



**2018-2019**

# **EARLY CHILDHOOD HANDBOOK**

Updated 8/2018

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**Green Edition**  
Please see inside for details!



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## Table of Contents

Introduction . . . . .	1
History . . . . .	1
Philosophy . . . . .	1
Mission Statement . . . . .	1
Vision . . . . .	1
Absence and Attendance Procedure . . . . .	2
Administrators Right to Amend Handbook . . . . .	2
Admissions Policy . . . . .	2
Age for School Entrance . . . . .	2
Animals in the Classroom. . . . .	2
Arrival . . . . .	3
Before and After School Supervision . . . . .	3
Before School . . . . .	3
Bullying . . . . .	3
Calendar . . . . .	6
Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy . . . . .	6
Confidentiality. . . . .	6
CORI . . . . .	7
Curriculum . . . . .	7
Dismissal. . . . .	9
Dress Code . . . . .	9
Dress Uniform. . . . .	10
Early Childhood Program . . . . .	10
Extended Care. . . . .	10
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act . . . . .	10
Field Trips . . . . .	10
Financial Aid . . . . .	10
Fire Drills . . . . .	10
Goals for Children. . . . .	11
Goals for Families. . . . .	11
Illness . . . . .	11
Lunch and Breakfast . . . . .	12
Lunchroom Rules for Kindergarten. . . . .	12
Lunch/Snacks . . . . .	12
Medication. . . . .	13
Parent-Administration Cooperation. . . . .	13
Parent Support . . . . .	13
Parent-Teacher Communication . . . . .	13
Parent-Teacher Organization . . . . .	14
Party Invitations/Class Birthday Celebrations . . . . .	14
Phone Calls . . . . .	14
Photo/Contact Release Waiver. . . . .	14
Referrals. . . . .	14
Religious Activities . . . . .	14

Rest Time (Preschool and Prekindergarten) . . . . .	15
Safety and Security . . . . .	15
School Cancellation . . . . .	15
School Health. . . . .	15
School Hours... . . . .	16
State License Requirement. . . . .	16
Statement of Poicy. . . . .	16
Telephone Numbers. . . . .	16
Traffic Policy . . . . .	16
Traffic Pattern. . . . .	17
Transportation. . . . .	18
Tuition . . . . .	18
Visiting. . . . .	18
Warm Weather Recess Guidelines. . . . .	18
Winter Weather Recess Guidelines. . . . .	18

## **Introduction:**

St. Joseph School is a Catholic, co-educational school that serves students in preschool through grade eight. The purpose of this booklet is to inform parents and children of the school regulations, policies, and general information regarding the programs and services offered by the St. Joseph School.

## **History:**

In 1908, the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary began a teaching ministry in classrooms located in the original St. Joseph Church structure in Fairhaven, Massachusetts in the Diocese of Fall River. When a new church was built in 1924, the original structure was redesigned to serve exclusively as a parochial school. Under the guidance of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts demands for admission to the parish school grew. This resulted in the construction and dedication of a new school building in 1964. Currently, St. Joseph School continues to provide a quality Catholic education for children in grades preschool through eight.

## **Philosophy:**

St. Joseph School is a Catholic learning community that is an integrated part of a larger faith based parish community that is dedicated to proclaiming the love of God as found in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Our school seeks to provide a quality Christian education that meets the academic and spiritual needs of our students.

The school community is dedicated to promoting a Catholic faith environment in which the student's growth as a person is central to all its work. Our faculty is composed of individuals whose common purpose is "To Teach as Jesus Did." We are committed to the vision and values of Christ's way of life.

St. Joseph School supports the efforts of families to provide a quality Catholic education based on Christian values. In partnership with parents, the child's primary educator, we seek to model the principles of Jesus and nurture the child's intellectual, religious, spiritual, social, civic, psychological, moral, physical, cultural, and aesthetic growth.

Our school environment fosters love of God, respect for oneself and others, compassion, justice, and service. Learning experiences challenge students to grow in understanding and appreciating their human worth, to take responsibility for their own learning and development, and to care for the world in which they live. The school encourages students to develop responsibility towards themselves and others and fosters respect for all persons and the world around us. Guidance in making good choices based on Catholic values is integrated throughout the curriculum.

## **Mission Statement:**

St. Joseph School is a Catholic learning community devoted to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and dedicated to providing a quality spiritual and academic education based on faith, values, and excellence that meets the needs of our students and their families.

## **Vision:**

All children will learn and grow in a faith-based environment that is nurturing, safe, and encouraging. Students will grow in their faith, develop their God-given talents, learn the values that will help them to make meaningful choices, become active lifelong learners, and seekers of God's truth.

With parents as partners, we strive to build a Catholic Faith community that models the teachings of Jesus and empowers each child to:

- Become a faithful witness of Jesus Christ.
- Develop their individual, God-given talents and seek academic and aesthetic excellence.
- Become an independent and life-long learner.
- Become a global citizen in service to the common good.

### **Absence and Attendance Procedure:**

Regular school attendance is essential to successful performance in school. Both school and home have the responsibility to encourage regularity of attendance. Valid reasons for absences are illness, death in the family, religious holidays and other reasons for absence approved by the principal. Medical and other appointments should be made during non-school hours whenever possible. Non-acceptable absences are those activities that can be conducted after school hours.

When a child is absent on any given day, **parents are required to call the school at 508-996-1983 before 9:00 a.m.** The school office has an answering machine to take your information, so calls may be made throughout the night if more convenient. An explanation for each of the student's absent is documented. For this purpose, the school office will contact the parent or person designated on the Emergency form if the parent has not called by 9:00. **Parents are reminded to update emergency telephone numbers as needed during the school year.**

### **Administration Rights to Amend Handbook:**

The school administration (principal) retains the right to amend the handbook. Parents will be given prompt notification of any changes made. Any situation not included in the handbook will be handled at the discretion of the principal.

