

SAINT JEROME CATHOLIC SCHOOL
3031 STAMFORD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19136
215-624-0637
FAX 215-624-5711

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

This handbook contains certain policies and procedures of St. Jerome Catholic School. The School may change any of its policies and procedures and apply them as circumstances dictate. If you have a question about a particular policy or procedure, please contact the Principal.

**STUDENTS AND PARENTS MUST ACCEPT AND
ABIDE BY THE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES IN ORDER FOR THE STUDENT
TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL**

ABSENCE

1. Parents are to call the school office if your child is going to be absent. Please leave the child's name, grade, and homeroom number.
2. Any student who has been absent from school for any length of time, is required to present a written excuse to the homeroom teacher on the day of his/her return to school. The note should state the name of the child, the date(s) of absence, the reason for absence, and a parent/guardian's signature. A doctor's note or certificate is required for absences of an extended time of three days or more. A parent may request work through the school office. Requests should be made to the school office before noon and picked up after 3:15 PM.
3. No student may leave school at any time without permission from a teacher and also reporting to the school office. Should an emergency arise where it would be necessary for your child to leave school early, kindly send a note to the homeroom teacher who will forward it to the office. A parent/guardian **MUST** sign students out in the school office. Any child who leaves school before 1:45 is considered absent for the afternoon. No student will be permitted to walk home from school outside the prescribed times of regular dismissal.
4. In case of illness during school hours, the nurse or office personnel will notify the parent/guardian of the child who is ill. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, a person whose name was submitted by the parents as an emergency contact will be called.
5. The school will contact parents of students with an excessive number of absences or lateness without grave reasons. A student may be required to attend a summer school program because of poor attendance.

ACADEMIC POLICY

1. The faculty of Saint Jerome School follows the curriculum established by the Office of Catholic Education of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The prescribed curriculum is followed from the Pre-Kindergarten through the eighth grade.
2. In order to be aware of the academic progress your child is making, assessments are to be signed by the parents and returned promptly in the Wednesday folder.
3. Progress reports will be issued approximately six weeks prior to the end of a marking period for the students who are experiencing academic/behavioral difficulty. These should be reviewed by the parent/guardian and extra support should be given in those areas where a student is struggling.

4. Summer school will be mandatory for any child (grades one through seven) receiving a failing grade in two major subjects on the final report card. Costs for these services will be the responsibility of the parent.
Any eighth grader who receives a failure on his/her report card will be required to attend summer school at a local high school.

ADMISSION POLICY

1. Age requirements: Pre K – 4 Program – 4 years old by September 1
Kindergarten – 5 years old by September 1
Grade 1 – 6 years old by September 1
 - NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.
2. Required records for registration:
 - Birth Certificate
 - Baptismal Certificate
 - Copy of immunization records
 - Non-refundable registration fee (cost set each year)
3. Saint Jerome Catholic School admits children of all races, creeds and nationalities. When space is limited, preference is given to Catholic children who are registered members of Saint Jerome Parish.
4. A test of basic math and Language Arts skills may be required of new students into Saint Jerome Catholic School.
5. Because all students learn differently, St. Jerome School may not be the best placement for all students. All children are admitted to school on a probationary status so that the child may receive the best possible education.

ARRIVAL

1. Upon entering the schoolyard, children are to report to their designated grade areas and stand in line and talk.

BELL SCHEDULE

1. Teachers are on duty in the schoolyard beginning at 7:40 AM daily.
Morning bell: 7:55 AM
Lunch: 12:00 AM to 12:50 PM
Dismissal: 3:00 PM Monday through Thursday
2:00 PM Friday
2. Students who report to school late must go to the school office for a late slip. This late slip is to be presented to the classroom teacher upon arrival into the classroom.

