



2024-2025

**St. John the Baptist
Catholic School**

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Parent/Student Handbook

2024-2025 Faculty/Staff

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Welcome to the St. John the Baptist Catholic School community! We are committed to your child's educational experience which focuses on faith formation and academic growth.

The purpose of this handbook is to present policies and procedures for our school. Please read this handbook in its entirety and keep this handbook available for future reference. Working together is a key component of a successful educational program. Please take time to discuss the handbook with your student(s). After you have reviewed the handbook with your student(s), please sign the policy and procedure sheet (one sheet per student) and have your student(s) return to the homeroom teacher.

At St. John's Catholic School, we value your child as a child of God. We strive for a safe, disciplined, nurturing Catholic environment and an education that develops excellence in the whole child. The faculty and staff look forward to working with you and together we will guide your child in discovering his/her abilities and individual gifts. Please contact us if you have questions or need assistance.

HISTORY

St. John's opened in 1996 with grades Kindergarten through 4th grade. Each subsequent year added a grade and doubled a grade until it was fully developed K-8th grade in 2005. The founding pastor was Fr. Patrick Murphy (1986-1998). The school opened year 1 with the top floor of classrooms from the current school office to the library. The bottom floor of that same wing (south of the current school office) opened for use in the 2nd year. The final phase, completed in 2002, allowed for the middle school classrooms, cafeteria, youth room and gymnasium to be utilized. Fr. Michael Sexton (1998-2007) was pastor during the 2nd phase of construction. A K4 class was added in 2010 and housed in the existing classrooms. Construction of 4 additional rooms to grow the K4 program was completed and opened in August 2014. Construction of the K4 rooms occurred under the leadership of Fr. Philip N. O'Kennedy (2007-2017). Fr. Bryan Lowe became the pastor in 2017 and we are a thriving community with over 370 students.

VISION STATEMENT

St. John the Baptist Catholic School envisions a school where all students, parents, and educators commit to achieving high academic standards focused on Catholic Tradition. Students will grow in faith, knowledge, and character with an intrinsic desire to participate fully in the life of the Church.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is committed to Catholic formation and academic excellence, preparing students to be productive citizens and faith-filled servants of God.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

St. John the Baptist Catholic School

- † values and respects each individual as a child of God.
- † inspires students to grow in their commitment of service to God and others.
- † offers and encourages opportunities for students to grow spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
- † integrates Catholic identity and academic excellence through innovative instruction.
- † enables students to learn through a variety of teaching strategies across the curriculum.
- † ensures effective education through a partnership among parents, students, teachers, staff, parish and community.
- † provides a positive, safe and structured environment for learning.

ADMISSIONS

St. John's admits students of any gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. John the Baptist Catholic School:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Members of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
3. Members of Most Merciful Jesus Catholic Church
4. Members of St. Paul's Catholic Church in Athens
5. Members of other parishes
6. Non-Catholic students

K4 - Children must be four (4) years of age by September 1st.

Kindergarten - Children must be five (5) years of age by September 1st.

First Grade – Children must be six (6) years of age by December 31st.

Students applying for admission to grades 1-8 must present a copy of last report card and standardized test results. Upon review of these records, determination is made whether the program at St. John's Catholic School meets the educational needs of the student. A student interview may be part of the admissions process. Students may receive full or conditional acceptance.

Upon acceptance into St. John's Catholic School, enrollment is complete when the office is provided a copy of the birth certificate, items listed above for admissions consideration and payment of the registration fee (non-refundable).

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Code of Alabama, 1975, §16-30-4 outlines that boards of education and the governing authority of each private school shall require each pupil who is otherwise entitled to admittance to kindergarten or first grade, whichever is applicable, or any other entrance into an Alabama public or private school, to present a certification of immunization or testing for the prevention of those communicable diseases designated by the State Health Officer, except as indicated by a licensed medical professional or by obtaining religious exemption based on objection in writing to specific tenets or practices of his or her faith.

Any child reporting on the first day of school without an appropriate immunization certificate will not be allowed to attend class. Appropriate certificates for enrollment, which will be available only from private physicians and the Health Department include: Certificate of Immunization (IMM-50, blue card) or Certificate of Medical Exemption (IMM-51, white card).

Any religious exemptions must be obtained in accordance with the requirements set by the Diocese of Birmingham. Please contact the school's principal to obtain information about the diocesan requirements and process for immunization exemptions. This must be completed in a timely manner prior to the beginning of July of the year attending.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Registration Fee:

\$150.00 per child, **non-refundable (unless relocating out of town), collected annually**

Tuition

For the payment of tuition, St. John's has two options from which to choose. Tuition is either **paid in full by July 18, 2024** or **on a monthly draft of checking/savings account** for a period of ten months, beginning in August and ending in May. When paying across the ten month plan, the account is drafted on the 1st of the month or the 25th of the preceding month.

Families are verified as parishioner by submitting a Parishioner Status form to the school office. Once the verification is completed, the tuition rate is established. Failure to support St. John the Baptist Catholic Church or Most Merciful Jesus Catholic Church through the Sacrificial Giving and/or through the Time and Talent Program can place a family in a non-parishioner status. The Church is responsible for placing families in parishioner or non-parishioner status, in accordance with the criteria established by the pastor and pastoral council.

If a student is withdrawn before the end of the year, the parent will owe the prorated amount based on percentage of the school year/month attended. The school reserves the right to withhold grades/report cards for delinquent accounts and moneys owed the school, including tuition, Before/After school care (BASC) bills, etc.