### **Admissions Policy:**

“The non-public schools of the Diocese of Fall River admit students of any race, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools...and do not discriminate on the basis of race, national and ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, as well as athletic and other school administered programs.”

St. Joseph School encourages a school climate of respect, inclusion, and equality.

Parents of students entering for the first time shall provide:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (if applicable)
- Medical immunization records required for school entrance.
- Non-refundable registration fee
- Information referring to legal custody and/or family arrangements etc.

Parents complete an online application form and state any medical, physical, emotional and academic needs that may require special attention. Students being considered for admission need to submit copies of the last report card and any individual and/or state test results if available. An interview with the principal is also a requirement.

All acceptances are conditional and rooted in the student's ability to adhere to the rules and regulations as outlined in the student handbook and the school's philosophy. If a disagreement develops regarding a student or parent's ability to support the school's philosophy and policies, the administration reserves the right to ask to have your child/children transferred to another school. Further condition is dependent upon the school's ability to provide the appropriate academic program that meets the needs of each child. The principal shall make final decisions in all matters requiring discernment. Priority for admission is given to parishioners.

### **Age for School Entrance:**

School entrance age shall be the same as that determined by the public school district in which the Catholic school is located. A child must be:

- 2.9 years of age by August 31<sup>st</sup> for entrance into the Preschool program
- Five years of age by August 31<sup>st</sup> for entrance into Kindergarten

### **Animals in the Classroom:**

Due to health and safety issues and our children, no pets or animals are allowed in classrooms. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Arrival:**

- Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten meet their teachers between 8:00-8:15 at the northeast entrance.
- Students in Grade K **must** be seated in their classroom before **8:15**, or they will be considered tardy. After eight (8) consecutive late slips are issued in one semester the principal and/or teacher will contact the family to work out an arrival plan.

### **Before and After School Supervision:**

There is no supervision on the playground before or after school. Morning and Afternoon Extended Care (See Extended Care on page 15) and Breakfast Program are available for families who require this service. **NO STUDENTS ARE TO BE IN THE HALLS, ENTRANCES, OR SCHOOL YARD UNATTENDED.**

### **Before School:**

A Breakfast Program will be offered. The only cost to this program is the cost of breakfast! Breakfast is available from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. daily. A school classroom aide will walk all students attending the breakfast program to their classroom at 8:00. **NO OUTSIDE FOOD IS ALLOWED.**

### **Bullying:**

#### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for the Diocese of Fall River**

“Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family.

The body of Catholic social teaching opens with the human person, but it does not close there. Individuals have dignity; individualism has no place in Catholic social thought. The principle of human dignity gives the human person a claim on membership in a community, the human family.” (Taken from Byron, William J. S.J., *Ten Building Blocks of Catholic Social Teaching*. (2010). America: The National Catholic Weekly. American Press Inc.)

This plan is to be an addendum to the parent/student handbook, and it will immediately become part of the policy book of the Diocese of Fall River. The plan will be available on the diocesan website as well as each school’s website.

The Diocese of Fall River will review and/or update the plan at least biennially. The school will give notice to and provide a comment period for families that have a child attending the school. The plan shall apply to students and members of the school staff, including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses.

Parents/guardians and students shall receive annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the plan.

All school staff shall receive annual written notice of the plan. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

#### **I. Definitions**

The Diocese of Fall River and St. Joseph School prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation as defined below. Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation can occur on or off school property, and during or outside of school hours.

“**Bullying**” is the repeated use by one or more students *or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional* of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the

school. *For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.*  
(Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

**“Cyber-bullying”** is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include: the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

**“Retaliation”** against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.  
(Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

**“Hostile Environment”** is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

**“Aggressor”** is a student, *or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional,* who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

**“Target”** is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

**“Staff”** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

*Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions or programs. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)*

## **II. Formal Procedure for Reporting**

Students are to report any and all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to teachers or staff.

Staff and teachers are to report any and all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to the principal or his or her designee.

Parents, guardians, and others are to report all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to the principal or his or her designee.

This reporting may be done verbally or in writing. This reporting of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation may be made anonymously; however, no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an



anonymous report. The principal and his or her designee will respond to and investigate all **credible** reports of bullying, and ensure proper documentation. This investigation will provide for the following:

- **Safety of the target**

The principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidences. Responses to promote safety may include but are not limited to: predetermining seating arrangements in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the classroom schedule to reduce that aggressor’s access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during or after the investigation, as necessary.

- **Protection of the reporter, witness, or provider of information during the investigation**

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting a student who has reported/witnessed or provided information during an investigation of a bullying situation. These responses may include but are not limited to the same responses noted for the safety of the target.

- **Notification, including the parents of both the target and the aggressor, as well as notification of law enforcement**

- a. **Parents/Guardians:** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. **Notice to another school:** If the incident involves students from more than one school, the principal or designee will notify by phone any and all schools so that each may take appropriate action.
- c. **Notice to Catholic Education Center:** After determining that bullying has taken place, notice should be given immediately to the superintendent or his or her designee.
- d. **Notice to law enforcement:** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the law and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency.

### III. **Investigation**

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

#### IV. **Determinations**

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefitting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

#### V. **Range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation**

Each school in the Diocese of Fall River will include bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation into the age appropriate disciplinary code that is included in the student/parent handbook. These disciplinary codes may include, but are not limited to, suspension and expulsion.

#### VI. **Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.**

#### VII. **At the discretion of the principal or his or her designee, counseling or referrals to Catholic Social Services will be made available to targets, aggressors, and/or family members.**

*\*\*Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the school administration from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.*

#### **Calendar:**

Calendar is available on website: [www.saintjosephschool.org](http://www.saintjosephschool.org).

#### **Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy:**

##### **Rules for Use of School Computers**

All students in grades Preschool through Grade 8 have regular use of the computer lab and classroom computers. St. Joseph School is connected to the Internet. Each student shall require parental consent to use computers. Every parent is asked to

carefully read and review with your child/children the contents of the computer contract from the Diocese of Fall River Policy regarding computer systems and Internet Acceptance Use and Agreement.

