 1990, a gymnasium with two extra classrooms was built onto the existing school building.

In 1990, a second full-day kindergarten class was added. Each year after that a second class of each successive grade was formed accounting for our current structure of two sections of all grades from Kindergarten through Eight. In the 2003-2004 school year a three and four year half day programs were added. We currently have a faculty of 21 full-time teachers, a counselor, five part-time “specials” teachers and three aides. Our nurses’ office is staffed by the VNA of Somerset County. Hot lunch is available for the students Monday through Friday.

ATTENDANCE

Prompt, regular attendance is absolutely 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.

DAILY SCHEDULE: School hours are 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Students should be dropped off no later than 8:40 A.M. so that they have time to get ready for Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance and Announcements. If students need to be dropped off before 8:30 A.M., they are to report directly to the gym where they will be supervised from 8:00 to 8:30 A.M.

12:45 DISMISSAL: It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that all students are picked up **ON TIME** for 12:45 Dismissal days. Faculty Meetings begin at 1:15 P.M. and **ALL** faculty and administration must be **ON TIME**.

ABSENTEEISM: A parent/guardian must call the school office each day the student is absent by 9:30 A.M. If no call has been received, the school office will make a reasonable effort to reach a parent/guardian by phone to verify the legitimacy of the absence. These procedures represent a mutual effort to account for the presence of the student during school hours. When the student returns to school, he/she must present to the homeroom teacher a written excuse from a parent/guardian stating the student's name together with the dates and reason for the absence. If a student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days, a medical excuse (doctor's note) is required. Individual Classroom Homework Policies and Homework Buddy System are explained on Back-To-School Night. Excessive absences may seriously jeopardize a student's grades and learning. A parent conference will be held to discuss any excessive absences and continued absence may result in failure of that grade.

TARDINESS: All students must **be in their classrooms** by the 8:50 A.M. bell. At 8:50 A.M. all doors to the school are locked. Students arriving after morning announcements will be marked **late** on the attendance records. Students who are late must be signed in at the school office by a parent/guardian **BEFORE** reporting to class.

DELAYED OPENINGS: The decision for a delayed opening is usually made by 6:15 A.M. when the forecast is for the weather to clear, and the Police and Road personnel believe that the roads will be passable. A delayed opening postpones the **start** of school for one and one-half hours (10:00 A.M.). Buses will arrive at the bus stop approximately one and one-half hours later than usual. Parents will be notified by the HSA Phone Chain.

Please note the following **Arrival Times:**

Buses - 10:00 A.M.
Walkers - NOT BEFORE 9:45 A.M.
Car Riders - NOT BEFORE 9:45 A.M.

EARLY DISMISSALS: As a rule, medical appointments should be made after school hours or on days off. If it is absolutely necessary for a child to leave early, a note must be sent to the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher then forwards the note to the school office. All students leaving the school building between 8:50 A.M. and 2:55 P.M. must be signed out in the

school office and accompanied out of the building by a parent/guardian. Students will be called to the office for dismissal when their parent/guardian arrives. If students are returning to school from an appointment, etc., they **must** be signed in by a parent/guardian in the school office.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS: Students will be dismissed early only in extreme situations (such as inclement weather) at 11:00 A.M. The decision is made by 10:30 A.M. by the Bernards Twp. Board of Education. Parents will be notified by the HSA Phone Chain. A telephone call will be made to parents or to the provided emergency numbers.

Students will be dismissed in their regular daily way of dismissal (**bus rider, car rider, walker**), unless the teacher is notified in the morning by a written note. Do not call the school office with any dismissal changes. Students whose parents are not contacted via the HSA Phone Chain will be kept at school until a parent/guardian arrives for them.

BOOK BAGS AND CARE OF BOOKS

Each child must have some type of school bag. **All** hardback textbooks should be covered **at all times (NO TAPE ON BOOK)**. Consumable paperback workbooks **ONLY** should be covered with contact paper. Books should be kept neat and clean at all times. There will be a charge for books that have been damaged. In the event of a lost textbook or workbook, the parent/guardian will be asked to pay the current price of the book.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

It is vitally important that the school records are current regarding change of home address/phone number and place of business/phone number and cell numbers. Contact the school office as soon as changes occur. It is also very important to notify the HSA Presidents for the HSA Phone Chain which is used in emergency closings and delayed openings. You should also notify your child's classroom mother.

