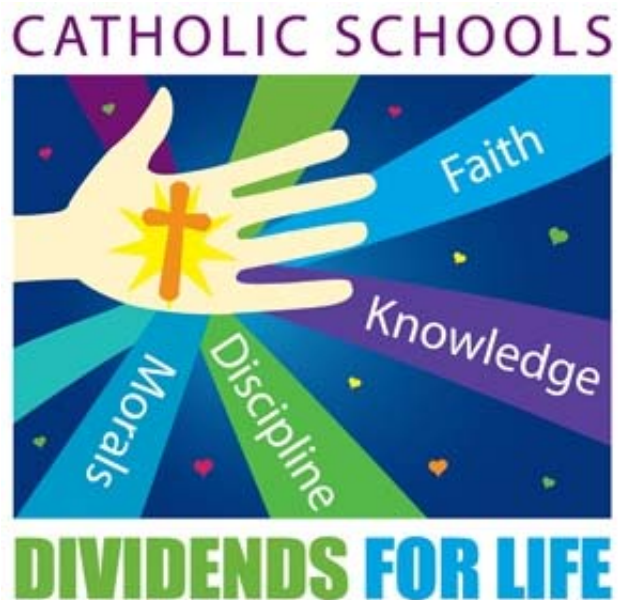


STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL



**PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK
2009 - 2010**



August 2009

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Star of the Sea Catholic School. In choosing Star of the Sea, you have demonstrated your support and commitment to Catholic education. As parents, faculty, staff and students, we work together as a community to provide a Christ-centered and virtue-based school.

It is our hope that this Handbook will be studied carefully in a family setting, so that students and parents alike are familiar with what is expected as stated in the Parent/Student Handbook.

During the first week of school, please take the time at home to read and discuss the content of the Handbook and review it periodically during the year.

As parents, students, faculty, and staff, we work together as a community to provide a Christ-centered and virtue-based school.

*The Administration and Faculty
Star of the Sea Catholic School*

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STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Star of the Sea Catholic School is rooted in the Gospel teaching of Jesus. Our mission is to continue a long tradition of spirituality, scholastic excellence, and service – a proven combination that prepares our students for the opportunities of lifelong learning.

STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

VISION STATEMENT

Star of the Sea Catholic School will remain a Christ centered learning environment. Catholic truths, values, and tradition fused with academic excellence will empower students to reach their fullest potential and their ultimate goal of eternal life with Jesus.

DIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Richmond hold a vision that encompasses past, present and future. They are rooted in the Catholic tradition, they address the present, and they are enthusiastically creating a future based on the example and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Catholic Schools **PROCLAIM** their identity as formative communities where prayer and worship, justice and peace, and reconciliation and evangelization become lived.

Catholic Schools **KNOW** themselves as integral to the mission of the church and are the responsibility of being church in the world.

Catholic Schools are **POSITIONED** as the heart of the church's life and, as such, share in the responsibility of being church in the world.

Catholic Schools **NURTURE** personal growth, scholarship, lifelong learning, service and responsible stewardship through a faith-centered way of life.

PHILOSOPHY OF LEARNING

Learning at Star of the Sea Catholic School is an exciting, engaging hands-on experience. Students explore and apply prior knowledge to our challenging, integrated curriculum in a safe and caring environment. This experience fosters the spiritual, academic, social, emotional and physical growth of each child in a Christ-centered faith community.

Throughout the learning process a combination of creative and comprehensive strategies allow students to develop basic concepts and apply critical thinking skills. Teachers address various learning styles, encouraging students to reach their highest potential.

We believe the integration of Catholic religious truths and values with life distinguishes us from other schools. Our integrated curriculum challenges students to be independent, well-rounded thinkers who have the ability to be successful as responsible contributing citizens of society.

HISTORY

Star of the Sea Catholic School was established in 1958 as a parish school under the vision and leadership of Father Nicholas Habets. For the next thirty-eight years, the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) a teaching order from West Chester, Pennsylvania staffed the school. Under the leadership of the IHM Sisters, Star of the Sea School began the mission of educating the parish children in the Catholic faith. Through the years the IHM and lay faculty collaboratively worked to educate the whole child: spiritually, academically, morally and physically.

In 1996, the IHM order withdrew the Sisters from the school. In September 1996, Star of the Sea Catholic School opened its doors for the first time under the direction of a lay principal, Susan K. Fentress, and an all lay faculty and staff. Mrs. Fentress retired June 2008 when Dr. Cathryn Whisman became principal. As an inter-parochial school, Star of the Sea School operates under the auspices of the Office of Catholic Schools.

Star of the Sea School celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2008. The school looks to the future with confidence in our mission to continue a long tradition of spirituality, scholastic excellence, and service – a proven combination that prepares our Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth grade students for the opportunities of lifelong learning.

ACCREDITATION

Star of the Sea Catholic School is dually accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACSCASI) and the Virginia Catholic Education Association (VCEA).

SCHOOL GOALS

RELIGIOUS

To guide the students in developing a personal relationship with God so that they may grow in an awareness of His ways in their lives by:

- Leading students in deepening their faith and commitment to God through communal prayer and liturgical celebrations.
- Help students work toward the goal of Christ-like behavior through service to their school, their parishes, and their community. Lead students in developing their conscience in relation to Catholic Christian values and morals through study of the basic doctrines of the faith.

ACADEMIC

To provide a challenging environment that will enable students to develop their critical thinking skills and achieve a level of competency that assures growth in learning and responsibility by:

- Helping students acquire academic skills needed to achieve success in their required classes.
- Help students to develop their speaking, writing, and listening abilities through an integrated language arts curriculum.
- Help students to acquire critical thinking skills and apply them in all areas of the curriculum.

SOCIAL

To guide the students in developing a positive attitude toward themselves and others, thereby appreciating the God-given gifts of all people by:

- Helping students to grow in self-respect and self-worth through positive reinforcement.
- Teaching students to show respect for authority and peers through acts of kindness and consideration.
- Helping students to grow in self-discipline through responsible completion of school and home assignments.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

Star of the Sea School considers it a privilege to work with parents/guardians in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life – physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, morally, and psychologically. Your choice of Star of the Sea Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, with the Church community and regular reception of the sacraments will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless they are nurtured by the example of good Catholic morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

During these formative years at Star of the Sea School, your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop to his/her fullest potential. As educational partners we cannot doubt the sincerity of the efforts we are each making. It is vital that everyone work together to nurture respect for authority and achieve the positive results needed. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and any other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping our children fulfill God's plan for them.

(The term parent, in this Handbook, refers not only to a student's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.)

Parents as Partners

As partners in the educational process at Star of the Sea Catholic School we ask parents:

To support the religious and educational goals of the school.

To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.

To provide good example of a personal relationship with God, and the Church community.

To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

To set rules, times, and limits so that your child gets to bed early on school nights.

To make sure your child arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day.

To make sure your child is dressed according to the school dress code and presents themselves as young ladies and gentlemen.

To make sure your child completes class assignments on time.

To provide lunch or lunch money each day.

To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.

To meet all financial obligations to the school.

To read school notes, letters and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education.

To notify the school of any changes of address or important phone numbers or emergency information.

To actively participate in volunteering at Star of the Sea Catholic School to support the needs of the school.

To make sure that your child(ren) read and understand this handbook.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Star of the Sea Catholic School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of 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 Star of the Sea School:

1. Catholic students registered and actively participating in a Catholic parish.
2. Non-Catholic students - Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy and mission of Star of the Sea School will be accepted on a space available basis.

Students entering Pre-Kindergarten must be four (4) years of age by September 30th. Students entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 30th.

Only students transferring from another Catholic school or out-of-state may be accepted into 8th grade provided they meet the current 8th grade academic standards at Star of the Sea School.

Students applying for admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the **current report card, standardized test results, and teacher recommendation**. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at Star of the Sea School will meet the educational needs of the students. New students entering grades K-8 may be required to take a test in some academic areas or interview with the principal as part of the admission process.

Other information that must be submitted includes:

- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Health Records
- Birth Certificate (original)
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Custody agreement if applicable
- Record of IEP **or other educational testing** if applicable
- Recommendation form from former teacher/principal.

New students are admitted on probation. Their progress both socially and academically will be evaluated during the first trimester. Students who do not comply with school regulations and policies or are unable to meet the academic standards may be asked to withdraw from Star of the Sea School.