**Parents/Guardians of students in grades Preschool through 4 are required to sign the contract and return it to school for your child to use computers. The document is to be signed by both parents and students in grades 5-8 and be returned for your child to use computers.**

##### **Confidentiality:**

Children's records are kept confidential and filed in the locked main office. Only St. Joseph School teachers, the child's parents, and individuals designated in writing by the parent may have access to the child's educational or health records. Parents have the right to view their child's records, request a copy and ask to have it amended. All assessments are kept in the child's portfolio and shared with families. Parent conferences are available as needed throughout the school year.

## **CORI:**

The Diocese of Fall River requires all employees and volunteers complete a safe environment training session. It is available online at <https://fallriver.cmgconnect.org/>. The volunteer must register as an individual (no group viewings are available) and complete the online Safe Environment Training. Massachusetts's law requires that the CORI form information be verified with a Photo-ID, (i.e., State License, Passport, Student ID) by a designated school official.

## **Curriculum:**

### **Preschool**

<b>Religion:</b>	Teacher's Preschool Manual Loyola Press 1996 edition. Pflaum Gospel Weeklies "Seeds" 2015-2016 edition.
<b>Reading/Language Arts:</b>	Pearson 2014 OWL Big Books – Literacy readiness activities Poems/science/stories from history Puzzles, letters, games, clay, cutting activities for fine and visual motor development Discussions after book or lesson Print rich environment "Hands on" letter cards, felt board letters Thematic Curriculum connections: for example, "Apple": everything connects to Apple, which starts with "A" and the "A" is highlighted everywhere.
<b>Math:</b>	Pearson 2014 OWL Number literacy concepts introduced through hands on activities: counting objects, matching, sorting, estimating, weighing and measuring, etc.
<b>Social Studies:</b>	Multicultural activities, puppets, role playing stories etc.
<b>Science:</b>	Hands on explorations like "Sink or Float", testing a variety of objects in a bucket of water and chart our "guess" and the actual outcome.
<b>Writing:</b>	Provided variety of materials in our literacy center (paper, pencils, crayons, markers, stencils, letter cards)
<b>Gross Motor Development:</b>	Balls, jump ropes, running, creative dramatics, etc...
<b>Library:</b>	Preschool children attend a weekly storytime in the school library to develop an appreciation of books and literature and the development of listening skills and the care of books.
<b>Physical Education:</b>	Students are exposed to a wide array of movement activities which enhance their loco-motor, manipulative, and balance skills. They are introduced to the concept of individual space and controlling their bodies in space. Elementary rhythmic activities and elementary tumbling skills are introduced. Developing social skills through games and activities is stressed.
<b>Art:</b>	Preschool students participate weekly in creative and artistic experiences. The fundamentals of art, such as, colors, shapes, cutting, gluing, drawing and following directions are explored. The art instructor coordinates the lesson with the classroom teacher to enhance the curriculum.
<b>Spanish:</b>	Preschool students participate weekly in foreign language exposure through stories, games and songs. Children learn by singing and playing.

**Music:** Preschool students participate weekly in musical explorations and movement. Our enriched, multicultural curriculum introduces the children to a variety of song, dance, and musical instruments that reinforce classroom concepts.

## **Kindergarten**

**Religion:** God Loves Us, Loyola Press 2016. This program for five-year-old students focuses on learning about God's Love. The children learn the sign of the cross, how to pray the Our Father and Hail Mary, and will attend Mass. They will also learn about friends, families and how they can differ, and also about growing in the Catholic Church.

**Reading:** Reading, Scott Foresman, 2013, Pearson Education, Inc. Reading Street. The curriculum will include: The Parts of A Book- How To Hold A Book- Author and Illustrator- The Order of the Alphabet- Capital and Lower Case Letters- Recognizing the Letters- Track Printing- Recall and Retell A Story. They will learn the difference between poems/stories/fantasy and reality and also fiction vs. nonfiction. They will learn to compare and contrast and also learn to use illustrations to help them with the stories.

**Math:** Math, Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley envision MATH, 2012. The curriculum will include: Identify and Write Numbers 1-20- Position and Classification- Comparison and Patterns- Graphing-Measurement- Geometry (shapes)- Money- Time- Addition and Subtraction up to Number Four- Using Problem Solving Strategies.

**Social Studies:** Here We Go, Scott Foresman, 2003. The curriculum will focus on the students' environments, i.e. their homes, families, school rules, and getting along. Also communities, work and jobs, our Earth, the U.S.A. and family stories will be studied.

**Science:** Science, Scott Foresman, 2003. The curriculum will include: Living and Non-living Things- Animals- Plants- Matter- Sound- Heat and Light- Movement- Earth and Sky- Weather- Caring for the Earth- Your Senses – Growing and Changing- Being Healthy.

**Language:** Reading, Scott Foresman, 2013. The class will focus on the vocabulary of the school such as: colors, numbers, directions, shapes and sizes. They will also learn to recognize and produce rhyming words as well as compare and contrast characters in stories.

**Spelling:** Reading, Scott Foresman, 2013. The students will learn to recognize letter-sound matches by naming and identifying each letter of the alphabet. They will also practice blending sounds to make words, develop print awareness and identify and isolate initial and final sounds of spoken words.

**Writing:** Reading, Scott Foresman, 2013. The class will be introduced to the following types of writing: Modeled, Shared, Interactive and Independent. They will also learn to write their names, use naming words, action words, phrases, and sentences.

**Library:** Kindergarten children attend a weekly storytime in the school library to develop an appreciation of books and literature and the development of listening skills and the care of books.

**Physical Education:** Students are exposed to a wide array of movement activities which enhance their loco-motor, manipulative, and balance skills. They are introduced to the concept of individual space and controlling their bodies in space. Elementary rhythmic activities and elementary tumbling skills are introduced. Developing social skills through games and activities is stressed.