CLASS TRIPS

On occasion, St. James School will sponsor and conduct class trips for educational enrichment of the students. The purpose of every class trip is to broaden the intellectual, cultural, and social experiences of each child. Permission slips for any trip will be sent home with your child and are expected to be returned by the deadline indicated on the form. As parent or legal guardian, you remain fully responsible for any legal responsibility which may result from any personal actions taken by the named student.

Participation in class trips is a privilege for students; therefore, the Principal reserves the right to restrict attendance.

COMMUNICATION

YEARLY CALENDARS: A tentative calendar for the school year is sent home at the end of the school year. Revisions of this calendar will be noted in the monthly calendar. Days off and other important dates are noted on it. Please try to arrange for doctor appointments and family vacations when there is no school.

MONTHLY CALENDARS: A calendar will be distributed home before the beginning of each month. Please check that calendar for any changes in the yearly calendar. Class trips, HSA meeting, liturgies, assemblies, and various HSA activities are noted on these calendars.

FLYERS: Flyers are usually passed out to the youngest child in the family. In some instances, flyers will be passed out to each student.

CHILDREN BRINGING MONEY TO SCHOOL: Money that is sent to school for a specific event or purpose should be placed in a sealed envelop and identified with the child's name and grade, the amount enclosed and its purpose.

PARENTAL RIGHTS TO SCHOOL RECORDS: Saint James 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.

COURT ORDERS: 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. The custodial parent may wish to supply the Principal with the "custody section" of the divorce decree if it contains information which may be useful to the School in fulfilling its obligations.

The School will permit only the custodial parent, or her/his designee (designated in writing), to pick up the child during or at the end of the school day. The non-custodial parent will not be permitted to remove the child from school during or at the end of the school day, unless there is written authorization from the custodial parent. In an emergency a clearly defined, one-time telephone authorization may be acceptable.

APPOINTMENTS: If a parent/guardian needs to make an appointment with a teacher, a note should be written to the teacher. Under **no** circumstances is it ever acceptable to disturb a class or stop a teacher while he/she is supervising students (classroom, playground, cafeteria, etc.). Conferences should be made **before** 8:30 A.M. or **after** 3:00 P.M. at a time agreed upon by both parent and teacher.

VISITORS: If there is any need for a parent to be in the school building during the school day, he/she must report to the school office. All visitors must report to the school office.

CURRICULUM

According to the Diocesan Curriculum Guideline, the following subjects are taught:

GRADES K - 8

English
Handwriting
Mathematics
Reading/Phonics/Literature
Religion/Family Life
Science/Health
Social Studies
Spelling/Vocabulary

Art
Computer
Library
Music
Physical Education
Spanish - Grades K-8

All students will attend all classes at their respective grade levels.

Class Assignments: St. James School assigns students to classes based on a desire to create a nurturing academic environment for the individual student. The school is the final decider of assignments and does not accept requests for assignments for the coming school year.

FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM: According to the Diocesan mandates, the Family Life Program is taught as part of our Religion Curriculum. It specifically addresses the needs of today's developing young Catholics. Young people are helped to form specific values toward which the Christian person strives.

SPECIALS: Art, Computer, Library, Music, Physical Education and Spanish are scheduled throughout the week.

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION, ESL, SPEECH, SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION AND CHAPTER I classes are available for students in need through the Somerset County Educational Services Commission, at Saint James School. The SCESC can be reached at (908) 707-0070 for questions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES: 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 all liturgical services scheduled for students during the school year.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY: The purpose of school-provided technology, including Internet access and electronic mail, is to facilitate legitimate educational endeavors. Such resources are used to enrich and enhance the learning experience and environment for students. Use of these resources must always be in conformity with law and the religious mission of Saint James School. No student is permitted to use technology to access or send inappropriate information or materials. Computer games are not to be used, played, loaded, and downloaded at any time.

A permission form signed by the student, parent/guardian, and teacher is required before any student is provided with Internet access privileges.

DISCIPLINE

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment at St. James School. 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 to learn and live the qualities of responsible behavior and the elements of good citizenship.