Academic Standing

All applicants to Star of the Sea Catholic School must be in good academic and behavioral standing in order to be considered for acceptance. Any student who has been recommended for retention will automatically repeat that grade upon acceptance to Star of the Sea School. Students with special needs will be evaluated on an individual basis. Documentation of any educational and/or psychological testing must be submitted to the school with the application. Although some accommodations can be made at Star of the Sea School, students with active IEP's must be able to meet all curriculum standards.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Religious Instruction

Since religion permeates all aspects of life, it should permeate all areas of education. In regard to curriculum, religion is the core subject and all other subjects intensify and widen the child's growth in a Christian way of life. Throughout its curriculum, Star of the Sea School strives to provide experiences that encourage our students to grow as Christians; however, it is only when parents take an active part in the shaping of their children's spiritual life that this goal is achievable. Parents and children are urged to attend Church as a family.

Worship

School liturgies, class masses, and prayer services are scheduled regularly throughout the school year. Please see the monthly calendars for dates and times. Parents are encouraged to join in these liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations. **The sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated with the students in grades 3-8 during Advent and Lent.**

Prayer

Students at Star of the Sea begin each day by praying together as a school community and saying Pledge of Allegiance. Students begin and end lunch with prayer. The school day is ended again with a school prayer. Different prayers are taught at each grade level.

Sacramental Preparation

Immediate preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist is a parish function. Please contact your parish for information on sacramental preparation. The school works together with the parishes by providing sacramental studies that are included in the Religion curriculum throughout the school.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Star of the Sea School follows the Consensus Curriculum set forth by the Diocese of Richmond. A copy of the Consensus Curriculum may be reviewed in the school office or at http://www.richmonddiocese.org/ocs/school_curr/curr_list.htm.

Quality Work

Beginning in the first grade, students are taught the correct way to prepare and present written work. This instruction is progressive and designed to standardize our work and teach our students this important skill. The following guidelines will help reinforce the school's effort:

- Much of the written class work students do at Star of the Sea is done in bound copybooks, usually one for each subject (purchased from Star of the Sea School). Spiral notebooks and binders are not **encouraged** at Star of the Sea School.
- Students are taught from the earliest grades to use headings on their papers (name, date, subject).
- **Black ballpoint pen is used for all written work except math in the middle and upper grades. All math work should be completed in pencil.**
- Writing is expected to be in complete sentences, using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling **for all assignments.**
- Rulers are used for underlining.
- Neatness in written work is expected.
- Organizational and study skills are taught at all grade levels.

If parents encourage these good habits and practices at home, it sends a strong message to students that at Star of the Sea, parents and teachers work together.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of the total education of the student. It is intended to reinforce concepts presented in class and includes both written and study assignments. Students should have the skills necessary to complete the assignments independently, and should need only to present finished assignments to parents for approval and signature as required by the teacher. In the primary years, it is essential that the parent accept full responsibility for the students' completion of all home studies. As the student progresses through the primary level, he/she should gradually assume greater personal responsibility. Ultimately, the student should assume total responsibility for both written and study homework. Homework should also stimulate originality and creativity; and for this reason, enrichment assignments and projects are given. **Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.**

Failure to complete homework assignments on a daily basis severely affects the student's grades and indicates a lack of appreciation for our academic standards.

In order to assist parents and help students with homework and study, Star of the Sea School uses the on-line parent communication component Ed Line. Each teacher will have a webpage and will post homework and other important information for parents and students to access from home.

In grades K-4 homework will not be given on the nights there is a Home & School General Meeting scheduled or on weekends.

Grades K and 1 are not encouraged to do homework in After School Care. It is important for parents to supervise homework in grades K and 1.

Teachers in grades 6 – 8 will post homework and test dates to make sure there is a balanced amount of written and study work for those students. No more than 2 major tests will be scheduled on one day.

Academic Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be sent home prior to report cards to inform parents of their child's progress and to indicate students who are experiencing academic difficulty in one or more subject areas. Parents are asked to **sign the notice** and return it to the teacher. Because progress reports are sent home halfway through the trimester, students have time to continue making progress to prevent failure. Parents are advised to monitor the student's progress.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year. Teachers will meet with parents to discuss student's progress at the end of the first trimester. Report cards are a composite of tests, class participation, home study, projects, and class work. Questions or concerns regarding report cards should be brought to the attention of the teacher in a timely manner.

Conferences

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall with the first report card. Additional conferences can be arranged at any time during the school year. Conferences must be scheduled with the teachers. In order to assure quality instruction and supervision of our students, teachers should not be disturbed in the morning before class, during instruction time, lunchtime, during carpool, or at home.

Diocesan Grade Scales

Kindergarten:

- E Exceeds skill level
- S Satisfies the skill level
- P Progressing in skill level
- I Improvement needed in skill level

Grades 1, 2 and 3 - Major Subjects

- A Outstanding Achievement (93 – 100)
- B Above Average Achievement (85 – 92)
- C Average Achievement (77 – 84)
- D Below Level (76 – 70)
- F Not Achieving Grade Level (Below 70)

Grades 1, 2 and 3 - Resource Subjects, Self-Discipline & Study Skills:

- E Exceeds expectations
- S Satisfies expectations
- I Improvement needed
- N Not meeting expectation

Grades 4 - 8:

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| A+ = 98-100 | A = 95-97 | A- = 93-94 |
| B+ = 90-92 | B = 87-89 | B- = 85-86 |
| C+ = 82-84 | C = 79-81 | C- = 77-78 |
| D+ = 75-76 | D = 72-74 | D- = 70-71 |
| F = 69 & below | | |

Grades 4 and 5 - Resource Subjects, Self-Discipline & Study Skills:

- E Exceeds expectations
- S Satisfies expectations
- I Improvement needed
- N Not meeting expectation\

Academic Awards

Principal's List - Grades 6-8

of A (95) or above in all major and A- or above in all resource subjects.

Grade

First Honors - Grades 6-8

Grade of B+ (90) or above in all major and B or above in all resource subjects.

Second Honors - Grades 6-8

Grade of B- (85) or above in all major and B- or above in all resource subjects.

Pursuit of Excellence Award (2nd and 3rd trimesters) - Grades 6-8

Must pass all subjects and at least one grade in a major subject must improve. No subject (major or resource) grades may go down.

Super Nova - Grades 4-5

Grade of A or above in all major subjects and all resource subjects, study skills and self-discipline/conduct grades must be satisfactory.

Shining Star - Grades 4-5

Grade of B or above in all major subjects and all resource subjects, study skills and self-discipline/conduct grades must be satisfactory.

Rising Star - (2nd and 3rd trimester) - Grades 4-5

At least one grade in a major subject must improve and no subject, study skills or self-discipline/conduct grades may go down.

Faith In Action (Grades K-8)

The Faith In Action Award was initiated to honor the student in each class who exhibits outstanding qualities of Christian attitude and character. This award is given monthly one student in each class.

Diocesan Criteria for Pre-Algebra

Rising Seventh grade students who meet the following criteria may be permitted to take Pre-Algebra.

- 85 % or above on standardized testing in Math in grade 6
- 90% or above annual average for grade 6 Math
- A minimum score of 80% on the Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test administered in the Spring to all 6th grade students
- Teacher recommendation

At Star of the Sea School 7th graders who successfully meet the requirements will be placed in Pre-Algebra. Students who did not meet all of the requirements will be placed in Pre-Algebra Part 1.

Diocesan Criteria for Algebra 1

Rising Eighth grade students who meet the following criteria may be permitted to take Algebra. 1

- 85% or above on the Math portion of the Terra Nova Test taken in 7th grade
- Cumulative average of 85% or above in Pre-Algebra
- A minimum score of 80% on the Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test administered in 6th grade or to new students.
- Teacher recommendation

At Star of the Sea School, 8th graders who successfully met the criteria for Pre-Algebra will be placed in Algebra 1. Students who took Pre-Algebra Part 1 or who did not successfully complete requirements for Pre-Algebra will be placed in Pre-Algebra Part 2/Introduction to Algebra.

Diocesan Criteria to remain in Algebra 1:

- Students maintain an 85% average or above in Algebra 1 throughout the academic year
- Students who do not maintain an 85% or above average will be placed in 8th grade Pre-Algebra Part 2/Introduction to Algebra.
- Only students who achieve an 85% cumulative average AND pass the Diocesan Algebra 1 exam will receive high school credit for Algebra 1 from the Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools
- Neither Star of the Sea School nor the Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools provides make-up exams for students who do not pass the Diocesan Algebra 1 exam.
- Parents/Students must sign an agreement which states that both parent and student understand and accept the stated guidelines.

Diocesan Criteria for Spanish 1 High School Credit:

Only students who pass Spanish 1, Part 1 in grade 7 AND Spanish 1, Part 2 in grade 8 AND pass the Diocesan Spanish 1 exam in May of the 8th grade year will receive high school credit for Spanish 1 from the Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools. Neither Star of the Sea School nor the Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools provides make-up exams for students who do not pass the Diocesan Spanish 1 exam.

