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652 Willard Ave. Newington, Ct. 06111

**(860) 666-3844 - (860) 666-5570 fax**

## **STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK 2009-2010**

### ***MISSION STATEMENT***

We, of Saint Mary School, are a Catholic community that works to ensure that every student in Pre-K through Grade 8 acquires knowledge, skills, and Catholic values.

In conjunction with the family, the Church, and the community at large, we offer a caring environment and a quality program. We prepare a diverse student population to live as productive and contributing citizens and to live as full members of the Body of Christ.

Our commitment to academic excellence, while developing the whole child, enables each student to achieve the full potential that God has endowed.

### ***SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY***

Saint Mary School, in partnership with the Church and the parents, strives to bring the child to a realization of his/her loving relationship to God, to neighbor, and to self, in a community of Faith. It is through the interaction of the faculty, children, and parents in a cooperative atmosphere, distinguished by mutual respect, that the goals of Catholic Education can be attained.

Saint Mary School, as the formal agent of education, is concerned not only with the intellectual growth of the child, but also with the physical, aesthetic, moral, and spiritual aspects of his/her development in the light of Christian principles and values. Learning is a life-long process and our staff aims to inculcate a love for learning which will endure beyond the school years.

Each child at Saint Mary School is seen as an individual with his/her own needs, as well as a member of society. Critical thinking, proper formation of conscience, and growth in the Christ-like self-discipline which leads to responsibility and love of God and others, are needs which Saint Mary School strives to meet through a firm but fair discipline process.

Saint Mary School derives its status as a place where Christians are formed and educated from the guidelines given by the American Bishops in their pastoral message, "TO TEACH AS JESUS DID." We believe it is the teacher's role to provide instruction which is contemporary in presentation, while being authentic in doctrine, to meet the needs of the child in this changing world. The school proclaims the message of the Gospel in fostering growth of Christian Community and involving students in serving others.

Saint Mary School offers in its educational program a value system wherein the child can be directed to answers in time of doubt, find security in an age of restlessness, and develop a Christian approach to life in an age of neo-paganism. The school provides ways of learning which best meet the individual's needs while promoting the common good. The concepts of

peace, justice and diversity are incorporated across the curriculum to make students aware of local and global issues.

## ***NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY***

Saint Mary School admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the administration of education policies, admission policies, scholarships, or any other school-administered programs.

## ***DAILY SCHEDULE***

7:00 - TLCare Begins  
7:50 - Duty Teacher in Gym  
8:00 - School Day begins in Gym with Morning Meeting  
8:15 - Classes Begin  
2:25 - Readiness for Dismissal  
2:30 - Kindergarten Dismissal  
2:35 - Dismissal  
6:00 - TLCare Ends

## ***ATTENDANCE***

If your child will be absent from school, please notify the school office (666-3844) between the hours of 8 a.m. – 9 a.m. on that day. When your child returns to school following an absence, they are expected to present the homeroom teacher with a note from the parent explaining the reason for the absence and indicating the date(s) of the absence. ***This note must be presented even though you have called in the child's absence. Excused absences include serious illness, medical and dental appointments of an emergency nature and serious home emergencies such as death or serious illness.***

***Cases of excessive absence will be handled by the administration on an individual basis. As per policy, a student who is absent from school on a given day or leaves school before 12:20 p.m. due to illness, will not be permitted to take part in any school activity or function (i.e. dances, practices, games, extracurricular activities) which are scheduled for later that day.***

Students who arrive after the 8:15 a.m. bell must report to the office to obtain a late pass. ***Punctuality is a habit. Children learn it from their parents.*** Repeated tardiness can have a detrimental effect on a student's work. It is also distracting to other students and the classroom teacher. Frequent and repeated tardiness will require a personal conference between parent and Principal and may result in administrative action if disruptive to the school and class. Bus students will not be considered tardy if their bus is late. Please try to schedule doctors' and dentists' appointments after school hours unless there is an emergency. A request for the early release of a student must be made in writing to the homeroom teacher who will forward the request to the office. Any child who is dismissed during the day, must be personally signed out by the parent.

Students who leave school due to sickness or for any other reason, must have completed a minimum of four (4) hours to be considered "in attendance". Children who leave prior to the completion of four (4) hours will receive an (I) Incomplete for the day. ***This will be recorded as one days absence on the report card.***

## **SCHOOL DAY**

The school day for children begins **promptly** at 8 a.m., at which time the students will file into the gym. **Walkers or riders should NOT arrive before 7:50 A.M. because supervision cannot be assured.** Bus riders will disembark between 7:50 a.m. - 8 a.m. Dismissal will be at 2:35 p.m. on full days and at 12:20 p.m. on early release days (unless otherwise noted).

## **COMMUNICATION**

Our website is updated regularly. All notices are posted in the appropriate section. Please make sure that we have your current e-mail address so that electronic communications can be sent to you via e-mail. The Principal Newsletter will be distributed on Wednesday of each week, September through June, and sent home. School notices are usually sent home with the youngest child in each family, (*reason - parents usually check youngest child's bookbag*). Please read each notice carefully and post it in a visible spot, since it usually contains information regarding important dates, upcoming events or policy changes. These notices will also be posted on the bulletin board of each classroom, in the main lobby of the school and on the School website of [www.stmaryngtn.com](http://www.stmaryngtn.com). Refer to them periodically to update yourself and your family.

Every classroom has its own class page on the website which contains homework assignments and classroom news. Parents may communicate via e-mail with teachers through this site. The website address will be provided to you in September by the classroom teacher.

## **BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND INVITATIONS**

We encourage your child to share their birthday with other students in the class. Whether during class time or lunch time cupcakes, brownies or rice krispie treats are shared by all members of the class. Please talk with the classroom teacher in advance as some students have serious allergies which prohibit them from ingesting or even touching certain food ingredients. We will allow students to distribute birthday party invitations or any invitation to all members of their class. If all of the students in the class will **not be** invited, the invitations **cannot** be distributed in the classroom.

