

**SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL
370 MAIN STREET
DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810
PHONE: (203) 748-6615
FAX: (203) 748-6508**

**2011-2012
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**Saint Joseph School is Accredited by the
New England Association of Schools and Colleges**

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DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810
PHONE: (203) 748-6615**

September 2011

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the community of Saint Joseph School! We are pleased to present this Parent/Student Handbook to you so that you will know more about the school and how we will work together for the education of your child.

The faculty and staff of our school look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the Catholic values of community, service, reverence and leadership.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

In Christ's Love,

Mrs. Lisa M. Lanni
Principal

SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Saint Joseph School is to continue the rich tradition of Catholic education upon which our school was founded. We are a family-oriented school. Our administrators, staff and clergy remain firmly committed to nurturing every child and supporting their academic growth while instilling a strong sense of Christian values within a diverse community.

SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Saint Joseph School is a Catholic, multi-cultural, child-centered school striving to be a living community of faith within a safe environment. Our school seeks to permeate every educational experience within the guidance of the school with the message of love and the vitality of Christ's presence. We are committed to nurturing individual excellence in every child.

Communication between home and school is an integral component of our philosophy.

Recognizing that parents are the primary educators, we work to reinforce that education that parents have initiated. Realizing that each child comes to our school with a distinct set of values, emotions, personality, and family background, we encourage an inclusive curriculum which provides for the development of the whole child – spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. We seek to instill in our community a strong sense of Christian morals and ethics, enabling each to become a contributing member of our global society.

ADDRESSES and PHONE NUMBERS

St. Joseph School: 370 Main Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: 748-6615
Fax: 748-6508
Website: sjsdanbury.org

St. Joseph School Before/After School Club: Phone: 748-0456

St. Joseph School Extended Care: Phone: 797-0188

St. Joseph Rectory: 8 Robinson Avenue
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: 748-8177

Regional Business Office: Danbury Catholic Elementary School System
90 Main Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: 744-6248

Bus Company: Student Transportation of America
Phone: 778-0782

SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL FACULTY 2011-2012

Pre-K 3's	Mrs. Judy Abdalla
Pre-K 3's / Pre-K 4's Pre-K 3's / Pre-K 4's Aide	Mrs. Nancy McKenney Ms. Nicole Bush
Pre-K 4's Pre-K 4's Aide	Mrs. Maryjane Carvalho Mrs. Nancy Dally
Pre-K 4's Pre-K 4's Aide	Mrs. Joanne Kimmel Mrs. Sharon DeWitt
Kindergarten Kindergarten Aide	Mrs. Barbara Sancho Mrs. Leigh Kulhay
First Grade	Mrs. Claudia Kozlowski
Second Grade	Mrs. Goncalves
Third Grade Third Grade Aide	Mrs. Mary Ann Fleming Mrs. Gail Doyle
Fourth Grade	Miss Alyson LaPerch
Fifth Grade	Mrs. Christine Hunton
Sixth Grade	Mrs. Jennifer Page
Seventh Grade	Sister Frances Heffron
Eighth Grade	Mr. David Roman
Middle School Math	Sharon Varian
Technology	Mrs. Deanna George
Physical Education	Mr. Dave Bongiorno
Art	Mrs. Suzan Black
Music 1-8 Pre-K & K Music	Mrs. Sara Dellaposta Mrs. Jennifer Doherty
Spanish	
Library	Mrs. Lynn Palmer

ACADEMIC POLICIES

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Saint Joseph School expects students to perform to the best of their ability. Teachers are expected to evaluate student progress on a regular basis. Students will be given quizzes or tests regularly. After the test is graded, it will be sent home for the parent to review. **If a parent does not receive quizzes or tests on a regular basis, the parent should contact the teacher.**

HOMEWORK

Homework counts no more than 10% of a Quarter Grade. Homework is an essential part of the instructional program and reinforces learning. It serves as a means for clarifying and reviewing material learned in class, for providing motivation and opportunity for individual growth, and for creating experiences of in-depth study and supplementary reading.

The time allotments for homework (written and study) are as follows:

Kindergarten	15-30 minutes/night
Grade 1	10 to 20 minutes/night
Grade 2	20 minutes/night
Grade 3	45 minutes/night
Grade 4	45 minutes/night
Grade 5	1 hour/night
Grade 6, 7, and 8	1 ½ to 2 hours /night

These time allotments are GUIDELINES ONLY. It is impossible to predict the amount of time an individual student will need to complete his/her work, and homework will vary throughout the year.

When students are absent, they are given time to make up missed work. Students are responsible for getting missed assignments from the teacher.

When a child leaves school early, for whatever reason, he or she must notify each teacher so that work can be collected or handed out and the child must submit all assignments for his or her remaining classes before being picked up.

In addition, when a student is absent from school illegally, he or she will receive a zero for all missed classwork, homework, tests, and/or projects assigned on those days.

GRADING POLICY

The Grading System for the elementary schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport is as follows:

Kindergarten:

M	Meeting Success
P	Progress Shown
I	Improvement Needed
N	Not Yet Expected

Grades 1 – 8 (All Subjects):

A	94 – 100 (Outstanding)	C+	77 – 79
A-	90 – 93	C	74 – 76 (Average)
B+	87 – 89	C-	70 – 73
B	84 – 86 (Above average)	D	66 – 69 (Below average, but passing)
B-	80 – 83	F	65 and below (Failure)

Study Skills / Conduct – Effort / Social Development (Grades 1 – 5)

Conduct – Effort (Grades 6 – 8):

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Good
- 3 Improvement Needed
- 4 Unsatisfactory

In certain extenuating circumstances, the Grades of ‘S’, ‘N’, and ‘U’ may be used after consultation with the Superintendent of Schools. Only official Diocesan Report Cards and approved administrative software for Catholic Elementary Schools are to be used in Kindergarten to Grade Eight.

The following grade codes are used in grades 1 – 3 specifically for Art, Music, Computer Skills and Physical Education:

S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

HONOR ROLL

Awards are distributed after each quarter, and are **only given to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8.**

High Honors

No grade lower than an ‘A-’ and nothing lower than a ‘2’ in Conduct / Effort.
All subjects are included in calculating High Honors.

Honors

No grade lower than a ‘B-’ and nothing lower than a 2 in Conduct / Effort.
All subjects are included in calculating Honors.

REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION

Report cards are distributed four times a year. Report cards will be withheld if financial obligations have not been met and fees are outstanding.

Report cards may not be given before the assigned date. In the event that a student will leave school prior to the last day in June and all financial obligations have been met, the student may give the teacher a self-addressed stamped envelope and the report card can be mailed the last day of school.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Very few decisions we make about children are more important than recommendations to promote or to retain a student. Most students will be able to follow the school's regular program of sequential learning objectives. If the student successfully achieves the year's objectives, the student progresses to the next grade.

Testing, diagnosis, and actual performance, however, may indicate that some students cannot follow the school's complete course of study. Therefore, the decision to retain a student indicates that although the school has done everything to help the student achieve success, the student has not made satisfactory progress.

All homeroom teachers are required to sign each student's report card certifying that the student was PROMOTED to the next grade, ADVANCED to the next grade, or RETAINED in the grade.

PROMOTED – means the student has completed the grade's work and has attained a minimum of a "D" average in all major subject areas. Major subjects are: Religion, Math, Science, Social Studies, English, and Reading/Literature.

ADVANCED – means a student has failed to meet the minimum level of achievement of grade level. After consideration of all factors (social, emotional, physical, academic, age) and in consultation with the Student Assistance Team, a decision will be reached and parents notified.

RETAINED – means the student has failed on the final average, two or more major subjects. Major subjects are: Religion, Math, Science, Social Studies, English, and Reading/Literature.

