

St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool



Parent – Student Handbook
2024-2025

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St. Mary Catholic School

2024-2025

I am pleased to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year! I would like to extend a special welcome to the many new families joining us this year and welcome back all of our returning families as well! I am so blessed and excited to return to St. Mary's as principal.

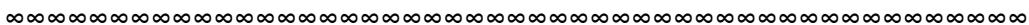
We are honored that you have chosen St. Mary's to nurture and educate your child, academically, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Our goal at St. Mary's is to work together to provide our students with a rich, Christ-centered learning environment. We are committed to meeting each student where he/she is and create an individual plan that will allow him/her to reach his or her full potential. In a collaborative effort, we want children to thrive in all ways possible. We have such a dedicated, dynamic, and faith-filled staff of professionals who are eager to work with you to educate your child. My hope is that all children will LOVE school and nurture a learning environment that is faith-filled, positive, safe, warm, caring, as well as a fun place to learn and grow.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Mary Catholic School for the 2024-2025 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Mary Catholic School during the 2024-2025 school year.

The faculty and staff of St. Mary Catholic School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

I feel truly blessed to be the instructional leader of such an amazing community.

Yours in Christ,
Mrs. Pam Wells
Principal



2024-2025 St. Mary Catholic School Calendar

July 2024							
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31				

August 2024							
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	
					1	2	3
4	5	6	7				
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

September 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

November 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

August
5/6 Teacher Inservice
7 First Student Day

September
2 Labor Day-No School

October
4 - End of 1st Grading Period
9 - Parent/Teacher Conferences
21-25 - Fall Break

November
27-29 Thanksgiving Break

December
20 - End of 2nd Grading Period/1st Semester
23-31 - Christmas Break

January
1-3 Christmas Break
6 - Teacher Work Day
7 - Second Semester Begins-Students Return

February
17 No School/Snow Make-up Day

March
7 - End of 3rd Grading Period
24 - 28 Spring Break

April
21 - No School/ Snow Make-Up Day

May
23 - Last Student Day
26 - Memorial Day
27 - Teacher Records Day

January 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	11
11	12	13	14	15	16	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Number of School Days (180)	
1st Quarter - 10/4	42
2nd Quarter - 12/20	46
1st Semester -	88
3rd Quarter - 3/7	43
4th Quarter - 5/23	49
2nd Semester -	92
Total Year - 180	180

School Closed
 Teacher Inservice/Workday
 Quarters

PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary Catholic School is dedicated to the Christian Catholic education of children.

We follow the teachings of Christ and the policies of the Indianapolis Archdiocese under the direction of the Pastor, the Principal, and staff. We focus our efforts on the personal growth and development of young people spiritually, socially, and academically.

To make this philosophy a reality, our school depends to a great extent on the family, which must be the prime agent of these same Christian values and teachings.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION and VISION STATEMENT

MISSION:

St. Mary's Catholic School and Preschool is Christ-centered, emphasizing spiritual values rooted in the Catholic faith.

- BELIEVING in Jesus Christ.
- ACHIEVING academic excellence.
- INSPIRING service, personal growth, and responsibility.

VISION:

Empowering students to reach their full potential - spiritually, morally, physically, academically and socially in a Christ-centered school family.

STAFF

Preschool – Ms. Daryn Wessel

Preschool - Mrs. Shana Neal

Kindergarten – Mrs. Heidi Schwering,

First Grade – Mrs. Hannah Leon

Second Grade – Mrs. Melissa Cull

Third Grade – Mrs. Jenna Schwering

Fourth Grade – Mrs. Michelle Means

Fifth Grade – Ms. Karen Hellmich

Sixth Grade – Ms. Amy Neuman

Physical Education - Mr. Brian Bess

Art – Mrs. Larissa Snyder

Spanish - Mrs. Gemma Rees

Music - Miss Jamie Tallent

Library Coordinator – Mrs. Jennifer Snow

Office Manager – Mrs. Ashley Busald

Cafeteria Manager – Mr. Junior Williams

Custodian/Maintenance - Mr. Gary Harlan

Special Education Teacher –Mrs. Kristina Runnebohm

RTI - Mrs. Angie Stevens

Instructional Assistants: Rachel Dozal, Mary Burklow, Whitney Barnard, Sara Glover, Marty Connerly

After School Care - Amaranta Kemple

Principal – Mrs. Pam Wells

Pastor – Fr. Dustin Boehm

Associate Pastor - Fr. Matthew Perronie

We are continuing our journey with the 3rd year of the Eucharist Revival, so please join with the St. Mary staff to promote our theme for the 2024-25 school year: ***The Eucharist is the Cornerstone, and We are building the City of God.***

St. Mary Handbook

ACADEMIC TESTING

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION Parents wishing to have a child evaluated for speech, psychological, social-emotional or academic performance should discuss this option with your child's teacher. All testing follows the Rush County Schools' "Response to Intervention" process, which includes a leveled procedure. This RTI process is available for your perusal in the school office as well as with your child's teacher.

ACCREDITATION

St. Mary Catholic School is accredited by the Indiana Department of Education. Our school meets or exceeds all requirements set forth by the state department. Our Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools holds all the schools within the Indianapolis Archdiocese to high standards through in-service offerings and standards. St. Mary Catholic School is accredited through Lumen. St. Mary Preschool is accredited through Cognia.

ADMISSION AND WAIT LIST POLICY STATEMENT

In order to ensure an orderly and equitable admission for children to St. Mary Catholic School (hereinafter referenced as the "School"), this policy and procedure is adopted and shall be periodically revised to allow for improvement based on the changing needs of parish membership, demographic trends and/or other pertinent factors. Once recommended by the Board of Education and ratified by the Pastor, revisions of this policy shall supersede any prior admission policy of the School.

A. Primary Goal - Catholic Education

The primary goal of the School is to provide a Catholic education to the children in accordance with the mission statement of the School, archdiocesan policies, curriculum and guidelines. Therefore, all students, once admitted, are required to participate in religion classes and liturgies and otherwise conform to the religious expectations of the School. The School respects the personal conscience of individual students and their families. This freedom is recognized by the Catholic Church. However, as a Catholic school it cannot relinquish its own freedom to proclaim the Gospel and to offer a formation based on the teachings of the Catholic faith and the values found in Christian education. Students are expected to participate in religious instruction and Catholic formation, including Catholic Christian service, offered at the school except those that are intended only for Catholics (e.g., reception of the sacraments).

B. Accommodation of Students with Special Needs

The School strives to accommodate students with physical, emotional, social, or learning challenges. However, families must fully disclose the nature and known extent of such challenges at the time of registration. The School has limited resources to meet certain challenges and may recommend educational alternatives that may better serve the needs of some students.

C. Parishioner Status

Regular attendance at Mass and faithful and consistent stewardship of Time, Talent, and Treasure (financial support) to the Parish will be expected by Catholic families of students attending or wishing to attend the School. All School families will participate in a registration process that will help establish each family's gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure. Families meeting these criteria will be deemed "participating parishioners" for the purpose of admission selection.

D. Financial Aid and Responsibility

It is a goal of the School and Parish to provide financial support to economically disadvantaged families to the fullest extent possible. However, all School families must assume responsibility for

paying the agreed-upon tuition charges in full and on time as prescribed by the School and arranged through F.A.C.T.S, our tuition management service. All Families are expected to participate in volunteer hours to the school. If volunteer hours are not satisfied, the family may have to offset the subsidy given by the parish.

E. Agree to Abide by the School Rules

Upon admission, all parents and students agree to abide by the policies and rules of the School as specified in this School Handbook.

Additionally, the School reserves the right to make definite decisions concerning whether the wearing or possession of any item is to be considered a violation of School policy.