## **BOOKS AND SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Students are issued textbooks at the beginning of the school year. Self adhesive book covers are **not** allowed. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their books covered at all times. Failure to do so will result in a detention. Parents will be billed for replacement of damaged books.

Books and other school issued materials are loaned to the students on a yearly basis. They are responsible for any damage or loss that occurs. All books must be carried to and from school in a book bag.

Students should not mark school furniture, walls, ceilings, floor or equipment with a marker, pen, pencil, paint or other instrument. Students are not to willfully damage school property (lighting fixtures, windows, etc). Accidents do occur, however, and students will be responsible to pay for anything which they break or needs to be replaced.

Library books are available on loan to students. It is expected that these books receive proper care and returned in good condition with normal usage. Students are expected to pay for any lost or damaged library materials. **Encyclopedias are not to be removed from the library.**

## ***POLICY FOR LOCKERS AT SAINT MARY SCHOOL FOR GRADES 5-8***

Students will be assigned a locker in which to keep jackets, book bags, backpacks, and materials related to school life. A combination lock will be loaned to the student to be used to secure the locker. If a lock is lost or misplaced, the student will be charged a replacement fee. When the original lock is found the amount charged will be returned. Items which are not necessary for school or are illegal are not allowed in school. Lockers will be searched by the Principal if there is reasonable suspicion that there is something illegal, dangerous, disruptive to the operation of the school or affects the health and safety of other students.

Our Locker Policy is as follows:

- a. Any search of school property assigned to a specific student may be made only if school authorities have reasonable cause to believe that the property contains an item which violates school rules. When possible, the student involved will be asked to be present.
- b. The school retains the right to inspect lockers and desks periodically for compliance with school rules.
- c. Items which are not permitted in school, in lockers or desks include weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, and stolen property.

Any person or persons found in possession of the above items will be subject to serious disciplinary action, legal action, or both.

## ***BUSING***

***Only students who are residents of Newington*** and live within the designated limits will be bused to and from school. Students are expected to behave properly on the bus and can expect a "Bus Conduct Report" if they do not abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the driver. The driver is responsible for transporting students to and from school safely and cannot be expected to be a referee or watch guard for misbehaving students. The driver's full attention must be on the driving. Therefore, it is the parents' responsibility to instruct their children on proper behavior while riding the bus.

Students are required to take their regular bus to and from school. Only assigned students are allowed to ride the buses. Assigned students who request to take another bus from the one originally assigned must have their parents submit a written request to the Principal at least **one day in advance**. The Principal will make a formal request of the Newington Transportation Director who will either grant or deny the request based on the information provided. The Principal will inform the parent of the decision and the school secretary will write a pass. Parents are expected to notify the school when there is a change of residence within the town. The school will then notify the bus company as to the change in bus stop.

## **COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOL**

Parents' concerns about their child are to be addressed **first** with the teacher. **Please allow the teacher sufficient time to investigate and resolve the situation. If you are not satisfied with the resolution then communicate your concerns to the Principal. If you are still not satisfied with the resolution, then contact the Pastor. It is very important that everyone involved be aware of the complete facts. A final decision shall be withheld until the facts have been sufficiently considered by all the parties involved.**

**If you have any questions regarding a classroom situation, please discuss it first with your child's teacher. Our faculty is very responsive and understanding and more than willing to help handle a "small" situation before it becomes a "BIG" problem.** Each faculty member has a voice mailbox which they check regularly, if there is a question pertaining to school policy contact the Principal. It is far better to discuss all such matters with those in authority than to discuss them with someone else.

### **CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are distributed four times a year for students in grades 1 - 8 and three times a year for kindergarten students. **Parents are required to personally pick up the report card of their child at the end of each marking period.** The report cards will be available for pick up in the main office from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The date(s) that the report cards will be ready will be published in the weekly newsletter. Please note that families that are not current on their tuition payments will not receive their student's report card(s). Progress Reports are sent home approximately mid way through the term.

Conferences are scheduled in November and January for you to meet and discuss your child's progress with the teacher(s). Exact conference dates and times will be announced well in advance. It is strongly suggested that you confer with your child's teacher at least once during the school year. If your child receives a failing grade, a conference is required. Parents and guardians of students who have received a mid-term report from a teacher indicating a subject deficiency are required to sign up for a conference during the three days scheduled in November or January.

Conferences can be and should be scheduled with your child's teacher at any time you have a particular concern about your child's progress academically, socially or emotionally. Do not wait until the situation becomes so unbearable or your child is failing before you arrange to talk with the teacher. Since our teachers are the primary instructors of your child, they must be the initial contact. If you feel there is a need to pursue any educational matter further, your next step would be to contact the Principal. Calls to the Pastor or Superintendent of Schools are automatically referred back to the Principal.

Do not call or visit the teacher or Principal at home to confer unless you have been asked to do so. Also the grocery store, movie theater or other public places are not the place or time to discuss your child's progress. Do not stop by unannounced before or after school, to confer with your child's teacher unless requested to do so, since this is the time the teachers have to get ready for the coming day. To arrange a conference, simply write a note to the teacher or call the school office (666-3844) and one will be arranged for you.

### **DANCES**

Throughout the school year the upper grade classes sponsor dances which are open to Saint Mary School students in grades 6 - 8. These dances are usually held in the school gym or the Church Hall and are chaperoned by faculty members.

Music is provided and refreshments are sold. These dances serve as a fundraising means for the eighth grade class and also provide the students with an opportunity for socialization.

Each June, the current seventh grade class hosts a graduation dance. This dance is strictly limited to members of the seventh and eighth grade classes. This is not a formal dance/prom. Formal attire, limousine rental, professional photographers, etc. are not allowed.

### ***DISCIPLINE POLICY***

The ideal of discipline within Catholic education is to enable students to move from externally imposed discipline, to self-discipline to discipleship. Children first must learn appropriate behavior through someone or something outside themselves. As soon as they are sufficiently mature, however, they should be helped to govern their conduct from within themselves so that they can live responsibly. Ultimately, opportunities should be provided which lead them to look beyond themselves to principled living, as exemplified by Jesus Christ.