St. James School reserves the right to correct (educate) students who through their lack of responsibility, behavior and conduct, infringe upon the rights of others in the school community. Parents/Guardians should be supportive of administration and teachers in this regard. If there is any question of a disciplinary action, communication with the teacher is encouraged and highly recommended.

A student who disrupts the good order of the School or violates a school policy or regulation must accept the consequences of those irresponsible actions.

Actions which 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 serious violations of School rules may result in immediate expulsion. If a student violates basic obligations of adherence to school rules, courtesy, consideration, respect, cooperation or safety, a Principal/Parent/Student conference may be scheduled. All 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/guardians and school staff prove ineffective, the student will be subject to expulsion or may be denied re-admittance to the School. Students can be disciplined for conduct whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school or the Roman Catholic Church.

BUS CONDUCT: Students are expected to be courteous and cooperative with the driver. Seatbelts should be worn at all times. Students' behavior must not distract the driver. Violence is prohibited and proper language is expected. For their own safety, students must keep all parts of their bodies inside the bus. The bus should be kept clean. Eating and drinking are not permitted. Insurance regulations dictate that no student is permitted to ride any bus but his/her own. NO student who is not assigned to a bus can ever ride on the school bus.

MISBEHAVIOR ON BUS: Students misbehaving on the bus will receive a warning. Any student misbehaving after one (1) warning may not ride the bus for one (1) full week. Two (2) additional infractions will result in a student being dismissed from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year. Parents/Guardians will be informed in all instances.

MISBEHAVIOR IN CAFETERIA/DISMISSAL/PLAYGROUND: Misbehavior during Cafeteria/Dismissal/Playground will result in recess detention. Students may serve a recess detention for a variety of reasons which may include but not be limited to:

1. Disruptive behavior
2. Inappropriate language
3. Excluding others at play

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND SUSPENSION: **In-school suspension** is the removal of a student from his/her classes. The student will remain in school under the supervision of the Principal or someone designated by the Principal. The student is held responsible for independently completing all work and lessons that are missed and for which he/she will not receive credit. The decision for an in-school suspension rests with the Principal. Parents/Guardians will be notified orally and in writing.

Suspension is the removal of a student from his/her classes and from the school itself. This is a most serious matter and can lead to expulsion. Again the decision for suspension and expulsion rests with the Principal and parents will be notified orally and in writing.

EXPULSION: Expulsion is viewed as a radical action at which point the school is saying that the student's interests would be better served in another environment, or that the individual's behavior is a serious threat to the school community or both.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION: Conduct which the Principal may deem as appropriate for suspension or expulsion of a student includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Possession of a weapon
2. Continued and/or willful disobedience/disrespect/defiance of authority
3. Physical assault
4. Taking, or attempting to take personal property or money from another student or from his/her presence by means of force or fear
5. Willfully causing or attempting to cause damage to school property. In cases of vandalism, students and their parents/guardians shall be financially responsible for all damage to equipment or school property. This applies to supplies of all kinds, as well as equipment, building and grounds
6. Inciting mob action and/or taking part in such action
7. Repeated disruptions in the class
8. Possession of alcohol and other drugs
9. Trafficking pornographic materials
10. Continued use of inappropriate (abusive, harassing, profane, vulgar) language

CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONICS

Some of the newer cell phones are providing the students with internet access that have no filtering on them and we feel that the opportunity for inappropriate sites to be visited during the school day calls for a new policy regarding cell phones.

When the students come to school, they are to hand in their phones to their homeroom teacher who will maintain them during the day. At dismissal, the teachers will return the cell phones. Since the students do not need their cell phones during the day, it should not provide any hardship. As we have always done, if there is an emergency, we ask you to contact the school office where you can receive assistance.

Personal electronics such as I-PODS and MP3 players should be left at home as their use is prohibited during the **entire** school day and the school is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

DRESS CODE

All students must report/come to school each day in complete and correct uniform. In case of an **EMERGENCY** where a student is unable to come in the proper daily or gym uniform, a **note** written by the parent **MUST** be sent to school. Without a note, the parent will be phoned and expected to bring the proper uniform. Uniforms are to be purchased from the uniform company, Flynn & O'Hara at (215) 637-4600 (Philadelphia) or (973) 882-0833 (Parsippany).