- Art:** Kindergarten students participate weekly in creative and artistic experiences. The fundamentals of art, such as, colors, shapes, cutting, gluing, drawing and following directions are explored. The art instructor coordinates the lesson with the classroom teacher to enhance the subject being taught.
- Spanish:** Kindergarten students participate weekly in foreign language exposure through stories, games and songs. Children learn by singing and playing.
- Music:** Kindergarten students participate weekly in musical experiences and movement. Our enriched, multicultural curriculum introduces the children to a variety of song, dance, and musical instruments that reinforce classroom concepts.

**Dismissal:**

- Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten classes are dismissed between 2:00-2:10
- Early dismissal for Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten is generally between 11:00-11:10
- Kindly refer to the monthly school calendar for specific information on early release days.

Children who are not picked up after school dismissal will be placed in extended care. Parents will be billed for the service.

When and if a child has to be dismissed during the school day, it will be necessary that the parent or guardian call for the student at the office. No child will be allowed to leave on his/her own since the safety of the child is foremost.

**Dress Code:**

**Preschool and Prekindergarten**

- Please dress your child in durable, casual clothing with a consideration for the weather. An outdoor playtime will be scheduled every day possible. Please have rainwear/cold weather gear available.
- Socks and rubber sole tie shoes or sneakers are the best for walking, running, and climbing.
- Please NO Flip Flops or slippers, as they are hazardous on our playground.
- Waterproof insulated boots, hats, waterproof mittens, and warm clothing.
- Clothing that children can manage independently in the bathroom is very important.
- The only requested uniform for Preschool and Prekindergarten is the gym uniform on gym days and field trips when requested by the teachers.

**K (Girls)**

**Daily Uniform:**

- Dusty Tan bucks
- Uniform Jumper
- Navy blue knit shirt or turtleneck
- Navy blue/white knee socks **OR** tights
- Gray twill slacks (**Nov. 1-Apr. 1**)
- Gray pleated twill shorts (**Apr. 1-Nov. 1**)

**Dress Uniform:**

- Navy blue crossover tie
- White blouse, round collar (in place of blue shirt)
- Gray Cardigan sweater  
**must be worn (Nov. 1– Apr. 1)**
- All items listed in daily uniform with the **exception** of the **slacks and shorts**.

**K (Boys)**

**Daily Uniform:**

- Dusty tan bucks
- Navy blue knit shirt
- Gray twill pants (**Nov. 1-Apr. 1**)
- Gray pleated twill shorts (**Apr. 1-Nov. 1**)
- Navy blue/white crew socks

**Dress Uniform:**

- Navy blue tie
- White oxford button down shirt (place of blue shirt)
- Gray pull over sweater  
**must be worn (Nov. 1– Apr. 1)**
- All items listed in daily uniform with the **exception** of the **shorts**.

**Dress Uniform:**

Dress uniform days are identified for special occasions. Please check the school's monthly calendar for a listing of dates.

**Mandatory Gym Uniform for Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten:** All students are required to wear the following gym uniform, with the *St. Joseph School* logo, and sneakers on gym days and some field trip days as requested by the teachers.

September-October	April - June	Navy blue gym shorts or jogging pants, t-shirts and/or sweatshirts
November-March:		Navy blue jogging pants, sweatshirt or t-shirt

**Early Childhood Program:**

St. Joseph School is dedicated to serving the best interests of the young child by understanding and supporting the developmental needs of each child and by modeling respect, kindness, and love. We strive to provide learning experiences that enhance a child's self discovery and the development of a positive self-esteem.

**Extended Care:**

A safe environment is provided for our students in Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten who need to arrive at school before school hours and remain after the school day. Activities provided under the supervision of faculty and staff includes free play, snack, and homework time. Breakfast Program hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. The only cost is the cost of breakfast.

Morning and after school hours are from 7:00 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$3.00 per ½ hour \$6.00 per hour or any portion thereof. Extended Care is billed per blocks of ½ hour (7:00-7:30, 2:30-3:00, 3:00-3:30, 3:30-4:00, 4:00- 4:30, 4:30-5:00, and 5:00-5:30). Full amount of \$3.00 will be charged if student is in Extended Care for at least 10 minutes within that block of time, less than 10 minutes there will be no charge. A discount will be offered for families with two or more children using extended care **three or more days per week.**

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:**

Parents and legal guardians have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's education record.
- Request the amendment of the record to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights.
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's record.

This school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of the non-custodial parent. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic record and to other school related information regarding the child. **If 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.**

**Field Trips:**

Students will be given a Diocesan "Parental/Guardian Consent Form and Liability Waiver" for parents to sign that describe the purpose and destination of the field trip. Students who fail to return this written permission slip signed by the parent/guardian **will not** be allowed to participate. All students must ride the bus to and from all field trip destinations.

**Financial Aid:**

The (FACE) Foundation to Advance Catholic Education provides financial assistance to families in need for grades K. Applications are available each year in the school office.

**Fire Drills:**

Fire Drills are conducted periodically to ensure that the students are properly instructed as to the procedures to follow should an actual fire ever exist.

During a fire drill, children are to exit in a quiet, orderly fashion. To insure your child's safety, running and talking are not allowed per order of the fire department. In the classroom, children are to follow their teacher through their assigned exit and line up outside the building in the assigned area. If the children are in the gym or cafeteria during a fire drill, they are to exit through the nearest door and line up outside the building.