The following policies have been established so that all students at Saint Mary School will know what is expected of them in terms of behavior. Students and parents are asked to read this policy and are expected to take this information seriously. It is the desire of the faculty and staff to have each child learn how to become a responsible Christian. This can only be done in an atmosphere of learning and growth.

### ***DETENTION PROGRAM***

Detention Procedures:

1. Student will receive a detention form for either academics or conduct to be taken home to parents.
2. The child must have the detention form signed by the parent or guardian and returned the next day. Failure to do so merits another detention or other creative disciplinary measures designed by the Principal. A phone call will inform the parent of this alternative.
3. Detention after school is from 2:35 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. on Wednesday or as noted on the Detention slip.
4. Students must be picked up promptly at 3:15 after serving their detention.

Specific Student Rules:

1. Students will be respectful to all authority at all times as well as to their peers.
2. Each student will accept and respect all regulations deemed necessary by the Principal, faculty and staff.
3. Student conduct in the classroom that deprives the other students from sharing their teacher's professional abilities will not be tolerated.
4. Students will complete all homework assignments. There will be no homework on weekends for students in grades K-5 so that they may take this time to celebrate family (incomplete/long range projects are the exception). Grades 6-8 may have week-end homework.

5. Continual tardiness will not be accepted and may result in administrative action.
6. Students will respect all school property and the property of their peers as well as their own.
7. Gum is prohibited.
8. Students must strictly adhere to the **uniform** dress codes.
9. Students are responsible to see that all written and verbal communications are delivered to parents.
10. Electronic devices, games etc. are to be left at home. The school will not be responsible for any lost or stolen items.
11. Harassment, either physical or emotional, will not be tolerated. Parents are advised to review proper usage of all phones, particularly texting. All phones are not to be used to harass or abuse other students. Bullying and harassment means any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity or on a school bus, which acts are repeated against the same student over time or committed more than once against any student during the school year.
12. Cell phones may be taken to school. This is to ensure that students may communicate before and after school with the family, however, they may not be used during school hours of 8 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. Unauthorized use will merit confiscation for the day and loss of privilege of carrying the phone.
13. Students who misbehave on the bus will be disciplined accordingly.
14. Students must come to school well groomed and neat in appearance. (Facial hair, extreme haircuts, fad hairstyles, colored or dyed hair, excessive make-up, tattoos, or body piercing of any type will not be permitted.) Boys may not wear earrings. Girls may wear one pair of small stud earrings without hoops.
15. Students must refrain from using objectionable language.

*At times, another form of punishment may be substituted for the detention at the discretion of the teacher or Principal.*

## **SUSPENSION**

A student may be suspended for the following:

- Continual disrespect to teachers, students or school staff without any evidence that personal responsibility to change is forthcoming from the student.
- Willful destruction of school property. Parents will be held liable for all repairs and replacement of school property.
- Social behavior that is deemed inappropriate for a student of Saint Mary School.
- Physical violence against another that necessitates medical attention or is sufficiently severe to merit suspension.
- Possession of illegal drugs.
- Found to be in the possession of a knife or any type of weapon.
- Bullying or harassment.
- Threatening.

The student's parents or guardians will be notified by phone or in writing.

The Principal may waive disciplinary action at his discretion for just cause.

Suspensions will be issued as follows:

1. The student's parents or guardians will be notified by phone or in writing.
2. "In-school" suspensions will be issued for a student at the discretion of the Principal (on a limited basis and only for extenuating circumstances).
3. Students will take an "at-home" suspension for any grave situation.
4. A discussion with parents, student and Principal must be arranged before the student returns to school.

A student who receives an "in-school" suspension will not be allowed to attend regularly scheduled classes. They will be given the daily assignments and will spend the day separated from their class. Parents will be notified of the suspension through an "in-school" suspension report. A student on "in-school" suspension cannot participate in after school activities, games, dances, etc. during the suspension period.

### ***EXPULSION***

The Administration of Saint Mary School reserves the right to expel a student who is unable to adapt to the Christian environment, who presents a danger to the moral or physical well-being of other students, or is guilty of prolonged and open disregard for school authority.

Expulsion will be considered only after conferences with parents/guardians have made the latter fully aware of the seriousness of the student's conduct. The Superintendent of Elementary Schools, or, the Assistant Superintendent will be consulted by the Principal before the final decision is made.

### ***DRESS CODE***

All students in grades K - 8 are expected to wear the proper school uniform each day. **If for some legitimate reason a child must appear out-of-uniform, a courtesy note must be written by the parent.**

In addition to the proper uniform, neatness, cleanliness and good grooming are expected. This includes not only the condition of the clothing, but also the general appearance of the student. Fad hairstyles, facial hair, excessive make-up, distracting jewelry (i.e. nose rings, earrings for boys) and nail polish on boys, are not allowed in school. **BLACK SOLED TREADED SHOES, HIKING BOOTS, CONSTRUCTION BOOTS, OR PLATFORM SHOES ARE NOT ALLOWED. Please note that the School Principal is the final authority on all uniform and dress questions.**

For safety reasons, girls are not allowed to wear dangle earrings. If earrings are to be worn, they must be the stud style (no dangles or hoops will be allowed).

Fleece vests or jackets are considered outerwear apparel and therefore will not be allowed to be worn in the classroom or the building.