BUS/BEHAVIOR OF RIDERS

1. Children riding the bus are expected to be prompt, courteous and respectful of bus drivers and the rules at all times.
2. Children riding the bus must get on and off the bus at their assigned stops and **MUST** ride the same bus to and from school. A note from a parent must be presented to excuse a child from riding the bus.
3. Failure to obey bus company rules will revoke the child's privilege to remain a bus rider. Safety and cooperation come before all else when riding the school buses.
4. No child may assume the right to board a bus to ride home to a friend's house. Only students listed on the bus company's register are insured to ride on a bus. In the event of an accident, the bus company register will be checked for each of the routes.
5. Parents whose children are eligible for bus service need to request this service through the school office at the time of registration. The bus company will send bus confirmation to individual students' homes before school begins each September.

COMMUNICATION

1. Effective communication is the single, most important factor that assures a positive relationship between the home and school.
2. Regular forms of communications include the handbook, a monthly calendar, the monthly newsletter, the Wednesday communication folder, the Church bulletin, parent-teacher conferences, Home and School Meetings, School Messenger, the school website (www.stjsch.org), the school facebook page, Progress Reports, and Report Cards.

COMPUTERS

1. The fundamental skills and concepts of computer literacy are taught in Grades 1 – 8 according the Archdiocesan guidelines. Grades 4 through 8 are graded in Computer and this is noted on the report cards.
2. Computers are the property of Saint Jerome Catholic School, and the students are expected to handle them with care. Any damage resulting from misuse or abuse will result in the parent being billed for the cost of the repair or replacement.

3. There is an ACCEPTABLE USERS POLICY from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia that MUST be followed in our school. Parents/guardians should read and review this policy carefully. This form will be sent home in the first Wednesday folder and must be signed and returned by the designated date. This policy remains in effect for the current school year. A new copy must be signed each year.
4. A yearly computer fee will be charged for the upkeep of the machinery. The yearly tuition costs do not include money for our computer needs.
5. There is a school website. The school reserves the right to use any child's picture on the website unless the principal receives a note from the parent denying permission. Personal information will not be put on the website.

CUSTODY ISSUES

1. Parents are asked to inform the school personnel when legal custody of the child/children resides with one parent. It is important for the school to have a copy of the CURRENT custody decree. This will help school personnel to make effective decisions when the need arises. Custodial parents are likewise asked to supply the school with copies of restraining orders if the need arises.
2. Those individuals who have legal custody of a student may attend school meetings, participate in educational decisions and review educational records regarding that student. Persons who do not have legal custody (including those with visitation rights but not legal custody) have no such educational rights and may not participate in these matters.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Discipline Code

1. The purpose of rules and regulations is to develop within the student a sense of SELF-DISCIPLINE, responsibility for his/her own actions and a loving concern for others. Teachers will lead the students to proper conduct through a firm, yet Christian approach.
2. Parents will be made aware of the unsatisfactory behavior of a student by telephone calls, notes from teachers or Behavioral Referrals.
3. A record of disciplinary actions is kept in the student's folder and must be sent to any school to which the child transfers.
4. School detentions are issued on a weekly basis. If four or more detentions are issued in a report period, the parents may need to meet with the Administration to

discuss the child's lack of progress and/or his/her ability to remain in Saint Jerome Catholic School.

Harassment

The school follows the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Policy prohibiting harassment, including sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual advances, attention, requests for sexual favors or other conduct of a sexual nature. Any student or parent/guardian who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student.

Violent/Threatening/Harassing and Inappropriate Conduct

It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility, and other inappropriate behavior. Such conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct, derogatory or discriminatory statements (verbal or written), and behavior not conducive to the educational and religious mission of the school. Unacceptable conduct – either by a student or a parent/guardian – includes, but is not limited to the following:

- disrespectful behavior of any kind toward or about any staff, student, volunteer, or parent;
- insubordination;
- fighting;
- bomb scares or triggering other false alarms;
- Repeatedly chewing gum/eating at inappropriate times/places
- cheating or plagiarism;
- use or possession of drugs or alcohol;
- Theft/Cheating/Forgery/Plagiarism;
- smoking;
- intimidation, harassment, or threats of kind;
- bullying/harassing behavior or hazing;
- destroying property; and
- possessing any weapon
- hazing - forcing someone to perform strenuous, humiliating, or dangerous tasks

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The school will determine which behavior is inappropriate.