Tuition Rates in Grades K-8:

	<u>Parishioner</u>	<u>Non-Catholic/ Non-parishioners</u>
One Student	\$ 5,570.00	\$ 6,960.00
Two Students	\$ 9,750.00	\$12,180.00
Three Students	\$13,360.00	\$17,050.00
<u>Tuition Rate for K4* (full day):</u>	\$6,080.00 (w/o lunch)	\$ 6,400.00 (w/o lunch)
	\$6,580.00 (w/lunch)	\$ 6,900.00 (w/lunch)

***Please note the K4 tuition is a separate fee from the family rate and is not included in multiple student discounts.**

Student Fees:

Technology 7th & 8th Grade:

Chrome Books are issued to each 7th & 8th grade student. A fee of \$50.00 per year, per student is collected.

Middle School Band:

Band fees are \$75.00 per year, per student in grades 6-8.

Return Check Policy

All checks returned to the school for the first time are subject to a \$30.00 return check fee. Second time there is a \$30.00 fee. Third time there is a \$50.00 fee and all payments to the school must be paid with a money order or in cash for the remainder of the school year.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of Alabama guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. In addition to these guidelines, teachers infuse Gospel values on a consistent and appropriate basis. St. John's Catholic School offers academic growth opportunities in the following major subjects:

Religious Education

Religious instruction, according to doctrine of the Catholic Church, is given top priority. Daily classes about the Catholic faith are taught using "The Loyola Series" in alignment with Standards and Benchmarks established by the Diocese of Birmingham. Additionally, our students pray together throughout the school day. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated twice a year in grades 2-8. Children attend weekly Mass together where liturgies are planned by specific classes. Students attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament bi-monthly.

The Sacramental Program is conducted by the Director of Religious Education of the Parish. For our second grade students, preparation for Reconciliation and First Communion are included in the daily religious education program. Parents are required to attend informational meetings and students are expected to attend parish-wide activities in preparation for the sacraments. The preparation and reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation occurs in high school.

Computer Literacy

Word processing, spread sheets, Power Point and integration with curricular subjects are the focus of the computer classes in Grades 3-5. Internet access is available through all classrooms, library or computer lab. All students must adhere to the Internet Use policy and appropriate user guidelines to maintain computer privileges.

Fine Arts

Weekly music and art classes are scheduled for all students in grades K4-5th. Band begins in 5th grade. Drama (grades 4-8) is available as an extra-curricular opportunity.

Handwriting

Students in K4-4th grade participate in handwriting development.

Language Arts

Reading, English, spelling, vocabulary, composition, library skills and literature appreciation make up the English/Language Arts coursework across the grade levels.

Library

K4 - Students have a 20 minute weekly library period that includes finger plays and story time. The books remain in the K4 classroom and do not go home.

Kindergarten - Students visit the library weekly for a 30 minute story time and book check out. The books remain in the Kindergarten classrooms and do not go home.

First and Second grade - Students have a 30 minute library period weekly, with story time and beginning library skills being taught. The students may check out one book for one week. The book may go home, but the student is responsible for returning the book on time. If a book is not returned on time, the student may not check out another book.

Third and Fourth grade - Students have a weekly 30 minute class in the library with the focus on learning library skills. Third Grade may check out one book for one week. Fourth Grade through Eighth Grade may check out two books for two weeks.

Overdue notices are sent out on a weekly basis. If the book(s) are still needed, the students may renew their books. The library has open times where there are no classes scheduled and students may come in and browse or do research. Teachers are also able to schedule class time in the library as needed. Students with lost or damaged books will be assessed a fee according to the circumstance. Library fees follow the same procedures as other fees and must be settled before report cards and records are issued.

Mathematics

Mathematics Skills are developed in all grade levels. Students apply foundational math concepts to develop problem solving skills and a solid foundation of basic math skills.

Accelerated Math – Accelerated math is offered in grades 6-8. Upon completing the previous grade, students' records are reviewed for placement in advanced math. Student math averages, NWEA (MAP) scores and teacher recommendation based on observations of student skills, effort and ability determine placement in the middle school advanced math program. Students are placed in advanced math at the beginning of the school year only. To remain in advanced math, students must maintain an A or B at the time of each issued report card (every 9 weeks).

Physical Education

Physical Education (PE) is part of a well-rounded education. PE grades are based on dressing out (6-8) in required uniform including athletic shoes, behavior, sportsmanship, participation, cooperation, effort, written tests, and homework. For each infraction, the student's grade will drop a percentage point. After the 7th infraction in a quarter, the student will drop one letter grade. Grades are entered weekly into FACTS and infractions are listed in the comment area. Students are not allowed to miss PE in order to make up other class work. Special situations may be worked out among the administration, teachers and students involved. A student must have permission from the principal to miss PE for any reason other than a doctor's excuse. If a student sits out of PE class due to injury or illness, the student athlete will not practice or play in school sponsored extra-curricular sporting events that day both here and at St. John Paul II.

No child may be excused indefinitely from PE with a note from parents. Parent notes for minor illness/injury will remain in effect for two days. A doctor's note is required for a more lengthy absence from PE.

PE clothes are required for grades six and above. Uniforms consist of an official St. John's gray gym shirt and navy knit gym shorts. Sweatshirt and sweatpants are an option for a winter PE uniform. Navy or white socks and athletic shoes are required. Shoelaces must comply with classroom uniform requirements. Without the proper uniform, which includes athletic shoes for K5 -3, students will not be allowed to participate and will lose points from their grade.

Science

General science and laboratory experiences are offered to all age groups. Students in 7th grade are required to complete and present a science fair project.