The dress code is as follows:

#### **Spring Casual (Boys & Girls) - Grades K-8**

White short sleeve golf/polo shirt with SMS Logo

Navy blue walking shorts

White ankle socks  
Sneakers (99% White)

**Winter Casual - Girls - Grades K-4**

Navy Pants/SMS Plaid Jumper/SMS Plaid Skort  
White Long Sleeve Polo Shirt with Logo  
White Turtleneck (*No Mock Collars*)  
White Long Sleeve Peter Pan Shirt  
Navy Knee Socks/Navy Tights  
Dress Shoes (*Closed toe and Closed Heel – Black, Brown or Navy only*)  
**No Clogs or Sling-Back Allowed**

**Dress Uniform - Girls - Grades K-4**

SMS Plaid Jumper/SMS Plaid Skort  
White Long Sleeve Peter Pan Shirt  
SMS Plaid Cross Tie (*for Skort only*)  
Navy Knee Socks/Navy Tights  
Dress Shoes (*Closed toe and Closed Heel – Black, Brown or Navy only*)  
**No Clogs or Sling-Back Allowed**

**Winter Casual - Boys - Grades K-4**

Navy Pants  
White Long Sleeve Polo Shirt with Logo  
White Turtleneck (*No Mock Collars*)  
Navy Socks  
Dress Shoes (Black, Brown or Navy only)

**Dress Uniform - Boys - Grades K-4**

Navy Pants  
White Long Sleeve Oxford Button Down Shirt  
SMS Plaid Tie  
Navy Socks  
Dress Shoes (Black, Brown or Navy only)

**Winter Casual - Girls - Grades 5-8**

Navy Pants/Navy Skirt/Navy Skort  
White Long Sleeve Polo Shirts with Logo  
White Long Sleeve Oxford Button Down Shirt  
White Turtleneck (*No Mock collars*)  
Navy Knee Socks/Navy Tights/Navy Nylons  
Dress Shoes (*Closed Toe and Closed Heel – Black, Brown or Navy only*)  
**No Clogs or Sling-Back Allowed**

**Dress Uniform - Girls - Grades 5-8**

*Navy Skirt/Navy Skort*  
White Long Sleeve Oxford Button Down Shirt  
Navy Cross Tie  
Navy Knee Socks/Navy Tights/Navy Nylons  
Dress Shoes (*Closed toe and Closed Heel – Black, Brown or Navy only*)  
**No Clogs or Sling-Back Allowed**

**Winter Casual - Boys - Grades 5-8**

Navy Pants  
White Long Sleeve Polo Shirt with Logo

White Long Sleeve Oxford Button Down Shirt  
White Turtleneck (No Mock collars)  
Navy Socks  
Dress Shoes (Black, Brown or Navy only)

**Dress Uniform - Boys - Grades 5-8**

Navy Pants  
White Long Sleeve Oxford Button Down Shirt  
Navy Tie  
Navy Socks  
Belt (Black, Brown or Navy only)  
*Dress Shoes* (Black, Brown or Navy only)

**Optional Items:**

Belt (Black, Brown or Navy only)  
Navy Cardigan Sweater with logo  
Pullover “V” Neck Sweater with Logo  
SMS Gym Sweatshirt or Running Jacket

Shirts/blouses are to be tucked in at all times and pants/shorts with loops are to be belted.

**Dress Code Changes**

- November 12 - students change to Winter uniforms.
- April 6 – students change to Spring uniforms.
- The new Dress Uniform must be purchased by all students. Students will be required to wear the Dress Uniform on Mass Days and other formal occasions.

**Gym Uniforms - Grades K - 8**

White t-shirt with SMS logo  
Navy mesh shorts  
Navy sweatshirt and sweat-pant with SMS logo or  
Navy Running suit with zippered jacket and pants with SMS Logo  
White ankle socks  
Athletic sneakers

Gym uniforms are only available through the Dennis Uniform Company. They can be ordered through their toll free number **1-800-854-6951** or 24 hours a day through their *website [www.dennisuniform.com](http://www.dennisuniform.com)*.

**CASUAL DAYS**

Throughout the year we have a number of “dress down” days. Although a headache for many parents, the children seem to enjoy wearing “regular” clothes. In order to eliminate any misunderstanding, appropriate attire for these days is as follows:

Blue jeans, shorts (reasonable length please), tee shirts (no concert shirts, shirts with obscene language or gestures, sleeveless shirts, midriff tops), shoes or sneakers. Sandals and flip-flops are not allowed.

If you have any question as to the appropriateness of your child's clothing, I would like to suggest that you follow a very simple motto: IF IN DOUBT, DON'T ALLOW IT!

## **EMERGENCY CARDS**

In September all students will be given a card to be filled out, which provides the school with emergency phone numbers. Please see to it that this information is updated throughout the year, if a change does occur. A note to the office with the updated information is sufficient. These emergency cards are extremely important especially in emergency situations, i.e. injury, illness, or emergency early dismissals. A secondary contact person is also required in the event that parents cannot be located.

## **ENTRANCE AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

**STUDENTS ARE TO ENTER THE SCHOOL BUILDING THROUGH THE SOUTH ENTRANCE** TO INSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL OUR STUDENTS, **VEHICLES ARE NOT TO DRIVE PAST THE BARRICADED AREA.** Barricades have been installed in various areas around the building to insure the safety of our students. Please do not move or drive through these barricades. Parents, relatives or friends picking up or dropping off children must park their vehicles in the outlined parking spaces and proceed on foot to the main entrance to drop off or pick up children. This procedure is necessary to avoid any possible accident from occurring.

Bus students will be dropped off in the back lot. They are instructed to report to the gym as soon as they arrive if a teacher is not on duty.

### **Dismissal Procedure**

1. At 2:35 p.m. all classroom teachers escort bus students to the designated waiting area, where an assigned teacher will be on duty. All other students will report to the gym where another teacher will be on duty.
2. At 2:35 p.m., those students who are staying after school for an activity, will be met in the gym by the adult conducting the activity and taken to their planned location.
3. At 2:35 p.m., walkers will be dismissed.
4. All students who are being picked up will wait in the gym until their designated driver comes into the gym for them. These drivers must have parked their cars in a parking spot in the front lot.
5. Any student not picked up by 2:45 p.m. will be sent to TLCare at the expense of the parent.