If **consideration** is being given for a student to either be advanced or retained, the parents shall be notified where possible in writing NO LATER than March of the school year. Prior to this time frame, teachers should have been in frequent contact with parents and administrators to discuss the difficulties the student might be experiencing. This sometimes occurs in middle school students because of mid-term and final exams.

Written notification of the **determination** to advance or retain a student shall be sent to the parents by the administrator no later than May 1st of the school year for students in Grades K-5.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Roman Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport base their educational purpose and all their activities on the Christian teaching of the essential equality of all persons as rooted in God's love. Thus, with discrimination so repugnant to their nature and mission, Catholic Schools in this Diocese do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, and gender in administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs. We expect St. Joseph School students to participate in the programs, privileges and required practices of the school.

Registration is ongoing at St. Joseph School. Students wishing to transfer can apply at anytime. Admission is generally based on previous school records demonstrating the student's ability to achieve the academic, moral and social standards of our school.

All candidates for admission are required to provide a birth certificate, Baptismal certificate (if applicable) and record of immunizations.

The age requirements for admission to Kindergarten or Grade One is in accordance with that of the Danbury Public School System. Kindergarten students must be five years of age by December 31st.

Open registration is formally held once a year. The number of openings we have available in Grades 1 through 8 is calculated by the responses we receive from our existing families who are re-registering for the following year.

Registration for Kindergarten usually begins in February. Before a child is accepted into Kindergarten, a screening is scheduled which is designed to determine a child's school readiness. Following an interview and evaluation of the materials, the parent will be notified about the status of the child.

Students are accepted into Kindergarten based on the child's test performance and according to the Diocesan priority procedures as follows:

- First to re-registrants, including Pre-K
- Second to siblings of currently enrolled students
- Third to Catholic students whose families are active members of St. Joseph Parish
- Fourth to Catholic students whose families are active in another Catholic parish
- Fifth to non-Catholic students

All new or transferred students are on an automatic 6 week probationary period.

Final determination is at the principal's discretion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Informational announcements are handled through the school P.A. Courteous attention is expected when any message is presented over the P.A. system, especially when prayers are said at the beginning of the day. All announcements must be written and brought to the office and approved by the principal.

ASSESSMENTS

STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM

Children take part in the Diocesan testing Program each year. The testing program measures the child's general ability as well as achievement in core subjects. Test results are used for diagnostic purposes. Over time, results can be useful in revealing individual and group trends. Like all assessment measures, standardized tests are most helpful when viewed in conjunction with many other factors.

Please be sure your child is well-rested and attends school consistently on the standardized testing days.

The official testing program for the Diocese of Bridgeport is the **Iowa Test of Basic Skills** and the **Cognitive Abilities Test** (Riverside Publishing).

Kindergarten	Metropolitan Readiness Test-DRA's
Grade One	Cognitive Abilities Test and ITBS
Grade Two	ITBS (optional)
Grade Three	ITBS and CogAt
Grade Four	ITBS
Grade Five	ITBS Complete Battery (Science and Social Studies included) and CogAt
Grade Six	ITBS
Grade Seven	ITBS Complete Battery (Science and Social Studies included) and CogAt
Grade Eight	ITBS

In the fall and spring of each year grades 3-8 will take the blue ribbon test.

In March, students in grades 5 and 8 take the NCEA Acre Test, which is a Religion assessment that tests general knowledge of this subject.

SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS

- Time allotment for each exam will be determined by the principal.
- The materials tested for the first semester exam will include all work covered in the first and second marking periods. The material tested for the second semester exams will include work covered in the third and fourth marking periods.
- First semester exam grades are averaged in with the first and second marking period grades to determine the midyear (first semester) grade. **(The exam grade alone will NOT affect honor roll status of a student.)**
- Second semester exam grades are averaged in with the third and fourth marking period grades to determine the second semester grade. **(The exam grade alone will NOT affect honor roll status of a student.)**
- Exams will be given in all of the major subjects: Religion, Mathematics, English, Social Studies, Science and Reading/Literature. Exams in all other subjects are optional.
- The format of the examinations will be left to the discretion of the teacher and submitted for review by the principal. The principal must assure that the exam is comprehensive in nature, of a format appropriate to the academic subject and is of sufficient length and scope to cover the semester's work.
- The semester exams will be weighed according to the following weight schedule:

Grade Six	Exams count as 2% of the semester grade.
Grade Seven	Exams count as 6% of the semester grade.
Grade Eight	Exams count as 10% of the semester grade.

Exams are to be reported separately on the report card.

PURPOSE of EXAMINATIONS:

- To better prepare students for High Schools.
- To improve study skills.
- To cultivate organizational skills.
- To develop the skill of retaining material.

ATTENDANCE

A child is **legally absent** from school for the following reasons: sickness, sickness or death in the family, impassable roads or extreme weather. All other absences are **unexcused**.

When a child returns to school, a completed absent note must be given to the teacher.

Doctor or dental appointments should be scheduled for after school or on Saturdays. Family vacations are not to be planned for those days when school is in session. The school provides families with an annual calendar to insure that does not happen. If it is necessary for a child to be dismissed during the school day, the parent or adult chosen by the parent **MUST** come to the school for the child. The school must be informed ahead of time about such occurrences.

When a child is absent, parents are required to phone the school by 9:00am.

Absence notes are still required in addition to the phone call.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (CLUB / EXTENDED CARE)

Before and After School Care (Extended Care / The Club) is available each school day. These programs are open from **7:30am – 8:30am** and from **Dismissal – 5:30pm**.

It is available on all early dismissal days.

- Exceptions:**
- on delayed opening days, both programs open at **8:30am**
 - on early dismissal days due to weather, both programs close at **3:00pm**
 - when school is closed due to weather, both programs are also **closed**.

The Club is primarily a convenience to working parents. Due to the size of the Club building and limited staff coverage, we must discourage the use of the Club for afternoon “play time”. However, it is always available for emergency purposes, (if a student misses a bus, or if there is a question as to whether a younger child is a walker or bus student, etc.). The bus company will **ONLY** return a student in Kindergarten or First Grade to the school if it appears that the parent is not at home. In those cases, students are brought to the Club and parents are called.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Birthday parties for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 4 may be held once a month in each homeroom with the teacher’s permission. Parents should notify the teacher in writing. Parents may bring small individual items such as cupcakes, brownies, etc. Parents may not bring in favors or “goodie” bags for the students. Please check with your child’s teacher about any food allergies of the students in your child’s class.

BOOKS

All books must be properly covered. Contact paper is NOT to be used to cover any books. Each child is responsible for keeping his/her books in good condition. Books that are lost or defaced become the liability of the student and his/her parents. If a book is lost or defaced, the school will bill the parents for the cost.

ASSIGNED TEXTBOOKS

When a textbook is lent to a pupil on a semi-permanent basis, it is required that:

- a. The pupil's name be placed in the space provided in each book
- b. The teacher make a record of the number of the book
- c. The teacher make a record of the condition of the book
- d. In September, each child will put a clean cover on each textbook received. In June, all textbooks are collected, extra materials and covers are removed.
- e. All workbooks are collected in June

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKS

When books are handed out to the children for use during a specific period within the classroom, they will be immediately collected after they have been read. If the book is to remain with the children for any length of time, his/her name must appear in the book and the teacher should have a record of this.

LIBRARY BOOKS

St. Joseph School is fortunate to have an excellent library, which is completely computerized. It contains both reading and research materials for all grade levels. The library is organized and staffed totally by volunteers. Students in Kindergarten through Grade Six have a set library period each week. Students in Grades Seven and Eight do not have a formal library class, but the library is always available to them. Books may be borrowed for one week. Books are charged to the child so that he/she will have the experience of signing out a library book and abiding by due dates. If books are returned late there will be a nominal fee, payable by the child. All lost library books must be paid for so that the school can purchase an additional copy. If the book is located after a new order is placed, the child will be allowed to keep the old book since he/she has paid for it.