GIRLS: Girls in **Grades 1-5** wear jumpers, white peter pan collar blouses, **navy** knee length or navy or white anklet socks and sweater with St. James Logo.

Girls in **Grades 6-8** wear skirts, skorts, white oxford blouses, **navy** knee length or navy or white anklet socks and sweater with St. James Logo.

Girls in **Grades 1-8** may wear the white turtleneck with St. James Logo, in lieu of blouse.

BOYS: Boys in **Grades 1-5** wear gray uniform pants, white oxford shirts, navy or white socks, navy tie and sweater with St. James Logo. The white turtle neck with St. James Logo may be worn in lieu of the white shirt and tie. Boys in Grades 6-8 wear khaki uniform pants.

ADDITIONAL: Students may wear the knit short sleeve shirt with the St. James Logo instead of the blouse or shirt and tie.

Uniform navy blue walking shorts may be worn during September and October and after May 1st with the white knit short sleeve uniform shirt. Socks and shoes as noted.

NO sneakers are permitted except on the designated gym day for students in Grades K-8.

UNIFORM STYLE SHOES: Please choose from **ONLY** the following **STYLES** (store, price range, brand are your choice):

Buckskins
Docksiders/Topsiders/CampMocs
Mary Jane (with FLAT heels)

NO boots (fashion, work, hiking), loafers or "slip-on" shoes are permitted.

KINDERGARTEN UNIFORM: Kindergarten students are to wear the gym uniform daily. Kindergarten students may wear the white turtleneck with St. James Logo.

GYM UNIFORM: Navy fleece or twill shorts, white short sleeve knit shirt with **St. James Logo**. In colder months, students may wear the uniform navy sweatpants and sweatshirts with **St. James Logo**. Students may wear the Gym Uniform to school on their specified gym day. Students not wearing **proper** gym uniform will **not** be permitted to participate in gym class that day.

HAIR: No student will be permitted to wear any odd looking hairdo to school. Boys are to keep their hair neat, cut above their shirt collar and out of their eyes. **“Tails” or “shaved heads of any kind” are not permitted.** Hair is to be cut of consistent length. Girls’ hair should be out of their eyes and neatly styled. Dyed hair is not permitted for boys or girls. The Principal has the final decision regarding hair styles.

JEWELRY: Girls are to limit their jewelry to one bracelet, one ring, one necklace, and one pair of simple stud or small loop earrings worn on ears only. Nail polish, including clear, is not permitted. Boys are permitted to wear a watch, one bracelet, and one necklace. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings of any kind. If boys or girls have a medal or chain on, it must be worn inside the uniform. Please do not allow your children to wear expensive jewelry to school. If it is lost, the school will not be responsible for finding or replacing it.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: Please **LABEL** all sweaters, jackets and gym clothes. The school cannot be held responsible for lost items without proper labeling.

HEALTH

EXAMINATIONS: A physical exam and record of immunizations are required for all new students entering Saint James School. Our Health Record must be completed and signed by your physician and returned to school by August 15th. According to state law, any child who cannot show proof of immunization or whose immunizations are not up-to-date must be excluded from school. Any student transferring from out-of-state, must have a Mantoux tuberculin test.

The following testing will be conducted by the school nurse:

Visual testing

Heights and Weights

Hearing

Scoliosis Screening - Parents will be notified and may request to be present at examination.

Blood Pressure & Color Vision

PLEASE NOTE: These are screenings only. If your child is not feeling, seeing, or hearing well, you should take him/her to your own medical doctor.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS:

- DPT: a minimum of four doses, last dose given after 4th birthday

- OPV: a minimum of three doses, provided a least one dose is given on or after the fourth birthday.
- Measles vaccine: two doses administered on or after the first birthday. As of September 1, 2001, all students born on or after January 1, 1990 must have two doses of measles vaccine.
- Mumps and Rubella vaccine: administered on or after the first birthday; children who were immunized before the first birthday are to be re-immunized.
- As of September 2001 all children born on or after January 1, 1996 are required to have received 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine prior to entrance to school.
- As of September 2001 all children born on or after January 1, 1990 and are entering 6th grade are required to have had 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine. This requirement is of special note because many children in this age group have not had Hepatitis B (HBV) vaccine where younger children have been getting this vaccine almost routinely with their other immunizations. (The new two-dose Hepatitis B vaccine series is acceptable for ages 11-15)

No child shall be admitted to school without proper proof that the child has been immunized as required by the laws of the State of New Jersey, N.J.S.A. 26:1A-9. Proper immunization is a condition of admission to the school. No requests for religious exemptions will be considered.