Any changes in normal transportation to or from school **must** be submitted in writing, signed by a parent and given to the classroom teacher in the morning.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We are proud of the school spirit and sportsmanship shown by the students of Saint Mary School throughout the many activities and programs we have established. A wide-range of programs are available and all students are encouraged to participate in order to develop a strong sense of pride and school spirit.

Extra-curricular activities are any activities directly sponsored by the teacher or Principal **outside regular class time.** These activities may vary each year.

Participation by Saint Mary students in any extra-curricular program is a privilege, not a right. The Principal reserves the right to suspend, dismiss, or place on probation any student whose attitude and conduct merits such action.

The responsibility to insist that a student's behavior, attitude and academics merit continued membership at Saint Mary School rests with the administration. The school administration requests that parents see that a balance is maintained regarding outside activities and academic performance at Saint Mary School.

Athletic programs are open to all students in grades 4 - 8 who have met the eligibility guidelines. Grade 3 Students may be admitted at the School's discretion. Students in grades 4, 5, and 6 are junior varsity. Students in grades 7 and 8 are varsity.

In order to be eligible for extracurricular activities (i.e. cheerleading, basketball, soccer, track/field, student council, or any other club activity) a student must maintain passing grades in all subject areas. If a student fails one or more subject areas he/she will be placed on a two week probation. During that time, the student will be allowed to attend practices, meetings and games. However, the student must work very diligently to pass all subjects. If at the end of the probationary period a student is still failing, he/she will be taken off the team or extracurricular activity until midterm reports are issued. If at that time, all subject areas are within the passing range the student will be allowed to participate. If the student is still failing they will remain off the team until the semester ends.

### ***ALTAR SERVERS***

Open to boys and girls from grades four through eight to serve at class Masses and parish liturgies. They are frequently asked to serve funeral Masses during the regular school day. Students who are asked to serve must be able to keep up with their regular school work and/or use their own time to make up whatever was missed.

Parents who wish to have their children excused from serving funeral Masses must send a written request to the Principal.

### ***ACTIVITY FEE***

Each family that has a student participating in athletics will be charged a \$50.00 activity fee. There will be an additional charge of \$10.00 for each additional sport.

### ***FIELD TRIPS***

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year to various educational or cultural events within the state. All students must receive written parental permission to attend these trips. Students will be transported to and from their destination on a licensed public carrier or they will walk to their destination. No private transportation can be used for liability reasons. If for any reason, (including failure to present permission slips), a student cannot participate in a field trip, he or she is required to attend school and work on assigned lessons.

**The Office of Catholic Schools policy strictly forbids overnight field trips and Saint Mary School does not permit its students to plan or fund-raise for such a purpose.**

### ***FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS***

**TUITION:** per student for the 2009-2010 school year is as follows:

2 day Pre-Kindergarten - \$1,515.00  
 3 day Pre-Kindergarten - \$1,830.00  
 5 day Pre-Kindergarten - \$2,440.00  
 Kindergarten through grade 8 - \$3,290.00 (Catholic)  
 Kindergarten through grade 8 - \$3,640.00 (Unaffiliated)  
 Kindergarten through grade 8 - \$3,940.00 (non-Catholic)

- \* A \$175 Book and Technology fee will be assessed per family in Grades K – 8.
- \* A \$100 deduction will be made from the above rates for the second child in a family, and a \$250 deduction will be made from the above rates for each child after the second.
- \* Each K-8 family has a fundraising and bingo obligation. Please refer to those sections in the handbook, page 14.

A \$250, non-refundable, deposit is due with the enrollment contract. The deposit will be applied towards tuition.

**Payment term schedules:**

Saint Mary School has contracted with FACTS Management Company to process tuition payments.

Families may choose the following payment plans:

- \* **Payment in full by July 1<sup>st</sup> – directly to St. Mary School**
- \* **Monthly electronic debit (via FACTS)**
- \* **Monthly invoices (via FACTS) – no more than 45 days late**
- \* **100% total tuition is due by April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010**

If for any reason you are unable to meet these deadlines, you are expected to contact the Principal or Business Manager at once. Failure to do so may result in one or more of the following actions: the addition of a \$15 per month late fee; the removal of your child from the school; withholding your child’s report card; or not allowing your child to participate in school activities, including graduation. Students with unpaid balances will not be eligible for records transfer to another school. Students with unpaid balances at other Catholic schools will not be considered for admission until their balances are paid in full.

You will be assessed a \$25 fee for any check returned by your bank for insufficient funds.  
**POSTDATED CHECKS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

**TUITION CHARGE PROCEDURE FOR EARLY WITHDRAWAL**

If a student withdraws partway through the school year, a \$250 penalty will be assessed and tuition will be prorated according to the following schedule. Records will be released when outstanding tuition bills have been paid in full to the school.

If student leaves before school begins	\$250 Family tuition deposit
If student leaves during the first two weeks of school	10% tuition + \$250 penalty
If student leaves during the first marking period	25% tuition + \$250 penalty
If student leaves during the second marking period	50% tuition + \$250 penalty
If student leaves during the third marking period	75% tuition + \$250 penalty
If student leaves after the third marking period	full tuition + \$250 penalty

**PARISH AFFILIATION**

A Catholic family is a registered and contributing member (*using the envelope system*) of a Catholic parish. Your Pastor will be assessed an additional sum (\$250.00 grades K-8) for each child you have enrolled at Saint Mary School. Refusal by the Pastor to pay this assessment usually results if you are not using the Church envelopes. If payment of the assessment is denied (unless the denial was due to the financial health of the parish), the family will be billed the Unaffiliated Catholic rate.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Saint Mary School is a cooperative endeavor in which EVERY FAMILY in the school community has a vital role to play. The school's primary expectation of the parents is an active, ongoing support of the religious formation which the school seeks to develop in the children. Parents can do this by:

- celebrating Mass together on Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation, and on days for School Masses
- taking time to talk to their children about God and their own faith journey
- praying together
- being informed about the religious concepts the children are learning
- continually reaching out to develop their own faith life

In addition to this spiritual support, we also expect that all parents become actively involved in fundraising activities. Tuition and fees do not even begin to cover the cost of education, especially in these days of inflation and fixed expenses. The difference between our intake from tuition and fees and the expenses of funding the school is considerable. This difference is made up by parish subsidy and fundraising. Each family is responsible for contributing \$450 to the fundraising budget. They have a choice of selling fundraising items totaling \$900 from chosen St. Mary School programs that we participate in, or buying out of the fundraising programs at a cost of \$450. Buyouts need to be done at the beginning of the school year prior to the first fundraising program. The \$450 buyout option may be added to the tuition and paid on a monthly basis through FACTS. At the beginning of the year a list of all fundraising scheduled for the year will be sent out. This will help you to plan with budgeting and organizing the time that you can give to promoting these events.