BULLYING

In 2003 the Connecticut State Assembly passed the Anti-Bullying Act, which states that bullying is against the law. Bullying can fall into one of three categories: physical, verbal and social. These types of behavior are always unacceptable.

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Bridgeport. It must not be tolerated during the school day nor during any school sponsored activities on or off the school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ. This behavior is against the fundamental tenet of “love your neighbor as yourself,” and destroys respect for the dignity of the student, undermines the Christian atmosphere of the school and deprives the student of a safe and caring learning environment.

Bullying is defined as any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity where acts are repeated against the same student over time. Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing, putdowns, name calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations and social isolation.

- **Students** at Saint Joseph School may report acts of bullying **anonymously** by placing a note describing the incident in the mailbox located outside the principal’s office.
- **Parents/Guardians** are to **contact the principal directly** to report instances of bullying, with the opportunity of filling out a formal written report.

Investigation Procedures

Upon learning about a bullying incident, the administrator or his/her designee shall thoroughly investigate the circumstances. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff, review of school records, and identification of parent and family issues.

Bullying incidents that demand in school/out of school suspension shall be reported to the respective Deputy Superintendent of Schools.

Consequences / Intervention

If it is concluded that an act of bullying has occurred, the parents/guardians of the student who committed such acts and the parents/guardians of students against whom such acts were directed shall be notified. Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the result of the investigation and may include a parent conference, professional counseling, detention, suspension, and expulsion. Depending on the severity of the incident, or the series of incidents, the administrator may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising the students involved, providing staff support for students when necessary, reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate, and developing a supervision plan with the parents.

BUSES

The State of Connecticut mandates that all students in primary and secondary schools receive bus transportation. The bus schedules are published in *The News Times*, the local newspaper, approximately one week before school opens. A child's method of transportation cannot be changed without a written note from the parent.

For safety reasons, the Bus Company and Danbury Board of Education discourage parents from allowing children to ride another bus to a location other than their documented stop.

Students and parents should consider riding on the school bus as a privilege and an extension of the school. Thus, students are to demonstrate a respectful, Christian, and safety-conscious attitude on the bus at all times.

Bus Behavior

Students are expected to:

- Be respectful and obey the bus driver and bus monitors at all times.
- Be on time and at the correct stop
- Wait away from the road until the bus has completely stopped and the door has been opened.
- Board the bus in single file, be seated promptly, WEAR SEAT BELTS, and remain seated while on the bus.
- Keep all body parts, and all belongings inside the window.
- Keep all belongings out of the aisles.
- Respect the rights of other passengers at all times.
- Treat the bus property with respect.
- Speak quietly – DO NOT SCREAM.
- Stay in the seats until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Do nothing to cause annoyances or distraction to the bus driver, as this places safety of all in danger.

Misbehavior on the bus leads to bus conduct referrals and possible bus suspension.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The office must be informed immediately if there is a change of home address or telephone number for the purpose of mailing and/or emergency.

CHILD ABUSE LAWS

Under Connecticut State Law, school officials are legally obliged to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the proper agency. In so reporting, no allegation is made against a parent or caregiver. Rather, it is a judgment by the school that the child may be presenting signs of abuse or neglect.

If the teacher or school nurse suspects abuse or neglect, he or she must immediately confer with the principal to discuss the aspects of the abuse and to determine which person on the school staff will report the alleged abuse to the proper agency.

CHILD CUSTODY

Custodial parents are entitled to receive original sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc.

Non-custodial parents are generally entitled to receive duplicate sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc.. Such parents may be asked to supply the teacher with self-addressed stamped envelopes for convenience and expediency.

COMMUNICATION

Since as parents you are the child's first teachers, you are our partners in education. Therefore, regular communication with you is an essential part of your child's school experience. Scheduled parent conferences allow teachers and parents to discuss student achievement as well as to develop means to assist students in areas of difficulty.

A parent may request a meeting with a teacher at any time by simply sending a note to the teacher in question and the teacher will arrange for this meeting outside class time at a mutually convenient time. The meeting should take place in the classroom or someplace that insures privacy, never in the hallway or on the street. A parent who is refused such a meeting should notify the principal.

CONFIDENTIALLY

There is a professional and moral ethic that requires all persons to safeguard all information of a privileged nature. It is imperative that such information be regarded as a sacred trust.

If there is evidence of knowledge that could impact on the health or safety of any person, the teacher has the responsibility to share the information with the principal.

Under Section 423 of the Child Protective Services Act, school officials are required to report when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused or maltreated child (see **section on Child Abuse**).

The rules that govern privileged information apply, as well, to any personal or academic information that is discovered through daily classroom instruction or other social interaction with students, parents or peers. **Always the sense of the sacred should prevail.**

CRISIS PLAN

Should a crisis require evacuation from Saint Joseph School building, students will be brought to a safe place – Saint Joseph Church – and parents can meet them there.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:15am	Enter School
8:35am	School Begins
3:05pm	School Dismissal

Sample Lunch Schedule

Regular Lunch:

Grade	Recess	Lunch
K, 1, 2	11:35 – 11:55	11:55 – 12:20
3, 4, 5	12:00 – 12:20	12:25 – 12:50
6, 7, 8	12:40 – 12:55	12:55 – 1:20

Early Dismissal Lunch:

Grade	Recess	Lunch
K, 1, 2	N/A	11:00 – 11:25
3, 4, 5	N/A	11:25 – 11:45
6, 7, 8	N/A	11:50 – 12:10

Walkers and children that are driven to school should NOT arrive before 8:15am; and parents must arrange pickup at dismissal times.

Upon arrival to school, students must report to the gym for Morning Prayer and announcements.

IN THOSE INSTANCES WHEN STUDENTS ARRIVE ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS PRIOR TO 8:30am, PARENTS MUST PROVIDE FOR THEIR PROTECTION AND SUPERVISION OR USE THE BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

To avoid interruption during the school day, any messages, forgotten lunches, books and boots, etc., must be taken to the OFFICE and not to the classrooms while school is in session. The school office will see to it that the child receives these items.

St. Joseph School Office is open from 8:15am to 3:30pm each school day.

DISCIPLINE CODE for STUDENT CONDUCT

Parents choosing Catholic school for their children frequently cite our commitment to structure and discipline as a major reason for their investment in Catholic education. Our students are to conduct themselves at all times as examples of Christian behavior and exhibit the values of their family, the Church, and our school community. Good classroom order and a tight school structure help to insure the safety of all children, facilitate the learning for all students, and promote self-control and self-respect in the individual child. While most parents find our approach to discipline to be very favorable, there are instances when a child breaks a rule and must suffer the consequences of his or her action. It is then that a parent may attempt to debate the fairness of the school policy or make excuses for the child's misbehavior. The administration of this school does not engage in debates with parents about our rules and regulations, nor can it be supportive of parents who are interfering with a child's growth in accepting personal responsibility for his or her actions. By enrolling a child in this school the parent agrees to and is supportive of the rules and regulations that we deem as critical in the spiritual, academic, and behavioral growth of the child.

Teachers discipline students directly for minor classroom disruptions, for not coming prepared to class, not being in the complete school uniform, for not completing assigned homework, for minor verbal disputes with other classmates, or other incidents which interfere in the teaching-learning process for the child and his or her classmates. Parents are notified of classroom problems by the teacher and are asked to help the teacher to insure that inappropriate behavior is modified.

Teachers are not permitted to use corporal punishment on any child. Perceived acts of corporal punishment should be reported to the principal of the school immediately by students or parents.

It happens that some classroom discipline issues are referred to the administration of this school. This would include chronic minor problems listed above or major problems such as, but not limited to, chronic lateness, the verbal abuse of the teacher by a child; signs of disrespect to a teacher or another adult on the staff; fighting; physical, sexual, or verbal harassment of a fellow student; violent behavior; stealing; vandalism; or the possession of drugs, alcohol, or a weapon. The administration handles such matters in a variety of ways depending on the severity of the incident.