N. J. STATE LAWS REGARDING ILLNESS AND MEDICATION: A child cannot remain in school if he/she is running a temperature of 99 degrees or higher. If a child develops a fever or vomiting during school hours, parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child as soon as possible at school. Please do not send your child to school if running a fever, as we are required to send him/her home. If a child does not feel well in the morning and/or has been ill during the night, please keep him/her home for your observation. Also, children should not be sent back to school until they are **24-hour symptom free**. If a child is unable to take gym class, a written note from the parent is required. For prolonged absence from gym, a doctor's note is necessary.

State Regulations require that all medications, **including** over the counter medication, must be **kept** and **administered** by the school nurse.

Saint James School strongly discourages the administration of either prescription or non-prescription medication in school or on school-sponsored activities. However, if it is absolutely essential that a student receive medication while under school supervision, the following procedures apply:

- A. A parent/guardian should come to the School and personally administer the medication.

B. If this arrangement is not possible, the School Nurse will administer the medication under the following conditions:

- The medication must be given to the School Nurse or Principal by the parent/guardian;
- The medication must be in the **original pharmacy-labeled container or non-prescription container**, and
- written notes are required: one from the parent/guardian giving permission to dispense the medication and a written and signed order from the legal prescriber (physician, dentist, or nurse practitioner) must accompany all medications (prescription and over the counter medicines).

For prolonged prescription medication, a note from the Doctor and a parent/guardian is required. Special forms (Authorization to Administer Medication in School) are available in the nurse's office. Please request one if your child is on a prolonged prescription medication.

Medication must be brought to the office at the beginning of the school day by the parent/guardian. If your child **MUST** take medication during school hours, please encourage him/her to come to the office at the appropriate time.

We **strongly urge parents/guardians to request** their doctors to prescribe medications in a 3-dose a day form. This way medication can be administered before school, after school and at bedtime, thus eliminating the need for children to miss class time.

The nurse should also be advised of any medication being taken at home by your child which may result in an allergic reaction or in any way affect his/her performance at school.

If your child requires medication for asthma/or allergies, please be sure it is available in the nurse's office.

Any unused medication must be picked up by the student's parent/guardian. After reasonable efforts to have the parent/guardian retrieve the medication have failed, any unused medication that remains in the school at the end of the school year or two weeks after the student stops taking the medication, whichever occurs first, will be destroyed or discarded by the school nurse.

THE BOARD OF HEALTH SUGGESTS THE FOLLOWING: Do not send your child to school if there is an unexplained rash on the child's face or body. Consult or contact a physician for diagnosis. Do not send your child to school if he/she complains of headache, fever, upset stomach, or doesn't generally feel well. Do not send your child to school if he/she is sneezing or coughing frequently or has a runny nose.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE: The school must be **notified** when a child is absent because of

a communicable disease. (Examples: Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Scarlet Fever, Strep Throat, Mononucleosis, Hepatitis, Meningitis, Ringworm, Impetigo, Scabies, Head Lice, Conjunctivitis, or an unexplained rash on the child's face or body.) In some cases a doctor's certificate will be required before a child is re-admitted to school.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS: In the event that you cannot be reached in an emergency, please be sure that the alternate phone number you provide us with is a person that is available and willing to come to school to pick up your child. It is extremely important that these numbers are **updated** whenever necessary.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework, carefully planned and geared to the development of the individual student, meets a real need and has a definite place in the educational program. It is assigned to help the student become more self-reliant, learn to work independently, and improve skills that have been taught.

It is very important that parents provide a good atmosphere for work at home. A specific place should be set aside for the student. Parents/Guardians should observe the child at work, and be available to give guidance if the need arises. However, self-direction is one of the major goals of homework. Parents are not permitted to do homework or projects for children.