## **BINGO**

All families in grades K-8 are required to work a minimum of five (5) bingo sessions (each session is approximately 4-5 hours) during the school year. If you cannot make one of the scheduled dates, ***you must*** switch with someone from a different team or ask a relative or friend to cover your position in your absence. ***If you miss or fail to cover your assignment, you will be assessed a \$125 fee per session missed. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND A REPLACEMENT.*** A bingo "buyout" option of \$500 can be paid at the beginning of the year, and can be added to the monthly FACTS tuition payments. This buyout option needs to be done at the beginning of the school year prior to the first scheduled bingo session.

## **FIRE DRILLS AND BUILDING EVACUATION**

Fire drills will be held at regular intervals during the school year as required by the Office of Catholic Schools and the State of Connecticut. Absolute silence is required during the building evacuation. Students, parents, visitors to the building and all school personnel are

to walk to the nearest exit. Students will reenter the building upon hearing the proper signal. In cold weather, fire drills may be held at dismissal time or with advance notice so students may put on their coats.

## ***MASSES AND FACULTY MEETINGS***

All school students will be attending Mass on a regular basis. These Masses are geared for the students and they take an active role in the liturgy. Parents are encouraged to attend our scheduled Masses and Liturgical Services.

## ***GRADING SYSTEM***

Students in grades K-3 are evaluated on their academic progress and social development. An evaluation key is included on the report card.

Students in grades 4-8 receive letter grades on their report card. The marking scale is as follows:

A+ - 98-100 (4.25 GPA)	A - 94-97 (4.0 GPA)	A- - 90-93 (3.50 GPA)
B+ - 87-89 (3.25 GPA)	B - 83-86 (3.0 GPA)	B- - 80-82 (2.5 GPA)
C+ - 77-79 (2.25 GPA)	C - 73-76 (2.0 GPA)	C- - 70-72 (1.5 GPA)
D - 65-69 (1.25 GPA)	F - Below 65, Failing (0.0 GPA)	

Students in grades 6-8 are eligible to obtain honor roll status each semester. In order to qualify for **High Honors** a student must have all A's or S's. To attain **General Honors**, a students must have all A's, B's or S's in all subjects. Students will not be awarded an honors status if there are unsatisfactory marks or comments for behavior on their report cards.

Midterm reports are issued to students in grades 5-8 midway through each semester. These reports indicate to the parent and student areas where the student is experiencing difficulty. If your child is experiencing difficulty, please contact the teacher for a more detailed explanation.

When a child is in danger of failing after midterm reports have been issued or they are encountering serious problems, a separate deficiency notice will be sent home. This notice will be a warning to the parent and the child that action must be taken immediately to avoid failing. Once again, it is the responsibility of the student and parent to contact the teacher to find out what actions can be taken to prevent possible failure.

Students normally will progress annually from grade to grade. The process of determining whether students will be promoted or not is a continual one. Decisions regarding the promotion, retention, and placement of students will be made on the basis of documented academic achievement. All teachers will evaluate students' educational progress throughout the year. This progress, or lack of progress, is communicated to the parent, through written report cards and parent-teacher conferences. **(Parents will be notified well in advance if retention is being considered)**. Any student in grades 4-8 who has failed two or more major subjects for the year must attend and earn passing grades in order to make up these courses.

## ***HOMEWORK***

Homework is a vital part of the learning process. Well-regulated homework assignments, in keeping with the student's ability, increase productivity and raise the level of achievement. The assigned homework:

1. Increases the school's expectation from the students.
2. Allows for communication and cooperation between the school and the home.
3. Gives the teacher a better perspective on the student's abilities.
4. Affords the teacher more in-class teaching time by decreasing time spent on practice.
5. Provides avenues of communication between parent and student.
6. Gives the parent an opportunity for reinforcement and encouragement of student efforts.
7. Develops good work habits and a sense of responsibility in the students.
8. Enables the student to increase his learning capability.

Homework assignments are required of students in all grade levels. Recommended homework time for students in grades K-3 may be an average of 10 to 15 minutes plus an additional 1/2 hour of reading time either alone or with a family member. Homework time for students in grades 4-5 may be on average 20 to 60 minutes and homework time for students in grades 6, 7 and 8 may be approximately 1-2 hours. Students in grades K-5 will not be assigned homework over the weekend. Tests will not be given in those grades on Monday. All students should be encouraged by their parents to read for pleasure approximately 30 minutes per evening.

### **Class Home Pages**

Each classroom teacher maintains a classroom home page which includes homework assignments. Please check these pages daily for assignments.

### **Telephone Extensions**

Please call the Saint Mary School main number of 666-3844 and dial the extension number of the teacher to hear the recording. Below is a general list of our Telephone Directory:

Mrs. DeAngelo	ext. 10	Mrs. Neumann	ext. 14
Mr. Maynard	ext. 11	Pre-K	ext. 15
Mrs. Weber, Nurse	ext. 12	Mrs. Callas-Wrobel	ext. 17
TLCare	ext. 13	Bingo	ext. 20
		Weather	ext. 25

### ***SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS***

1. Impress upon your child the purpose and importance of homework.
2. Provide a suitable place to study which is free from interruption.
3. Establish a regular time for study to help the child develop proper work habits.
4. Encourage the child and show interest in his work, but avoid getting involved in the working and completion of the assignments.
5. Try to avoid upsets, tensions, and discipline trouble over assignments.