Social Studies

History, Geography, Current Events as well as Alabama history (4th grade) are part of the curriculum offered.

Spanish

All students experience instruction in vocabulary, grammar, conversation and culture. Spanish is offered weekly in K4-7th.

ATTENDANCE

The school day officially begins at 7:55am. In order to promote a positive learning environment, students should be in the classroom on time and ready to learn by 7:55am. K5 and above students enter the cafeteria by the cafeteria doors or the gym doors after 7:25am where they will remain until dismissed to their homeroom. **Any student arriving late must report directly to the office and be checked in by the parent. Students unescorted by a parent when tardy, automatically receive an unexcused tardy.** Students who are habitually tardy will be subject to disciplinary action and administration will schedule a conference with student and parents. School is dismissed at 3:00pm. Students who are not picked up by the end of the afternoon car line will be placed in after school care.

Maximum absences allowed are **ten days** per semester. Excessive absences can result in a student being retained. Students absent for five or more consecutive school days are required to submit a doctor's certificate before being readmitted to school. Any student who has had a contagious disease (except for minor colds and viruses) is required to submit a doctor's certificate before being readmitted to school.

The following are considered valid (excused) reasons for absence from school: illness, death in family, health treatment, permission from principal and inclement weather. Students missing for excused reasons will be allowed to make-up work. **Parents must send a handwritten note or a doctor's excuse explaining the reason for the absence. Electronic notes, such as emails, and phone calls are not sufficient.** The absence note must be submitted upon the student's return to receive an excused absence. **Notes to excuse an absence will not be accepted after the fifth day the student has returned to school and therefore the absence will remain unexcused.**

Make-Up Work

When a student is absent for two or more days due to illness, a parent may contact the homeroom teacher by 9:30am, to arrange for missed assignments. These assignments may be picked up in the school office between 3:00pm–3:30pm. Students have one day for each day missed to complete make-up assignments. If extenuating circumstances apply, it is the responsibility of the student to request additional consideration from the teacher. **AGAIN, any request for make-up work should come after two or more days of absence.**

Any student absent from school more than ½ day may not participate in school sponsored events at St. John's and for 7-8 grade athletes at JP2 that afternoon and evening. A student is counted absent the entire day if missing more than three and a half hours, (3 hours and 30 minutes).

Parents should make every effort to schedule doctor/dental appointments after school hours. If not possible, then every effort should be made to have the child miss a minimum amount of instructional time. Parents must come into the office to sign out a student for an appointment. Upon return to school, the parent must escort the student into the office to sign him/her back into school. The student is responsible for checking with the teacher(s) about missed work.

Any scheduled absences must be pre-approved by the principal. In order for a requested planned absence to be excused, please submit a note with a parent signature giving the reason and the date(s) the student will be absent. Upon returning to school from a scheduled absence, it is the student's responsibility to secure missed assignments. Excessive abuse of this procedure can result in a student being denied the opportunity to make up missed work. **Assignments will not be given in anticipation of a vacation.**

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

Homework

The purpose of homework is to reinforce concepts taught in school. Homework is assigned on a regular basis. A general rule of thumb is 10 minutes for each grade the student has been in school, beyond kindergarten (for example, 5th grade can expect 50 minutes of homework). **If your child is taking an unusual amount of time to complete homework, it is your responsibility to contact the teacher for a conference (and we request that you do so).**

Grading

Report cards are issued quarterly. The Diocese of Birmingham uses the following grading system in all its schools:

Kindergarten (K5):

A checklist with the following qualifiers:

S = Satisfactory

P = Progressing

NI = Needs Improvement

X = Not covered yet

Grade 1:

A checklist with the following qualifiers listed below:

M = Mastered

I = Improving

NP = No Progress

NA = Not applicable at this time

Grades 2 through 8:

Grading at these levels will be letter grades with a scale given on the report card. The electronic grading system will provide you a numeric. The following subjects will be graded with letters: religion, English/Language Arts, math, science, social studies, music, art, physical education, and Spanish. Computer Literacy does not receive letter grades since it is a tool to be integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

The grading scale will be as follows:

A 93 - 100

B 84 - 92

C 74 - 83

D 65 - 73

F 64 and below

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are distributed every nine weeks for K5 through eighth grade. Parent - Teacher Conferences are held at the end of the first quarter. Progress reports are emailed home at mid-term (about the fifth week of each quarter) to indicate the student's standing in academic and behavioral areas. Families are issued passwords and logins to access the online grades through FACTS. K4 parents will have conferences in January.

Honor Roll

Honor Roll certificates are issued at the end of each quarter for students in 3rd grade and above, an "All A" and an "A & B". Students must have no "U"s (unsatisfactory) in conduct to qualify for Honor Roll each quarter. Students maintaining an A in all subjects in every quarter will be recognized on Honor's Day.

Promotion/Retention Policy

At the end of the school year, students are either promoted or retained. A student fails for the year if he/she has a yearly average below 65 or "F" in two or more of the following areas: Reading, English/Language Arts, Math, Science, or Social Studies. Students may be retained for reasons other than grades if a decision is reached cooperatively among the teacher, principal, and parents. When there is disagreement, the decision of the principal is final.

Assessments

St. John's uses the NWEA standardized assessment: MAP-Measures of Academic Progress. Students in grades 3-8 participate in this assessment period which occurs 3 times a year. There are 3 subtests'; reading, grammar & math. Students need to be present unless ill. Please do not make routine doctor's appointments during these scheduled assessments. Students in grades K-2 participate in STAR reading and math assessments.