** The school reserves the right to search anything brought onto school property.

**Anything contrary to the Gospel values will be viewed as an infraction of the school rules.

Bullying Policy

Bullying is commonly defined as intentional, repeated, hurtful acts, words, or other behavior, such as name-calling, threatening, and/or shunning by one or more individuals

against another. Bullying happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.

Bullying can be either physical or verbal and is never justified.

Cyber-bullying is unacceptable. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, or threatening another student or adult by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, pictures or images.

Response to bullying may include:

- verbal warning
- removal from class or activity
- verbal or written apology to the victim
- a parent-teacher conference
- conference with the principal
- detention
- suspension from school

Electronic Devices

In order to provide the best educational environment, students may not use electronic and/or telecommunication devices such as cell phones, I Pods, MP3 players, video games etc. on school property during school hours.

Any violation of this policy will result in the item being confiscated from the student and held in the school office until a parent/guardian can come and get it. Repeated violators will receive a detention and/or suspension.

The school will not be responsible for the theft or damage to any electronic/telecommunication devices.

All students are expected to adhere to all the terms in the Acceptable User Policy. ***Students will receive a copy to sign each year.*** No student will be permitted to use any technology in school unless the signed contract is returned to school.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

1. Parents/guardians are asked to listen to KYW 1060 AM in the very early morning and throughout the day when extreme weather conditions begin or prevail. Please do not call the school. Saint Jerome Catholic School will be closed if the announcement is

“PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC AND ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED.”

2. If the children are in session and an early dismissal is announced on the radio, please follow the time given. We prefer students not be dismissed on a sporadic basis. The full dismissal will take place at the time given on the radio. Again, we must ensure the safety of ALL in any emergency situations. We will also use the School Messenger Program to notify parents of unscheduled closings.

3. All children should be made aware from the start of school, of the plan they should follow when and if school is closed unexpectedly closed early. There is NO CARES PROGRAM on the days that the school is dismissed early for emergency reasons. Because an unexpected dismissal can be hectic, children MAY NOT use the phone to find out their emergency plans. Please discuss your plans with them ahead of time.
4. If Saint Jerome Catholic School is closed due to unrelated weather conditions, the name of the school (NOT a number) will be announced on KYW. A School Messenger call will be issued to inform you of the closing.

EXTENDED CARE

1. A CARES Program (Children Are Receiving Extended Services) is available for children from dismissal until 6 PM on school days. Children **MUST** be registered in the program before they are legally permitted to stay. Registration is taken in September or upon entrance into the school during the school year.

FACULTY MEETINGS

1. Faculty meetings and early dismissals are scheduled on various days and will be noted on the monthly calendar. Lunches should not be sent for the children with the exception of the children officially enrolled in the CARES Program.

FIELD TRIPS

1. Class trips are taken at the discretion of the classroom teachers and the administration and are considered part of the regular school day. Permission slips are required for a child to participate in these events.
2. Any student may be excluded from going on field trips for disciplinary reasons.
3. All school related fees, tuition and Sunday collection **MUST** be up-to-date before a student may go on a trip.
4. Specific information about each trip will be given to the parent prior to the actual trip date.

FIRE DRILLS

1. A practice fire drill is held monthly in school. Students are expected to follow all fire drill directives. Shelter in Place and lockdown drills will be held periodically during the year.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

1. Forgotten lunches are to be dropped off at the school office.
Parents/guardians/visitors are NOT PERMITTED to go directly to the classrooms.
2. Gym clothes, school supplies, books, homework, and/or projects may not be taken directly to the classrooms.
3. No student or parent may return to a classroom after dismissal to retrieve a forgotten item.

GRADUATION

1. Eighth grade students who have completed the prescribed course of study and maintained a suitable discipline record are eligible for graduation if all financial obligations have been met. The Administration and the eighth grade teachers determine procedures for graduation.
2. Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right. The school has the right to deny any student from participating in closing exercises if, in the view of the school, the student's academic or disciplinary record indicates that the privilege should not be extended.