Academic Concerns

Academic concerns will be addressed primarily by the teachers and parents working together to assure student success. Teachers will provide a variety of strategies to accommodate different learning needs. If further intervention is needed, a conference will be set up between parents, Principal, and teachers. Students who are struggling academically may also be referred to Star of the Sea School SRT (Student Resource Team) to help identify needs and provide recommendations and support for students and parents.

Sometimes it is necessary to refer a student and his or her family to community professionals for issues that cannot be easily met within the classroom. If the school recommends further testing or educational supports, a timely response will be required from the parents in order to assure educational needs can be met at Star of the Sea School. No major accommodations will be made within the classroom without a diagnosis or recommendations from a professional in the community. Any modifications of the curriculum will be noted on the student's report card and permanent record card by the teacher, after approval of the principal.

Academic Probation/Failures

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. The principal and teacher will meet with parents and students who have multiple failures in major subjects each trimester. Any student who falls into this category will be put on probation for the following trimester. Academic probation impacts a student's ability to participate in co-curricular activities. Two successive trimesters of multiple failures in major subjects may be cause for dismissal from Star of the Sea School.

Promotion and Retention Policy

Advancement to the next grade at Star of the Sea Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level. Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend retention in a grade, tutoring or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

- Students in grades K-3 are promoted upon mastery and application of essential skills in Math, Reading and Language Arts.
- Students in grades 4-8 are promoted to the next grade on the basis of earning a passing (70 or above) yearly average in each of the core subjects of Religion, Language Arts (English, Spelling, Reading), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.
- Students in grade 8 who do not meet the promotion standards (i.e. have failing yearly average in a core subject) will be retained in grade 8 and may not participate in Graduation exercises.
- Students in grade 8 who have been sent to the principal for any disciplinary actions (i.e. write-ups, suspensions, behavior contract) during their 8th grade year will not be eligible to represent their class as a speaker at graduation.

Provisions for Transcripts and/or Diploma

As a general rule the school shall have the right not to certify a student's graduation or provide transcripts of the student's academic record to third parties, e.g. other schools, or to issue a Certificate of Diploma to the student, if there has been a breach of a material condition of the contract, including the failure to meet financial obligations.

School Counselor

Star of the Sea School contracts with Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads to provide counseling services for the students of Star of the Sea School. These services may be accessed by calling the office, teacher referral, principal referral or student self-referral. If a child still is having difficulty educationally or managing his/her behavior, the counselor will be consulted to determine the best way to address needs

Testing Program

The Diocesan standardized testing program is administered in the spring for students in the designated grades. Terra Nova Standardized Test and is administered to students in grades 1-7. Test results are used annually to establish learning plans throughout the school.

Junior High Service Program

The community service program was instituted to expose our children to the joy of giving of their time and talents. Eighth graders are responsible for completing twenty (20) hours; Seventh graders are responsible for completing (15) hours; Sixth graders are responsible for completing (10) hours.

- Volunteer hours may be served at Star of the Sea School or at other organizations where help is needed.
- If hours are served at a location other than Star of the Sea School, please send in a note from that organization with the student's name, number of hours worked, type of community service and the signature of the overseeing adult.
- Hours worked during the summer will be credited in the fall and will count for whichever grade the student is in that fall.
- Students who volunteer to help their parents, at the parent's workplace or their parent works at Star of the Sea School, should serve no more than one third of their hours helping their parent. The student may, however, earn additional hours helping other adults at the workplace.
- If students earn more than the required hours per grade, they may carry them over to the next grade. However, the intent of the program is to have students do volunteer hours each year so they will experience the satisfaction serving others brings.
 - Hours not served in one year will be added to the next year's requirement.
 - Students who meet or exceed the recommended number of hours will receive a certificate recognizing their efforts.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Star of the Sea School offers a variety of extra-curricular activities that include athletics, student council, performing arts, band, and forensics. Activities are open to students in different grade levels depending on the program. Further information about programs may be found on the school website.

In order to participate in extra-curricular activities a student must pass all courses he/she is currently taking, and which are required for graduation. Any student who has a failing grade or an unsatisfactory grade in the areas of conduct or effort will not be permitted to participate in sports/extra-curricular programs for a period of 3 weeks. When improvement has been noted by the teacher, the student may resume the extra-curricular activity.

All extra-curricular activities come under the direct authority of the Principal or a designee.

Field Trips

During the course of the year, classes may plan educational and enriching trips during school time. Field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

Only the diocesan permission slip, signed by parent/guardian, is acceptable for each child who takes part in the activity. Handwritten letters and phone calls will not be accepted in lieu of the diocesan permission slip.

Field trip instructions will be given to the volunteers by the supervising faculty member, so that there will be no doubt as to the responsibilities of a chaperone.

- All school rules are in force, unless the principal has stated otherwise.
- Supervision is both mental and physical. Be sure that attention is always on students.
- We hope that you enjoy the outing, but we are grateful for your remembering that your first responsibility is the safety of the students.

DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS

ROSE UNIFORM is the approved uniform supplier for Star of the Sea School.

Local address: 1920 Centerville Turnpike, Va. Beach, 479-2100

When purchasing items please be sure you are buying the proper size. If clothing does not fit the child properly (too tight, too loose, etc) you will be required to replace the clothing with the proper size.

The length of jumpers, skirts and shorts will be strictly enforced. If altering the length of the jumpers, skirts or pants please allow for growth as you will be required to lengthen or replace if there is not enough hem. Shorts should be the standard length and not altered.

Star of the Sea School uniform sweatshirts are the only allowable sweatshirts. Special permission will be given for wearing Star of the Sea sports sweatshirts during the sport season. During colder weather students may wear jackets/winter coat, Star of the Sea sweaters, Star of the Sea sweatshirt or Star of the Sea fleece for outerwear. Other sweatshirts or “hoodies” are not appropriate outerwear.

The principal maintains the final say on what is considered proper length and proper sizing of all uniform items. If it is determined that something does not fit a student properly the parents/guardians will be notified and expected to correct the problem promptly.

Shoes

Except during Physical Education (PE), all students in grades K-8 must wear saddle shoes or blue, black or brown leather dress shoes. Tie or shoes that buckle (must be a buckle, not just decorative) are acceptable for girls. With school uniforms no sandals, flip-flops, sneakers, athletic shoes of any kind, boots (any shoe that comes above the ankle), or clogs/mules may be worn. Heels should be of a moderate (approximately one inch height) for safety. Shoes with brads, eyes, or any other decorative ornamentation are not acceptable. Shoe laces must be dark in color.

Personal Appearance

Boys: Hair must be neatly trimmed. Boy’s haircuts should be short with ears, neck and eyebrows showing. Shaggy, surfer styles may be popular but they are not in line with our dress code. It must be combed off the face out of eyes; no rat or pony tails for boys and boys must be clean shaven where applicable. Hair should remain the natural color during the school year. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.

Girls: No make-up, jewelry, perfume, cologne, colored nail polish (*only clear may be worn*), acrylic, gel or artificial nails. Girls are permitted to wear small modest post earrings (one per ear). The earrings may not extend beyond the earlobe. Hair should be brushed and neat and should remain the natural color during the school year.

All: No tattoos permitted (temporary or permanent)

Older students are encouraged to bathe daily and wear deodorant.

Blouses and shirts must be tucked in at all times. **Polo shirts should have at least two buttons buttoned.**

Uniforms should be washed regularly.

Dress Uniform

Dress uniforms will be worn on days we have school liturgies or on days that we have formal functions.

Boys: (K-8) Navy blue uniform pants with a black/brown/navy blue belt
White uniform dress shirt (long/ short sleeve) and school tie
Navy blue uniform socks

Girls: (K-5) Split front plaid uniform jumper
White uniform round collar blouse (long/short sleeve)
Navy blue uniform knee socks or uniform tights
(6-8) Plaid uniform skirt with uniform oxford button down collar blouse (long/short sleeve) and navy blue uniform knee socks or uniform tights; 8th grade girls may wear school tie (optional)
All skirts should pass the “flamingo test” for length. Girls should be able to stand with leg raised to a 90degree angle and the skirt should touch the back of the leg.

Regular Uniform

Boys: (K-8) Navy blue uniform pants with black/brown/navy blue belt
White or light blue uniform knit polo shirt (short sleeve) w/logo or white uniform knit polo shirt (long sleeve) w/logo.
Optional items - Navy blue uniform sweat shirt w/logo OR navy blue uniform cardigan (K-5), navy blue uniform pull over sweater (6-8); **Navy blue** uniform socks.