Individual Classroom Homework Policies and The Homework Buddy System are explained to parents on Back-To-School Night.

It is school policy that teachers are not to give any advance work to students taking unscheduled vacations. It is the responsibility of the student to get and complete all missed assignments and tests. If a teacher feels the need to have a child remain after school for help, parents/guardians will be expected to cooperate.

INSURANCE

Basic accident insurance is provided by the school for accidents that occur on school premises during the school day.

A secondary policy that pays on an excess basis only is available. Although this coverage is very broad, there are restrictions, limitations, and exclusions in the policy. In other words, the policy is in excess over any other collectible insurance that may be in effect.

Insurance forms for additional supplemental coverage are distributed to the students the first week of school. This supplemental coverage is optional and is not mandated by the school.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found box that students may check for lost items will be kept on the lower level of the school. After a reasonable amount of time, unclaimed items are donated to the poor.

HOT LUNCHESES/MILK MONEY

Students may purchase lunch directly in the cafeteria on a daily basis. The Menu Sheet will be sent home monthly. Parents can purchase lunch on a monthly, weekly or daily basis. We recommend that lunch be purchased for children in grades K-3 on a monthly basis. The lunch program is administered by Dowling Food Services. Soda or drinks in glass bottles are **NOT** permitted.

MISSIONS

The Christian spirit of sacrificing for those less fortunate is encouraged through prayer and personal donations on a daily basis, as well as during the Lenten and Advent seasons. Each September the entire student body is enrolled in the Holy Childhood Association.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES/REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

REPORT CARDS: Report cards are distributed on a quarterly basis in Grades 1-8. Kindergarten students receive report cards the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Marking Periods only. Student grading is explained on the report card. After the close of the First Marking Period, parents/guardians are required to meet with the teacher at a scheduled conference at which time they will receive their child's report card.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES: Parent Teacher Conferences will be scheduled for each student after the close of the First Marking Period at which time the parent will receive their child's report card. Parents are free to make appointments concerning student's progress through correspondence with the teacher anytime during the school year. It is highly recommended that parents have close contact with their child's teacher in regards to academics. If the teacher feels a need for a conference, the parent will be notified by phone or in writing. These conferences

should be scheduled **before** 8:30 A.M. or **after** 3:00 P.M.

PROGRESS REPORTS: Progress Reports are distributed midway during the marking period for the following grades:

Grades K & 1: 2nd, 3rd and 4th Marking Periods

Grades 2 through 8: 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Marking Periods

Progress Reports should be signed and returned to the teacher as soon as possible.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST/HONOR ROLL: The Principal's List recognizes honor roll students in Grades 6 through 8 who have received all A's in major subjects, and "S" or above in Ancillary Subjects. The Honor Roll recognizes students in Grades 6 through 8 with no grade lower than B in major subjects and "S" or above in Ancillary Subjects. A student may have one C+ in a major subject but must have at least two A's in major subjects. However, checks received in the "Behaves Appropriately Section" will keep a student off the Principal's List/Honor Roll.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Promotion of students is normally expected. In Grades K through 8 promotion will be primarily on the basis of ability to do the work with consideration of maturity and social development.

Conditional promotion, assuring a child of placement in the next grade, provided some successful summer work is accomplished, may be used in exceptional cases. Trial promotion, giving a child a period of time in the next grade and then demoting the child if unsuccessful, is not permitted.

Decisions departing from the norm should be made in the student's best interest and after consultation with all parties concerned. In the case of retention, the following should be observed:

1. Normally a child may be retained only once in the elementary grades, K-6, preferable in the primary unit.
2. Retention in the primary grades is normally dependent upon the development of reading and language arts skills. Retention of students in Grades 4 through 8 is normally dependent on achievement in the basic skills subjects: Reading, Math and Language Arts. Failure in two of the basic skills subjects or in one of the basic skills subjects plus another academic subject is a basis for retention.
3. If a child is to be retained, report cards and daily papers must consistently show marks

which indicate failure.