GOVERNMENT MILK PROGRAM

1. The Nutritional Development Services of the Archdiocese in cooperation with the State and Federal Governments offer a subsidized milk program to the schools in the Archdiocese. The program allows each child in our school to purchase an 8 oz. carton of 2% white milk or fat free chocolate milk, which sell for a specified amount of money to be given at the beginning of each school year. Additional containers of milk and/or juice may also be purchased at a certain cost per container. Information will be printed on a monthly basis for parent ordering purposes. Orders cannot be accepted after the posted due date.

HEALTH SERVICES

1. Medication must be given at home whenever possible. In the event that short-term medication must be taken in school, the following applies:
 - The ORIGINAL PRESCRIPTION CONTAINER with the pharmacy label in place. The label will have the child's name, medication name and instructions for dispensing (dose, time, etc.)
 - A signed note from the parent/guardian must accompany the medication. This note will indicate the time of the most recent dose given at home. The note

will specifically request the nurse/school personnel to dispense the next scheduled dose.

2. Students are not permitted to have any medication with them during the school day nor are any staff members permitted to dispense over the counter medications.
3. First Aid care given in the school is limited to first aid in accidents and illness until the parents can be reached to take a child home, to the doctor, or to the hospital. It is important for you to keep the information on your emergency cards up-to-date.
4. Due to confidentiality regulations, the nurse may not disclose medical information about a student to ANY personnel. It would be in your child's best interest for you to notify all of you child's teachers of any medical conditions.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

1. The Home and School Association has been organized to bring the home and school together.
2. One purpose of this association is to help all the parishioners/parents to learn more about education at the local, state, and national levels.
3. All parents are encouraged to join the Home and School Association, attend Home & School meetings, and to participate in Home & School sponsored events.
4. All money raised by this Association will be used to directly benefit the school program and the needs of the students.

HOMEWORK

1. The normal time allotments for homework vary depending on the grade level of the student. The following is offered as a guide:
 - Grades 1 and 2 - 30 minutes
 - Grades 3 and 4 - 60 minutes
 - Grades 5 and 6 - 90 minutes
 - Grades 7 and 8 - 120 minutes

LATENESS

1. If a student is late, he/she must report to the office for a late slip.
2. A detention will result for the student who is late 5 times in a report card period.

LIBRARY

1. Students in Grades K through 8 have scheduled library periods. Students are responsible for the care and return of these borrowed books.
2. Students are not permitted a new selection from the library until the previous book has been returned.
3. Fines will be given for overdue books. Payment is expected if a book is lost or damaged.

LOST AND FOUND

1. There is a Lost and Found box kept outside the office in the Saint Joseph Building. Any article found is to be brought there. Articles may be claimed from the Lost and Found box after morning announcements. Articles not claimed by the end of each month will be donated to charity.
2. We suggest that the **student's name be placed in the back of sweaters, gym uniform pieces, lunch bags etc.** This makes it much easier to return the items to the student.

LUNCH

1. A hot lunch program is available. Menus are sent home monthly. Further explanations of the program will be sent home each September. There is a required lunch fee each semester.
2. Lunch monitors will be provided for the care of the children. The lunch monitor's primary responsibility is the supervision of the children. The students are expected to treat the lunch monitors with respect.
3. Students must follow the regulations given during lunchtime. Time will be given for eating and also for some fresh air in the schoolyard. Due to the large number of students and the limited space, restricted types of activities will be permitted in the yard.
4. No student may leave the buildings or the school grounds without an adult's permission.