Girls: (K-5) Split front plaid uniform jumper – length should pass the “flamingo test”
White uniform round collar blouse (long/short sleeve)
Navy blue uniform knee socks or uniform tights.
The option of navy blue Rose Uniform, flat front pants, with a black, blue or brown belt **and a white or light blue uniform knit polo shirt** w/logo (short) OR White uniform round collar blouse (long/short sleeve)
Girls are encouraged to wear shorts under their jumpers/skirts.

(6-8) Plaid uniform skirt (length must pass the “flamingo test”) with white or light blue, or navy blue uniform knit polo shirt w/logo (short) OR white uniform knit polo shirt w/logo (long sleeve) OR white uniform oxford button down collar blouse (long/short sleeve).

An option is navy blue Rose Uniform, flat-front pants, with a black, blue or brown belt and shirt or blouse options listed above.

Optional items include navy blue uniform sweat shirt w/logo OR navy blue uniform pull over sweater.

Navy blue uniform knee socks or uniform tights.

Girls may wear shorts under their jumpers/skirts.

Warm Weather Option

Warm weather options run from the start of school through Oct. 31st and begin again April 1st through the end of school of the school year.

Boys: (K-8) Navy blue uniform shorts with black/brown/navy blue belt – length should not be shortened

White or light blue uniform knit shirt polo w/logo

White socks that reach above the ankle

Athletic shoes that are predominantly white or regular uniform shoes

Girls: (K-8) Navy blue uniform shorts/skorts with black/brown/navy blue belt - length should not be shortened

White or light blue uniform knit polo shirt w/logo (no navy blue uniform knit shirts with shorts)

White socks that reach above the ankle

Athletic shoes that are predominantly white in color or regular uniform shoes

Physical Education Uniform

Grades K-8: Students (girls and boys) are required to dress in the Star of the Sea PE

Uniform:

Warm weather - navy blue gym uniform shorts w/logo and white gym uniform t-shirt w/logo

Cold weather – navy uniform sweatshirt and sweatpants w/logo

White athletic socks above the ankle

Athletic shoes – predominantly white

Students will come dressed in their PE uniform on the days that they have scheduled PE classes.

Free Dress Guidelines

On days that students are allowed to come to school not in uniform the following guidelines apply:

- Slacks are acceptable. They should be neat and clean without any holes.
- Skirts must be the same appropriate length as the uniform and pass the “flamingo test”.
- Shirts must have sleeves and may not have any inappropriate logos, pictures, or symbols.
- Parents will be notified to bring a change of clothes if a student comes to school dressed inappropriately.
- These guidelines also apply to after school sponsored functions.
- The best rule: When in doubt, don’t wear it!

CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

All students at Star of the Sea Catholic School are expected to exercise self-control and conduct themselves properly at all times. Behavior must reflect the values of our Catholic Faith. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, honesty, and appropriate language.

Star of the Sea Catholic School Rules of Conduct

1. Students are expected to show respect of peers, faculty, guests, and volunteers through words and actions.
2. Students are to be in proper school uniform as detailed in this handbook.
3. Students are to remain seated if a teacher must leave the room.
4. All property, personal and school, must be given proper care. Textbooks should be covered at all times.
5. Students should enter and exit the buildings quietly.
6. Students may not run inside the building or when moving between buildings.
7. Good manners are to be displayed by all students.
8. Chewing gum is not permitted in the school buildings or on school property during the school day.
9. **All conduct rules and expectations extend to all school sponsored activities and programs.**

Conduct rules and expectations are set for each classroom by the teachers. Discipline will be handled firmly and fairly. This includes general classroom behavior and failure to complete assignments. Items that detract from a learning environment are not allowed at school. Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, any type of aerosol can, radios/players, iPods, MP3 players, inappropriate CD's (no "parental advisory" labeled music is allowed for any school function), electronic games (Game Boys, PSP's, etc.), toys, or trading cards are not allowed to be brought to school. Items that are taken away from students will be held until a parent/guardian comes to pick up. Repeat offense in bringing items to school will result in the items being kept until June.

Cell Phones

Cell phones may be brought to school under the following conditions. Phones must be turned off during the school day. Phones may not be used for taking pictures or text messaging during school time. Phones must be kept in the student's book bag during the school day. Any violations of the rules regarding cell phones will result in cell phones being confiscated and loss of the privilege of bringing them to school.

Cheating

Cheating is a form of stealing, an act of injustice. Copying homework, using notes during a test, receiving answers from another student, sharing homework, or copying information verbatim from the Internet or another source are considered cheating. Cheating will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade and possible suspension.

Harassment/Bullying/Violence

As a reflection of the mission of Star of the Sea Catholic School, it is recognized that bullying, harassing, or violent behavior will not be tolerated. At Star of the Sea we seek to create an environment of learning, compassion, and safety by educating parents, teachers, staff, and students concerning respect.

Bullying/harassment is defined as a abuse of power by an individual (or group) who deliberately targets others for repeated physical and/or psychological abuse. Examples of bullying behaviors include, but are not limited to, a pattern of intimidation, threats, menacing, taunts, teasing, the spreading of rumors, and other psychological abuse; and/or in the extreme, causing injury. Bullying can also include a pattern of deliberate isolation or exclusion of another with the intent to be hurtful. Physical contact such as pushing, punching, kicking, or throwing of objects between students will not be tolerated. Making fun of, writing notes and encouraging a fight are examples of harassment and will not be tolerated.

All forms of cyber-bullying on computers at school or home are unacceptable. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuse of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, and threatening another by sending or posting inappropriate or hurtful messages, pictures or images, including Web site postings or blogs.

All incidents of bullying/harassing/violent behavior will be investigated. Intervention will be conducted and students could face possible suspension or expulsion. All persons – those engaging in bullying behaviors, victims of bullying, or witnesses to the victimization of another – must realize that bullying is a community concern requiring community-wide accountability and commitment to both its prevention and prompt, appropriate response if and when it occurs.

Playground/Recess Expectations

Recess is a privilege. Please discuss the recess rules with your child(ren). Any student who does not behave according to the rules may forfeit the privilege of participating in recess.

All classes are scheduled for playground/recess time. However, no student may leave the playground or designated recess area. The playground is supervised during recess.

In order to provide a safe environment, the following rules must be followed:

1. **HAVE FUN - BUT NOT AT SOMEONE ELSE'S EXPENSE.**
2. Students are to listen to direction of adults and teachers supervising the playground at all times.
3. Teasing, name calling, swearing, fighting or vulgar gestures are not allowed and are considered serious behavior infractions.
4. Rough or dangerous play will result in suspended recess privileges. Throwing of gumballs, acorns, rocks, sticks, dirt, sand, mulch or other organic matter is not allowed.
5. Food or drink is not allowed on the playground.
6. Put balls, jump ropes, etc. away when you are called to line up.
7. **Stop and freeze immediately when the signal is given by an adult.**

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Technology is meant for educational purposes. Access to network services is provided for students to conduct research and other educational goals. Students are expected to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege – not a right. Access entails responsibility and any misuse may result in suspension of privileges. All students and their parents in grades 1 – 8 will sign the Diocesan Acceptable Use Policy that outlines the policies for use at Star of the Sea School as directed by the Diocese of Richmond.

Security for all users in the school is a priority. Anyone with reason to suspect a security problem on the Internet must notify a teacher or Principal.

During school, teachers of younger students will guide them toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they interface with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio and other potentially offensive media.

Violations at school may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Violations occurring outside of school that impact Star of the Sea School may also result in disciplinary or legal action. Violations could include the following:

- a. Sending or displaying offensive or violent messages or pictures.
- b. Using obscene language.
- c. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others.
- d. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks.
- e. Transmitting any material in violation of any national or state regulation.
- f. Violating copyright laws.
- g. Using another's password or attempting to log on to another's account – including faculty and staff.
- h. Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files.
- i. Intentionally wasting limited resources.
- j. Employing the network for commercial purposes.
- k. Misrepresenting oneself on the network.
- l. Inappropriate contact with a faculty/staff member.
- m. Publishing information on the Internet which brings discredit to Star of the Sea School whether done on or off premises.
- n. Doing anything that will limit the use of the network or attempt to alter school system data.
- o. Star of the Sea School may not be held responsible for users' intentional misuse of the Internet or equipment. Star of the Sea School or the Diocese of Richmond makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for Internet service. They will not be responsible for any damages suffered, such as but not limited to; loss of data, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions, user errors or omissions. The school and Diocese denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet or its services.