F. Non-Discrimination

The Board of Education, Administration and Pastor establish policies for admission of Catholic and non-Catholic students in alignment with archdiocesan policies. Catholic Schools administered under the authority of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions as may be specifically applicable to the schools which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school-administered programs. This policy does not conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who publicly advocate any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith. Catholic schools have not been, nor shall they become, havens for those wishing to avoid social problems confronting them in the public sector.

ADMISSION SELECTION PROCEDURES

Beginning with the spring registration date each year, without exception, students registering for preschool who are at age 3 or 4; or for kindergarten, who are age 5 by August 1 of the school year for which they are registering, will be eligible for consideration for admission. For grades 1 through 6, students will be eligible for consideration for admission based on proof of successful completion of the previous grade. Eligible students will be selected and placed in the School based on the maximum capacity of classrooms as set by the administration and School Commission according to the following categories in order of preference:

1. Current students of the School (Preschool through 6th grade)
2. Children who are siblings of students attending the School in the current school year if spots are available.
3. Catholic children of participating parishioners who are siblings of a graduate of the School if spots are available.
4. Catholic children of participating parishioners if spots are available.
5. Catholic children of non-participating parishioners who are siblings of a graduate of the School if spots are available.
6. Catholic children of non-participating parishioners if spots are available.
7. Non-parishioner Catholic children if spots are available.
8. Non-Catholic children if spots are available.

Within categories numbered 1 through 4 previously, priority will be given according to the parish registration date of any family deemed to be a "participating parishioner" (See Section C of previous section).

Within categories numbered 5 through 8 above, priority will be given according to the date of the School admission application.

Each year's incoming student class will be selected soon after the registration/pre-registration process is closed.

WAIT LIST

Students not selected for admission to the School will automatically be placed on a wait list. If an opening becomes available, students on the wait list will be given priority for those openings in the same order of preference as detailed in the Admissions Selection Procedures above. The wait list will exist from year-to-year only and the wait list for each school year shall be established after the selection process for the upcoming school year has ended and shall terminate when that school year ends.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students in good standing from another school will be considered for transfer admission after the following has been accomplished:

1. Admission application is completed online.
2. A conference with the Principal, parents and possibly the student has been held to discuss the goals, religious mission and expectations of the School.
3. Enrollment/Admission forms are completed and new student registration fee is paid.
4. If requested, the parents have provided a written statement indicating their reasons for seeking enrollment for their child in the School.
5. Previous educational records have been supplied to the School including, if available and applicable: current grade transcript or report card, most recent standardized testing results, Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Service Plan, Section 504 Plan or Individual Catholic Education Plan (ICEP).
6. If appropriate records are not available or if there are other educational concerns, the Principal may require entrance testing of the child and direct consultation with the previous school to determine appropriate educational placement before admission is granted.
7. Updated immunization records have been received.
8. Applicants for admission to grades 5 and 6 are generally scrutinized more closely than applicants for lower grades as educational preparation and disciplinary records at this level are of more concern to the School.

NOTE: Catholic schools support the disciplinary decisions of other schools. Therefore, a student expelled from another private or public school may not be considered for enrollment until one year after the expulsion date and then only at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with the Pastor.

If the Principal determines through the aforementioned procedures that the family and student have philosophies, educational goals and levels of preparation that are compatible with the religious mission and educational programs offered by the School, and that the student is likely to be successful in the Catholic educational setting, and an opening exists; the student may be admitted either on a probationary basis or without restriction. Prioritization of placement of applicants for transfer will occur in the same order and by the same criteria as defined in the Admission Selection Procedures above.

Ensuring that St. Mary's provides a Catholic and rigorous academic education, we offer smaller class sizes with more individualized attention. In grades Kindergarten through sixth grade, we are limiting our class sizes to 20 students per class. In preschool, we are limiting our classes to a 10:1 ratio of students to teachers.

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one semester in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Mary Catholic School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final. If after admission, the educational and/or behavioral needs of a student exceeds what would be considered reasonable, the student may need to be separated from St. Mary Catholic School. This decision will be made for the student's educational and/or behavioral needs to be fully met in another educational setting. If the decision to separate the student from St. Mary Catholic School is made by the school, the student's tuition due would be prorated.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE (ASC)

- Director for the 2024-2025 school year – Aramanta Kemple
- After care will be from 3:15 to 5:30 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. After care will be from 2:35 to 5:30 pm on Wednesday while teachers have their in-service.
- The fee will be \$6.00 per child, per day with a total of \$30.00 a week for each child. Money can be included in the weekly lunch check.
- **Space is limited. Students are required to sign up for ASC at the beginning of the year. If ASC becomes a need later, students may sign up at the beginning of each semester..**
- **Students will be separated into two rooms, PreK-2 and 3-6.**
- **Grades 3-6 will have a snack from 3:15-3:30 and homework time from 3:30-4:00 pm.**
- **PreK-2 will have snack at 3:15 and then go to the playground or the gym.**
- ALL students must be signed out by his/her parent or authorized adult.
- The pick-up time will be no later than 5:30 pm every day. After 5:30 pm there will be a late fee of \$1.00 per child, per minute late. This late fee *must be paid in cash* by Friday of the current week. Children will not be able to participate in ASC until parents pay the late fee and/or meet with the Principal. This will be enforced as we need to be respectful of the After School Care Director's time.
- State Choice Vouchers DO NOT cover After School Care.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Vehicles should be stopping at the stop sign at the end of the east drive. Vehicles coming from the west should not park on the wrong side of the road (north side of 5th Street) facing the wrong way. Vehicles coming from the west should not make a U-turn or turn around in the east drive or drive across the road. There are many cars traveling on 5th Street at dismissal and arrival time and we want to keep all of our students safe.

Arrival

Students arrive at school between 7:30 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. and enter at the back school door. After 7:55am, students need to be dropped off at the front office. If preschool parents are walking their child into the building, please park in the middle of the back lot and walk your child to their classroom. If you need to come into the office, please park on 5th Street up past the handicapped parking space. Please do not leave your car idling. Students must report directly to their classroom. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. and a child is marked tardy after that time. Please be prompt and ready for class to begin.

Dismissal

Car Riders – Kg thru 6th grade

At the 3:10 p.m. bell, **on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday**, all car riders (with staff members) exit downstairs to the backdoors to the parking lot. All cars will park in a row facing the playground. Teachers will dismiss students by rows. Parents will secure students in their cars. Once all students are secure, cars will be dismissed by rows, beginning with Row #1. **FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF, DO NOT PULL AROUND ANY PARKED/LOADING CARS.** All students should be picked up here. On **Wednesday, early dismissal is at 2:25 pm** and should follow the same procedure as outlined above.

Car Riders: Preschool

The preschool teacher will take out the preschool car riders in row one (those with no siblings). After all students are secured in their cars, row one will be dismissed. The rest of the preschool will be dismissed with row two (and siblings) and will wait until all rows are called. All preschool students in after care, will be picked up by the after care supervisor during this time.

After School Care

Any child NOT picked up by 3:25 pm (all days except Wed.) will be taken to our After School Care Program (ASC - see After School Care) and the appropriate charges will incur. Wednesday dismissal will be 2:25 p.m.

Bus Riders

Staff members and bus riders will exit the double doors leading to the church at 3:00 p.m.. They will be escorted to Perkins Street where one or two buses will pick up all children to be transported to the high school for their connecting bus.

ASBESTOS

As required by law, you must be informed that St. Mary School does contain asbestos. It is regularly inspected and considered safe. An abatement plan is in a file marked in the custodian's room at the doorway. By the end of the 2024 summer, all asbestos will have been encapsulated in all student areas.