The school employs a progressive discipline system for minor acts of misbehavior in order to encourage students to change inappropriate behavior so that sanctions do not increase in severity. For acts such as disrupting class, talking out, throwing objects, unnecessary movements, etc., not meeting the requirements for preparation and submission, wearing inappropriate clothing, using profane language, returning graded papers unsigned, students are often given conduct referral, detention, demerits, etc.

Detentions are served on a day and time designated by the teacher. A child receiving a detention is given 24 hours notice. The parent/guardian is required to sign the detention slip and the child must return it to the issuing teacher the following school day.

Repeated violation of these rules and regulations may result in suspension from school or the non-re-registration of the child for the next school year.

For more serious acts of misbehavior such as fighting, stealing, vandalism, swearing at or being disrespectful to an adult in the building, and harassment, the student is immediately suspended for a period of one to five days. In cases of vandalism, the parent must pay the full cost of the repair or replacement of the item before the child may return to school. In cases of theft, the item is either returned in good condition or the cost of replacement is borne by the parent before the child can return to school.

In cases in which a child engages in a fight which causes injury to another child or adult, the police will likely be called and, then, the parents will be notified. Likewise, the possession of drugs or alcohol by a child is reported to the police. The school reserves the right to expel such a child.

In cases in which a child brings a weapon to school, the police are notified, and then the parents are called. The school reserves the right to expel a child for the possession of a weapon.

It is the expectation of this school that student behavior is exemplary both on and off school grounds. Whenever a child is wearing our school uniform, he or she always represents his or her parents and the entire school community. Therefore, the school reserves the right to punish students for acts such as, but not necessarily limited to stealing, fighting, vandalism, harassment, or any other type of threatening or inappropriate misconduct (personally, via the telephone or the Internet), and prohibited use of personal electronic devices including but not limited to cell phones, cameras, camera-phones, PDA's and the like. The principal determines what is within the vicinity of the school. This could result in any number of punishments including the possibility of suspension or expulsion.

Lastly, a child's arrest for a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the school, at any time could result in the child's suspension or expulsion. A child's conviction of a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the school, will likely result in a child's expulsion.

DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed at 3:05pm each day except for half-days and early school closings. **Parents are asked to wait in the back parking lot for their children.**

On half-days, school is dismissed at 12:30pm.

DRESS CODE

Your school uniform confirms your attendance at Saint Joseph School and is a symbol of unity within the school community. It minimizes distractions in the learning process. It is important that you take pride in your appearance by wearing your complete uniform, always remembering that by wearing it inside and outside the classroom and the school, you are representing the school and your behavior should be a credit to both yourself and the school community.

Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company carries all the appropriate uniform requirements.

They have an outlet store located at:

Fair Oaks Shopping Center
720 Wolcott Street
Waterbury, CT 06720
Phone: (203) 591-9191

Directions from Danbury: Take Route 84 East to Exit #23. Make a right onto Rte. 69 North and go straight, approximately one mile. Make a left onto Manor Avenue. At the traffic light, make a right onto Wolcott Street. At the second light, make a right into Fair Oaks Shopping Center.

SCHOOL UNIFORM: All uniforms are always required to be clean and pressed.

Summer Uniform: Summer uniforms may be worn from the opening of the school year until September 30th and again from May 1st to the end of the school year. Students who do not have a summer uniform as of yet, may wear their powder-blue polo shirt with navy pants (boys), skirts or jumpers (girls).

- Navy Camp-style shorts ONLY (to the knee). Cargo and trendy styles are NOT allowed.
- Belt
- Powder-blue St. Joseph polo shirt
- White or navy **crew socks**
- White sneakers
- Gym shorts are NOT considered summer uniform shorts.

Regular School Uniform / Dress Code: All students are to be in full, regular school uniform from October 1st to April 30th.

All students in Kindergarten-Grade 8 will be in uniform.

Kindergarten (Daily and Gym):

- Navy Blue sweat pants (No Stripes)
- Navy Blue sweatshirt with the School Emblem
- Navy Blue Walking Shorts
- Light Blue Shirt with School Emblem

Boys: Grades 1 to 8:

- Navy blue dress pants
- Light Blue Golf Shirt with School Emblem
- Navy Blue School Sweatshirt with School Emblem
- Blue/Black tie shoes or Loafer Type Shoes (solid color)
- Blue/Black belt
- Blue/Black Socks Hair should be short enough NOT to touch the collar. NO tails or “extreme” hairstyles (e.g. bleaching, etc.)
- NO earrings or jewelry
- NO visible tattoos

Girls: Grades 1 to 4:

- Plaid school jumper,
- Yellow Peter Pan blouse Navy blue sweatshirt with school emblem.
- Navy Blue Mary Jane type shoes or Loafer Type Shoes.
- Navy blue pants (optional)
- Navy knee-high socks. Tights may be worn in the cold weather.
- NO nail polish.
- NO bracelets.
- Stud post earrings ONLY.
- Small religious medals and crucifixes may be worn under the uniform.

Girls: Grades 5 to 8:

- Plaid Kilt skirt
- Yellow Golf shirt with school emblem.
- Navy blue sweatshirt with school emblem.
- Blue/Black tie shoes or Loafer type shoes.
- Navy blue pant (optional)
- Navy knee-high socks.
- NO “extreme” hairstyles (e.g. bleaching, etc.) “Extreme” is to be determined by the Administration.
- Stud post earrings may be worn: ONE IN EACH EAR ONLY – NO long and dangling types.
- NO visible tattoos.
- NO nail polish
- No make-up
- NO jewelry, other than a ring or watch.
- Small religious medals and crucifixes may be worn under the uniform.

Gym Uniform for Boys and Girls:

- Navy blue shorts (no stripping)
- Uniform golf shirt/sweatshirt
- Solid navy sweatpants(no striping)
- White ankle/crew socks.

The gym uniform may be worn all day on gym day. This DOES mean that students must wear their navy sweatpants during cold weather. When summer uniforms are in use, they may be worn as the gym uniform. During September, May and June, students may wear their gym shorts all day. The solid navy sweatpants (cotton fabric) MUST be worn from October 1st to April 30th.

DRESS-DOWN / NON-UNIFORM DAYS

On special occasions throughout the year, students will be awarded the privilege of partaking in Dress-Down/Non-Uniform Days.

DRESS-CODE:

Neat Jeans (no baggy jeans or very tight jeans may be worn)

Shorts may not be worn without the approval of the principal, and when worn it must be at the knee

Sweats may not be worn

MODESTY in clothing worn is a must (length of clothing; no tank tops; no spandex shorts or pants, no midriffs)

Plain t-shirts, t-shirts with team logo, places of travel are only allowed

Whatever clothing is worn should be neat and clean

Wheely sneakers may not worn at any time.

Administration and faculty maintain the right and responsibility to deem clothing inappropriate. Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will have to call home to request their uniforms be brought to school and, in addition will forfeit the privilege of partaking in future dress-down days.

Parents will be notified if a child comes to school consistently in an unkempt manner. If no improvement is noticed within a reasonable amount of time, an appointment with the parents and with the guidance office will be made by school officials.

DRUGS and ALCOHOL

In recognition of the seriousness of drug and alcohol problems to which the children are exposed, Saint Joseph School will follow the policy as stated below:

- If a teacher suspects that a child is under the influence of either drugs or alcohol, the matter will be referred to the principal immediately
- The principal will verify teacher observation and will notify parents who must pick up the child immediately
- Should it be determined that the suspicion is accurate, parents will be expected to follow the recommendations of the school principal if the child is to continue in the school
- Any student who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or any drug, and appears at a school function in questionable condition will be barred from attending or participating in that ceremony, a party, dance, or school outing. Parents will be notified and appropriate action will be taken which may include suspension or mandatory withdrawal from the school.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If it is necessary to pick up your child before 3:05pm, please send a note in to the teacher. Children dismissed early **must be signed out** at the school office. When you arrive to pick up your child, they will be called down to the office.