Graduation

Participation in the eighth-grade graduation ceremony is a privilege and indicates a successful completion of all requirements. Should academic or disciplinary circumstances arise, the principal reserves the right to deny the privilege of participating in the ceremony and associated activities to those who do not complete these requirements.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION

Water Bottles

Students are permitted to keep water bottles, containing only water, with them during instruction. Middle School students' water bottles must be clear. Multiple filtered dispensers have been installed throughout the school.

Extracurricular Activities

An "extracurricular activity" has the following characteristics:

1. Extracurricular activities are an out-of-class event, usually supervised by the school.
2. Extracurricular activities are not part of the regular school curriculum, are not graded, do not earn credits, generally take place out of classroom time, and often involve performance before an audience or spectators.
3. Extracurricular activities may include but are not limited to: athletic teams, bands or orchestra, musical performing groups, school publications, clubs and dramatic groups, and school dances.

Students in grades 5-8, may not be allowed to participate in any activity if they have an average below "C" in any of their subjects at the time report cards are distributed. Ineligible students will be re-checked every two weeks from the official marking period. Additionally, student athletes in grades 7-8, who are playing sports through JP2, must also adhere to SJB standards and the academic requirements by the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA).

Field Trips

Educational field trips enhance classroom learning and students are expected to attend just like any other school day. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior on field trips as well as in the classroom prior to the trip. Students that choose to challenge rules during the course of a normal day may be denied the privilege of attending a field trip. Students that lose the privilege of attending a field trip or are not given permission by the parent may be required to complete an alternative assignment.

According to the procedures outlined by the Diocese of Birmingham, proper permission is required for students as well as parent drivers. Drivers must go directly to and from destination with no additional stops. Additional fees will be collected as needed for field trips.

Field Trip Reminders for Parent Drivers

- Make sure each student is buckled securely.
- Student may not ride in the front seat (except the child of the driver).
- Please make sure you have enough gas for the trip and follow all speed limits.
- Please refrain from smoking at all times during the field trip.
- Drivers are not to use cell phones while driving.
- Drivers must transport only students provided on a list by the teacher.
- Teachers should provide each driver with a set of written directions and the school phone number.
- During the program, please refrain from talking to model proper listening manners for the students.
- Please refrain from showing videos in the car unless preapproved by teacher or administration.
- Siblings may not attend class field trips.

Illness

The Clinic at St. John's exists to provide **temporary** care for students with minor injuries. A school nurse is in the clinic on a part-time basis. Parents are required to complete a **Medical Emergency Form** for each student to be kept on file in the office. Injury reports are filled out and filed for serious injuries. **STUDENTS ENTERING SCHOOL USING CRUTCHES MUST HAVE A DOCTOR'S EXCUSE.**

A student will not be kept nor admitted to school if the student is known to have a communicable disease or parasite that may be spread by any form of casual contact and considered a health threat to the school population. Students sent home with any of the below symptoms must be free of these symptoms for a **twenty-four hour period** (without medication) before being readmitted to school.

1. Temperature of one hundred (100°) Fahrenheit or higher.
2. Vomiting and / or diarrhea.
3. Discharge of fluid or mucus from the nose, eyes, or ears that is green or yellow in appearance.
4. Rashes of unknown origin. (Students may be readmitted with evidence of physician's diagnosis and treatment required.)
5. Conjunctivitis. (Students may return to school after having undergone a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of treatment.)
6. Streptococcus or other infection. (Student may be readmitted with evidence of physician's diagnosis and a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of antibiotic treatment.)
7. Head Lice. School must be notified. (Treated with proper medication required. Parent must accompany student to school for the student to be rechecked by the administration or school nurse for readmission.)

Re-admittance will be denied if the 24 hour symptom free time period has not been met. In accordance with public health guidelines designed to decrease the spread of communicable diseases, should a student become ill during school; parents will be contacted to pick their child up in a timely manner. If the school is unable to locate the parents, the emergency contact will be called to pick up the student.

Medications

Medication may be dispensed at school only under the following conditions:

- A Parental Request Form for Administering Medicine at school has been properly completed and returned to the office along with the medicine. This form may be obtained in the office or on the website.
- All medication must be in its original container with dosage information and directions.
- Medication must be delivered to the school office by the parent or guardian.

- A written doctor's order must accompany the prescribed medication and will remain on file in the office stating the name of the drug, the time to be given, and the dosage. The label on the prescription bottle may serve as the physician's order.
- All medication will be kept in a locked area of the clinic.
- Students are not to have prescription or non-prescription medication in their possession during school hours on school / parish premises or at school sponsored events and field trips away from school.
- In order to administer non-prescription medication, a signed clinic card must be on file. The parent will be called before the medicine is given.

**Only the Principal has the authority to make exceptions to this policy.*

Before/After School Care (BASC) **BASC contact number: 256-603-4648.**

St. John's Catholic School offers a BASC program as a service to parents.

BASC Rates: \$3.50 per hour, billed in 15 minute increments, per student.

BASC activities:

1. Recreational activities include board games, puzzles, etc. outside playground or gymnasium, which are planned and supervised.
2. Snack is provided between 4:00-4:15pm

BASC hours:

Before school: 6:45am – 7:25am for grades K5 thru 8th at the cafeteria entrance
 7:15am for K4 at the K4 entrance
 After school: 3:05pm – 5:00pm

K4 students may be dropped off after 7:15am at the K4 entrance. Students in K5-8 dropped off before 7:25am or picked up after 3:15pm will be placed in BASC and invoiced accordingly.