ATTENDANCE

Reporting

- A parent/guardian must report each day of absence by 7:55 a.m. Office **932-3639**. You can leave a message on the office voicemail system after school hours.
- If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of the St. Mary students and is aligned with the state statutes of the state of Indiana.

Office Procedure

- *Door Buzzer/Intercom System*-As of 8:00 am and during all school hours, ALL doors of the school are kept locked and secure. A door buzzer and intercom on the 5th Street door are in use during school hours. Children and staff members are not able to open any doors to the building at any time for someone to enter from outside. Please be respectful of this rule. It is for everyone's safety and security.
- *Sign out* – Parents, please enter the School office through the south door or 5th Street door by the flagpole AFTER BEING RECOGNIZED AND BUZZED INSIDE, complete the sign-out sheet, request your child to be excused from class, and wait for your child to meet you in the office.
- *Sign in* – Parents, please walk your child inside to the School office, AFTER BEING RECOGNIZED AND BUZZED INSIDE, and complete the sign-in sheet.

Illness

- All absences of three consecutive days or more must be verified with a doctor's note prior to readmission into St. Mary Catholic School. Any absences after an accumulated 10 days must have a doctor's note.
- If your child has a communicable disease or condition (chickenpox, head lice, pink eye, etc.) please immediately notify the office prior to readmission to school.
- Students with a fever, severe colds, and contagious diseases/conditions should stay home from school.
- A child may not return to school until he/she is "fever-free" for 24 hours and not taking fever reduction medication.
- If a child is absent from school that day, no sports or school-related activities (including after school robotics) should be attended that same day or evening.

Missed work

- When you phone in the absence, please indicate school work arrangements. Any missed work can be picked up in the office **at 3:00 p.m.** A sibling or friend may transport the homework if this arrangement is designated.
- All work is due back to School in the number of days absent. (Example: If a student misses 2 days, then he/she will have two extra days after they return to complete the missed work.)
- Class work missed due to family vacations will be given to students upon their return to class. No work will be given prior to a vacation.

Tardy

- Students are expected to be in the classroom ready to begin class at 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy and must report to the school office upon arrival at school. **Students must be signed in by a parent/guardian if the student is tardy.** Contact will be made with the parents by the principal if excessive tardiness occurs.

Excessive Absences/Tardiness

- Tardiness
 - Educational neglect occurs when a child is excessively absent OR tardy. Excessive tardiness is defined as 5 or more tardies per semester. A letter and/or phone call to parents may be warranted. Should nine or more tardies occur per semester, a parent conference will be called. The Rush County Prosecutor's Office may also be contacted. Your child's education is compulsory in the State of Indiana. Help your child to succeed by being on time (8:00 a.m.) and attending school daily. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. Students who arrive after 8:45 a.m. or leave before 2:15 p.m. will be considered half day absent.

Consequences

- Absences and/or Tardies
When a student reaches seven absences/tardies per semester the principal will contact the family through a phone call or letter to discuss the consequences of further absences which may include mandatory before or after school schoolwork detention. When a student reaches nine absences a parent conference will be scheduled with the principal.

Excessive absenteeism or tardiness may necessitate the following actions.

1. Written attendance contract.
2. Required before or after school schoolwork detention
3. Required additional outside tutoring.
4. Retention in the same grade the following year.
5. Prosecution under Indiana State Compulsory Attendance Law (IC 20-8. 1-3-33)
6. **Excessive absence (40) days or the equivalent of 40 days including tardies**, can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year.

Excused Absences

- Excused absences are generally for illnesses, medical or dental appointments, funerals, weddings, court appearances, or to serve as a page of the Indiana General Assembly.

Unexcused Absences

- Vacations should follow the St. Mary School calendar. Attendance will be unexcused if you remove your child for vacations while School is normally in session.
 1. Work may not be given in advance.
 2. Unexcused absences could affect grades and daily work as well as tests.
- In the event of unavoidable circumstances for absences/vacations, please immediately write a request to the Principal and your child's teacher with an explanation.
- Note that some disciplinary decisions such as in-school suspensions may warrant unexcused absences.
- Absences Due to Covid-19 - If a student tests positive for Covid-19, the school will follow the most up-to-date CDC Guidelines for student and faculty attendance. Students who are not Covid-19 positive and/or symptomatic, but just a close contact will be expected to be in attendance. In addition, students will be expected to complete all work and assessments. A student who is absent due to a positive Covid-19 test will be marked absent and coded as VC to denote the reason for absence.

Outstanding Attendance

- Outstanding attendance will be recognized at the end of the year. To qualify, the child cannot miss or be tardy more than three school days in the year.
- To qualify for perfect attendance, students must have 0 tardies and absences.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are recognized each morning as part of our morning announcements.

If your child would like to share a simple birthday treat with their class, please notify the teacher in advance. Please check with the teacher for any food allergies, too.

Any party invitations distributed at School should be offered for ALL of the boys or ALL of the girls of your child's class. Otherwise, they should be placed in the mail. We know your child's birthday is a special day, and we are happy to share in your celebration.

BOARD OF EDUCATION/SCHOOL COMMISSION

The St. Mary School Commission serves as an advisory board regarding school matters. Parents are welcome to attend the regular board meetings, which are held monthly on the second Tuesday of September - May in the evening. The meetings are conducted from a prepared agenda. Anyone desiring to have a topic discussed at a board meeting should contact the school Principal or a board member one week BEFORE the regular board meeting.

BOOKS

Students check out library books regularly. Students are encouraged to protect and care for these books. A book bag should be carried daily to School. All books are checked carefully before and after they are issued to students. Damage beyond normal wear and tear will be charged to the students. Lost or mishandled books must also be charged to the students prior to the fourth quarter report card being issued.

BULLYING

Jesus, our Teacher, wants us to "Treat others as we wish to be treated." St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool will not tolerate the following bullying behaviors: physical aggression, social aggression, intimidation, threats, written aggression, sexual harassment, and racial or ethnic harassment.

All classroom behavior will be tracked and monitored. Each classroom infraction involving bullying will be reported to the Principal and monitored. If a child visits the Principal for disciplinary reasons, the Principal WILL notify the parent via email, a note, or a phone call immediately. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (**seriously or in jest or online**) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Cell Phones and Watches with Communication Capabilities

The practice of students bringing cell phones to school is strongly discouraged. However, if a student needs a cell phone due to walking to or from school or for pick up after an after-school event, students may bring the cell phone to school. Cell phones should at no time during the day be ON. Cell phones pose a distraction to the learning process. The cell phone of any student not following this policy will be taken away and sent to the office. Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year. The administration reserves the right to search the contents of a confiscated cell phone.

Students are allowed to wear watches during the school day. We highly encourage students to not wear watches with communication and wifi capabilities. If a student uses a watch for any type of non-school related activity, including but not limited to, social media, texting, calls, youtube, etc., they will have the watch confiscated.

If a teacher plans a lesson/lessons with student cell phones, the principal should be notified that cell phones will be used for academic purposes on a particular day/period. Teacher lesson plans should also

include cell phone assisted instruction. Students who do not possess a cell phone during such lessons will not be academically penalized.