If a child's regular after school plans change, the school office needs to be notified **in advance** (preferably in writing). Whenever there is going to be a change in your child's dismissal plans, **please notify the school office by 2:30pm.**

If the school has no communication that something different is going to happen, the child will be placed on their regular bus or be expected to use the usual route home.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Any electronic device such as cell phones, beepers, hand-held and other personal electronic devices that may distract the student, other students, or the class as a whole during the course of the school day is prohibited. Failure to abide by this will result in immediate confiscation. Parents should contact the principal to make arrangements to pick up the item.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS / DELAYED OPENINGS

In the event of a delayed or early dismissal due to inclement weather, we will follow the Danbury Public School System. If they close so do we.

ENVELOPE POLICY

School-wide notices are sent home to each family in a manila envelope every Tuesday with the youngest or only child. Parents are asked to read all notices, sign and date the envelope, and return it to school the following school day. This form of communication helps to keep everyone well informed about what is going on in the school and any changes in the routine.

EXPECTATIONS and RESPONSIBILITIES for STUDENTS

Students attend Saint Joseph School in order to develop fully their God-given talents and capabilities.

To accomplish this, students are asked to:

- Do their best at all times.
- Treat all members of the school community (i.e., teachers, staff, priests, parents and students) with respect. This includes respecting the work of others by not cheating.
- Obey all school rules and regulations, including those forbidding the use of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or disruptive behavior.
- Develop personal standards of conduct that reflect Christian morals and behavior, and refrain from use of inappropriate language, verbal threats and sexual behavior (including touching, gestures, writing, and dress).
- Speak in a well-modulated tone of voice.
- Observe the school dress code, including standards on no-uniform days.
- Help care for school property and keep the school free from damage and defacement.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students are encouraged to participate in the extracurricular activities of the school. Participation in these activities is a privilege. Students are expected to fulfill their obligations in the classroom (class work and homework). In order to participate in extracurricular activities, students must pass each subject on their report card and model acceptable behavior both during the school day and during the selected activity. Failure to meet academic or behavioral requirements will result in the student's suspension or dismissal from the activity. Participation in these activities requires a commitment of both student and parent. Attendance will be taken at each activity to determine a student's participation. In individual cases regarding participation in extracurricular activities, the principal holds the final determination.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips must serve as an educational purpose and their values should be an integral part of the school's instructional program. They broaden the students' educational experiences. Field trips are privileges given to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip.

- Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals
- Field trips vary on each grade level
- Field trips are permissible when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity
- Individual teachers in consultation with the administration reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct
- A **written official permission slip**, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip. **Verbal or faxed permission cannot be accepted.** Permission slips are due in the office 48 hours before the day of the trip.

As a volunteer chaperone, **you must have VIRTUS training.** This is the mandatory 3-hour training program required for every person age 18 and over who works or volunteers within the Diocese of Bridgeport. This training teaches adults how to identify early warning signs of child sexual abuse and how to prevent it. Log on to www.virtusonline.org to register.

The number of chaperones and the choice of chaperones are left to the discretion of the teacher organizing the field trip. If you are interested in chaperoning a class trip, you will be expected to assist the teacher in the supervision of his/her students. The safety of the children should be the top priority of a chaperone. Therefore, siblings are not permitted to participate in class trips. If a child has an allergy that needs to be monitored, parents are asked to accompany them on the trip.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

A **registration fee**, per family, is charged at the time of registration and each year thereafter at re-registration. A Home School Association fee is charged annually, per family.

The continued functioning of St. Joseph School depends upon tuition, Diocesan subsidy and the fund-raising activities of the Home School Association.

Tuition payments run July through May of each school year for a monthly plan, or September and January for a semester plan. **Non-payment of tuition for more than two months is grounds for removal of the student(s) from St. Joseph School.**

Diocesan policy states that if tuition is not current, students may not receive their report cards, go on field trips, or participate in any extra-curricular activities. Academic records may not be sent for students who transfer to another school.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by the law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the fire signal is given, everyone obeys promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. Students are not permitted to talk during a fire drill and are to remain outside the building until a signal is given to return inside. Teachers will direct the students.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

Students are not allowed to use the telephone to call their parents to bring in forgotten items, including lunches. If lunches are forgotten, other students will be asked to share some of their lunch. Please do not bring in lunches or send in any fast-food chain meals from Taco Bell, McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, etc., or soda of any kind.

Parents are asked **not to bring in forgotten items, except for medicine or eyeglasses.**

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

There are many various fundraisers throughout the school year, which you will be notified of as they happen. Please make every attempt to support these fundraisers as you are able.

GUIDELINES for the EDUCATION of NON-CATHOLICS

Parents must be made aware of the intentional Catholic witness in our schools. Saint Joseph School as a Catholic school within the Diocese of Bridgeport has as its primary mission the formation of children in the Catholic faith.

All children will participate in total academic life of our school, including religious education. According to the norms of our Church, it is expected that non-Catholics participate as fully as they can in the liturgical and prayer life of the school.

The religious educators of our schools are committed to teaching the fullness of revelation as it is taught by the Roman Catholic Church. While our teachers value ecumenical education, and respect the traditions of other ecclesiastical communities, they always teach within the context of fidelity to the doctrine and traditions of our teaching church.

HARASSMENT POLICIES

Harassment regulations need to be grounded in the belief that all persons have a right to be treated with dignity. All demeaning behavior is prohibited.

Saint Joseph School provides a safe environment for all. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken seriously. Students making such threats even in jest face appropriate disciplinary action including detention, suspension or expulsion. Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior are subject to detention, suspension, or expulsion and where appropriate, will be referred for counseling services. If you believe that your child is being harassed, please notify the principal immediately. Teachers, also, should report threats made against them to the principal.

HEALTH / ILLNESS

Health services will be provided to students. The goal is to be supportive to each child in enhancing their lives by teaching preventative medicine and helping students enjoy a healthy lifestyle. To accomplish this, families are urged to inform us of existing health concerns, emotional or physical. This also includes recent surgeries, serious illnesses, communicable diseases, or accidents. Also, please inform us of any recent immunizations.

If a child has a chronic illness such as asthma or a condition that warrants frequent use of the bathroom, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school and classroom teacher in writing in September so that we are aware of the condition.

During the school year, students are screened for vision and hearing. Parents are notified when screening results are outside the normal limits.

A child should be 24 hours free of fever before returning to school.

Emergency Procedures: If a child is injured or becomes ill while at school, the school nurse or other school personnel will contact the parent/guardian at home or work. It is essential that an emergency number be on file with the school office. If a child needs to be transported to the clinic or hospital for emergency treatment and the parent/guardian cannot be located, an ambulance will be called.

LATENESS

Student lateness interrupts the learning process for your child and all other children in that classroom. Any student arriving at school after the published opening time is considered late. **Students arriving late to school must obtain a late pass from the school office to be admitted to class.** Repeated lateness affects your child's ability to be on the honor roll and could impede your child's re-registration for the coming year. A child will receive detention for chronic lateness.

LITURGY

All students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 will attend Mass weekly and at other times as indicated in the school calendar.

LOST and FOUND

Lost and found items are placed on a rack in the cafeteria of the building. **Please attach name labels or mark your child's clothing and other personal belongings.** This makes it possible for children to identify their items. Lunches and lunch boxes should be marked with a **permanent marker.** Any unclaimed items are periodically donated to charity.

LUNCH / LUNCHROOM

St. Joseph School has a cafeteria and participates in the Sodexo School Service's Hot Lunch Program. All students are given a monthly lunch menu. Tickets are sold on a daily basis in the school lobby. Snacks and milk are available to buy at lunch. The Sodexo Food Service follows the state guidelines for preparing healthy lunches and selling only healthy snacks.