### **Goals for Children:**

Opportunities will be provided to develop the following goals for the children in our care:

- To learn about God's love
- To develop a sense of self and respect for oneself and others
- To feel accepted in a warm and caring environment and valued by the people who are most important to them with their home culture and language reflected in their classroom environment
- To gain knowledge about themselves, others and the world around them
- To develop age appropriate fine and gross motor skills
- To develop readiness skills and concepts that will lead to critical thinking and reasoning through classroom experiences in the content areas and exploring learning centers and units that are meaningful and interesting to children.
- To participate in tasks that are open-ended, creative, and an end in themselves
- To develop one's self-esteem and confidence in their own ability
- To develop a responsibility for self and others by gaining independence, self-direction and following rules and routines appropriate to their developmental level
- To be able to play and learn cooperatively while mastering appropriate social skills and listening skills
- To learn to respect the rights and property of others by learning empathy, self regulation, sharing and taking turns when appropriate
- 

### **Goals for Families:**

- Families will feel welcomed and valued in our program and school
- Parents will feel encouraged to give input regarding their child's growth and development
- Teachers and parents form a collaborative relationship to work together for the benefit of their child
- Parents feel positive about their child's education and care

### **Illness:**

Please notify St. Joseph School as soon as possible if your child will not be attending school for a day or for an extended period of time. Teachers should be informed of injuries or illness so they may provide the best care for your child and notify others if there is the possibility of contagion.

St. Joseph School requests that children not be brought to school if they are:

- running a fever
- are expressing illness-related distress or discomfort
- have symptoms of diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours
- display excessive coughing or sneezing

These are contagious conditions and will infect other children. There are many other childhood conditions that are contagious and require exclusion. These include, but are not limited to, chickenpox, severe cold, conjunctivitis, impetigo, lice, and strep throat.

If your child displays symptoms of any of these conditions during the day, St. Joseph School will request that a parent or authorized adult pickup the child as soon as possible. ***If parents cannot be reached, St. Joseph School will call the emergency contact. Your emergency contact must be someone who is available in case of mild illness, is willing to care for your child under conditions such as a mild fever, vomiting, etc., and has transportation to St. Joseph School.***

Children sent home from school with vomiting, diarrhea or fever must be free of these symptoms for a full 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school. This gives the child a rest period to recover and limits the spread of illness to other children. Parents are advised of communicable diseases or conditions via e-mail, school reach or written notification, Health Alerts and/or cubby room notices. Please note these alerts and follow

recommended precautions especially during flu season. Children with severe symptoms may need a doctor's clearance to return to school

### **Lunch and Breakfast:**

Students may purchase breakfast and hot lunch in the school cafeteria. Parents have the option of paying daily or in advance. Food service personnel monitor the balance. Students with a balance over \$10.00 will have a limited lunch choice until balance is reconciled. A monthly menu, can be viewed online, and a price list is sent home at the beginning of the school year. Students with a lunch from home may purchase milk, juice or water (**carbonated drinks are not acceptable**) or supplements to their lunch. A hot lunch with milk included is available daily with the exception of early dismissal days. Checks are to be made payable to **Fairhaven Public Schools**. Please do not send child with large amounts of money.

Preschool and Prekindergarten are served lunch in their respective classrooms. All children may bring a lunch from home or purchase a school lunch. Kindergarten students eat lunch in the cafeteria.

Unacceptable behavior will result in disciplinary action.

St. Joseph School does not have the facilities to provide "safe allergy free meals" to students. The parent/guardian is responsible daily for providing an allergy free lunch for their child. Personnel will be made aware of students with such allergies. A peanut/nut or specified allergen free lunch table will be provided. Peanut/nut or specified allergen free lunch table will be washed thoroughly with soap and water between each lunch shift.

### **Lunchroom Rules for Kindergarten:**

1. Enter quietly; go to assigned seating and wait to be called to lunch line.
2. Students may talk in a quiet, respectful, conversational tone during lunch.
3. Use appropriate manners, as you would in your own home.
4. Remain seated.
5. Clean your space.
6. Line up quietly and orderly when requested to do so.
7. Microwaving of food items brought from home is not allowed.
8. **No fast-food meals** (McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's etc.) are to be brought to school.

### **Lunch/Snacks:**

Families are encouraged to send in healthy snacks and lunches in accordance with USDA'S CACFP food guidelines. More information can be found at [www.nal.asda.gov](http://www.nal.asda.gov). All foods and beverages brought from home should be sent in a lunch bag or containers labeled with the child's name with an ice pack if needed. Due to choking hazards we ask parents of children younger than 4 years of age not to send the following foods for their child: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The school's teachers are doing conservation and recycling as part of our everyday routines. Parents can support our effort by using recyclable containers for lunches or snacks instead of foils, wraps, and plastic baggies.

Please inform the school in writing of any food restrictions or allergies. We encourage families that wish to bring food from home to share among the children, to bring in commercially prepared package, foods in factory-sealed containers, so that we can monitor all items fed to the children. *Thank-you for your cooperation!*

Microwaving of food items brought from home is **NOT ALLOWED**. Please use "hot" thermos for necessary items.

All "**forgotten**" lunches must be delivered to the office. Parents may not bring lunch directly to students. **No fast-food meals** (McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's, Subway, etc.) **are to be brought to school**. Non-compliance will result in the child eating in the office.



### **Medication:**

The health and safety of every individual in our school community is of utmost importance. Under no circumstances should students be given any prescriptive or over-the-counter medication to administer themselves. Required medication during the school day needs to be administered by the child's parent. Any medication prescribed to be given three (3) times a day should not be sent to school. It can be given at home before school, after school and at bedtime, unless otherwise specified by the physician in writing.

Auditory & Vision Screenings are conducted annually for students in Preschool and Kindergarten. Physical exams are required for students to enter grades K. At this time, a school nurse is available on a part-time basis.

Please note: In case of a life threatening allergic reaction, a trained staff member is able to administer an EpiPen injection.

### **Parent-Administration Cooperation:**

The education of a student is a partnership between the parent and the school. School Administration reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines the partnership has been irrevocably broken and reserves the right to require the withdrawal of the student.