Child Abuse Laws

St. Mary Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Indiana. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

GUIDELINE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ON RESPECTING PERSONS

The good name, reputation and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member is vitally important. In order to protect students, employees, and the School itself, each student and family member is expected to treat the good name and reputation of other students, School employees and the School with dignity and respect and not engage in any activity or conduct, either on campus or off campus, that is in opposition to this policy and/or inconsistent with the Catholic Christian principles of the School, as determined by the School in its discretion. Any derogatory, slanderous, hostile, or threatening remarks or actions directed toward any of the above by a student will be seen as a violation of this policy and will be viewed as an extremely serious matter, whether it is done physically, verbally, or electronically through the use of a home or school computer, phone, Ipod or other electronic media or by remote access during school time or after hours. Some examples include but are not limited to, text messages, blogging, images, pictures, etc. Any individual found to have made or participated with others in making any such remarks or actions will be subject to disciplinary action by the School, up to and including expulsion/dismissal. ~OCE/2011

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Our teachers promote a classroom atmosphere in which everyone will be able to learn. All students are expected to:

- Come each day to class with all supplies needed such as homework, paper, pencils, and books.
- Show self-discipline at all times in all places.
- Respect all property and belongings.
- Be polite, kind, and courteous.
- Keep the School neat and clean.
- Be the best you can be every day.

CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

St. Mary Catholic School (SMS) follows the same calendar as Rush Co. Schools. If Rush County Schools are closed – SMS is closed. This might differ if we utilize elearning days. If Rush County Schools are delayed – SMS is delayed. During 2-hour delays the school will be open at 9:30 a.m. for students to arrive. Tardy bell is at 10:00 a.m. If there is a 2 hour delay on a Wednesday, there will not be an early dismissal.

To receive free closing and delay information automatically from WISH-TV, go to www.wishtv.com, scroll down to site tools on the bottom right for sms/text alerts. You will be asked to enter your mobile number – be sure to scroll down to WISHCLOSINGS and enter Rush County Schools. The school voicemail (932-3639, ext. 229) also indicates any delays or closures. We will also utilize Flocknotes with text and email for closings.

COMMUNICATION / ACADEMICS

- Your child's checked work, various papers, and other information are sent home each week in a "Friday Folder." Teacher and office weekly newsletters are e-mailed unless a paper copy has been requested.
- Quarterly report cards and mid-quarter reports (called progress reports) keep parents regularly informed of their child's progress.
- Powerschool is an online reporting system used to track your student's progress during the school year. **Each student has an account that you have direct access to.**

- Teachers and the office will phone parents immediately if something occurs that demands immediate attention.
- Parent/Teacher conferences are held at the end of the first quarter
- At various times throughout the school year, conferences may be deemed necessary. Please contact the teacher, first, to arrange a conference at your convenience. If this first conference does not rectify the situation, then a parent should call the Principal.

COMMUNICATION / SCHOOL OFFICE

- Visitors by appointment only.
- All visitors to the school MUST check in at the school office.
- Office personnel will deliver messages, lunches, or books to classrooms.
- A newsletter is sent home each week via e-mail.
- All parents are welcome to call or email the school office at any time with questions or concerns.

Counselor

A certified counselor serves the needs of students and parents through class and individual consultation.

Crisis Plan

St. Mary's has implemented a "crisis plan" in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to secure designated locations.

DAILY SCHEDULE **

7:30 a.m.	Entrance doors at the back of the school are unlocked
7:30-7:50 a.m.	Breakfast available
7:30-7:55 a.m.	Students must report to classrooms/Back door door
7:55- 8:00 a.m.	Students dropped off at the front door, but are not tardy
8:00 a.m.	Classes begin - Tardy Bell
8:05 a.m.	Morning announcements on the intercom
11:00 a.m.	Dismissal of half-day preschool
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Lunch and recess
3:00 p.m.	Bus riders dismissed
3:10 p.m.	After school care dismissed and begins
3:15 p.m.	Car riders dismissed

**** Wednesday - Bus 2:20, ASC 2:25; car rider 2:30 pm**

DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any student who damages or destroys school property will be held responsible for replacing, fixing or paying for the item(s). The student may be subject to other disciplinary action at the Principal's discretion.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

With Jesus Christ as our teacher, St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool students learn to be loving and respectful members of our Christian community. When an incident occurs that will warrant a referral to the Principal, the parents will be informed that school day. Classroom teachers or any other staff member may also contact you in your child's daily folder of any school infractions. You will be kept informed and we will cooperatively work together to ensure that our students are held responsible for their actions.

BEHAVIOR PLAN

This behavior plan is broken into three tiers as the level of the infraction increases. This is not meant to replace classroom rules or classroom management but rather support and reinforce it.

Level 1

- Not respecting God, self and others at all times
- Use of inappropriate language and/or gestures
- Not following directions given by an adult
- Not coming to class prepared and ready to learn
- Not listening politely and speaking respectfully
- Not accepting ownership of actions
- Not keeping assigned areas clean
- Using equipment and supplies inappropriately
- Ignoring classroom rules and procedures

Demonstrating the above behaviors will result in a consequence determined by the teacher.

Level 2

- Open defiance
- Backtalk/arguing with adult
- Refusal to work
- Cheating/lying
- Minor physical altercation (example – hitting another student)

Demonstrating the above behaviors will result in a meeting between the student and the principal. At this time, parents could possibly also be called in.

Uniform infractions = could result in a call home or office for proper attire; excessive uniform infractions can result in an after school detention

Level 3

- Fighting
- Bullying
- Stealing
- Profanity
- Extreme disrespect
- Harrassment

Demonstration of the above behaviors will result in a conference with the student, principal /pastor and parent(s). Consequences will be dependent on the severity of the offense. These offenses could result in suspension or expulsion.

Level 1 and 2 offenses are handled by the classroom teacher and documented. In addition, parents will be notified. If offenses persist, a parent conference could be held with the homeroom teacher, student and principal in hopes to alter the behaviors.

Certain offenses require an immediate office referral (e.g. sexual/racial harassment, possession of a weapon, making threats, inflicting advanced bodily harm on others and other Safe School Violations). These incidents may immediately result in an Out-of-School Suspension or other consequences at the discretion of the administrator and/or pastor.

Students are not allowed to record other students at any time using their school devices. Per the Archdiocesan policy and FERPA, parents are not able to view surveillance videos from school property.

Additionally, we want to reward students who make good choices and demonstrate Catholic values and character. Anytime a teacher or adult working in the building notices behavior that exemplifies this, they can give the student JOY recognitions and tickets of appreciation.

DRESS CODE

The dress code for St. Mary Catholic School students is intended to encourage a neat appearance consistent with our values and appropriate to a learning environment. Parents are expected to assume responsibility for making sure our students have dressed appropriately for school. Students are to be dressed for classroom work. Clothing should not distract from the learning process. Clothing should be neat, clean, and comfortable with no holes, rips, or tears. Clothing that displays pictures, language or symbols that are vulgar, violent, sexual, drug/alcohol/tobacco related or is in any way offensive or disruptive is not acceptable school attire. The principal will make final decisions regarding the appropriateness of dress and grooming issues.

There are two distinct uniforms in our code: Formal Uniform and Daily Uniform.

Formal Uniform – Wednesday Mass Days

Boys:

Khaki pants from Schoolbelles
Black or brown belt
White button down shirt
Hunter green sweater vest from Schoolbelles
Black or brown socks
Black or brown dress shoes (No white soles)

Girls:

White button down blouse from Schoolbelles
Plaid Jumper (K-4) Plaid Skirts (5/6) from Schoolbelles
White or navy ankle or knee high socks
Black or Navy dress shoes with closed toe/heel (No white soles)

Daily Uniform – M, T, Th, F

Dress shorts– both boys and girls

*navy or khaki *no shorter than 3 inches above the knee
***shorts with belt loops must be worn with a belt in grades 3-6**
*Cargo shorts are acceptable

Capris

Girls may wear navy or khaki capris during shorts season.