4. Neither conduct nor attendance should be considered solely as a basis for retention but they may be contributing factors in any final decision.
5. Consultation about retention between teachers and Principal must take place as early as possible during the first semester.
6. A conference with parents/guardians to advise them of the possibility of retention and to discuss possible remedial actions must be held no later than the end of the second marking period.
7. Follow up teacher-parent conferences to evaluate academic progress of the child must be held.
8. The Principal, after consultation with appropriate staff members and parents, shall make the decision as to whether a student is retained.
9. For a classified student, the Child Study Team must be consulted.

If a student fails a major subject, summer tutoring will be required.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Monthly school liturgies are planned and prepared by individual classes. Parents are invited to participate.

The Season of Advent and Lent are celebrated as a school following a specific theme. Special family-centered programs e.g. the Family Advent Wreath Making and the Christmas Pageant are scheduled throughout the year.

The second graders receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation in January and First Holy Communion in May. Preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation begins in the Fall of seventh grade.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized Testing according to the Diocese of Metuchen mandates, measures student achievement for Grades 1 through 8 in vocabulary, reading, language, work-study, mathematics, social studies, science, and at the primary levels, listening, and word analysis. Students are given

notice as to when the tests will be administered, and are encouraged to be properly rested and nourished. It is important that students be in school during the entire testing period. However, if students are sick (i.e. fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or any contagious disease, etc.), please keep them home as any test scores would not reflect the true ability of the student.

TRANSFERS

Parents are asked to notify the school office of date of transfer. A Student Records Release Form must be completed for each student transferring. Before scholastic and medical records can be forwarded, all texts and library books must be returned, financial obligation to the school met, and an exit interview with the Principal conducted.

Once a child transfers from St. James School, it is school policy that he/she may not return unless the family is moving back to the area or a classified student can be mainstreamed.

TRANSCRIPTS: Transcripts of academic and health records may not be given directly to the parent/guardian in the event of a transfer. A request for transfer must be submitted in written form by a parent/guardian. Transcripts will be sent directly from school to school when the sending school receives an official written request from the receiving school. If the parent/guardian does not submit a request for transfer that includes an authorization to send a transcript, the receiving school must secure permission from the parent/guardian to request the transcripts from the “sending” school.

TRANSPORTATION

The (B6T) Application for Private School Transportation Form must be filled out every year for each student. For students returning for the following school year, forms will be distributed in early Spring to be returned to the school office as soon as possible. A new B6T form must be filled out for students who have a change of address during the school year. Please contact the school office in that event. For new students, forms are available in the school office.

The following are five categories for transporting students to and from school:

1. **BUS RIDERS:** Bus Riders are students who ride a school bus to and from home. Students are dropped off and picked up by the school buses in the front of the school.

Students assigned to a bus **MAY NOT CHANGE** buses at **ANYTIME** for **ANY REASON**. A student who is not assigned to a bus **MAY NOT RIDE ANY BUS AT ANY TIME FOR ANY REASON**.

2. **CAR RIDERS:** Car Riders are students who ride in a car to and from home. Students are dropped off and picked up by car in the parking lot in back of the school. The driveway to the parking lot is off Collyer Lane.

In the morning, to keep the car line moving in a safe manner, please drop your children off as quickly as possible. **If you need to assist your child/children out of the car, please use a parking space and walk your child/children to the door.**

At dismissal, parents are asked to print their family name on a 9"x 12" piece of cardboard and place it in the front window (passenger side) to expedite car loading. Please drive your car up to the designated teachers so that more cars behind you can be loaded. Remind your son/daughter to watch for you and move when your car is at a complete stop. Please be patient. **Do not pass** cars that are loading children so that we can avoid any possible accident. Students riding cars home are asked to be **ATTENTIVE** to when their car is approaching the "pick-up area". Siblings/friends going home together should stand near each other. Attentiveness and togetherness will expedite our dismissal procedure.

Parents are asked to please drive carefully and slowly through the parking lot when dropping off or picking up the children.

3. **WALKERS:** Walkers are students who walk to and from their home. Upon arrival, students may enter the school via the parking lot door. At dismissal, students are led by a designated teacher via the Collyer Lane doors. Parents who are picking up children from the walker line cannot park on Collyer Lane or South Finley Avenue. Children on South Finley must be crossed by the crossing guard to Colonial Drive. Children on Collyer Lane must meet with the crossing guard on Collyer and Maple.

4. **BIKERS:** Bikers are students who ride their bikes to and from home.