- Each grade is assigned a section in the lunchroom and is expected to remain in it until dismissed.
- It is the responsibility of the individual child to keep the area clean.
- Respect and obedience are to be shown at all times to those who work in the lunchroom.
- No glass bottles are allowed.
- Trash is deposited in the appropriate containers.

RECESS RULES

Outdoor Recess:

- Students must remain in the area assigned to their class
- Students may not leave the school yard and may not reenter the building without permission from the teacher on duty
- Small toys are not permitted

Indoor Recess:

- Students will remain in their homerooms unless a movie is played in a separate room
- Students will play card games, board games, color, draw, read, work, etc.
- Students will use **indoor voices**
- There is to be **no yelling, running,** etc.
- Balls or other outdoor equipment will not be used during indoor recess

MONEY

Money that is brought to school for a specific purpose (class trip, book fair, milk money, etc.), must be put into an envelope with the child's name and grade and amount. Since snacks are sold at lunch time students may choose to bring in small amounts of money (less than \$5) for such purchases during their lunch period. If a student does bring money to school the money should be kept on the student's person and not left in the school bag, coat pocket, lunch box, or desk. The school cannot be responsible for lost money. **Purchasing of snacks is only allowed during students scheduled lunch period.**

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

RELEASE of COPIES of REPORT CARDS, SCHOOL NOTICES, ETC.

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide a non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding your child. If there is a court order specifying that this should not happen, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a copy of the court order.

Non-custodial parents are generally entitled to receive duplicate sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc. Such parents might be told to supply the teacher with self-addressed stamped envelopes for convenience and expediency.

RELEASE of CHILDREN

Non-custodial parents may pick up a child only if previous arrangements have been made.

PARENTS as PARTNERS

Just as the parents look to the school to provide the facilities and the trained personnel that are essential to their child's proper development, so the school looks to the parents to assume active responsibilities that cannot be delegated to others. No school can be wholly effective in teaching the values of religion and the virtues of honesty, respect for authority, consideration for the rights and property of others, and standards of personal morality and integrity unless these principles have been established, upheld, and valued in the home. If parents cooperate with the school, instill respect for the authority in the home, this is likely to be reflected in the positive attitudes of their children.

Parents are asked to take an active role in their child's education by:

- Assisting their child in his/her academic and moral development by carefully reviewing class work, test results, progress reports, and report cards; supervising home study; and reinforcing school policies
- Explaining and reviewing periodically the school behavior code with their child. Parents should discuss school disciplinary episodes in relation to the school behavior code.
- Recognizing their child's talents and interests so they may be developed in cooperation with the classroom teachers.
- Seeing that the dress code, including gym uniform and summer uniform, is enforced, and insisting that children dress according to Christian virtue.
- Insisting on their child's regular school attendance and punctuality and on complying with attendance rules and procedures.
- Making all tuition and fee payments on time, and participating in fund raising activities.
- Providing proper supervision at home, and not tolerating harassment, inappropriate or violent behavior, or viewing of such videos, movies, song lyrics, and on the Internet.
- Teaching their child respect for law, for authority, for the rights of others, and for public and private property. This includes showing respect for the work of others by not tolerating cheating in any circumstance.
- Arranging for a time and place for their child to complete homework assignments.
- Working with the school in a cooperative effort to carry out recommendations made in the best interest of their child, including those related to educational evaluations and counseling.
- Attending all Parent-Teacher Conferences and Home-School Association meetings.
- By always interacting in a respectful manner when speaking with or about the administration, teachers and staff of the school. Verbal abuse or physical harassment may result in your child being required to withdraw from the school immediately or not being allowed to re-register for the following year.

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

A Home-School Association provides an effective channel of communication between parents and teachers for the benefit of the students and the whole community. Its main purposes are:

- To create mutual support and understanding between home and school, and thus bring about a total learning environment for students
- To provide a means for keeping parents informed of school activities, programs, etc., and if any, parent service requirement
- To assist the school in meeting its financial obligations, primarily through fund-raising activities
- To provide adult education programs

PARKING / TRAFFIC FLOW

- **Speed limit on school property is 5 miles per hour.**
- Parents driving or picking up their child/children must enter by Franklin Street and leave by Robinson Avenue (by the rectory). Turning around in the back parking lot and going out to Franklin Street is not allowed.
- All traffic should enter the rear parking lot from Franklin Street from 8:15am – 9:30am. Exit either to Robinson Avenue or Main Street. The back playground is closed until 2:30pm.
- The driveway between the rectory and the fence is an OUT street on school days between the hours of 8:00am – 4:00pm.
- There is NO THRU TRAFFIC in the back lot between 9:30am – 3:30pm.
- There is no parking in the back lot during school hours. Please park by the church or Parish center and walk via the sidewalk to the school entrance.
- Please do not park in NO PARKING ZONES or CLERGY/RECTORY parking areas.
- When dropping off children at school in the morning, please do not leave your car running.
- When dropping off children at school, pull into a parking space. Please **do not stop in front of any school doors**, as this causes a traffic back-up.

PLEASE use caution when driving your child/children to and from school. Always be alert and ready to stop. Your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- A good personal hygiene routine should be followed daily: ears, neck, and fingernails should be given special attention. When appropriate, children should be instructed in the use of deodorant.
- Complete uniform must be worn at all times
- No make-up may be worn
- Girls may **not** wear nail polish
- No excessive jewelry:
 - Only small watches may be worn
 - Small religious medals and crucifixes may be worn under the uniform
 - Girls may only wear **one** set of small stud post earrings on the lobes
 - Boys **are not** permitted to wear earrings
- Hair should be clean and well-groomed at all times:
 - Hair accessories are limited and should be kept to a minimum
 - Boys' hair should be no longer than the top of the collar of their shirts
 - No "extreme" hairstyles permitted ("Extreme" is determined by the Administration)

RE-REGISTRATION

At the time of re-registration parents will be notified if their child is being invited to return to the school in September or if the child is not being invited back.

RELEASE of STUDENTS DURING the SCHOOL DAY

The school has a sign-out book located in the main office.

Occasions for the use of a **Sign-out book** are:

- In the event of a student illness the parent or adult designated by the parent must come to the school and take the child. It is against the law to dismiss a child during school hours except into the direct custody of a parent, guardian, or an adult designated by the parent. If the parent cannot be contacted, the secretary will contact the name listed on the child's emergency contact slip. Emergency slips are completed in September and **must be updated as necessary.**
- When a student is released to a parent or guardian, that adult must sign the book.
- For a prearranged appointment when the student is released, the parent, guardian, or approved adult must sign the book. Please note: only the **principal** may **approve** the release of a student for a **prearranged appointment.**

SCHOOL CALENDAR

A tentative calendar was sent home during the summer months. A month by month calendar will be sent home during the school year indicating any changes necessary.

SCHOOL'S RIGHT to AMEND

Saint Joseph School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent as necessary.

SECURITY

To assure the security of the building and the safety of each child, Saint Joseph School strongly enforces its policy of requiring **all visitors, even parents, to report to the office.**

To avoid interruption of the learning process, **no one may enter a classroom without permission of the principal.**

SEX OFFENDER POLICY

This notice is to remind you of the importance of taking steps to keep your child safe when he or she is involved in outdoor activities, including traveling to and from school. The following are some safety tips that we hope you will share with your children:

- Students should never go home with strangers
- Students should never talk to strangers
- Students should never take things from strangers
- If students are approached by strangers and are still near the school, they should be encouraged to return to the school and immediately inform a staff member
- Young students should be escorted to and from school
- Older students should be encouraged to walk/travel to school in groups whenever possible

The teachers at our school will also remind students of the importance of not responding to strangers and actions each child should take if approached by a stranger, including reporting it to responsible adults. Finally, if our school is notified during the school year that a registered sex offender has moved within the vicinity of our school, further notice will be sent to you.