### **Parent Support:**

The school will participate in a number of activities throughout the year to raise funds to defray the costs not met by tuition and subsidy. We ask that each family actively participate in these events that earn required funds to support our efforts for a quality education for all our students. Parents are also invited and encouraged to participate in a wide range of volunteer activities to support the educational experience provided to our students. Grandparents and other family members are also welcome to volunteer. All volunteers must participate in Safe Environment Training and complete a CORI (see "**CORI**" on page 7 for additional information).

### **Parent-Teacher Communication:**

St. Joseph School encourages communication between parents and teachers. Beginning this year, St. Joseph School is becoming a "Greener" school. As a means of maintaining positive communication with each family all vital forms and information will be **e-mailed and posted on the St. Joseph school website** at [www.saintjosephschool.org](http://www.saintjosephschool.org). All students will also be provided with a "Take Home Tuesday Envelope" which will contain information that cannot be sent via e-mail. We encourage each family to check their e-mail on a regular basis and to ask your child for the Tuesday envelope and review any information that is contained therein. Other notices may also be sent whenever needed.

Parents are strongly urged to contact the teacher whenever the need arises. Your child's teacher will provide his/her contact information. Conferences may be scheduled by making a written request to your child's classroom teacher or by calling the office and leaving a message. Please allow the teacher sufficient time to investigate a situation and confer with you. If you are displeased with the teacher's resolution of your situation you may contact the administration. If you feel the matter has been resolved in an unsatisfactory manner at this level you may contact the pastor.

The need for collaboration with families is important in identifying the needs of all children. Every effort is made to involve parents in the conversation about their child's development. All teachers maintain a communication notebook that is sent home daily to inform parents of a child's progress and receive ongoing information from families. Each teacher has a classroom website that is kept up to date and a school email. Teachers also complete a weekly newsletter on the classroom website describing events and activities and a copy is also sent to families upon request that are unable to access the internet. School wide announcements are sent home weekly every Tuesday (Wednesday if no school on Monday). The School Messenger program, a telephone communication system that contacts all families with important information and announcements, is also available for parent reminders. If required, translation services would be provided to accommodate a family's preferred language.

Preschool and Prekindergarten Welcome Day conferences are scheduled at the beginning of the school year. Parents and teachers share information about the child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development and set goals for the year. A parent conference is also scheduled in January and a Creative Curriculum Summary of Developmental

Progress is shared with families. Another Creative Curriculum progress report and an end of the year checklist of skills is shared with families in May. The results of the Scott Foresman screening tool GET READY TO READ, an assessment given to preschoolers entering kindergarten, is also shared with parents. A portfolio documenting the child's growth, progress and experience through samples of work, photographs, stories are also given to parents at the end of the year.

Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of parents or teachers as needed throughout the school year.

Kindergarten Welcome Day is scheduled before the first day of school. Children visit with their parents to view the classroom and meet the teacher. Teachers provide information regarding program policies and procedures and parents share information about their child. A conference is also held in November with a progress report issued at the conference. Results of the Scott Foresman Reading Street 2008 edition and the Scott Foresman Math program 2011 edition reading and math assessment and ongoing observations are shared with parents throughout the year. Report cards are also issued in January and June.

### **Parent-Teacher Organization:**

The mission of the St. Joseph School P.T.O. is to ensure effective communication between parent, teachers, and the administration and to participate in activities that support the education of all the children at St. Joseph School. Meetings are held monthly. All parents are encouraged to participate on the subcommittees that work on special projects throughout the year.

### **Party Invitations / Class Birthday Celebrations:**

Invitations for student parties may only be distributed in school if an entire class is invited. This is to avoid any hurt feelings. If you are unable to invite all boys or all girls, invitations may not be distributed on school property. The teacher must distribute all invitations. **No classmate's names or addresses will be given out at any time by anyone working at St. Joseph School.**

Students celebrating a birthday may share a simple snack (cupcakes, brownies, cookies, please no cakes) with classmates. The sharing of the snack is to remain in the classroom of the person celebrating the birthday. Please refrain from providing balloons, favors or trinkets. Large displays and costumed characters are not appropriate.

### **Phone Calls:**

Generally, students are not allowed to make or receive telephone calls during the day. Only **emergency** calls are allowed. Permission to go to a friend's house is not an emergency. St. Joseph School has Caller ID service. If you have a private number and you are trying to telephone the school, you must first dial \*82 to unlock your number. After the call is ended, your private number will be reactivated.

### **Photo/Contact Release Waiver:**

Photographs of St. Joseph School Students are taken throughout the year. On occasion, some photographs with accompanying names, are used for publication on Facebook, newspapers, brochures and Internet etc. for both St. Joseph School and Fall River Catholic School Alliance. A Contact and Photo Release waiver must be signed and returned.

### **Referrals:**

Concerns regarding a child's health, development or behavior will be brought to the immediate attention of the parent. The child's teacher will assess the areas of concern and document through observation, anecdotal records and other appropriate methods and then meet with parents to discuss their observations. Parents will be asked to contact their public school system for evaluation and support and/or private resources if they prefer. The goal is to serve the best interests of the child and make every effort to maintain the child and family within our school. Any referrals will be followed up by school with the parent's consent. A list of referrals is available in the school office.

### **Religious Activities:**

St. Joseph School offers liturgies, prayer experiences, Sacramental preparation, and instruction on the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts to foster each child's development of faith and Catholic values. St. Joseph School provides

religious instruction that is age appropriate for faith development. Our program seeks to supplement the instruction that takes place in the homes and faith communities of the children.

### **Rest Time (Preschool and Prekindergarten):**

All children are provided with a daily rest or quiet time. Teachers minimize noise and disturbance and each child is provided with a cot individually marked. There is appropriate space and adequate lighting to allow proper supervision. Blankets, pillows, and a “sleeping buddy” are brought from home and sent home regularly for washing. Children are asked to rest but not required to sleep. Story tapes and/or soft music are played and books and/or quiet activities are offered to those not asleep.