Skirts, jumpers, dresses or skorts

*navy, khaki, blue/green plaid
*no shorter than 3 inches above the knee
*No bib-overall type jumpers are acceptable
*shorts **must** be worn under skirts or jumpers
*Accompanying shirt must have a collar and sleeves

Shirts/blouses – boys and girls

*white, navy, light blue, or dark green
*NO stripes or patterns
*oxford, polo, mock, or turtlenecks are permissible
***must have collar and sleeves**
*NO monogram or emblems unless St. Mary small emblems

*Preschool Students may wear any solid, plain shirt in uniform colors. Preschool students may wear jeans.

******Dress shorts may be worn from the first day of school until fall break and after spring break to the end of the school year.**

******ALL shirts and blouses are to be tucked in at all times.**

Sweaters, vests, sweatshirts

- *white, navy, or dark green – solids only with **NO HOOD**
- * ¼ zip and ½ zip sweatshirts with SMS logo may be worn.
- *NO writing or logos or graphics except small St. Mary
- *No jackets or windbreakers

Shoes

- *Casual dress shoes or athletic shoes.
- ALL shoes must be closed-toe, closed heel
- NO flashing/blinking lights, noises, crocs, heels (must be 1” or less), wheels, or boots.

Socks

- *Socks must be worn at all times – solid black, white or navy only.
- *Tights/Leggings/Pantyhose: Solid uniform colors or skin tones only.
- *Uniform color leggings may only be worn under skirts/jumpers/skortis (not as pants).

Belts

- *Belts must be worn with looped slacks, shorts, skirts/jumpers/skortis (for grades 3 – 6).
- *Belts must be in solid, plain colors.

Nail Polish

- * Nails should be clean, neatly groomed, and of natural length.
- * Girls may wear fingernail polish if it is light in color and presents an overall acceptable appearance.

Jewelry

- *All jewelry should be conservative and not disrupt the classroom atmosphere. ***Girls ONLY/small earrings in the lobe of the ear – NO other body piercing**

Tennis Shoes: All students must have tennis shoes for gym class. They should be kept in their lockers for gym class if they do not wear them to school.

General Dress Code:

- NO tattoos
- NO make-up
- Modest hairstyles with no “unnatural” hair coloring permitted, i.e. pink, purple, blue, green, etc., no highlights, or coloring of hair is permitted. There should not be any unnatural feathers, tinsel, etc. attached in the hair. No mohawks or designs can be cut into the hair.
- Boys’ hair should be above their collar, above the ears, and above the eyes.
- Coats and sweaters or light jackets must be worn outside the building as dictated by weather conditions. Students not having appropriate outdoor clothing for recess will be required to stay in at recess. This includes hats and gloves when needed.
- **Dress Down Day Apparel Code:** Students may wear jeans with no holes, sweats, shorts still need to be within 2-3 inches above the knee, socks and closed toe/heel shoes must be worn. All shirts and dresses need to have sleeves; no sleeveless, off the shoulder, or open shoulder shirts or dresses will be allowed. No low cut shirts; no cleavage.
- All uniform shirts are to remain tucked in at all times.

We do have a **Uniform Closet** that has several pieces of uniform clothing available at no cost. Use what you can and return those items when finished and get the next size needed. If you have any uniform clothing that no longer fits your child, please send those to School for another child to use.

DISCIPLINE/CONSEQUENCES for Dress Code violations:

Students will have to get appropriate apparel from the uniform closet if they are out of uniform or from home if there is none available. Frequent disregard of the uniform policy will result in communication with the parents and consequences for the student. A parent, student, and administrator conference will be held if violations continue to occur.

The dress code will be enforced. All uniform policies are acceptable or non-acceptable under the discretion of the school administrator. Exceptions to the uniform code will be permitted only with advance approval of the school administrator.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL/WEAPONS POLICY

These are considered serious offenses: bringing to School or possession of a weapon or object that could be used as a weapon, bringing to School or possession of drugs or alcohol, bringing to School or possession of tobacco. Violations concerning these things have the potential of resulting in suspension, exclusion, and/or expulsion.

EMERGENCIES

A file is kept in the office containing confidential contact and emergency information. Please notify the office immediately should any contact information change such as address, phone number or names.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

St. Mary Catholic School has developed an emergency preparedness plan, which includes fire, tornado, earthquake, nuclear disaster, flooding, and lockdowns. Regular drills are held, as mandated by the State Fire Marshal's office and other state agencies. Copies of the emergency preparedness plan are in every classroom and in the office.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Cubs Basketball: Boys in grades 5-6 are eligible to play for the St. Mary Cubs Basketball Team. 4th graders may be able to play depending on the number of 5th and 6th grade students.

Cubette Basketball: Girls in grades 5-6 are eligible to play for the St. Mary Cubette Basketball Team. 4th graders may be able to play depending on the number of 5th and 6th grade students.

Robotics Club: Mrs. Cull is the facilitator for the Robotics Club.

Cross Country: Mrs. Westphal is the facilitator for the XC Team

Cheerleading: Mrs. Leon is the facilitator for cheerleading.

Students must meet certain academic and behavior guidelines. Students who habitually break the classroom and/or School rules will not be eligible to participate in the program. All classroom work as well as required homework must all be completed in order to fully participate in any athletic program.

Passing grades must be received in all subjects and maintained as well.

FIELD TRIPS

- Classes are encouraged to participate in field trips which relate to areas of the curriculum.
- A permission slip listing all pertinent information will be sent home in advance. Students must return the signed permission slip in order to participate in the field trip. Verbal permission will not be acceptable.
- Parents may be asked to drive or chaperone on these field trips. Parents who are transporting students in their own vehicle must provide proof of insurance and have a current driver's license

on record in the School office. Archdiocesan regulations also prohibit the use of fifteen passenger vans to transport children. Bus service will be used on field trips whenever feasible.

- According to the guidelines from the National Catholic Education Association and the Office of Catholic Schools, parents who plan to chaperone may not bring younger siblings along on a field trip.
- **Chaperones and Volunteers must maintain their Safe Parish Training, have a current background check, and have a Code of Conduct form on file in the office. Training may be obtained by visiting: www.ArchindySafeParish.org Passcode: Archindy2021**

GRADES

Teachers are expected to maintain a grade book using the following Archdiocesan grade scale:

Grades K – 3 will use the standards based grading system.

E=Exemplary: *Demonstrates above grade level master of a standard.*

M=Mastery Level: *Demonstrates an understanding of the standard and consistently performs at grade level expectations.*

PM = Partial Mastery Level: *Demonstrate mastery of some of the skills necessary for the standard.*

N=Non-Mastery Level: *Not progressing at grade level for this standard.*

O = Not meeting mastery of any part of the standard.

Grades 4, 5, and 6 will use the following grading scale:

A=93-100

B=84-92

C=75-83

D=70-74

F=69 or below

I=Incomplete

GUM

Students should not chew gum at school or at any time that they are on school/parish property. This includes before school, during school, and after school. Disciplinary action will occur for students who are chewing gum during the course of the school day.

HOMEWORK

We believe any work done at home should be meaningful and respectful of the family. Homework will be given at the teacher's discretion.

It is up to the family to ensure this work is complete. The failure to complete homework, in most instances, reflects in the student's retention of the subject matter and thus reflects in his/her overall grade based on in-class assignments and tests. Appropriate consequences will be given by the teacher if necessary.

Parents will be contacted for repetitive behavior of not completing homework.

Late or Missing Work Policy: If a student is missing a 3rd assignment, the student will meet with the principal and parents will be notified. This will occur again on the 4th missing assignment. If there is a 5th missing assignment or any thereafter, the student will stay after school for a detention that SAME day. The detention will be served from 3:15-3:45pm.

If the problem continues to persist, the student may be placed on academic probation.

Plagiarism and AI - Students using AI or plagiarizing their work will receive no credit for the work and will also receive disciplinary action.

INTERNET USE ACCEPTANCE POLICY

What Is the Internet?