DISCIPLINE

The essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline. The philosophy inherent in our school aims at motivating children to develop right attitudes toward discipline and responsibility. Students are expected to comply with school directives and policies. Students are to be courteous, respectful and attentive to teachers and other adults at all times. Teachers should treat students with courtesy, respect and attentiveness as well. Students are expected to show respect and consideration for their classmates. These guidelines extend to all school sponsored activities, i.e. Before/After Care Program, Athletics, Performing Arts, etc.)

A student will be sent to the principal when the teacher feels that the student's improper behavior cannot be corrected through teacher management practices. When a child becomes disruptive or uncontrollable in a classroom situation, the parent may be called to remove the student from the school immediately. If a child is threatening or exhibiting violent behavior or is in danger of harming him/herself or others, the Star of the Sea administration reserves the right to summon the appropriate authorities to assist with the child.

Detention

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. Parents are provided with a Detention Form with written notification of the detention. The day, date, and time are at the discretion of the teacher who monitors the detention. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, ballgames, etc.

Off Campus Conduct

What students do out-of-school can directly impact the school. The administration of Star of the Sea School reserves the right to discipline students for out-of-school conduct that interferes with the school or instructional quality in the school. For example, inappropriate use of technology on a home computer, may subject the student to consequences. Inappropriate use includes harassment, use of school name, remarks directed to or about teachers, offensive communications and safety threats. Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, MySpace.com®, XANGA®, Friendster®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, staff and administration, other students or the parishes.

Suspension

In-school suspension (ISS) or out of school suspension (OSS) may be imposed for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

Psychological or physical abuse of another person; disrespect towards fellow students, faculty, staff or volunteers; bullying or harassment (verbal or physical); fighting; defacement of property; stealing; forgery; truancy; biting; obscene or offensive language; leaving school grounds without permission; conduct unbecoming a Christian student; repeatedly disrupting class and learning; or consistent misbehavior which has been documented in writing and sent to parents. Any offense of a sufficiently serious nature, including but not limited to those listed above, may warrant suspension. Cases will be evaluated on an individual basis with the final decision being made by the Principal.

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work with a substitute teacher paid for (\$60.00) by the suspended student's parents. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but failing grades will be recorded for this work.

Our goal is to create a productive learning environment for all of our students. When students continually disrupt this learning a discipline referral to the principal will result in:

- The parents being contacted by the principal.
- Three incident reports may warrant a suspension. For each incident thereafter, a suspension may be given.
- Three suspensions or one serious offense (see above list) and the student is eligible for dismissal from the school.
- Students may be asked to sign a behavior contract by the principal. If this contract is not upheld by the student expulsion is in order.

Expulsion

Expulsion is resorted to when other means of discipline prove ineffectual, and the student's conduct or presence is a definite hindrance to the welfare and progress of the class or school community. Any offense of a sufficiently serious nature may warrant expulsion. Cases will be evaluated on an individual basis with the final decision being made by the Principal after consultation with the Office of Catholic Schools. Parents will be provided written notice of an expulsion.

A student may be immediately expelled from school for, but not limited to:

Possession of a weapon or facsimile of a weapon; possession of drugs (prescription, over the counter, illicit, etc.), alcohol, or tobacco; possession of lighters, matches, flares, fireworks or explosives, etc.; possession of flammable chemicals or fluids, gels, etc.; verbally or physically threatening behavior toward another student, teacher or other adult. Police will be called if a student makes a threat against another student, teacher or other adult or brings any weapon or reasonable facsimile of a weapon to school.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at his/her discretion.

It is the principal's right and sole discretion to dismiss or suspend any student for lack of progress or for conduct that is not in the best interest of the student and/or of the school or for conduct of the parent(s)/guardian(s) that is contrary to the interest of the school.

COMMUNICATION

Star of the Sea Catholic School takes the partnership with parents very seriously. Providing various means of communication is a goal of the school.

ADT Alerts

Star of the Sea School subscribes to the ADT Alert system to keep parents informed. The system has different levels for alerts. With the highest level we are able to notify parents quickly in the event of an emergency by immediately contacting parents through phone and email. Lower levels of alerts allow us to notify parents of important events, weekly memos, and other information. Parents submit all contact information at the beginning of the year and will need to make sure the information is up-dated throughout the year.

Website

Star of the Sea School maintains a website for communication with families and all who are interested in the school. The school website is:

www.sosschool.org

Edline

Star of the Sea School subscribes to Edline, a communication tool for parents, teachers and students. Information will be posted regularly for parent information to help them be effective school partners. Each family will be provided with an access code at the beginning of the school year. Each teacher will have a webpage that will contain important information for the class as well as posted grades, calendars, homework assignments, and other information for students and parents. This tool will help us to develop our interactive classrooms.

The 2009 – 2010 school year will be the first year that the school will be using Edline. We ask that parents are patient with the school and teachers as we learn and adapt to this program. Teachers will be required to post grades and up-date calendars and assignments in a timely fashion once we have completed training and webpages are up.

Wednesday Memo

A weekly memo will be posted on the Edline website keeping families up-to-date on important information, activities, and happenings. Alerts will be sent to remind parents when a memo is posted and for easy access. If you have an item for the memo, it must be sent to the school office by Monday at 12:00 PM. If Monday is a holiday, it must be in the office by the 12:00 PM the Friday before publication. Items not received by the deadline may not be published. The information must be typed or legibly written and is subject to approval by the principal.

Communication Envelopes

Family envelopes will still be maintained in the office to send home information that cannot be posted on the website. Teachers may also utilize the envelope to send home pertinent classroom information. Parents are asked to sign and return envelopes to the homeroom teacher.

Calendars

A yearly school calendar will be posted on the website. Monthly up-dates or changes will be posted monthly or in the Wednesday news. Teachers will post classroom calendars on their webpages.

Telephone/Email

The school phone is a business phone and may not be used by students without permission. Forgotten books, lunches, gym clothes, etc., are not considered serious enough to warrant calling home.

Every faculty/staff person has a voice mailbox and an email address (accessible on our website at www.sosschool.org. or through Edline teacher webpages. Parents may access voice mail by calling the office during school hours. After regular school hours, voice mail may be accessed by dialing 428-8400 and following the recorded instructions.

Teachers will not be interrupted for telephone calls during the school day unless it is an emergency.

DAILY SCHEDULES

School Hours

7:00 A.M.	Before School Care begins
7:45 A.M.	Students in grades PK* through 8 report to classrooms
8:00 A.M.	Prayers and classes begin – students tardy after this point
12:00 P.M.	Dismissal of PK-Half Day Students*
3:00 P.M.	Dismissal (2:30 P.M. on Wednesday)
3:00	After School Care begins (2:30 P.M. on Wednesday)
6:00 P.M.	After School Care ends

Morning Drop-Off

Option 1: Parents may drop children in the “Gym parking lot” following these procedures:

- All traffic must enter from the 16th Street entrance. DO NOT enter the gym parking lot from Pacific Avenue as the open gate on Pacific Avenue will be used as an exit only in the morning.
- Form a single line of traffic along the gym building and stop when directed by the traffic volunteers.
- Children should disembark from the passenger side and traffic volunteers will direct them to the sidewalk.
- Children in classrooms on the church side of the street will then be crossed at the 15th Street crosswalk by staff members and/or parent volunteers. Children whose classrooms are on the gym side will go directly down the sidewalk to their classrooms.
- ALL traffic will exit the gym lot from the gate on Pacific Avenue. ALL TRAFFIC MUST TURN **RIGHT** ON PACIFIC Avenue in order to prevent congestion.

Option 2: Parents choosing to escort their children to the doors of the main building must park on the streets surrounding the school buildings or the Church parking lot. Students must be escorted by an adult from the Church parking lot; this is not a “drop off” area. Students may not walk through the Church to get to the main building.

5th grade students will be met by their teachers and will enter the Parish Hall building through the entrance on the side of the building by the dining hall.

Please do not escort children to their classrooms. Any vehicles illegally parked will be subject to ticketing by the City of Virginia Beach Police.

Afternoon Pick-up

Option 1: Parents may pick up children from the Gym parking lot following these procedures:

- Enter the Gym lot from the 16th Street gate and form parallel lines facing 15th Street. Pull as close to the person in front of and beside you as possible.
- Children will be dismissed from school to the Gym lot. Make eye contact with the teacher and your child will be released, load children into cars and wait for traffic director to begin dismissal of cars.

- **ALL TRAFFIC** must exit onto Pacific Avenue via the open gate. **ALL TRAFFIC** must turn **RIGHT** on Pacific Avenue in order to prevent congestion.
- Please get children into the cars quickly so no children or parents will be walking in the Gym lot during car dismissal.
- If using this option, please do not use this time to visit with teachers, parents or children as the entire lot of traffic is inconvenienced when all cars are not ready to depart at the same time.