SMOKING

Connecticut Law prohibits smoking in a school building and on school property. Smoking is prohibited at all times in the Saint Joseph School building, on its parking lot and playing fields. This prohibition applies to faculty, staff, parents, and all visitors to the school.

SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

Students with learning differences are children of God and members of the Church. Saint Joseph School makes every effort to meet individual student needs. Sometimes, however, a student may have needs that do not permit him or her to benefit fully from the program. In those cases your child's teacher and/or principal may schedule a meeting with you to discuss having an evaluation of your child's learning needs. Such evaluations can be done through the local public school district, i.e., Committees on Special Education (CSE's), or privately. Once the results of the evaluation are available the teacher and principal will meet with the parents to discuss the results of the evaluation and the recommendations.

SPORTS PROGRAM

Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut **Administrative Policies and Regulations for Catholic Elementary Schools**

Interscholastic Activities and Other Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in school-sponsored interscholastic athletic programs and other organized activities (i.e. cheerleading, drill teams, etc.).

It should be clearly understood that all participants, as students in Catholic Elementary Schools, are expected to meet their obligations in the following areas: academics, attendance, personal behavior, conduct, appearance, and all school policies and regulations.

All matters pertaining to athletic activities are considered to be the responsibility of the principal, and, as such, will be subject to the review and acceptance of the school principal. His/her decisions shall be in line with Diocesan policy.

Those students taking part in athletic activities are required to have a yearly physical, a copy of which must be on file in the school office.

All teams are to carry adequate insurance for all participants.

Basketball teams Eligibility Rule

Members of all Catholic Elementary School basketball teams:

1. Must be a full-time student in a Catholic school
2. Must not have completed eighth grade
3. Must be under fifteen years of age before September 1st of the school year
4. Cannot play for a parish team while a member of the school team.

St. Joseph School Sports Program

PARTICIPANT POLICY

St. Joseph School belongs to the Parochial Basketball League. Both boys and girls in grades 5-8 are eligible to participate in this program. The basketball season begins in October of each school year and continues through February. Cheerleading is also available for students in grades 5-8.

The rules on sportsmanship and academic eligibility are explained to participating students and their parents at the beginning of each season. Students and parents are given the contract below to sign that explains what is expected from them. There is a charge per student to cover the cost of belonging to the League.

All program participants are expected, at all times, to conduct themselves in accordance with the rules and policies of St. Joseph School and the Danbury Parochial League.

Scholastic Requirements

Students must maintain a **minimum of a 'C' average in all subject areas**. Students falling below this average will be benched. During this time, the student **may not attend or participate in games or practices**. Reinstatement will be considered at the end of a two week period providing the student's grades have improved to the minimum of the 'C' average. **If a student falls below a 'C' average a second time, he/she may be dropped from the team.**

Any student receiving an **'F' in a subject** and/or an **'F' in conduct** will be automatically off the team or squad for the remainder of the season.

Behavioral Code: The following applies to all students while in uniform:

- Students will NOT chew gum, swear, wear jewelry, or do anything that could be construed as un-Christian. This includes face painting.
- Team or squad members must attend **all games**. They **must be on time and must not leave the gym during the game**.
- Players will show **respect** at all times to coaches, officials, faculty, parents and other students.
- Good sportsmanship must be displayed at all times.
- Loitering in hallways or lavatories is not permitted.
- Any use of profanity will result in a player being taken out of a game and benched for the remainder of the game. A second offense will result in suspension from the team.
- Poor attitude and lack of self-discipline in the classroom will result in possible suspension.

Absences: All participants will keep their coaches advised of any illness or planned family or school activity that would conflict with the sports schedule. Remember: joining a team is a commitment and players are expected to be at all practices and games.

Dress Code/Uniform: All players are responsible for keeping their uniforms clean and undamaged. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action up to full restitution of the cost of the uniform. Laundering instructions will be provided with the uniforms.

- Uniforms must be turned in and accounted for before Sports Night at the end of the season. Individual coaches are responsible for collection.
- ALL players must wear T-shirts under their uniforms only in the **same color** as their uniform.
- All participants are to dress neatly coming to and from the game. Casual clothes or sweat suits may be worn over the uniform.

- No student is to enter St. Joseph School without an adult coach being present.

- Parents, please do not ‘drop off’ your child until the coach has arrived.

- Any student absent from school on the day of a game will NOT be allowed to participate that night.

- No one is to be on the court at half-time.

Players and their parents sign the following pledge at the beginning of each sports season, which is kept on file in the school office:

As a player/cheerleader, I, _____ have read these requirements and agree to abide by them.

Student’s Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian’s Signature _____ Date _____

COACHING POLICY

The St. Joseph Basketball Association consists of the Principal, the League representative, head coaches from the four basketball teams, and the coach of the cheerleading squad.

Everyone associated with the St. Joseph basketball Association agrees to abide by the By-laws set forth by the Greater Danbury Parochial League.

The coaches of St. Joseph Basketball Association agree to a team size of 12 – 15 players. The coaches agree to teach proper Christian behavior to their members. **They are to remember that they represent St. Joseph School.** They must respect the opposing school team and coaching staff, the referees, and the fans that attend the games. Any coaches or team members that do not abide by this will be removed from that team.

Individual teams will consist of the following: the **JV Teams** will consist of 5th and 6th graders and the **Varsity Teams** will consist of 7th and 8th graders. If for some reason St. Joseph School does not have enough students to support a JV Team, the addition of 4th graders will be decided by the principal.

- a. All coaches are appointed by the school principal.
- b. All coaches must be knowledgeable in first aid as defined by the school principal. All injuries at games and practices must be attended to immediately and brought to the attention of the principal.
- c. All coaches must reinforce Christian attitudes, good sportsmanship, school spirit, and a HEALTHY sense of competition.
- d. All coaches must call athletes by their first name and use appropriate language at practices and games. Coaches are also responsible for the language of their players.
- e. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players at practices. Players and coaches must abide by the school rules in terms of use of the gym and bathrooms.
- f. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players at home and away games. This includes monitoring students in areas assigned to team members and making sure the room is left as it was found.
- g. Coaches are responsible for staying after practices and games until ALL students are picked up.
- h. Coaches are responsible for reading and abiding by ALL League rules.
- i. Coaches are accountable to the principal. Coaches are expected to reinforce decisions made by the principal regarding discipline and academics.
- j. Coaches MUST take the Virtus Training Course as mandated by the Diocese.
- k. Failure to comply with ANY of the above rules will necessitate a meeting with the principal and the League president, and possibly lead to a request of coach's dismissal.

SPECTATOR POLICY

A copy of this policy is given to all St. Joseph School students and families and is posted for our visitors.

Above all, spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a Christian manner at all times.

All spectators are required to abide by the following:

- a. Dress appropriately. No ripped jeans, t-shirts with inappropriate slogans, or backpacks.
- b. No eating of anything in the gym. No food, drink, candy, or chewing gum is allowed in the gym.
- c. Spectators must sit in a chair. No running around the gym.
- d. You must stay in the gym. If you are getting food from the snack bar, you must stay in the hall by the snack bar.
- e. No spectator is allowed in any of the classrooms.
- f. During quarter-time, half-time, or time-outs, no spectator is allowed on the basketball court.
- g. Language **MUST** be appropriate at **ALL** times. No booing, chanting, or making fun of anyone on the court. If the referee has to speak to any student, you will be required to sit with your parent/guardian. You are to be respectful of all adults and children while representing the school.

ALL STUDENTS MUST FOLLOW THE SPECTATOR RULES,
OR THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND BASKETBALL GAMES.

BASKETBALL PLAYERS MAY JEOPARDIZE THEIR PLAYING IN THE NEXT GAME.