### **Safety and Security:**

St. Joseph School will make every effort to keep children safe. We ask your cooperation with the following:

- All visitors must report to the **main entrance** for admittance into the building during the school day. Please ring the bell, identify yourself, and state the purpose of your visit.
- Once in the building all visitors will report to the main office, sign in on the daily log, and obtain a visitor’s pass.
- No one is allowed to walk beyond the double doors in the main hallway without an escort.
- Parents are not allowed to interrupt a class while it is in session. Appointments for teacher conferences may be made through the office.
- Students shall not open any entrance for any visitor.
- Parents employing extended care services should employ the front or back doors of the main hallway.

The school also has an Emergency Safety Procedure Manual, which is available in the office for parent review.

A registered sex offender who is the parent/guardian of a student may come onto his/her child’s diocesan school campus in order to transport his/her own child to and/or from school; attend Open House Nights/Back to School Nights; attend Parent-Teacher Conferences; attend school sporting events; attend school performances (i.e., school drama or musical performances) or any other school events that are listed specifically on the school’s calendar of events. If a registered sex offender who is the parent/guardian of a student receives a notification from a school teacher or school administrator to attend a meeting regarding his or her child, he/she must follow the protocol set forth in the next paragraph concerning, in general, the presence of registered sex offenders on a diocesan school campus.

In general, a registered sex offender who is the parent/guardian of a student is not allowed to come to campus for any other reason unless they have scheduled a specific appointment directly with the school’s administrator/head of school. When an appointment is scheduled with and confirmed by the school’s administrator, the parent/guardian must report directly to the Main Office of the school for that appointment and will be escorted by the administrator or his/her designee to the location of the meeting. The parent will be escorted back to the Main Office at the conclusion of the scheduled meeting and must leave the school premises immediately after the scheduled meeting.

### **School Cancellation:**

**St. Joseph School follows the schedule for the Fairhaven Public Schools for all weather related school cancellations.** St. Joseph School subscribes to School Messenger, an automated phone messaging system, which will contact all families in the event of a cancellation of school due to weather. In the event of inclement weather or other school cancellation, please listen to the following radio stations for specific NO SCHOOL announcements: WBSM, WNBH, WFHN, Channel 4, Channel 6 Channel 7, Channel 12 and Channel 56. All school cancellations will also be placed our website [www.saintjosephschool.org](http://www.saintjosephschool.org).

### **School Health:**

Massachusetts State Law prevents smoking in all public buildings. The school, all outside buildings, and surrounding grounds are smoke free areas. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

### **School Hours:**

St. Joseph School is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Parents are asked to bring their child/children to the school playground as near as possible to the arrival time of 8:00 a.m. since there is no supervision of students provided before school unless in breakfast program.

### **State License Requirement:**

St. Joseph School is operated by the Dioceses of Fall River and is not required to be licensed by the state.

The statutory definition of a day care center (M.G.L. c.28A, s.9 and 102 CMR 7.2) specifically excludes “any part of a private organized educational system, unless the services of such a system are primarily limited to kindergarten, nursery or related preschool services.” Although our preschool component is not required by the state to be licensed we are accredited and follow the regulations and guidelines from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for operation.

### **Statement of Policy:**

“All Schools in the Diocese of Fall River are subject to the policies of the Dioceses of Fall River. The \*\*policy manuals of the Diocese of Fall River replace and supersede any contrary statement of policy, procedures, programs, or practices, including but not limited to, any such statement contained in any handbook or manual prepared by any school in the Diocese of Fall River.”

\*\*These manuals are available to be read at the

Catholic School Office, 423 Highland Avenue, Fall River, MA 02720

### **Telephone Numbers:**

School: 508-996-1983

Fax: 508-996-1998

St. Joseph School Academic Year Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

### **Traffic Policy:**

The safety of our children at arrival and dismissal is paramount. We would like to thank you in advance for following the School’s traffic policy as stated below.

#### **MORNING DROP OFF 8:00 – 8:15\_School Safety Zones**

- All students will enter the school by the Northeast playground door on Homestead Street.
- Any student that arrives after 8:15 must enter by the main entrance on Spring Street.

Parents **may not** park in the Drop Off Only Zones. These areas are for drop off only. **Staff members will escort your child from the car to the building. Please remain in your vehicle.**

#### **CROSSWALK ON HOMESTEAD**

Parents are requested never to block the crosswalk. This is for student use only.