Internet technology began in the 1960's with the Department of Defense who used it to compete in the space race. Today, the Internet is available to any computer user in the world. The Internet is a communications highway connecting databases and computers whose users are able to access and share information. Students and teachers at St. Mary have access to many curriculum related resources. As we move forward in our technological efforts, it is important to be responsible users.

Listed below are examples of the types of information that may be accessed:

1. Electronic mail communication with people all over the world.
2. Information from libraries, scientists, authors, politicians, and museums etc.
3. Discussion groups on a wide range of topics such as culture and the environment.
4. Videos and music from libraries, museums etc.
5. Research to gather information from the World Wide Web and Navigational software.

Security and Privileges

With access to computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of information and material on the Internet that would not be considered of educational value in the context of a school setting. St. Mary School will take precautions to restrict access to the Internet with proper supervision and implementation of this user's policy. Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and the teacher may review or examine all student files and communications to maintain integrity to the school and student. The school retains the right to edit any material in a student's computer file that is not related to the educational purposes of the school.

Educational Philosophy

Part of our goals is to promote academic and personal growth of students. Technology is available at St. Mary Catholic School to enable students to enhance their learning opportunities by fostering a positive attitude for lifelong learning. Technology has become integrated into the curriculum so students can access, explore, communicate and learn information effectively.

Responsibility of St. Mary School

1. To notify parents through this user's policy that his/her child will have access to Internet services.
2. To make this Internet user policy and procedures available for review by parents, guardians, staff members, and members of the community.
3. To provide in this user policy, descriptions of inappropriate Internet use and consequences for inappropriate use.
4. To supervise students using the Internet services when accessing or transmitting information for educational purposes.
5. To prohibit access to the Internet for any reason other than for educational purposes.
6. To notify students of their responsibilities and that Internet use must comply with the school's educational philosophy and all local state and federal laws.

Responsibility of the Student

1. To use the Internet as a tool for learning. Accessing information, exploring for information and transmitting of information must have an educational purpose and directly related to the school's curriculum and educational philosophy.
2. To obtain the permission of the teacher or staff member before accessing the Internet.
3. To follow general classroom and computer lab rules.
4. To comply with all local, state, and federal laws.

Responsibility of the Parents or Guardians

1. To encourage proper use of the Internet by their children.
2. To be aware of this user policy for Internet use.
3. To understand that computer storage/files may be reviewed, examined and edited at anytime to ensure compliance with school policies.
4. To pay for any Internet services your child accesses without permission of school personnel.

Inappropriate Uses and Consequences

The following activities will not be permitted when accessing the Internet or any other telecommunications network.

1. Accessing, sending, or displaying offensive, obscene, harassing, insulting or attacking messages, pictures, videos, audios or other forms of inappropriate communications.
2. Trespassing on the other rights of users by falsifying user identities, sharing, using or displaying account numbers or passwords.
3. Damaging or disabling files, computers, related equipment or the work of others.
4. Using the Internet for non-educational purposes.
5. Violating copyright laws.

Misuse in any form will not be tolerated. Violation may result in loss of Internet privileges, detention, restitution for monetary damages, and/or suspension. In extreme cases legal action will be pursued and families will be held liable for any damages incurred.

**Please indicate acceptance of the St. Mary Catholic School Acceptable Internet Use Policy by signing the page in back of the handbook.
Internet Use Policy should be signed and returned no later than August 16, 2024.**

LITURGIES

- Weekly liturgy is an important part of the curriculum at St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool. It is the very core of our existence, our religion and our faith. Students plan and actively participate in the liturgies, which are on Wednesday and Friday mornings at 8:30 a.m. As always, Catholic families are expected to attend Sunday Mass with their students as obligated by our Catholic Faith.
- Holy Days of Obligation throughout the year will also be attended.
- Preschool joins us on Wednesdays beginning 2nd semester.
- The students are also regularly given the opportunity to take part in Reconciliation, the Way of the Cross, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and other special services. You are always welcome and invited to join together with us.
- We welcome families to join us for Mass and sit with your child(ren).
- The children are taught that prayer is essential in daily living. Giving example in prayer is highly important as children watch and copy the way we speak to and of God. Parents can assist the teacher in giving inspiration, understanding, and meaning to these common forms of prayer the child should use in his/her daily life.

Morning Offering	Meal Prayers
The Our Father	The Glory Be
The Hail Mary	Apostles' Creed

- Spontaneous prayer is also fostered, taught, and encouraged to thank, praise, petition, and make reparation to our good God.

LOST AND FOUND

Please mark all coats, jackets, gym shoes, lunch boxes, and other belongings with your child's name. Items found should be turned into the office.

LUNCH and BREAKFAST PAYMENTS

When breakfast or hot lunch is provided in cooperation with the Rushville Consolidated School System, there is a charge of \$1.75 for breakfast and \$2.50 per day (includes milk) for lunch, plus \$.60 for extra milk. Payment must be paid by the first day of the week for all lunches that will be ordered that week. A large lump sum may be paid and placed in your child's lunch account. As your child orders lunch/milk, your child's account will be charged that amount. Once the account is close to being depleted, you will be notified to send in more lunch money to be placed in their lunch account. Students bringing a sack lunch from home may purchase milk for \$.60 each.

MEDICATION POLICY

In order to protect the health and welfare of children and school staff members, Indiana laws require that school personnel observe certain safeguards in administering prescription and over-the-counter medication to your child, the following procedures must be observed:

1. We must have the Authorization to Dispense Medication Form completely filled in with all information complete, including specific instructions for administration, dosage, reason to be given, etc.

OUT OF UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Students may wear:

- *jeans
- *tennis shoes
- *short socks
- *shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- *skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- *skorts
- *sweatshirts
- *jogging suits
- *nail polish
- *jewelry
- *dresses
- *slacks

Students may not wear:

- *flip-flop sandals
- *no open back or open toe shoes
- *tank tops
- *T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- *tennis shoes that convert to roller skates
- *biker shorts
- *pajama pants
- *yoga pants
- *leggings worn as pants – leggings must be worn with a dress or skirt
- *make-up
- *low cut blouses/tops
- *clothing that is extremely tight
- *hats

Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't.

ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL.

REPORT CARDS

St. Mary Catholic School issues report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period for all students in grades kindergarten through sixth. These are sent home with the child to be read and signed by the parent, and then returned to the teacher who issued the report. In addition to this, teachers also send progress reports home to parents at the end of the first five weeks of each grading period. You can access and monitor your child's progress via Powerschool 24/7.

Safe Parish

Every adult who interacts with students at St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool must complete the Safe Parish program and the required background check, as per the guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. St. Mary Catholic School will pay for the student's primary guardians' background checks only, up to two. All other interested adults must pay the cost of the background check, which is currently \$7.00, directly to the school before being approved and certified.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Policy of the SMS School Commission

#1999-1

Adopted: May 4, 1999

School Safety – Zero Tolerance for Weapons

The SMS School Commission recognizes that its responsibility for the safety of students extends to possible natural and human-made disasters and those emergencies are best met by planning and preparedness.

There will be zero tolerance for knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon. Students will be immediately suspended from school and recommended for expulsion for such possession, unless the particular circumstances for the case show that expulsion is inappropriate per the discretion of administration. No exceptions shall be made in the case of the possession of a loaded or unloaded firearm. Police will be notified per Indiana code.

Policy of the SMS School Commission

#1999-2

Adopted: May 4, 1999

School Safety – Threats

The SMS School Commission recognizes that its responsibility for the safety of students extends to possible natural and human-made disasters and that such emergencies are best met by planning and preparedness.