Any student not picked up by 5:00pm will accrue a charge of \$1.00 per minute per family.

Students may NOT be picked up from BASC during afternoon carline,

Invoices are sent electronically during the first week of the month and payment is due by the tenth of that month. Electronic drafting is an option for payment. Failure to pay fees may result in the loss of BASC use. A \$5.00 late fee will be automatically added to all invoices not paid by date due.

Students are to be signed out by parent/guardian and require photo identification. For parent/guardian to allow another person(s) to pick up students, the parent/guardian must fill out the BASC form and submit to the school office. These forms are maintained at BASC.

Students who exhibit an uncooperative or disruptive behavior at BASC may be denied BASC services.

Lunch

A lunch program is provided for \$4.00 per meal and is a **PREPAID PROGRAM**. Families should deposit monies in the student's lunch account and monitor the balance thru FACTS. The lunch menu is posted on the school website. Lunches may also be "brown bagged". Milk or juice may be purchased for \$0.50 per carton. **Fast food or carbonated drinks are not allowed for students.** The school offers a free milk program to qualifying families.

Ice cream is available for an additional \$1.00 expense. Teachers in grades K4-5 will schedule ice cream one day a week. Middle School may purchase daily according to permission given between parent and student.

Organizations

St. John's Catholic School encourages each student to become a faith-filled, well rounded citizen in our community. Participation in clubs and/or activities sponsored by the school or parish provides an opportunity for this type of growth. Those activities available to students are listed below.

Student Organizations:

- Athletics
- Band
- Book of the Month Club
- Drama
- National Junior Honor Society
- Safety Patrol

Parish Organizations:

- Altar server
- Children's Choir
- Scouts

Student Activities

- Religion Scholars' Bowl
- Science Fair (Grade 7)

STUDENT CONDUCT

Catholic Education supports student growth in all areas. Self-discipline is a life skill that can and should be achieved. School rules and regulations are no more than basic courtesy, good manners and the creation of a Christian community where learning can take place. The authority to control student behavior extends to all activities of the school including Mass and religious services, all games and public performances, field trips, and all other school sponsored activities.

The student should be fair with him/herself, with fellow students, and with the teacher. No form of cheating, lying, or stealing will be tolerated. We ask that our students tell the truth at all times, conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen, respect law and order and follow the Commandments in all phases of life.

Students are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity. This includes reporting incidences of inappropriate or bullying behavior. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner towards everyone. Disrupting the learning environment of other students is not acceptable.

Adhering to school/classroom rules is another expectation for students at St. John's Catholic School. Some examples of behaviors that are considered routine and appropriate are (but not limited to):

1. being honest and truthful
2. being respectful and polite
3. getting along with others
4. using acceptable language
5. following classroom rules
6. no gum chewing
7. being responsible for school property
8. respecting others' property
9. being on time to class

These rules are samples of general school expectations and may be adjusted during the year by the principal.

Disciplinary Measures

Teachers will handle routine classroom discipline using assertive discipline techniques and positive reinforcement when possible. Repeat or serious breaches of behavior will be referred to administration.

K4 - 5th grade students: follow a systematic procedure which encourages self-regulation and involves warnings and consequences that escalate if the behavior does not improve. Each teacher will provide a classroom management plan to the student and parent.

6th – 8th grade students: For student misconduct, the teacher will give a logical consequence to the student if applicable. On the second offense, the student will receive a written warning (W) marked in the student's planner by the teacher. On the third offense, the student will receive silent lunch with a notification form stapled in the planner. The form requires a parent signature and must be returned to the assigning teacher the following day.

If misconduct continues, whether on the same day or a different day of the month, a second silent lunch will be issued and a notification form will be sent home requiring a parent signature. At this point, a student-parent-teacher conference will be scheduled.

If misconduct persists, whether on the same day or a different day of the month, a third silent lunch will be issued requiring the student to write a letter notifying the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and administration. The letter requires parent/guardian's signature and has to be returned the following day. A student detention will be issued and the parents will be notified by the homeroom teacher. The detention form is to be signed and returned to the homeroom teacher.

Warnings do not carry over from one classroom to another or from one day to the next. Patterns of misbehavior, however, will be addressed by that specific class teacher with the student and the parent. Silent lunches, detentions, or office referrals may be given immediately in incidents of severe misbehavior. Each student starts over on the first day of the month.

Should discipline procedures move beyond time out and loss of privileges for younger students or beyond detention for older students, the following actions may occur:

1. Mandatory Parent Conference - Required disciplinary meeting by custodial parents with the teacher and/or principal for a discussion of the problem and potential solution.
2. In-House Suspension - Isolation of a student from his/her peers at school during the school day. Teacher will provide lessons, work, and tests to be done during the day. No extra-curricular participation allowed.
3. Out of School Suspension - Removal of the student from the school setting (1-10 school days). The student stays home and receives zeroes on all missed work. A parent conference is mandatory for re-admission. No extra-curricular participation allowed.
4. Expulsion - Removal of the student from the student body and the school. The following activities will result in suspension or expulsion: (extreme disrespect of authority, harassment of another student, fighting/violence, stealing, sexual misconduct, vandalism, bomb threats, possession of weapons or use of objects as weapons, possession of illegal substances, truancy, repeated violation of school rules). Behaviors not listed here but deemed by administration to be of like severity also result in suspension or expulsion.

Students are removed from the school by the principal with notification given to the Pastor and the Superintendent of Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham.