Option 2: If you do not wish to get in the carpool lanes for pick-up you must park on the streets surrounding the school buildings. Any vehicles illegally parked will be subject to ticketing by the City of Virginia Beach Police. A parent/guardian must come and pick up the child from the Gym parking lot where they will be assembled after school.

Rainy Day Dismissal Procedure

In the event of heavy rain during dismissal time, all students will be directed to the gym. Parents may pick students up at the far end doors of the gym facing 16th Street. Students will be lined up by grade/class. Parents are asked to come to the door and the students will be called. Parents are asked not to come **onto** the gym floor to pick up students to avoid congestion and confusion. Teachers or staff will be posted at the doors to help with locating students.

Parking

- Parking during the school day is available on the street or in the Church parking lot. The Gym lot is not open to cars during the school day when it is being used for recess and PE classes.
- There is street parking available on 15th Street, 16th Street and Arctic Avenue when parents are picking up or visiting the school during the day.
- If you choose to park on the street be sure to do so legally as the school is not responsible for those ticketed or towed for being parked illegally.

School Early Dismissal

These are scheduled as noted on the school calendar. Early dismissal is at 12:00 P.M. (unless otherwise noted). No lunch will be served on those days. When daycare is provided, children are to bring a lunch. The fee charged will be according to the daycare contract.

Late Pick-up

Children, whose rides are later than 3:15 P.M., will be taken to the "after school program" and a fee of \$4.00 per hour will be charged.

Bicycles/Walkers

If your child(ren) will be riding his/her bike(s) or walking to/from school, please notify the school in writing. Children who ride their bikes or walk to/from school should be familiar with and obey the safety rules that apply to bike riding in traffic. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen bikes or the safety of children who ride bikes or walk to/from school.

Returning to School after Dismissal

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after the 3:00 p.m. dismissal unless accompanied by a teacher. Students must be in a scheduled activity with a teacher or authorized adult if staying after school. **Students may not wait after school for siblings in another activity without a parent present.**

Student Early Dismissal

We discourage medical, dental and optical appointments during the school day. We encourage you to make your child's appointments on half-days, or during Christmas and Easter breaks. In an emergency, it may become necessary for a child to leave early. In this case, a note written by the parent or guardian should be sent to the teacher with the student in the morning. The note will be forwarded to the office. Parents must come to the office to pick up the student and sign the student out. No one may go directly to the classroom to pick up a student unless cleared by the office. We try to eliminate classroom interruptions as they are an infringement on teaching time and jeopardize security.

Emergency Dismissal

In the event of an emergency school closure, parents will be notified through our school alert system. If a student is not picked up within 30 minutes of the school closing, the school will attempt to contact parents or others designated as emergency contact. If we are unable to contact a parent or other designated person, Child Protective Services may be called. Parents should make sure that all contact information is up-dated throughout the school year. See Emergency Preparedness Plan for further information.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is imperative for a child to maintain progress in school. Undue absence and tardiness interfere with learning. It is the duty of parents/guardians to see that their children are present and on time each day.

Parents are requested to call the office in case of absence. Upon returning to class, a student must have a written note of excuse signed by a parent or guardian. The reason and dates of absence should be included in the note. Prolonged absence of 3 or more days requires a doctor's certificate. **If a student has been ill, the student must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

If a student is absent for more than 2 days, work may be left in the office between 3:00-3:30 to be picked up or sent home with a sibling/carpool at the request of the parent/guardian.

Homework and class information will be posted regularly on teacher Ed Line webpages for parents and students to access. Teachers may also be contacted by email when students are absent because of an illness to help make sure the students can keep up with school work. In cases of prolonged absence (more than 2 consecutive days) the student needs to make

arrangements with the teacher to make up work. Students who do not turn in assignments according to the schedule agreed upon by the teacher and student may receive a “zero” for that assignment.

In grades 4-8 it is the student's responsibility to make up the work or tests missed during the time they were absent. All work and/or tests must be made up within one week of returning to school.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends and other vacation times during the year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or vacations during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given or test schedules altered in anticipation of the vacation.

Tardiness

Students are considered late if they arrive in school after 8:00 A.M. They must report to the main office to obtain an admission slip if their homeroom is in the portables, gym building or Parish Hall building, or the nurse's office if their homeroom is in the main building before reporting to class. The parent or responsible guardian must accompany the child(ren) to the office, not the classroom. A written note should be presented to the teacher when a student is tardy. Excessive tardies have a direct impact on a student's academic progress. The principal will contact the parents/guardians when there are excessive tardies.

Truancy

A student who is absent from school without the consent of his/her parents is considered to be truant. This is an unexcused absence and the student must be accompanied by the parents before being readmitted to school. Repeated truancy may be cause for suspension or expulsion.

Transfers

Students withdrawing from school must bring a note from their parents/guardians informing the office of the withdrawal at least 5 days prior to the date of leaving. Parents are asked to come to the office to pick up necessary transfer papers. All textbooks, workbooks, library books and other school property must be returned and all accounts settled prior to release of records to the transfer school.

Re-admission

Re-admission to Star of the Sea Catholic School will be decided on an individual basis by the principal.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

The Pre-Kindergarten class seeks to promote self-discipline, acceptance of others, competence and self-esteem in a Christ centered learning environment. The positive personal attributes for success in later formal instruction are interwoven with the different play and activity centers made available every day. Our program encompasses the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical and social development of the child.

Dress Code

For the pre-kindergarten student, please consider shorts, t-shirts, long pants, sweats — something comfortable and non-confining that you do not mind getting dirty or messy. Girls should wear shorts under dresses/skirts. Uniforms are not required in this class.

Shoes should be rubber sole or athletic shoes every day. Socks must be worn at all times. No sandals, flip flops, etc. are permitted.

NO nail polish is permitted.

Winter jackets should be easy to put on and take off. They should be easy to zip and/or button for the student. All removable items during school hours should be labeled with the child's name.

Snacks

Snacks are to be brought from home. Nutritious snacks are a must. Snacks should not require refrigeration or special preparation. Snacks should be properly wrapped to prevent them from becoming dirty. Sharing of snacks is discouraged because of possible food allergies or special diets of the other children. Time does not allow for the student to eat a lunch. One snack item and a drink are all that is necessary. Also needed are necessities such as a napkin, spoon and/or straw.

Birthdays

Please contact the teacher to discuss arrangements to have a special snack brought to class by your child. Please do not plan to have your child's celebration during our limited snack time.

Personal Hygiene

All pre-kindergarten students must know how to care for all their bathroom needs. You will be notified if a student has a complication.

CLINIC/HEALTH

Health Records

Student health records should be kept up-to-date. If your child has a specific medical problem, it should be brought to the attention of the classroom teacher, the nurse, and the office via a written note.

Emergency Contact Form

An emergency contact form is given to every student. It needs to be completed by a parent/guardian, signed and returned to school. Parents, or those designated on the emergency form, will be notified in case of illness, accident, or emergency. Information on the emergency form must be kept current. Please inform the school in writing of any change of name, address, phone number, emergency contacts, etc.

Medication

Virginia State Mandates Regarding Administration of Medicine at School are strictly adhered to at Star of the Sea School. **Authorization/Parental Consent for Administering Medication forms** are available in the school office.

Prior to administering medication the following items must be addressed:

- Signed authorization for medication from licensed prescriber
- Medication must be properly labeled
- Written parental consent
- The use of all prescription and over the counter drugs must be authorized by a licensed prescriber, which includes physicians, dentists, physician assistants or licensed nurse practitioners. This includes Tylenol, which must be provided in an un-opened container/package by the parent/guardian.

Any changes in the original **Authorization/Parental Consent for Administering Medication** form require a new written authorization and a change in the prescription label. Changes of medication via the telephone will be taken on a one-time-order basis. A telephone authorization must be followed by a written order from the licensed prescriber within 24 hours.

In addition to the authorization of administering medication, parental consent must be obtained before medication is given to the student. This information is on the **Authorization/Parental Consent for Administering Medication** form.

The medication must be in the original container before it is given to a student. The pharmacist can divide the medication into 2 containers - one for home and one for school. **Medications in plastic bags or other non-original containers are not acceptable.**

The parent/guardian is responsible for transporting medication to the school so that the child is not responsible for bringing the medication to school. Unused medication must be picked up by the parent. Medication given on a daily basis throughout the school year will be discarded if not picked up by the parent.

All medication must be given to the school nurse. Students' are not permitted to keep any medication with them.

Allergy Policy

Star of the Sea recognizes that asthma and food allergies are conditions that affect many school children. The school welcomes pupils with asthma and allergies and will work with parents to develop a procedure that will ensure the safety of students. Parents must inform the school of any serious conditions so that effective planning can occur.