All threats will be taken very seriously. Administration will determine the gravity of the situation in which the threat was made. Parents will be notified. Students who make threats can/will be suspended from school and be required to receive psychological assessment and counseling. The student can return only if he/she presents a written recommendation to that effect from the psychologist/psychiatrist and the administration is willing to have the student back.

If the student returns, his/her parents must be notified, in writing, that a second offense will result in automatic expulsion.

In the case of an adult threat, immediate legal action will be taken.

SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

St. Mary's Catholic School believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of

academic achievement. As an Indiana accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school has a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have behavior crises are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint.

Behavioral interventions for children must ensure all children are treated with dignity and respect. This environment should allow all children to be free from physical or mental abuse, aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety, and any physical seclusion or restraint imposed solely for purposes of discipline or convenience.

Seclusion or restraint shall not be used as routine school safety measures; that is, they shall not be implemented except in situations where a child's behavior or action poses imminent danger of physical harm to self or others and not as a routine strategy implemented to address instructional problems or inappropriate behavior (e.g., disrespect, noncompliance, insubordination, out of seat), as a means of coercion or retaliation, or as a convenience. Any use of either seclusion or restraint shall be supervised, short in duration and used only for the purposes of de-escalating the behavior.

Parents can access a full copy of our school's plan by request in the school office.

ST. MARY PTO (PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION)

All parents are invited to become active members of our parent group, St. Mary PTO. This organization consists of teachers and fathers, mothers, and guardians of children in St. Mary Catholic School. All members are encouraged to attend the business meetings, which are held in the school multipurpose room four times each school year. Schedule for the year as well as officers will be sent home by September.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

St. Mary participates in the statewide testing, I-Learn, I-Read, WIDA

- Students in grades 3-6 take the ILEARN (Indiana Statewide Testing for Education Progress) standardized tests as required by the Indiana State Department of Education. This test is administered yearly in the spring. There are also 3 benchmark assessments that will be administered from the state for ILearn.
- 2nd and 3rd graders will take the I-Read 3 test
- English as a Second Language Learners will participate in WIDA testing in February.
- I-Ready Diagnostic testing will be offered to all students several times as well. Results will be tracked and shared with families when administered.
- Those students who score at risk on IREAD or below or approaching proficiency on the Math and/or Language Arts portions of the ILEARN will complete the appropriate IXL Skill Plans during the summer.

TUITION

The information below is an explanation of the tuition plan which will be in effect during this school year for families with children attending St. Mary Catholic School, Rushville, (Preschool through grade 6). The details of the plan are as follows:

MINIMUM TUITION AMOUNTS TO BE CHARGED PER MONTH PER FAMILY:

1. **YEARLY SCHOOL TUITION**
K-6: \$6670

2. **Preschool**
\$4465 for all day, everyday attendance

\$2235 for half day, everyday attendance

Please ask the office for tuition for reduced number of days.

\$100 REGISTRATION FEE is assessed to all new students in addition to tuition.

\$60 Uniform fee for students K-6 who order through the school.

Both preschool and school tuition that needs to be financed will be paid through FACTS Tuition Management. Incidental charges for lunch and after school care exceeding \$100 each will be charged to your FACTS account as warranted.

Placement in the preschool class will be determined by priorities established in the student handbook and by the administration and St. Mary School Commission and will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

The intent of the School Commission is to make a Catholic school education possible for any family desiring such an opportunity. Some money is available to assist Catholic school families who are unable to pay full tuition and need tuition assistance. Your family will be able to complete a St. Mary Needs Based Scholarship Application, if they do not qualify for a Choice Scholarship or SGO Scholarship

CHOICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM/SGO PROGRAM

As of July, 2011, St. Mary Elementary School became eligible to accept students through both the Choice Scholarship Program (HB 1003) and the Tax Credit Scholarship Program which is a Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO). Requirements and guidelines can be accessed by visiting the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) website at www.idoe/schoolchoice.com or please contact the school.

WATER BOTTLES

Students are allowed to bring water bottles to school. Water bottles must be 20 oz or less in size. They must be NON-SPILLABLE with caps that completely close. Only WATER is allowed to be in the water bottles. Any violations of this policy will result in the privilege being revoked. We have all new carpet in the building, including the classrooms, and we want to keep them looking nice and clean.

WEDNESDAY EARLY DISMISSAL

Our students are released 40 minutes earlier (at 2:30 p.m.) than normal on Wednesday of each week. This will coincide with the Rush County School release, bus and dismissal schedule. Teachers and staff members will be attending weekly in-service meetings and professional development.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

School staff and volunteers:

- Will only use email accounts that are provided by the School to communicate electronically with young people.
- Should only communicate with students and parents using the approved system, that is provided by the School or employer.
- Must decline or disregard invitations from students to interact one-on-one through instant messaging, texting, and social networking sites.
- Should not use a personally owned device such as a cell phone or smart phone to communicate with a student or young person.
- Should not use a web cam or internet type of phone to communicate with a student or young person.
- Always notify the parent or guardian anytime there is electronic or telephone communication to a student or young person involving schedule changes, cancelation of practice, weather cancellations, etc.
- Always notify the principal anytime a teacher or caring adult uploads a file to a student or a young person as well as copy the file that was uploaded to the parent and the principal.
- Adults and staff members of the school are forbidden from knowingly participating in any type of online games with students or young people.
- In the case of an emergency, if an adult uses a personal communications device or email account to contact an individual student; the date, time, and nature of the contact must be copied directly to the principal at the same time. (Pam Wells, pwells@stmaryrush.org)
- Adults must acknowledge in writing that they are aware that technology auditing software is being used by the school or employer in order to protect not only students, but also the adults.

Any violations of this policy must be immediately reported to the principal, Pam Wells, at pwells@stmaryrush.org.

All staff and volunteers will have this signed policy kept on file, together with updated Safe Parish, and Code of Conduct form for each year.

_____ Date: _____
Staff or Volunteer

Please see page 31. There will be one form signed in which you agree to the Technology Policy, Code of Conduct, Handbook Agreement, and Internet User Policy. That form needs signed and returned to the office no later than **August 16, 2024.**

Archdioceses of Indianapolis

Code of Conduct

As a community of faith, we are committed to safeguard our children and youth, the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. The following rules and regulations reflect that commitment and apply to clergy, employees, and volunteers.

I will:

- Safeguard children and youth entrusted to my care at all times.
- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Attend Virtues: Protecting God’s Children training and read monthly online articles.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with a child or youth at church/school activities.
- Refrain from giving inappropriate, personal gifts to children or youth.
- Avoid all unnecessary physical contact, especially when alone with a minor.
- Obtain permission from a parent or guardian before contacting a minor via social media or before posting pictures, video, and other information that may identify a minor.
- Always maintain a professional attitude when dealing with minors, avoiding emotional attachment and being aware of the powerful attraction of adults in positions of authority.
- Report suspected child abuse to civil authorities (Indiana hotline: 800-800-5556) or to a local law enforcement agency and to the archdiocese (victim assistance coordinator: 800-382-9836, ext. 1548). Report any violations of this code of conduct to the victim assistance coordinator. Confidential reports to the archdiocese can also be made online at www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com. You do not have to give your name.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Communicate any views contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol while overseeing youth at any church/school activities.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs.
- Allow minors to have and/or use alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Use profanity or engage in behavior that is harassing or degrading to others.
- Allow minors to have, or assist them in gaining access to, pornographic or inappropriate websites, movies, or printed materials.

I understand and will abide by the rules and guidelines in this Code of conduct.

Printed Name

Parish, School, or Agency Name

Signature

Date

Please see page 31. There will be one form signed in which you agree to the Technology Policy, Code of Conduct, Handbook Agreement, and Internet User Policy. That form needs signed and returned to the office no later than **August 16, 2024.**

ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL INTERNET USE ACCEPTANCE POLICY

What Is the Internet?