Diocesan Policy on Bullying

The Diocese of Birmingham is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment in its schools. Bullying, which involves an imbalance of power or strength, is repeated aggressive behavior that may include physical, verbal, racial, sexual, or emotional intimidation. This includes cyber-bullying which is defined as destroying or smearing a person's reputation through the use of internet connected devices. Any and all witnessed or reported incidents will be addressed. Students involved in bullying or harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by the local school's handbook or policy statement.

Definitions of Harassment/Bullying

Harassment/bullying is a specific type of deliberate and sustained misconduct which hurts the dignity of another person by isolation, intimidation, and/or humiliation and thus jeopardizes physical and emotional safety and undermines the well-being of the school community. Harassment/bullying repeatedly hurts another person through, but not limited to, the following behaviors:

Physical
Cyber-bullying

Verbal
Sexual

Social/relational
Retaliation

Reporting

1. Student practices self-talk behaviors taught in response to alleged bully.
2. Student addresses bully.
3. If the bullying behaviors do not stop, he or she reports the bullying concerns to the teacher or adult caregiver in a verbal/written report.
4. An observer/bystander of a harassment/bullying incident is expected to report the incident to a teacher or adult caregiver.
5. St. John's follows a "zero indifference" approach which means that all witnessed or reported instances of harassment/bullying will be addressed.

Administrative Investigation

All reports of harassment/bullying will be investigated by the employees and administration of St. John's. The following steps will be followed once a report of bullying is received by administration:

1. Ensure there is a safe and secure environment.
2. Investigate - An administrative investigation and written report will be prepared.
3. Determine Remedial and Disciplinary Action - Following a reasonable investigation, administration will determine a probable cause; what remedial action is most warranted to prevent reoccurrence and allow reconciliation; and what corrective or disciplinary action is most appropriate.

DRESS CODE

An established dress code at St. John's Catholic School is reflective of our Catholic faith and promotes a positive learning environment through neat and tidy appearance as well as minimal distraction to the daily instructional atmosphere. Students are expected to abide by the dress code policy. Students who choose not to abide by the dress code policy will not be admitted to class until the proper uniform attire is brought to him/her at school. If these uniform regulations are to succeed, it will take the combined effort of students, parents, and faculty/staff, to insure every child comes to school in the proper uniform. The principal will have discretion in all questions pertaining to student's dress code.

Coats/jackets are not allowed to be worn in the classroom.

Hats are not allowed to be worn in the building.

Boy Scout and Girl Scout uniforms are permitted on the day of the scout meeting.

Please print the student's name in all articles of clothing worn to school.

Dennis Uniform Company provides the uniform St. John's students wear. **Clothing indicated with an "*" must be purchased through the Dennis Uniform Company.** Any items previously purchased from Dennis Uniform Company that are different than what is listed below are not allowed.

Grooming

Girls:

Hair must be neat, may not be distracting, and must remain out of the eyes without assistance. Extreme hair coloring and bleaching with non-natural colors and/or patterns is not permitted. Nail polish must be light in color. Only one pair of earrings may be worn and those must be stud earrings. No make-up in grades K-7. 8th grade girls are allowed modest amount of make-up. No henna tattoos.

Boys:

Hair must be neat, may not be distracting, and must remain out of the eyes without assistance. Hair length cannot extend over the collar or cover the eyes/eyebrows. Haircuts must be of a traditional nature and no unusual cuts. Examples of unusual cuts are partial shavings and/or taller row of hair in the middle. No facial hair. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings or makeup. No henna tattoos.

Kindergarten (K5)-4th Grade Boys:

***Short** - blue walking shorts

***Pants** - navy – must be traditional length.

***Polo shirt** - green or white, long or short sleeve: must have St. John's logo

***Sweaters** - optional; navy, cardigan, vest or pull-over style. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

Sweatshirts - The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

Belts - black, brown or navy for grades K5-8

Shoes - Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black. Only one accent color is allowed and **cannot be neon**. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoes worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

Socks - White or navy and **crew** in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names.

***PE Uniform** – Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 6-8. Students in K-5 do not wear a PE uniform.

Kindergarten (K5)-4th Grade Girls:

***Shift (jumper)** - plaid (must wear navy shorts underneath). Jumpers must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

***Skorts** - plaid. Skorts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

***Shorts** – plaid, navy

***Pants** - navy – must be traditional length.

***Blouses** - round collar, white, long or short sleeve

***Polo Shirt** - Green or white, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

***Sweaters** - Optional; navy; cardigan, vest or pull-over styles. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

Sweatshirts - The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

Belts - black, brown or navy for grades K5-8

Shoes - Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black.

Only one accent color is allowed and **cannot be neon**. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoes worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

Socks - White or navy and crew or knee-hi in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names. In cold weather, girls may wear blue or white tights instead of socks. Leggings are not allowed.

***PE Uniform** - Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 6-8. Students in K-5 do not wear a PE uniform.

5th-8th Grade Boys:

***Shorts** - navy walking shorts, khaki walking shorts

Pants - navy or khaki – must be traditional length, not excessively short.

***Oxford shirt** - white oxford button down, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

***Polo shirt** - green or white, long or short sleeve: must have St. John's logo

***Sweaters** - optional; navy, cardigan, vest or pull-over style. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

Sweatshirts - The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

Belts - black, brown or navy for grades K5-8

Shoes - Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black.

Only one accent color is allowed and cannot be neon. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoes worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

Socks - White or navy and crew in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names.