PRETZELS

1. Pretzels are ordered weekly. Money is sent into school on Thursdays in an envelope with the child's name written clearly on the front.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

1. The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharistic Liturgies are made available to the students on a regular basis.
2. Traditional activities of the Church are taught to the students, and they are given experiences of these traditions throughout the school year. Some of these include:
 - The recitation of the rosary and May Procession
 - The Stations of the Cross
 - Distribution of Ashes

REPORT CARDS

1. Report cards are issued to grades K through 8 three times during the school year.
2. Dates for Parent conferences are given at the beginning of the school year. Parents are welcome and encouraged to meet with the teachers throughout the school year concerning the student's progress. A note needs to be sent to the teacher with a listing of possible dates and times for these individual conferences apart from the formal conference dates assigned at the time of the first report card period.

RETENTION

1. A student is retained if he/she has not adequately mastered the subject materials in a given grade or if he/she does not exhibit the necessary maturity to advance to the next grade level. The teacher will confer with the parents throughout the year. **However, the decision to retain a child is left to the discretion of the administration.**
2. The parents will be informed in writing by the second trimester of the possibility that their child might be retained. A statement that they have been informed must be signed and returned to school.
3. The teacher and administration will make the final decision for retention with a formal presentation made to the parents.

STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAMS

1. A nationally recognized standardized test is administered throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia each year in the spring for the students in Grades 2 through 8. Results will be communicated to the parents once they are returned to the school.

STATE FUNDED SERVICES

1. Under **Act 89**, our students have the services of CORA (Counseling or Referral Assistance) in counseling, speech therapy, remedial Reading and remedial Math.
2. Under **Act 90**, we are entitled to funds for student workbooks up to a specific allotment.
3. Through **Act 195**, we are entitled to funds for student textbooks up to a specific allotment.

STATIONERY

1. We ask that primary copybooks and theme tablets be purchased through the school. Other supplies, such as rulers, pencils, etc. may be purchased either at school or elsewhere. A limited number of copybooks will be available at school. A stationery list will be provided yearly.
2. Students may purchase stationery daily by placing their orders through the classroom teacher. The order must be in a sealed envelope stating their name, homeroom number and a list of the items to be purchased. Exact change is greatly appreciated.

STUDENT UNIFORM

1. A regulated dress code is an advantage to the parent and to the student. It teaches our children that there is a proper time and place for everything, including dress. We want our children to take pride in their appearance by coming to school neat, clean and well groomed. Uniforms are worn in Grades K through 8.
2. No make-up, jewelry, tattoos, body art, or false nails may be worn in school. If a girl's ears are pierced, only small post earrings may be worn (one earring in each ear). There should be no other visible body piercings. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings in school.
3. No *extreme* hairstyles are permitted for girls or boys. No student's hair should be covering his/her eyes or eyebrows. Boys' hair should be neatly trimmed and may not be below their shirt collar. Hair should be the child's natural color, no "fad" colors are permitted. The principal will determine what constitutes an extreme hairstyle.

Girls' Uniform Grades 1 through 4

- Blue plaid jumper (worn to the top of the knee)
- Light blue school uniform blouse
- Navy blue knee socks (worn to the knee) or navy blue stockings/tights.
- Navy blue oxford shoes (No sneakers)

Girls' Uniform Grades 5 through 8

- Blue plaid skirt (worn to the top of the knee)
- Light blue oxford blouse or golf shirt, tucked in at the waist at all times.
- Navy blue knee socks (worn to the knee) or navy blue stockings/tights.
- Navy blue oxford shoes (No sneakers)
- Navy blue sweater vest (must be worn October 15th through April 30th)

Boys' Uniform Grades 1 through 8

- Navy blue dress slacks and a dark belt. Absolutely no jeans, levis, corduroys, wranglers or the like may be worn.
- Light blue shirt and plaid tie or
- Light blue golf shirt (long or short sleeve)
- Black oxford shoes with non-scuff soles. **No athletic shoes or sneakers may be worn.**
- Navy blue sweater vest (must be worn October 15th through April 30th)

** Sweaters are not a mandatory part of the uniform. However, if a sweater is to be worn, it must be a blue cardigan, button down sweater. No sweatshirts, team shirts or sweaters of other descriptions are acceptable.

Summer Uniform (Optional) Grades 1 through 8, boys and girls.