St. Joseph School students only are asked to sign the following Spectator Policy agreeing to abide by all the regulations of spectators as stated above.

**As a spectator, I _____ have
read these responsibilities and agree to abide by them.**

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

**Parent/Guardian's
Signature _____ Date _____**

SUMMER SCHOOL

Since most summer schools offer reading, mathematics, and language arts, a student who has failed in one or more of these subjects in three marking periods of the report card will be required to take a remedial course during the summer. Summer school also may be recommended due to poor performance on standardized tests or in the classroom.

Whenever the administration becomes aware of quality programs suited to the specific needs of a child, the principal or the assistant principal will notify the parent directly.

The summer school Report Card must be submitted to the office upon completion of the summer school program. Failure to attend summer school will result in retention. It is the parent's responsibility to provide documentation that summer school has been successfully completed. In cases in which tutoring is allowed for the remediation, it must be undertaken by a qualified teacher.

Since summer school is limited to Reading and Mathematics, students who failed Social Studies and Science for the school year will receive a summer packet for them to complete and return on the first day of school in September.

STATE / FEDERAL SERVICES

The school receives the services of a nurse, psychologist, social worker, English language teacher, Speech and Hearing therapist, and Learning Disabilities teacher, from state and federal funds. In addition, Title I Funds are available to the school. The personnel and funds are assigned by pupil ration using the public school figures as the criteria. All services are provided to St. Joseph School through the Danbury Public School System.

VIRTUS TRAINING

Diocese of Bridgeport Policies and Procedures Relating to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons or by Lay Employees or Volunteers

The Diocese has mandated that all volunteers receive a copy of Policies and Procedures Relating to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons or by Lay Employees or Volunteers, sign and return the receipt included at the end of the packet.

In addition, as of the Fall of 2004, all parents who volunteer in the school must submit to a background check, and attend the Virtus Training Program, as mandated by the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Virtus is a mandatory 3-hour training program required for every person age 18 and over who works or volunteers within the Diocese of Bridgeport. This training teaches adults how to identify early warning signs of child sexual abuse and how to prevent it. Log on to www.virtusonline.org to register.

VISITORS

We welcome parents, guardians, and grandparents to our school. However, for the safety of all the children in our school, **anyone entering the building must sign in at the school office and pick up a Visitor's Pass.** Please contact the principal to set up an appropriate time for a visit.

VOLUNTEERS

We welcome and appreciate any time that parents/guardians are willing to share with us. Volunteer efforts provide an educational advantage to our students. **All volunteers must be Virtus trained.** Please stop by the school office for further information on this training.

WALKERS

Walkers are dismissed at 3:05pm once afternoon prayers have been said. In order to keep order and avoid confusion, walkers are called to the back doors by grade. No walkers will be dismissed from the lobby by the main office unless they are being signed out as an early dismissal by a parent/guardian.

Staff members are responsible for walker dismissal and call students as they see their parents. It is imperative that you notify the school in writing if someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up your child/children. If an unexpected emergency occurs, please call the school office. The staff will ask for identification.

Parents, please do not enter the building or block the stairwell during this time.

WITHDRAWAL / TRANSFERS

A transfer must be obtained from the school secretary. All books must be returned. All bills must be paid before records are transferred to another school.

When a student withdraws before the end of a marking period, the grade will be reported as of the date of withdrawal. This grade will be indicated on the child's report card.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Once students have met the necessary admission requirements and have been accepted in Saint Joseph School, the school warmly welcomes these students for the coming school year and will strive to provide them with a solid Catholic spiritual and academic education in a supportive learning environment. Students and parents must always be mindful that attendance at Saint Joseph School is by invitation. It is not a “right” because this is a private school. Admission to and continued enrollment in this school include responsibilities regarding conduct, both inside and outside the classroom and the school, and students are expected to conduct themselves in such manner as to be a credit both to themselves and to their school.

In order to protect its standards of scholarship, discipline and character, Saint Joseph School reserves the right, and students and parents or guardians concede to the school the right to require the withdrawal of any student at any time, for any reason deemed sufficient in the sole discretion of the school and its administrators. By the student’s attendance at the school, a student and his or her parents or guardians acknowledge the important obligations and restrictions contained in this handbook and agree to be bound by the terms of this handbook.

Students attending Saint Joseph School relinquish certain rights they might otherwise be entitled to if they were attending public school. For example, a student’s freedom of speech is limited in many important respects here at our school. Speech, either written or oral, contrary to the Roman Catholic faith, the teachings of the church or the directives of the local Bishop or Ordinary is prohibited, as is any other speech which is contrary or disruptive to the philosophy and purposes of our school. Another important right all students at Saint Joseph School surrender involves searches and seizures. School administrators may search a student’s person and belongings if there is a reasonable belief, in the sole opinion of the school administrator, that contraband, illegal substances or inappropriate objects are being concealed. Any unauthorized items found may be seized. Additionally, student desks and lockers, which are at all times under the joint control of the school and the student to whom the desk or locker has been assigned, may be searched by school administrators at any time, for any reason or for no reason at all. Students should have absolutely no expectation of privacy with regard to any item in their desks or lockers.

Another important right that a student and his or her parents or guardians give up when they decide to have a student attend this school is the right to sue the school, and/or any individuals acting on behalf of the school, such as the school administrators, teachers, staff or any of their agents for any matter relating to academic or disciplinary decisions or other matters covered within this handbook. Each student and his or her parents or guardians, by their acceptance of enrollment at Saint Joseph School agree to and accept the school’s rule and policy that students, parents and guardians may not bring any civil action in any local, state or federal court or in any administrative agency or body to challenge any school decision on academic or disciplinary matters, including any decision relating to the rules, regulations, procedures or programs covered within this handbook. Students and parents or guardians agree that any challenge to any school academic or disciplinary action or relating to the rules, regulations, procedures or programs covered in this handbook may only be challenged or appealed within the hierarchy of the school, subject to the limitations contained in this handbook. This includes any decision relating to a student’s enrollment at the school or termination of that enrollment.

While any student and his or her parents or guardians are of course free to consult with legal counsel regarding any school decision taken with respect to a student, the school emphasizes that students and parents or guardians are not permitted to have legal counsel present during any meetings with school administrators. School administrators are not obligated to meet with legal counsel at any time.

There are several grounds for disciplinary action or expulsion set forth in the “Discipline Code” section of this handbook. It should be noted, however, that any listing of prohibited conduct is set forth by way of example only and to provide guidance to the student and his or her parents or guardians. It is not meant to be an exhaustive listing of improper conduct or resultant disciplinary action.

Our family has read and discussed the St. Joseph School Handbook and we agree to be in full compliance with the outlined policies and procedures.

Family Name _____

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Please sign the above and return to school no later than October 1, 2011.

**SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL
370 MAIN STREET
DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810
(203) 748-6615**

PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE FORM FOR 2011 – 2012 SCHOOL YEAR

September 2011

Dear Parent/Guardian:

On occasion, representatives from St. Joseph School wish to photograph students in connection with school programs or events. Educating the public about St. Joseph School is one of our objectives. The entire community benefits from knowing about the needs and abilities of our students and about the programs we offer to children and families.

In order to release student photos and/or post on the St. Joseph School website or the monthly St. Joseph School News, we need written permission. To give your consent, please complete the form below:

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____ give permission for my child to be photographed by the representatives from St. Joseph School for the purpose of publicizing educational programs and events at St. Joseph School. I authorize the use and reproduction of any/all photographs taken of my child, without compensation to me/my child. All of these photographs shall be the property, solely and completely, of St. Joseph School. I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished photographs or printed matter that may be used in conjunction with them.

OR

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____ **DO NOT** give permission for my child to be photographed by representatives from St. Joseph School for the purpose of publicizing educational programs and events at St. Joseph School.

Signature of parent/guardian _____ Date _____

Please sign and return this form to school by October 1, 2011.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Lanni
Principal