***PE Uniform** - Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 6-8.

5th-8th Grade Girls:

***Skirts** - Plaid Skirts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

***Shorts** – khaki, navy or plaid

***Pants** - navy or khaki (flat front or pleated front) - must be traditional length, not excessively short.

***Oxford Shirts** - white button-down collar, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

***Polo Shirts** - Green or white, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

***Sweaters** - Optional; navy; cardigan, vest or pull-over styles. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

Sweatshirts - The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

Belts - black, brown or navy for grades K5-8.

Shoes - Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black.

Only one accent color is allowed and cannot be neon. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoe worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

Socks - White or navy and crew or knee-hi in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names. Leggings are not allowed.

***PE Uniform** - Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 6-8.

NO UNIFORM DAYS

Certain days will be designated as “no uniform day.” Students will arrive in clothing that represents the Catholic teachings of integrity and dignity. Non-compliance will result in a loss of out of uniform privilege and parents called to bring the school uniform. The following will be strictly enforced:

1. All clothing will be neat and clean
2. Clothing may not contain messages that are not in keeping with the teaching of our faith
3. Skirt length is to be closer to the bend of the knee than the torso of the body
4. NO spaghetti straps or tank tops; shirts must have a sleeve
5. NO open toed/open heeled shoes
6. While socks are required, crew socks are not
7. Non marking athletic shoes are required for PE
8. Earrings (girls only): only studs allowed
9. NO worn, frayed, torn or soiled clothing
10. No biker shorts. No running shorts.
11. Leggings are not allowed to be worn as pants.

School related events, such as graduation and dances, will have dress code requirements provided to the student before the event.

Spirit Shirt Days are allowed 4X a year with the official spirit shirt (purchased each year). Non-uniform bottoms are allowed on this day.

PARENT - SCHOOL RELATIONS

Parental Commitment

The Catholic Church believes that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. Therefore, in addition to taking this role at home, parents are encouraged to be active and interested in the life of the school community. The operation of a successful school depends on participation and support from the parents and friends in the community. The school depends on volunteers for many activities. All parents are encouraged and expected to get involved in activities, including volunteering in the classroom, driving on field trips, and fundraising.

Youth Protection for Adults

Any parent that wishes to volunteer at school must complete the Diocesan Youth Protection course; Virtus and complete the Volunteer Release form to allow the school to run a background check. **Training must be renewed every three years. This is required for all adult volunteers.** Classes are taken on line at the Diocesan website bhmdiocese.org and are free.

Parent – Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is a service and information organization for the parents and teachers of St. John's Catholic School. Its purpose is to offer support and financial aid for the betterment of the school. All parents and teachers are members of the PTO. Membership dues are collected at the beginning of the year. All families should make an effort to attend the meetings and support the efforts of the PTO.

Crusader Club

The Crusader Club is a parent support group for our P.E. and athletic programs. Every parent is automatically a member of the Crusader Club and is encouraged to be involved, especially if their student participates in athletics.

Communication Procedures

Communication between parents and teachers is very important. The following methods of contact are suggested:

1. Notes sent via your child
2. Email
3. Conferences*

*Conferences may be scheduled through the school office or directly with the teacher. Formal conferences in grades K-8 are scheduled in the fall. K4 conferences are scheduled in January.

Issues and concerns of any kind should be addressed first in a conference with the individual teacher. Typically, most problems will be resolved in this way. If the issue is not resolved with faculty and the parent needs to explore additional support, the following sequence must be followed:

1. A parent is to contact the principal. The principal may arrange a joint meeting between the parent, teacher and or other staff member.
2. If still unresolved, the parent (s) may contact the pastor for consultation.

Students will not be called out of class to speak with a parent. In the event of an emergency, parents should contact the administration for assistance with student notifications.

Communication Responsibilities

The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member as well as the good name of each school in the Diocese of Birmingham as an institution of the Catholic Church, is vitally important. Two specific aspects of this are:

1. Internet activities (games, apps, social media, etc.) that a student may independently choose to participate in can make the student vulnerable to predators. We strongly advise our students to be very careful about the personal identification information they share via the Internet. We also advise parents to monitor these sites to be sure their child remains safe. Should information come to the school regarding a student sharing personal identification information and/or information concerning a student demeaning him/herself, the school will notify the parents and it will be the parents' responsibility to take action.
2. In order to protect each and every student as well as employees and the institution itself each student enrolled in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School is expected to treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect. The same is expected of each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in our schools. Public defamation of any student, employee, or Catholic school by a student or parent/guardian is serious whether this be done orally, in writing, via email or on the web and whether it is done on a school computer or not and on school time or not. Therefore, any student or parent found to be participating in any defamatory activity will be subject to disciplinary/responsive action by the school. This could include dismissal of the student whether the action is by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

Parent to Parent Communication

Class notes from parents to other parents must be approved in advance by the teacher or principal.

Fund Raising

All fund raising must be done through an organization, with approval in advance from the principal.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Drop Off/Pick Up

Morning drop off (if not using Before/After School Care (BASC)) begins at 7:25am. After school, students who are not picked up in carline will be placed in BASC. Please remember that school starts at 7:55 am and students need to be in class ready to begin learning. **PROPER ARRIVAL TIME IS AT LEAST 10-15 MINUTES BEFORE 7:55AM.**

When signing a child in or out of school, parents must use a lined parking space in the parking lot and not leave vehicle engine running.

During carline, refrain from conversation with the faculty/staff during drop off and pick up. Be patient; watch for pedestrians and drive slowly. The playground is "off limits" during pick-up and drop-off for safety reasons. **No cell phone use on campus at any time you are at the wheel of a moving vehicle.**

Each family will have a name card containing their last name. Please display this card(s) in your windshield during pick-up to assist the faculty/staff in locating and loading your children. These name cards will be provided to each family. If you will be car-pooling, please be sure to get a name card of the family with whom you are carpooling.