Internet technology began in the 1960's with the Department of Defense who used it to compete in the space race. Today, the Internet is available to any computer user in the world. The Internet is a communications highway connecting databases and computers whose users are able to access and share information. Students and teachers at St. Mary have access to many curriculum related resources. As we move forward in our technological efforts, it is important to be responsible users.

Listed below are examples of the types of information that may be accessed:

1. Electronic mail communication with people all over the world.
2. Information from libraries, scientists, authors, politicians, and museums etc.
3. Discussion groups on a wide range of topics such as culture and the environment.
4. Videos and music from libraries, museums etc.
5. Research to gather information from the World Wide Web and Navigational software.

Security and Privileges

With access to computers and people all over the world, also comes the availability of information and material on the Internet that would not be considered of educational value in the context of a school setting. St. Mary School will take precautions to restrict access to the Internet with proper supervision and implementation of this user's policy. Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and the teacher may review or examine all student files and communications to maintain integrity to the school and student. The school retains the right to edit any material in a student's computer file that is not related to the educational purposes of the school.

Educational Philosophy

Part of our goals is to promote academic and personal growth of students. Technology is available at St. Mary Catholic School to enable students to enhance their learning opportunities by fostering a positive attitude for lifelong learning. Technology has become integrated into the curriculum so students can access, explore, communicate and learn information effectively. All students at St. Mary School have access to 1:1 devices.

Responsibility of St. Mary School

1. To notify parents through this user's policy that his/her child will have access to Internet services.
2. To make this Internet user policy and procedures available for review by parents, guardians, staff members, and members of the community.
3. To provide in this user policy, descriptions of inappropriate Internet use and consequences for inappropriate use.
4. To supervise students using the Internet services when accessing or transmitting information for educational purposes.
5. To prohibit access to the Internet for any reason other than for educational purposes.
6. To notify students of their responsibilities and that Internet use must comply with the school's educational philosophy and all local state and federal laws.

Responsibility of the Student

1. To use the Internet as a tool for learning. Accessing information, exploring for information and transmitting of information must have an educational purpose and directly related to the school's curriculum and educational philosophy.
2. To obtain the permission of the teacher or staff member before accessing the Internet.
3. To follow general classroom and computer lab rules.
4. To comply with all local, state, and federal laws.

Responsibility of the Parents or Guardians

1. To encourage proper use of the Internet by their children.
2. To be aware of this user policy for Internet use.
3. To understand that computer storage/files may be reviewed, examined and edited at anytime to insure compliance with school policies.
4. To pay for any Internet services your child accesses without permission of school personnel.

Inappropriate Uses and Consequences

The following activities will not be permitted when accessing the Internet or any other telecommunications network.

1. Accessing, sending, or displaying offensive, obscene, harassing, insulting or attacking messages, pictures, videos, audios or other forms of inappropriate communications,
2. Trespassing on the other rights of users by falsifying user identities, sharing, using or displaying account numbers or passwords.
3. Damaging or disabling files, computers, related equipment or the work of others.
4. Using the Internet for non-educational purposes.
5. Violating copyright laws.

Misuse in any form will not be tolerated. Violation may result in loss of Internet privileges, detention, restitution for monetary damages, and/or suspension. In extreme cases legal action will be pursued and families will be held liable for any damages incurred.

Please indicate acceptance of the St. Mary Catholic School Acceptable Use Policy, by filling out the information below and return it to school by August 16, 2024. If you do not want your child to use the Internet at school, please still fill out the form, but mark a large “NO” overtop of the writing on the form.

Family Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade Level _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade Level _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade Level _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade Level _____

I/we have read, understand and will comply with the Internet Use Policy and guidelines for St. Mary School and hereby give my/our permission for the student to participate in school sanctioned Internet activities.

Parent Signature(s): _____

or Legal Guardian(s): _____

Date: _____

Please see page 33. There will be one form signed at the end in which you agree to the Technology Policy, Code of Conduct, Handbook Agreement, and Internet User Policy. That form needs signed and returned to the office no later than **August 16, 2024.**

ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL - HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

We the undersigned, state than we have read, discussed, and agree to be governed by the policies as stated in the Parent – Student Handbook for St. Mary School during the school year. We understand fully the regulations contained therein and recognize the right of the School to establish rules and provide for their enforcement. St. Mary Catholic School retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause and parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Date: _____

Parent Signature(s): _____

or Legal Guardian(s): _____

Student’s Signature

Grade

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

This form needs signed and returned to the office no later than **August 16, 2024.**

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Student Health and Safety Plan

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis believe:

- in fostering positive relationships that exemplify the love of God;
- that Catholic school communities are enriched by the unique image and likeness of God that is present in each individual;
- that formation best occurs within faith-filled cultures of learning that are inclusive
- that parents are the primary educators of each young person and that it is the responsibility of Catholic schools to support the domestic church;
- that Catholic schools are part of the evangelizing mission of the Church, forming disciples through the intentional integration of faith, culture, and life;
- and that “excellence” is defined by and achieved through the growth and holistic development – spiritual, intellectual/academic, social, emotional, and physical – of the individual within the context of community.

The best way in which Catholic schools can practice these beliefs is by operating Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities in their preferred form – in person – whenever possible. Therefore, as early as July 1, 2021, Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities will resume with new health and safety precautions in place, unless there is a resurgence of the pandemic and/or canonical and/or civil authorities require(s) closure.

The Catholic school will take every precaution possible to protect students and adults. Heightened protocols related to cleaning and sanitization are in place. Expectations of proper handwashing, physical distancing to the extent possible, and minimal sharing of resources to the extent possible will be enforced. Guidance from IDOE, CDC, and local authorities will be employed as best fits our Catholic school community as determined by administration. A more comprehensive plan is (attached/included).

1. I understand that the School will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment, including specific measures to guard against the spread of a contagion such as Covid-19. I accept that no matter the precautions taken by the School there is no way to fully assure that such measures will be successful in preventing injury, exposure to a contagion, or illness. I understand that by allowing my child to participate in Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities, there is some assumed risk on behalf of students and their parents.
2. I will provide my student the necessary equipment, resources, and supports needed for participation. These needed materials will be communicated by the teacher(s), coach(es), and/or moderator(s). I will also reinforce to my student the need to maintain all expected protocols related to his/her health and that of others.
3. I understand that parish and school leaders, united in the mission of the Catholic Church, work collaboratively to make sure shared spaces are as safe and secure as possible for participants in all ministries.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL and PRESCHOOL
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We the undersigned, state than we have read, discussed, and agree to be governed by the technology policy on page 27 of the St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool Parent – Student Handbook.



We the undersigned, state than we have read, discussed, and agree to be governed by the Code of Conduct on page 28 of the St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool Parent – Student Handbook.



We the undersigned, state than we have read, discussed, and agree to be governed by the Internet Use Acceptance policy on pages 29 and 30 of the St. Mary Catholic School and Preschool Parent – Student Handbook.



We the undersigned, state than we have read, discussed, and agree to be governed by the policies as stated in the Parent – Student Handbook for St. Mary School. We understand fully the regulations contained therein and recognize the right of the School to establish rules and provide for their enforcement. St. Mary Catholic School retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause and parents will be given prompt notification if needed.

Date: _____

Parent Signature(s): _____

or Legal Guardian(s): _____

Student's Signature

Grade

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

This copy can be retained in the handbook for your records. There is a separate copy sent home the first week to be signed and returned to the office no later than **August 16, 2024**.

***Any issue not covered in this Parent/Student Handbook is addressed on an individual basis.