HIV /Hepatitis B Policy

Star of the Sea School, following the policy of the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia, does not discriminate with regard to students infected with HIV/AIDS. These students would be placed in classroom situations according to procedures operative for all students and are entitled to the same rights, privileges and services.

OSHA Guidelines

The individual's right to confidentiality will be maintained by those privileged to this information due to the role each play in ensuring a quality school environment for the student.

The following are called universal precautions and should be used by all school and volunteer personnel when handling blood or any bodily fluids (Reprinted from guidelines issued by the Department of Health):

1. Those involved in cleaning surfaces contaminated with blood or bodily fluids (vomit, urine), or rendering first aid to bleeding children should wear disposable gloves and avoid exposure of open skin lesions and mucous membranes to blood.
2. Surfaces contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be promptly cleaned with household bleach (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) using disposable towels or tissues.
3. Hands must be washed after gloves are removed.
4. If inadvertent contamination of the skin with blood or bodily fluids were to occur, all that is required is thorough washing of the contaminated areas with soap and water.

Parents, please instruct your child to wash his/her hands frequently, especially after using the rest room and before eating. All cuts should be covered with a Band-aid.

Any student whose clothing has been exposed to bodily secretions (i.e., blood, urine, vomit) must change his or her clothes immediately. This may necessitate a call to the parent unless a change of clothing is available at school. We have a legal responsibility to notify the parent and have the student removed from school if a change of clothing is not available.

Immunizations

Proof of exact dates of required immunizations as required by the Code of Virginia are necessary for school admission for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing

In case of inclement weather, announcements of emergency closings or delayed openings for Star of the Sea School will be sent through the ADT Alert system to notify each family. In addition it will be announced on the following television stations: WAVY-TV Channel 10, WVEC-TV Channel 13 and WTKR Channel 3. Announcements will also be sent to the following radio stations: WNIS AM (790 AM), WTAR AM (850 AM), BOB FM (93.7 FM), 96X (96 FM) and The WAVE FM (92.9 FM).

If possible an announcement will also be posted on our website and recorded on our voice mail system as well.

Please do not call the school for closing information. As soon as a decision is made, announcements will be sent.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution. At the time of a fire drill, everyone (including parent volunteers) **must** leave the building quickly by the designated route. **ABSOLUTE SILENCE MUST BE OBSERVED AT ALL TIMES DURING THE FIRE DRILL.** Escape routes should be posted in each classroom.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Star of the Sea School has an Emergency Preparedness Plan in effect. A copy of the plan is on file in the school office. The purpose of the plan is to ensure the well being and safety of our entire student body and staff members. The school administration will work closely with the appropriate local public safety agencies, such as police and fire, to foster a safe school environment. The administration will make every effort to maintain an orderly environment and will communicate with parents as effectively as possible.

Communication: Should normal operating hours of the school be affected, the administration will broadcast emergency messages using several methods.

- Official notice will be posted on the school web page.
- The administration will contact the PAC (Parent Advisory Committee) representatives to disseminate accurate information and to be points of contact.
- A message will be sent through the ADT Alert system.
- The television stations will be notified.

Evacuations: In the event that the school needed to be evacuated for any length of time, the off-site evacuation site will be Cook Elementary gymnasium on 16th Street and parents would pick up students at that location. Any on-site evacuation would involve moving students to the Church or the field by the church offices on 14th Street.

LIBRARY

Library instruction is an integral part of the learning process. Each class is scheduled to visit the library at least once a week. Any library assignments are expected to be carefully completed. Students check out books for a one-week period. Books may be renewed once. Penalties are charged for books that are late, defaced, or lost.

Scholastic Reading Counts

Star of the Sea School utilizes the Scholastic Reading Counts program through the library. Students are encouraged to become life-long readers. This program is an incentive for students to explore and read more books, take the computer quiz for the book and accumulate points during the year.

Policy and Procedure for Challenged Materials

Star of the Sea School affirms the philosophy of the National Catholic Education Association that: “Students not only need basic skills, but they also need the skills to critically evaluate what they read. Students need to form judgments based on a rational process informed by the light of the Gospel.”

This policy endorses the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America and the views expressed in the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights.

At times, students may be exposed to materials which present information, ideas or attitudes which some members of the school community may consider to be controversial, inappropriate or offensive. Objections to these materials are an important part of the democratic process and should be treated as legitimate avenues of communication in education. However, challenges are only considered on the understanding that no parent has the right to determine learning or recreational materials for students other than their own. To facilitate the hearing of potential objections and to guide appropriate action, the following procedure will enable differing points of view to be clearly and openly expressed while preserving the principles of intellectual freedom and the professional responsibility and integrity of the school.

In order for a challenge to be made, the material in question must have been read, listened to, or viewed by the challenger in its entirety. No material shall be removed from use until a final decision has been made; however, access to the material can be denied to the child/children of the challenging parent if a written request is submitted. If the material is challenged, the following procedures will be followed:

- Check for previous reconsiderations of the item. If it has already been reviewed, a copy of those findings will be provided and no further action will be taken.
- Provide patron with “Challenged Materials” form which must be completed and returned to the library before further action will be taken.
- On receipt of the completed form, a Material Evaluation Committee will be established composed of: 3 teachers (one from each core), 2 parents, administrator, and librarian

The Material Evaluation Committee will:

- Read, view or listen to the challenged material in its entirety independently.
- Consider published reviews and standard aids.
- Base opinions on the material as a whole and not on passages taken out of context.
- Meet to discuss the challenged material and prepare a Materials Evaluation Committee Report.
- File a copy of the report in the school library, school office and provide a copy to the challenging parent within 30 days.

LUNCH/DINING HALL

The dining hall staff works hard to have a pleasant and healthy lunch experience for all of the students. Students may bring or purchase their lunch. A lunch menu will be posted on our website at www.sosschool.org each month. All students must remain at school for lunch.

Dining hall expectations:

1. All students must remain seated during the lunch period until dismissed by the supervising teacher/adults.
2. No students may leave the dining hall without permission from a teacher/adult.
3. Table voices and good table manners are expected from all students.
4. Silence will be expected during part of the lunch period so students can focus on finishing their meal.
5. Students are expected to eat their lunches provided and not waste food.
6. Every student is responsible for the cleanliness of their table area.
7. Violations of dining hall rules may result in the loss of privileges.

Parents are invited to have lunch with their child(ren). We ask that you call the office by 8:30 or send a note with your child in the morning if you are planning on coming and purchasing lunch so we can include that on our lunch count for the day.

Lunch Fees

Students may pay cash or purchase a prepaid debit card from the business office. Parents will be notified when the debit card balance falls below \$10 so that it may be refilled through the business office. The cafeteria staff and/or the bookkeeper will not be responsible for enforcing parental limits on lunch choices.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Buckley Amendment/FERPA

Star of the Sea School abides by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review the student's education records. The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Non-custodial parents will be given access to the academic records and to information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent is denied access to such information.

Child Abuse Laws

Star of the Sea School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services. The principal should be notified of any suspicions of abuse. The observing employee should report to Child Protective Services.

Child Custody/Non-Custodial Parent

Parents are asked to inform the office, in writing, when custody of the child(ren) resides with one parent. Star of the Sea School abides by the provisions of the FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a locker or cubby in which to store clothing and textbooks. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. Lockers may not be decorated inside or out. Lockers and desks are school property. The school is not responsible for the safety of personal items in lockers and desks.

Photo/Video Release

Parents give permission to allow publication on the Internet (www.sosschool.org) website of student's creative efforts including stories and artwork, use student names (but no picture) or use student photos (but no names) in Star of the Sea Catholic School internet publications, in local newspapers or other external media. Media Release is signed by parents as part of Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Responsibility for School and Personal Property

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. All textbooks must have a proper book cover for the entire year. All workbooks must be covered in clear contact paper. No writing in textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

Students may not take textbooks or workbooks home for the summer. All textbooks and workbooks remain the property of Star of the Sea Catholic School. Students will be charged for new books if they are not kept in the condition in which they received them less normal wear and tear. Textbooks paid for by students and needing replacement will remain the property of Star of the Sea Catholic School. Upon withdrawal, all textbooks and workbooks must be returned to Star of the Sea Catholic School.

Chewing gum is **NOT** permitted in school or on school grounds. This includes the gym during practices and games.

Personal Property

- Students' belongings should be labeled with their name on each item.
- Lost items will be placed in the "Lost & Found" in the office. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity.
- Students are not permitted to bring non-school items (toys, games, etc.) unless requested by the teacher.
- Cell phones are permitted under the following conditions – the phones must be turned off and kept in book bags during the school day.

Rolling Bookbags

Students entering grades PK-4 are NOT permitted to have rolling book bags of any kind.