Any student walking to school alone must have a written note on file in the office. Please, do not allow children to walk to school if they have to cross Hughes Rd.

End of Day

Please do not check a student out between 2:50pm and 3:00pm. Our end of day procedures prevents us from handling check outs at that time.

School Records

Parents / legal guardians have the right to inspect all official records relating to their own child. Records are confidential. Requests to review should be made directly to the principal. Records must be reviewed in the school office in the presence of the principal. The school respects the right of a non-custodial parent to review the records unless a copy of the divorce decree stating otherwise is supplied by the custodial parent and is on file in the office.

Custody Issues

When there is a divorce resulting in custody issues, the school must have a court certified copy of the decree for custody for the permanent records. This document is needed in order to give the school direction regarding the non-custodial parent visiting the school, going on field trips, and picking up the student. Without the correct court papers, the school must assume that both parents have full equal access to the child.

Personal Belongings

Only those items deemed by the teacher to be necessary for school are to be brought to school. All students are encouraged to have a book bag. Children in grades 4-8 may have rolling backpacks. For children in grades K-3, backpacks with wheels are unnecessary and not allowed. **Please be sure that all items related to school (lunch boxes, uniforms, books, etc.) are labeled with the child's name.** Be sure the following items are not brought to school: glass, sharp objects, breakable, precious or items of great value. Students do not need to bring large amounts of cash to school.

Electronic Devices

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham make every effort to assure that each student is safe while they are at school. Each school also tries to ensure that the teaching/learning process is interrupted as little as possible. Only approved electronic devices may be utilized during the teaching/learning process. A non-approved personal electronic device (such as a cell phone, camera, etc. but not limited to only these devices) that is used, seen or heard during school hours will be confiscated. I-watches are not allowed. Consequences will be determined by the principal.

Birthday Celebrations

In recognition of their birthday, students in K5 through Grade 8 may come to school dressed out-of-uniform on their birthday or half birthday (6 month date if birthday occurs outside of school year). The student will arrange the out of uniform with the homeroom teacher. In addition, a healthy birthday treat may be sent to school for students in **Grades K4-Grade 1** only. Balloons, etc. are not permitted.

Invitations

Students may not distribute birthday party or any invitations at school.

Visitors

All visitors, parents, and volunteers must report to the office immediately upon entering the school. Parents wishing to visit classes should make arrangements through the office and teacher. Students visiting from other schools, even St. John's alumni, may not be on campus unsupervised. Arrangements for visitors must be pre-approved by the office at least 24 hours in advance.

Telephone

The school phone is to be used only by school personnel. In the event of an illness or emergency, the school personnel will contact the parent. ONLY emergency messages will be conveyed to your child. We cannot call him/her to the phone. Please make sure your child is aware of his/her plan for the end of day. Calling the school office to convey where your child should go at 3:00pm should only be done when an emergency situation has changed your original plans.

Textbooks

All hardcover books are rented and should be covered all year (no contact paper, please). No writing in the books except for the student's name. Lost or damaged books are to be paid for at the replacement value. If workbooks are lost, students must purchase new ones. Rental books are turned in at the end of the school year.

School Closings

In determining the need to close during inclement weather, St. John's follows the City of Madison School system. Additionally, you will be contacted through our FACTS system. Please ensure all contact information (phone, email, mailing address, emergency and pickup contacts) are up to date. If Madison City Schools close, then St. John's will close as well. There will not be a separate announcement for St. John's; please follow the Madison City School announcement. Be alert to radio and/or television stations regarding re-opening and delayed openings. Parents are not allowed to pick up their children during tornado warnings. They are welcome to wait in safe areas with their children

Safety/Crisis Management Plan

St. John's has developed a plan describing procedures for various possible crisis situations. A copy is maintained in the office. Routinely, St. John's practices drills to enhance preparedness in the event of an emergency.

RIGHT TO AMEND

St. John the Baptist Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be communicated through the "Wednesday" folder and/or email.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BASC – Before and After School Care

FACTS – The school management software used for communication as well as displaying the student gradebook in grades 2-8. Families should log in as soon as possible and become familiar with it.

Back to School Night – An event for the entire family to attend. Meet the teachers, purchase spirit wear, and volunteer to help with the various parent organizations, pick up school supply kit.

Youth Protection for Adults I – Training that is required for volunteers. The Diocese of Birmingham uses an online program called Virtus. The training is free. At the conclusion of the online program, please provide information so a background check may be completed. All volunteers must complete the training, agree to the Code of Conduct and submit to a background check to volunteer at St. John's. Information is on the school and church website.

Events throughout the Year:

1. Family FAITH Night – Scheduled 2-3 times a year where all school activities, including homework, are suspended for the evening and the community focuses on faith-filled activities. Events may be held at school or suggestions sent home.
2. Advent program – Grades Kindergarten through 5th have a short program in December to celebrate the season of Advent. Held in the church and lasts about 40 minutes.
3. Catholic Schools Week – held nationwide the last week of January. Events are scheduled for each day to celebrate Catholic Schools.
4. Spirit Shirt Days – Spirit shirts are sold by the 8th grade class as part of fund raiser for their class trip. If students purchase the spirit shirt sold at the beginning of the school year, they will have four designated days to wear that shirt to school with non-uniform bottoms. Only the current spirit shirt for the current school year is allowed to be worn. Previous spirit shirts are not permitted.