- Navy blue walking shorts, with a belt. No short- shorts, jeans etc.
 - Light blue golf shirt. Shirts must be tucked into the shorts at all times.
 - White socks that cover the ankles
 - White sneakers or white with blue trim sneakers
 - Summer uniforms may be worn from the beginning of school until October 15th and from May 1st to the end of the school year.
1. All of the above items, with the exception of the shoes, may be purchased at DiGiulio's and/or Flynn and O'Hara. There is no obligation to purchase anything at these stores with the exception of the girls' uniforms.

Kindergarten Uniform

1. Gray gym shirt and burgundy shorts
2. Burgundy sweat shirt and burgundy sweatpants
3. Socks and sneakers
4. Uniforms must be ordered through the school office.

Gym Uniforms

1. Gray gym shirt and burgundy shorts
2. Burgundy sweatshirt and burgundy sweatpants
3. Sneakers, crew socks that cover the ankles.
4. These must be ordered through the school office.
 - Shorts and gym shirts may be worn from the beginning of school until October 15th and from May 1st until the end of the school year.

- During the time from October 15th until May 1st the regulation uniform consist of the sweatshirt and the sweatpants. The tee shirt may be worn under the sweatshirt for removal within the school building if the student is too hot. Shorts may not be worn under the sweatpants.
- Colored or imprinted tee shirts may not be worn under the gym uniform shirt.
- Sneakers, unless worn with summer uniform, may only be worn in school on the gym day.

TRANSFERS

1. The school office must be notified if it is necessary for a student to transfer to another school. Information needed to obtain a transfer slip includes: child's name, new home address, new school address, name of the parish, and date of the transfer.
Records will be forwarded when requested by the admitting school. No academic records will be transferred if there is outstanding tuition due.

TUITION

1. Tuition is established on an annual basis.
2. Contracts are signed so that the parents are aware of their obligation in this area.
3. The rectory maintains all tuition records. Questions concerning tuition accounts must be directed to the rectory staff.
4. Tuition payments must be made directly to Smart Tuition. Please do not send tuition payments to the school.

VISITORS

1. All visitors to the school are to report to the school office.
2. Teachers are not to be interrupted during class time. The teachers cannot answer questions for a parent on the phone or via conference during the school day unless it is scheduled in advance during the teacher's preparation time.
3. If you wish a conference with your child's teacher, please send a note to the teacher requesting an appointment.
4. To assure the safety of the school buildings and an atmosphere of learning for the students, no parent is permitted access to any part of the school buildings unless the Administration is aware of the reason. No unauthorized individual is permitted in the buildings.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers, including those chaperoning a class trip, must have current Child Abuse Clearances and Criminal Checks before being able to work with our children. All volunteers must also attend the Archdiocesan classes on Standards of Ministerial Behaviors and Boundaries and have that certificate on file in the school office.

Saint Jerome Catholic School Provides:

1. Pre-School Program
 - a. Pre-kindergarten three year old program
 - b. Pre-kindergarten four year old program
 - c. Kindergarten Program – full day program
2. Full academic program for grades one through eight
3. Extended Day Program – CARES provided for after school hours.
4. Child Care Program
 - a. On our school property the Sisters of Saint Joseph and Saint Jerome Parish offer a full day Child Care Program. The address is:
2950 Holme Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19136
215 – 335 - 1234

PARENT SIGNATURE FORM
INDICATING THAT THE HANDBOOK HAS BEEN READ

The contents of this handbook reflect the cooperation and support expected from parents whose child/children are registered students in Saint Jerome Catholic School. The various policies are not debatable but the expected norm for the good order and right educational setting necessary for all students to learn.

I have carefully read the contents of the Saint Jerome Catholic School Family Handbook. I have reviewed the expectations of Saint Jerome Catholic School with my child/children. We will work to support the Catholic atmosphere of the school as well as the good order necessary to provide an educational setting for all students.

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Parent/ Guardian Signature: _____

Printed Name(s) of Student(s): _____

Student(s) Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

**Please return this signature page to the school by
September 30, 2015**

Revised September, 2015