Medical exceptions will be made only with a physician's written order.

Students in grades 5-8 may choose to have "collapsible" rolling bookbags. No luggage style or non-collapsible bags will be permitted. Bookbags should be cleaned out and organized during each trimester.

School Directory

FERPA authorizes making student directory information public as permitted under state and federal laws and regulations. Star of the Sea School publishes a school directory. Information included in the directory will be authorized by the parent. The Student Directory should be used to acquaint parents with the names of their children(s) classmates and parents. These directories should not be used or sold for other purposes.

Searches of Students and Student Property

A Principal or designated school official has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's person and/or personal property on school property or at school activities (e.g., automobiles, etc.) may be conducted by the school Principal or other designated officials. It is only necessary that a search be reasonable and related to the school's rights in these regards. The failure of a student to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

Student Insurance

All students are required by the Diocese of Richmond to have school insurance. This fee is included in the tuition. School insurance does not cover students who play on athletic association teams (i.e. basketball, cheerleading, soccer, etc).

Title IX

Star of the Sea School adheres to the tenets of the Title IX: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to the discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Visitors

Visitors are welcome. In order to insure the safety and continuity of the instructional day, it is requested that the following procedures be adhered to:

- Report to the office to check in and receive a visitor's pass.
- Drop off items or messages to the office.
- DO NOT visit a classroom or teacher without an appointment. No unscheduled conferences, however brief, are permitted during regular school hours.

Volunteers

Volunteers Are Essential to Star of the Sea School. Parents are encouraged to volunteer their services in the cafeteria, on the playground, in the library, health room, etc. We also need volunteers at home in the evenings to make phone calls, type, etc. Volunteers must sign in and out at the school office.

Volunteerism is a critical component in Catholic education. With strong volunteerism, we are able to provide all of the needed services and activities that create the quality, affordable, faith-based education for our children. The generosity of time and talent of our parent/guardian volunteers is needed more than ever!

Sign-up forms for volunteering are sent home in the summer mailing each year and are also posted on our website at www.sosschool.org.

In accordance with diocesan policy, all volunteers are required to have a Criminal Background Screening through Child Protective Services, screening through Volunteer Select and must attend VIRTUS training. Background screening packets are available in the school office.

Confidentiality

In the performance of their duties, volunteers may learn confidential information about students and/or their families and teachers. Volunteers should understand that they are expected to keep this information confidential in any setting inside or outside the school. At the same time, volunteers must understand that there are times when student confidences cannot be kept. The guideline is: Any information which, if shared with parents and/or administrators, may save someone from harm must be shared with the appropriate person(s) and only the appropriate person(s).

Supervision of Volunteers

The principal is responsible for the total school operation; thus, the principal supervises all who serve in any capacity in the school.

Loyalty to School

When individuals volunteer at school, they are representatives of the school. Volunteers should support the directions given by staff and administration. If the volunteer disagrees with school policy, the principal will be happy to hear their concerns and discuss them with the volunteer

School Organizations

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Home and School Association (HSA) promotes the spiritual and educational objectives of the home and school with a program of Catholic education and promotes an understanding of the mutual educational responsibility of parents and faculty. All faculty, staff and parents are members of the HSA. Dues are included in the tuition.

The primary functions of the HSA are:

- Organize social activities, such as picnics, breakfast with parents, etc. for the school community.
- Coordinate volunteers for fund-raisers, dining room, playground, etc.
- Provide a forum for faculty and parents to discuss areas of concern to the school.
- Assist in the financial support of Star of the Sea School through fund-raising programs. Two major fund-raisers are held during the school year.

SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board is a consultative body to the principal in the areas of finance, long range planning, development and building and grounds. Members are chosen from local parishes and from the school community. As per diocesan policy, employees and spouses of employees may not serve as members of the board.

PAC – Parent Advisory Committee

PAC is a committee that operates as part of the School Board. The committee was established to promote better communication between parents and the administration. The committee will be a point of contact and be able to disseminate timely and correct information for families during the school year. Parent representatives will be appointed from each grade level for a period of one year. Nominations will be accepted at the beginning of each school year. Further information and by-laws for the committee are available from School Board members.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Yearly tuition rates are available in the school office or on the school website at: www.sosschool.org. Please address all tuition questions to Star of the Sea Catholic School bookkeeper at 428-8400.

Tuition assistance

Tuition assistance is available to all families who have children registered in Pre K through Grade Eight.

- Applicants will be required to submit necessary financial information to FACTS.
- All application must be sent directly to FACTS with the appropriate fee for processing.
- Tuition assistance decisions are made after review by the Finance Committee of the School Board and the Principal prior to the start of the academic year and awarded based on funds available.
- Tuition assistance is also available through the McMahon-Pareter Fund of the Diocese. Families must have applied through FACTS and have already received assistance from Star of the Sea School in order to be automatically eligible for Diocesan assistance. No additional application will be needed to be eligible for Diocesan assistance.

Tuition Payment Options:

- Pay 100% of the tuition to the school in cash, check or money order by July 15. If choosing this method please be aware that tuition payments not made in full by August 1st will be assessed a 2% late charge on the full tuition amount. Please be aware children will not be able to start school if the tuition account is not paid in full prior to the first day or paid using the FACTS tuition management company.
- Make 12 monthly installments (July -June) through FACTS on one's checking, savings, or credit card account. There is an annual non-refundable \$41 administrative fee for enrollment in the FACTS program per family which is included in the tuition.

Fees

The following fees apply:

- A \$75.00 per student Technology Fee is due by August 31. Fees may be paid by check, money order, or cash. Fees should be sent to the bookkeepers office labeled "Technology Fee". In the case of student withdrawal, this fee is non-refundable.
- A \$75.00 graduation fee for 8th grade students is payable by January 1. This fee covers graduation gowns and other graduation expenses.

Enrollment/Re-Enrollment

- The \$200.00 non-refundable Application Fee for new families must be submitted with the application.
- The non-refundable re-enrollment fee for returning families is \$100.00 if paid by the announced cut-off date, \$200.00 if paid after cut-off date.
- There will be a \$25 returned check fee for all checks made payable to Star of the Sea School that do not clear the bank.

- Re-registration for the next school year may not be accepted unless all tuition, fees, charges, etc. are paid in full.

Withdrawal Policy

Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawing from the school. The school will not forward records/transcripts for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance. If a student is withdrawn by the parent/guardian without the consent of the school the following applies (this policy will be in effect for the 2010-2011 contracts):

- Parents of registered students who withdraw before the first full day of school are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Parents of registered students who withdraw between the first day of school and December 15th are responsible for ½ of the full tuition amount.
- Parents of registered students who withdraw after December 15th are responsible for the full tuition amount.

In the event an account is referred to an attorney for collection, parent/guardian/guarantor shall pay an additional sum of 25% of the outstanding balance owed as and for attorneys' fees. Tuition and fees are non-refundable in cases of withdrawal of a student or expulsion of a student. It is the principal's right and sole discretion to dismiss or suspend any student for lack of progress or for conduct that is not in the best interest of the student and/or of the school or for conduct of the parent(s)/guardian(s) that is contrary to the best interest of the school.

Additional School Fees/Billing and Payments

- Before/After School Care fees will be billed monthly and are payable upon receipt. Students will not be permitted to attend the Before/After School Care if a balance becomes 30 days past due.
- Lunch items may be purchased by cash or through a debit lunch card system. A \$10.00 balance should remain on the debit card at all times. Lunch account statements will be sent home every two weeks to any account that is \$10.00 or below. Payments are due upon receipt of the statement. Accounts that are past due could result in loss of the privilege of using the debit card for lunch purchases; only cash would be accepted until account is brought current. Checks for lunch accounts should indicate the student name and amount of money to be credited to their account. Please do not combine any other fees with lunch account payments. **The school will not be responsible for enforcing parent restrictions on student lunch purchases.**
- Check, cash or money orders are acceptable forms of payment. All cash payments must be brought directly to the main office so a receipt may be issued. Teachers will not accept any cash payments in the classroom. If paying by check or money order, there is a locked box on the counter in the school office in which you can place tuition, daycare and lunch payments. **The school administration will not be responsible for checks, cash or money orders sent via children.**

RIGHT TO AMEND

This handbook is intended solely to be a guide to school policy and procedures for the benefit of the school and its students. The principal retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read the 2009 - 2010 Parent/Student Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Please Print Family Name Here: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____
Date

Parent/Guardian Signature _____
Date

Student Signature _____
Date

Student Signature _____
Date

Student Signature _____
Date

Student Signature _____
Date

SIGNED FORM DUE TO OFFICE BY August 31, 2009.