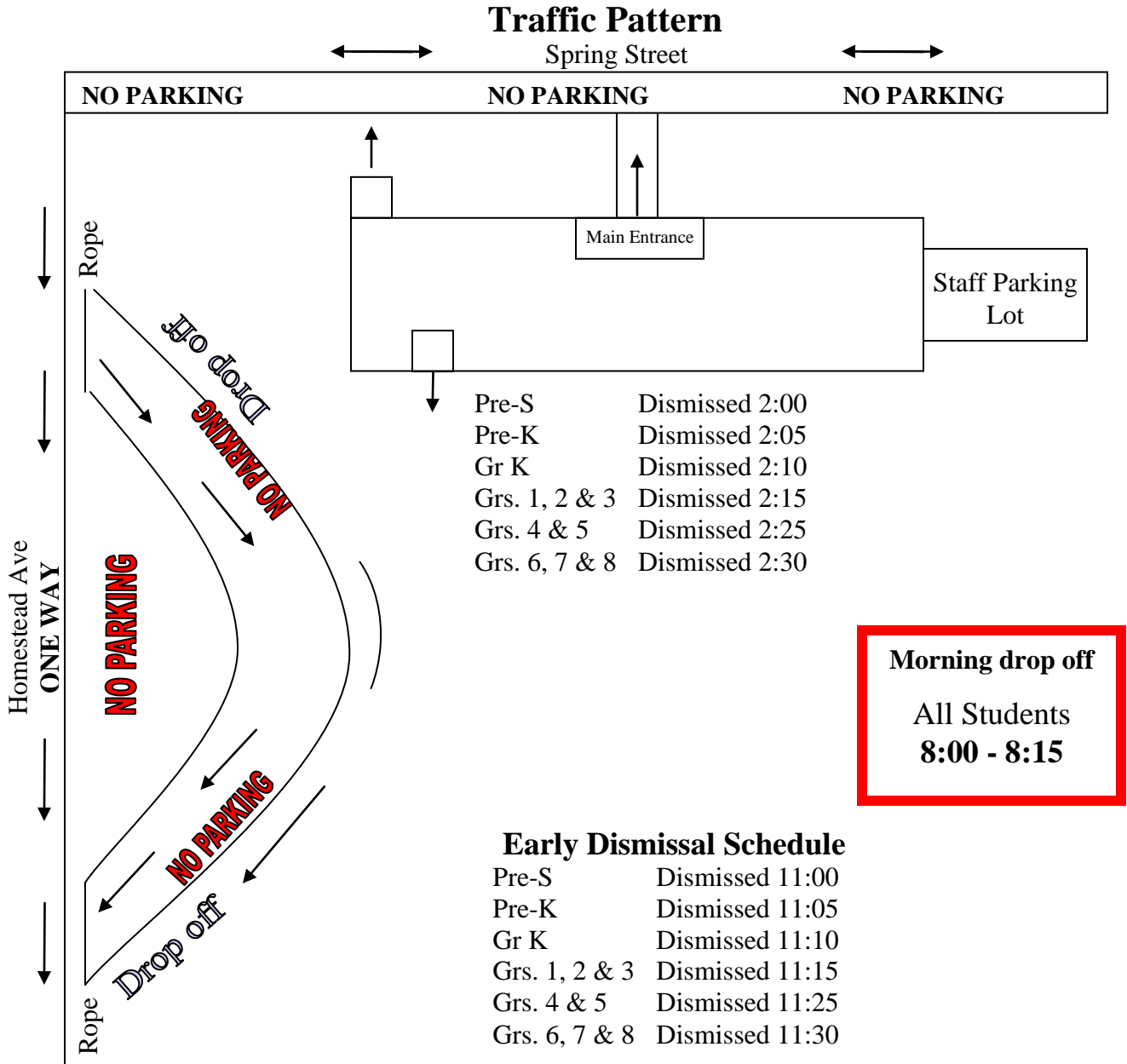
- Homestead is a one-way (going north) from 8:00-9:00 a.m. and 2:00-3:00 p.m. **ONLY**
- Handicapped Parking is available in the driveway west of the school on Spring Street.
- Please be respectful of our neighbors on Spring Street and Homestead Ave. by not parking or obstructing other private driveways.

### **Afternoon Pick-Up:**

- Preschool will be dismissed at 2:00, Pre-Kindergarten will be dismissed at 2:05 and Kindergarten will be dismissed at 2:10. The students will exit the building from the Northeast playground door.
- Grades 1-3 will be dismissed at 2:15 and exit from the Northeast playground door.
- Grades 4 & 5 will be dismissed at 2:25 and exit from the Northeast playground door.
- Grades 6-8 will be dismissed at 2:30 and exit from the Northeast playground door.
- Parents are encouraged to remain outdoors at time of dismissal.

**\*\*PLEASE PLAN TO ARRIVE AT TIME OF OLDEST CHILD'S DISMISSAL.  
YOUNGEST CHILD WILL REMAIN IN CLASSROOM UNTIL OLDEST SIBLING IS  
DISMISSED.**

Please View Chart below.



**Transportation:**

St. Joseph School does not provide transportation. Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. Children will take field trips to off site locations. In these instances, we walk or hire a school bus from a local bus company. Parents will be notified in advance and all children require a signed parent permission form in order to participate. Since all faculty and staff are required on field trips, any parent that does not wish their child to attend will need to make alternate child care arrangements for the day. Teachers and assistants have cell phones in event of an emergency and usually several parents attend as chaperones. The first aid kit available in the classroom is also brought as well. In the event of a transportation problem, the bus company would send an alternate vehicle.

**Tuition:**

The tuition, related fees, and fund raising assessments are determined yearly by the Principal and Pastor and are based on the per pupil cost of maintaining the school and providing a quality education. The parent/guardian is responsible for full payment of tuition, fundraising assessment, and all fees. There is a \$25 charge for returned checks.

**Visiting:**

The school has an open door policy. Please call the office to arrange a time to visit. We encourage you to visit and make presentations to the children. If you would like to share a tradition, hobby, or skill, please discuss it with your child's teacher.

**Warm Weather Recess Guidelines:**

Trees are available for shade as well as protection from the sun under the Big Toy itself. Parents may apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent at home if so desired prior to their arrival at school.

**Winter Recess Guidelines:**

Exercise outdoors is healthy and is strongly encouraged. If conditions preclude the full recess time, even a (5) minute break can revitalize children and prepare them for academic learning. Students go outside for recess every day unless it is raining, snowing or severe weather based on the "feels like" temperature.

Below are the guidelines for cold weather recess.

The National Nurses' Association has established the following guidelines for outdoor recess during the winter months.

- Feels like 25 degrees and above (considers wind chill factor) – Outdoor Recess
- Feels like 16-25 degrees (considers wind chill factor) – Abbreviated Outdoor Recess to 5 or 10 minutes
- Feels like 15 degrees or below (considers wind chill factor) – Inside Recess

To access the current local temperature including wind chill:

1. Type [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)
2. Type in your zip code (02719)
3. Look at the current temperature for Fairhaven
4. Look right below that current temperature to get the "Feels Like" temperature
5. That's the temperature that we will use to determine outdoor recess.

Children with special health conditions, in particular, asthmatic children, and others, may need special accommodations noted on their individualized health care plan or asthma health care plan.

**THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT  
TO MAKE NEW POLICIES WHEN NECESSARY**