



Parent and Student  
Handbook  
2022-23

## **Mission**

St. Francis of Assisi School is a joyfully Catholic school where students Seek the Truth, Do the Good, and Love the Beautiful. Students in preschool through sixth grade become life-long learners, committed to pursuing virtue and excellence as they grow in Christ's grace.

## **Parent/Guardian's Role in Education**

We consider 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 your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life – physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. By choosing to partner with St. Francis of Assisi School, you are committing to working with us to educate your child; we expect your partnership, good-will, and commitment in return. We work together with parents to provide a safe, nurturing educational community where Christian behavior and Catholic morality is exhibited in word and deed both in and out of school.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will impact the way your child relates to God and others. Catholic morality and Christian behavior taught in school will not take root in the child unless you model these behaviors and adopt prayerful practices at home. St. Francis School provides an authentically Catholic school, and as such, your children will receive a Catholic education. St. Francis School welcomes students of all faiths and those who are on the journey to Faith if parents are willing to partner with us according to our mission. Students, while at SFS, are not allowed to “opt” out of religion class, Mass, rosary, or any other religious practice while at school. With a true spirit of evangelization, religious education, Mass, and other devotions are taught and required for all students.

Once you have chosen to enter a partnership, we trust that you will be loyal to the school. During these formative years, your child needs constant support from both parents and the school to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging and nourishing the student to reach his/her potential. We require parents to follow the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, that is, concerns should always be brought first to the lowest level. An example of this is if a parent has a concern with a staff member, teacher, or the principal, that parent should be speaking directly to the person regarding their concern. It is vital that both

parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and each other will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. 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, we believe appropriate boundaries and limits provide children with much needed guidance and security.

We believe that in order to develop a sense of self and responsibility, students must learn to take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

### **St. Francis School Philosophy and Parent Involvement**

St. Francis School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program.

St. Francis School is pleased to have parents partnering with us to achieve these objectives:

1. To develop the total Christian personality by instilling in children a respect for life and reverence for Christian living.
2. To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on Catholic theology, scripture, liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.
3. To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods such as small and large group instruction, departmental classes, and other tools for basic knowledge and formation.
4. To aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities.

It is the consensus of the faculty that every human being has a right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability. In the early years, education is often of the utmost importance because through

education and guidance, the children of today become the Catholic citizens of tomorrow.

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

### **Parents / Guardians Obligation**

As partners in education at St. Francis School, we ask parents/guardians to set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
- Is dressed according to the school dress code
- Completes assignments on time
- Has ordered lunch or brings a nutritional bag lunch every day
- Actively participates in school activities

We require you as the parent to:

- Notify the school with a written note when your student has been absent or tardy
- Notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers
- Meet all financial obligations to the school
- Pay for any damage to schoolbooks or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of your student
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health
- Complete and return to school any requested information promptly
- Read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school
- Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing concerns

### **Volunteers**

In order to keep costs low and raise awareness of our school in the surrounding community, St. Francis of Assisi School has multiple volunteer opportunities throughout the school year. Each family is ENCOURAGED to contribute 10 volunteer hours. Notices will be sent home periodically requesting volunteers for school sponsored events.

All individuals who wish to volunteer in the school must complete the Diocesan mandated background check and the Shield the Vulnerable course. Volunteers are expected to dress appropriately (clothing should be modest and neat).

### **School Hours**

Before Care: 7:00am-7:30am\*  
School Day: 7:55am-2:45pm\*\*

(Early Childhood (PS and PK) Half Day Dismisses at 11:30am  
Full Day Dismisses at 2:45pm)  
After School Group (ASG): 2:30pm-6:00pm  
Early Release Day: 7:55am-11:30am

\*\*Students not in line to enter school by 7:55am are considered tardy; you may drop off your child(ren) beginning at 7:30am.

### **School Office Hours**

The school office is open on all school days from 7:30 AM – 2:45 PM.

### **School Visitors**

School visitors (volunteers, parents/guardians, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to return the nametags and sign out at the time of departure.

### **Morning Arrival Routine**

As independent learners in training, students are expected to enter the school building on their own each morning as a normal practice.

Drop-Off: (Preferred method)

- Bear left at the fork in front of the church and stay to the right as you enter the parking lot.

- Let your child out of the car on the right-hand side onto the sidewalk. Your child will be able to walk to the playground on the sidewalk.
- After dropping off your child(ren), turn left at the end of the parking lot and proceed to the outermost edge of the parking lot – passing next to the dumpster and shed – in a counter-clockwise pattern to exit the parking lot.
- Please remember to drive slowly as other parents/guardians and children will be navigating the parking lot at this time.

### **Park and Stay**

- Bear left at the fork and stay to the left as you enter the parking lot
- Park your car in a middle row parking space and walk your child to the sidewalk
- Please be mindful of other cars entering and navigating the parking lot at this time.
- Parking is not permitted along the sidewalk during morning drop-off

### **Inclement Weather Drop-Off**

If the cones are not blocking the driveway in front of the school during heavy rainfall or snow, you may drop your child(ren) off at the entrance to the school by pulling up to the overhang in front of the main doors. Once you have unloaded your child(ren), proceed around the building to exit parking lot as at afternoon pick-up.