### ***MAKE-UP WORK***

1. Make-up work must be completed within a period of time determined by the length of the absence. Two days in which to complete the work will be allowed for each day of absence.
2. If a student is absent on the day a research project, book report or other long-term assignment is due, it will be the responsibility of the student to see that the assignment is turned in to the proper teacher on the assigned due date. Any project turned in after the due date will result in a loss of credit.
3. If a student is absent on the day of a scheduled quiz and/or test, they will be required to make up this work on the day they return to class, unless the absence was long term.
4. School is recessed for a week at Christmas, February and April. For this reason, vacations at other times during the school year should be avoided in the interest of the pupil's educational welfare.
5. In the event that a student does miss school due to vacation, the following policy will be in effect:
  - a. The student will be expected to make up all missed work. This work will be kept in a folder by the teacher. The student will receive the folder upon return to school. ***The teacher will not plan or send lessons home ahead of time.***
  - b. Tests and quizzes missed by the student will be made up at the ***teacher's convenience***. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements for this make-up.
  - c. All make-up work must be completed in a timely manner. Two days make-up time is allowed for each missed school day. Failure to make up the missed work will result in a zero.

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO OBTAIN AND MAKE UP ALL MISSED WORK.**

### ***HOMWORK POLICIES WHEN ABSENT***

Teachers will be responsible for providing parents with homework assignments when students will be absent from school for **more** than one day. A one day absence will not require homework to be provided.

Parents or caregivers will be required to make their request for homework assignments **before 9 a.m.** when calling in their child's absence to the main office. This will give the teacher an opportunity to put together a package which will be available for pickup by the parent or caregiver at the close of school (2:35 p.m.) Homework assignments and books may be picked up the day of the absence. Homework materials are usually left at the end of the school day in front of the office on the bench.

## **INSURANCE COVERAGE**

Saint Mary School and Parish are insured for liability by the Catholic Mutual Insurance Group. Effective August 1, 1997, the Archdiocese of Hartford has formulated a self-funded "Student Medical Payments Coverage." This plan provides up to \$1,000 of medical payments for any one incident to students who are injured as a result of participating in school or CCD sponsored athletics or other activities. This coverage is written on an excess basis and will entertain any medical or dental bills not covered by the student's and/or families own insurance coverage.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

All clothing apparel, lunch boxes, lunch bags, book bags, books, etc. SHOULD BE LABELED. Lost items of value should be reported to your homeroom teacher and also to the office. Found items will be returned to the student (if labeled) or deposited in the lost and found box located in the staff workroom. Periodically these unclaimed items are displayed in the gym. After a specified period, any unclaimed items are donated to charitable organizations.

## **LUNCHROOM**

Hot lunches are available on a daily basis with a prepaid order. A menu and price list will be sent home monthly to aid you in providing your child with a lunch. Your child must order and pay for hot lunch in advance so that we have an accurate lunch count. Purchase of student lunches can be paid by cash or check. **THERE WILL BE NO CHARGING LUNCHES.** If your child forgets their lunch, a peanut and butter jelly sandwich will be provided to them. Please encourage your child to eat nutritiously and learn the value of money. Parents are asked not to bring in pizza, McDonald's or other fast foods to your school age child at lunch time. It is perfectly acceptable to send these food items in with their lunch box, however, please do not hand deliver lunches.

At times we may require the elimination of certain foods which might put the health of students at risk. Parents are expected to comply with these requirements. For safety reasons, the microwave oven is not available to heat student lunches.

The lunchroom is staffed by lunch room aides who serve the food and monitor the children. Students are expected to act in a responsible, polite and orderly fashion at all times. They are to display respect towards all adults who work in the lunchroom and all other areas of the school. Students are not allowed to switch seats, bring games, TV's, walkmans, toys, cell phones or homework to the lunchroom. Students are responsible for the clean-up of their table and the floor area surrounding their table. Failure to do so will be reported to the Principal/teacher. The lunchroom monitors have the authority to report to the Principal/teacher any child whose behavior and attitude in the lunchroom shows no significant signs of improvement after verbal correction has been given. Students who continue to exhibit inappropriate attitudes or behavior in the lunchroom will be denied the privilege of eating in the lunchroom.

Parents who volunteer in the lunchroom may bring their younger children with them when they are on duty. ***We ask that these children are seated at a card table and not allowed to roam freely throughout the gym and hallways unsupervised.***

## **NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**

Saint Mary School regularly submits pictures and articles pertaining to school activities and events to the local newspapers. If you **do not want** your child's picture or name to appear in the newspaper, you must submit that request, in writing, to the Principal at the beginning of the school year otherwise, we will assume there is no objection.

## **NO SCHOOL AND LATE OPENINGS**

When school is closed due to inclement weather, any and all school late openings, cancellations, and early dismissal will be announced on TV (Channel 3 and 30) or on radio station WTIC 1080 a.m., or the **Town Hot Line 665-8665**. Also, an e-mail blast will be sent to all parents. We also have our own "Weather Info Line" which is extension 25. In the case of an Early Closing, the telephone tree will be used to get the message out to our families. For this reason, we ask that all family contact information be up to date. Saint Mary School generally follows the decision of the Newington Public Schools. *It is a parental choice to send your child to school or pick your child up early in inclement weather.*

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

### **Health Room Coverage**

Saint Mary School is provided with part-time nursing coverage through the Newington Board of Education. A registered nurse is present in school from 8 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Monday and Wednesday and from 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. The school health office number is 666-3844, extension 12. Please feel free to call with any questions or concerns about your child. Your input is welcomed and encouraged. In case of illness or accident, the school nurse will notify the parents or legal guardians. Children who cannot remain in school for health reasons must be picked up by an adult and signed out in the main office.