Students are to park their bikes in the bike rack provided on the Early Childhood side of the school. Upon arrival, they are to enter the school via the parking lot door. Bikers will be dismissed with the car riders to the school parking lot.

5. **SCOUTS:** Scouts are students who meet their respective Scout leaders in a designated area after school.

All Scout Groups leave their classrooms following the Car Riders and meet their respective Scout leaders in the designated spot in the school parking lot. On rainy days, Scout Groups will follow Car Riders to the designated area in the assigned room.

STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PICKED UP ON TIME: Children are never left out in the parking lot alone. They re-enter the building and must wait in the school office for an authorized

adult to pick them up. Every effort should be made to pick your child up on time.

TUITION/RE-REGISTRATION/ACADEMIC FEES

TUITION: Saint James Parish and the Home School Association subsidize tuition. Tuition is due in monthly payment beginning in September. Each family uses a coupon book for payments.

RE-REGISTRATION FEE: Re-Registration is taken during the Spring. A non-refundable fee is collected for each student and is applied towards the next academic year's tuition.

ACADEMIC FEE: The Academic Fee is payable each year for each student. The fee provides the following: textbooks and workbooks, various school supplies, insurance, computer program, library, art supplies, supplemental reading materials, and Standardized Testing.

HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The heart of the Association is the home and the school. Pastor, Principal, parents and teachers attend HSA meetings approximately four times a year. Guest speakers are invited to attend in an effort to enhance parenting skills, inspire spirituality or disseminate information. Since a Catholic school strives to develop Christian life and ideals in all its students, an appreciation for Gospel values, the Catholic Faith and worship, together with the educational ministry of the Church, form an integral part of the HSA.

Dues are collected in September and are used to satisfy fees to the Diocese and to help cover costs of HSA sponsored events. Two major fund-raisers are held each year allowing parents, faculty, administration, staff, and students to come together for a common cause.

The HSA respects the established school policies and practices. In all instances, the Association shall be mindful that it functions as a support to the administration and as a promoter of the mission statement, goals and objectives of Saint James.

This handbook is considered to be in effect once it is distributed to the parents in September of the school year.

ADDENDUM TO STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

01/04/06

St. James School conforms to the Discipline Policy promulgated by the Department of Education, Diocese of Metuchen, which is reprinted below:

“Students who choose to disrupt the order of the school, violate policies or regulations, or infringe on the rights of other students, interfere with the teaching or supervisory duties or staff, must accept the consequences of these choices.

Students are expected to be respectful of others and of others’ property; be obedient to authority; be orderly; cooperate with students, teachers, and all others within the school; act in appropriate manner; and behave in a fashion that reflects the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Failure to meet these standards of conduct shall result in the application of the following disciplinary actions:

- School authorities shall follow procedures outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement which has been entered into by the Diocese of Metuchen, the school, and local law enforcement agencies. The behaviors cited below are mere summary of the behaviors cited in the Memorandum of Agreement and are not intended in any way to supplement, revise, or supersede the specific language of that document.
 - physical violence or the threat of physical violence;
 - bringing weapons to school;
 - bringing drugs to school;
 - threatening another person with weapons, drugs, and/or violence;
 - on-going bullying and/or even one instance of bullying that presents an imminent danger to others;
 - brings to school toys or other objects that can be dangerous or used as a weapons.
- If a student engaged in any one of the aforementioned acts, the Memorandum of Agreement requires that the principal or his/her designee: (a) call the local police department immediately upon being informed of the student’s violation of this policy, (b) call the parents to inform them of what has transpired, (c) call the appropriate administrator in the Catholic Schools Office, and (d) suspend student during the course of the police investigation. During the course of the suspension, the principal is required to collaborate with the Catholic Schools Office.
- Policy of the Catholic Schools Office requires that the school inform the parents/guardians that the parents/guardians must (a) arrange to have the child interviewed by a Certified Psychologist, and (b) present a letter signed by the Psychologist to the school principal to consider for reinstatement to school.

Due to the provisions of the Memorandum of Agreement, St. James School must implement the disciplinary actions outlined above when behavioral infractions occur. Parents will assist their children by helping them to realize the consequence of misbehavior in our ever changing society.