### **Physical Examinations**

A physical examination is required by state law for students entering kindergarten, grade four and seven. A student may not enter school until this physical examination is completed. When a child enters our school system from out of state, the written report of a physical examination administered within the past year is required. If a student enters from any Connecticut public or private school, health records will be transferred and reviewed by the school nurse.

### **Mandated Health Screenings**

Vision screening is done on all students in grades kindergarten through grade six. Hearing screening is done for grades kindergarten through three, five and eight. Postural screening for scoliosis is done on students in grades five through eight. Parents will be promptly notified of any screening failures and are encouraged to request screening/rescreening if they have concerns regarding their child's vision, hearing or posture. The school nurse will notify parents via the school newsletter when the screenings will take place.

## **Immunization**

New students will not be permitted to start school until the school nurse receives a complete immunization record. This includes pupils entering pre-k, kindergarten, or registering for the first time from an out-of-district school.

## **Administration of Medications**

Medication, including “over-the-counter” (i.e. non-aspirin medications) is given only with written authorization of the parent and physician, physician’s assistant, or dentist on a designated form. Staff certified by the school nurse may legally dispense medications when the nurse is not available.

Medication must be delivered and dispensed from the original container clearly labeled with the name of the student, physician, and medication, with directions for dosage and date of original prescription. All medication must be delivered to the school nurse by the parent or other designated adult. Students are never allowed to carry medications without written medical and parental authorization. If your child needs to receive medication on a temporary basis (i.e. antibiotic), please contact the school nurse to make the necessary arrangements.

## **Emergency Cards**

An Emergency Card should be completed for each student by his or her parent/guardian the first week of each school year or at the time of enrollment. **Any changes throughout the school year related to Emergency Card information should be reported to the school immediately.**

## **Contagious Diseases**

Students recovering from the following diseases are readmitted to school after evaluation by the school nurse:

- Chicken Pox – Students should be kept home at least seven days after the first appearance of vesicles.
- Scarlet Fever and Strep Throat – Students should be kept home a minimum of 24 hours after antibiotic therapy has begun.
- Impetigo – Students should be excluded from school until satisfactory treatment has been given.
- Students with head lice, ringworm, pink eye, and other conditions that might be easily transmitted will be sent home until such condition has been satisfactorily treated.

## ***PHONES***

The school office telephone is for school business *only*. Students are not allowed to use it without permission from the Secretary or Principal. We have found in the past that many students call home if they forget homework, lunches, gym clothes, etc. Because we are trying to build responsible students and we need your cooperation in doing so, please allow your child to suffer the consequences of their forgetfulness. (A youngster who forgets lunch, however, will not be allowed to go hungry.)

## **SMOKING**

Smoking is **strictly prohibited** by students, **parents**, teachers or staff within the school building at **any time**.

## **TLCARE**

Saint Mary School's TLCare program offers before and after school care to Saint Mary School students on days that the school is in session (including scheduled early release days). This year, we will continue to offer TLCare before school, starting at 7 a.m. and after school until 6 p.m. We will also continue to provide TLCare for Preschool children before and after their preschool class, and on the days that they are not scheduled to go to preschool.

### **MONTHLY PLAN:**

This discounted plan is for students who use TLCare most days.

In order to take advantage of this discounted rate, payment must be received by Saint Mary School by the **28<sup>th</sup> of the prior month**. (If payment is not received ahead of time, the family will be billed at the per diem TLCare rates).

	<u>Monthly rate</u>
7 – 8 a.m. (all ages-includes breakfast)	\$ 140
PK3 (full days M,W,F; part days T,TH)	\$ 550
3 day PK4 (2 full days, 3 part days)	\$ 495
5 day PK4 (5 part days)	\$ 445
K-8 after school	\$ 300

### **PER DIEM PLAN:**

TLCare is available on a per diem basis, for those who only use TLCare occasionally. Invoices will be sent out on a weekly basis, and are payable to Saint Mary School upon receipt.

#### **Before school TLCare cost (grades PreK & K-8):**

\$ 9 per day between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. (includes breakfast)

#### **After school TLCare cost (grades PreK & K-8):**

\$10 for the first hour – or any portion thereof (After school snack included)

\$ 5 for each additional hour

Please note that we are not open on school vacations, holidays, in-service days, and snow days. If school is dismissed early due to any inclement weather conditions, TLCare will close at the same time as school.

Requests for Saint Mary School's tax identification number must be made in writing and submitted to the Principal for approval. The reason for the request must also be stated in writing.

## **VISITORS**

***ALL visitors (including parents, private contractors, and service personnel) are required to report directly to the school office to sign in and receive a "Visitor's Pass" before going to any part of the building.*** In order to maintain proper building security, no visitors will be allowed in the hallways during school hours without the proper approval of the principal (or designee). Doors will be locked promptly at 8:30 a.m. We ask that parents and visitors not congregate in the school hallways while waiting for children. In consideration for the teacher and in justice to the students, neither the teacher nor the class

should be interrupted during class hours. Parents are required to report to the office when picking up a child early or when delivering something to their child.

Parents and friends of the students are encouraged to attend open houses which are scheduled periodically throughout the year. Students are not allowed to receive visitors in school except by written permission of the parent **and prior approval of the Principal.**

### **WALKMANS, TV'S AND VIDEO GAMES**

The use of I-pods, MP3 players, walkmans, portable radios, TV's, and video games during school hours is strictly prohibited. It is in the best interest of the students that these items remain at home, since loss or damage may occur. Teachers are allowed to confiscate the above-mentioned items. Retrieval of these items must be made by the parents and not the students.

### **A FINAL MESSAGE**

We have tried to answer many of the commonly mentioned concerns regarding your child and his/her education at Saint Mary School. If home and school cooperate in all matters, the children will benefit tremendously. These policies and procedures were initiated for the health and safety of all our students. **IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION CONCERNING POLICY OR PROCEDURES, THE DECISION OF THE PRINCIPAL IS FINAL.** Your cooperation in respecting these policies is expected and greatly appreciated.

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