### **AFTERNOON DISMISSAL ROUTINE**

- Upon arriving to campus, bear left at the fork and stay to the left as you enter the parking lot.
- Proceed along the outermost edge of the lot – passing next to the shed and dumpster – and form a line beginning at the cones.
- At 2:45 p.m. (11:30 a.m. on Early Release Days) the cones will be moved, and vehicles may proceed to the front entrance of the school.
- Pull your vehicle as far forward as vehicle in front of you allows and wait for your child to arrive at your car. The children will be called and escorted/directed to your vehicle by faculty and staff members; please stay with your vehicle.

## **Attendance**

A student's absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress. Three (3) tardies or three (3) early withdrawals are considered a one-half day absence. Excessive tardies and early withdrawals will have a direct impact on a student's academic progress and may result in student retention in his/her current grade.

## **Absences**

When a student is absent from school, a parent/guardian should call the office by 8:00 AM each day of the absence. If the office does not receive a call, the office will make every attempt to contact a parent/guardian to make sure they are aware of their child's absence.

A written statement giving reasons for the absence or tardiness must be brought to the student's teacher upon the student's return. Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents/guardians are requested to consult with the Principal and present a written reason for the absence.

## **Admission to St. Francis School / Potty Training**

Please note that St. Francis School is a private school and not a daycare provider. While we know that accidents sometimes happen, students must be fully potty trained before the first day of school. A child is potty trained when:

- He or she uses the bathroom facility independently
- He or she lets the teacher know they need to use the bathroom
- He or she can dress and undress themselves on their own

As a rule of thumb, 2 accidents within one week for two weeks is the marker for the school determining a child is not fully potty trained and therefore would be better served in a daycare setting.

## **Absence Due to Illness**

To avoid infecting others, we ask parents to keep their child(ren) home when they are sick; please use your best judgment for the sake of your child's recovery and their class-mates' well-being!

- If your child has had a fever, your child should NOT return to school until 24 hours have passed of being fever-free without any fever-reducing medications.

- If your child has had a stomach virus or any gastro-intestinal issues, your child should NOT return to school until 24 hours have passed without any vomiting or diarrhea.
- If your child has had head lice, your child should NOT return to school until all nits or eggs are gone from their heads. If 5 or more nits are found on your child's head during school, they will be sent home immediately.

When a student is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness, a parent/guardian may call the school office before 9:30 AM to arrange for his or her homework assignments to be compiled. These assignments may be picked up in the school office between 2:00–2:30 p.m.

For short absences, students should make arrangement with classmates regarding assignments or obtain missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school. Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.

### **Absence Due to Vacations**

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the interruption of a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility to make up upon his/her return. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. Assignments will not be given in anticipation of a vacation.

Arrangements for tests missed because of an absence are to be made with the individual teachers. Tests must be taken within one week of the original test date.

Excessive absence (40) days or the equivalent of 40 days including tardies and early dismissals (3 tardies or dismissals = ½ day absence), may be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year.

### **Temporary Absence during the School Day**

Students leaving for appointments during school hours require a written note by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are required to sign out their child when leaving and sign in their child upon returning. Students who are away from school for an appointment for 3 ½ hours or more will be counted as absent for ½ a day. Three (3) early withdrawals each of which are less than 3 ½ hours are considered a one-half day absence.



## **Academics**

### **Curriculum Standards**

Our curriculum is designed with clear standards and benchmarks for each subject area and grade level. Student progress is measured against the standards of the curriculum.

### **Academic Achievement**

Student progress is measured against a continuum of curriculum standards rather than in comparison to other students. Students are encouraged to collaborate and cooperate with their peers and compete only with themselves. Students must achieve mastery of each curriculum standard before moving on to the next standard. St. Francis of Assisi School defines mastery as earning 80% or better on the summative assessment for that standard.

### **Homework**

Homework assignments are designed for practice and preparation for lessons. A general guideline for time spent on homework per night should approximate 10 minutes per year in school:

Kindergarten: 5 minutes

First Grade: 10 minutes

Second Grade: 20 minutes

Third Grade: 30 minutes

Fourth Grade: 40 minutes

Fifth and Sixth Grade: 50-60 minutes

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, time required may vary per student and per assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.

Homework may be assigned to students Monday through Thursday. New homework assignments will not be assigned on the last day before weekends or vacations (if homework is assigned before a weekend or vacation, it will not be due the first day back).

Any TESTS/QUIZZES/PROJECTS that are assigned for or due on Monday or on the first day back from vacation will be assigned AT LEAST one week ahead of time.

### **Field Trip Excursions**

1. Field Trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.

2. Teachers, in consultation with the Principal, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on Field Trips due to, but not limited to, poor conduct.
3. A written official permission slip, signed by the parent/guardian, is required before a child will be permitted to attend any off-campus activity. We can only accept original signatures: verbal, electronic and faxed permission will not be accepted. Signed permission slips are due in the office forty-eight hours after receipt.
4. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to support Field Trips but may refuse permission for their child. Students not attending a Field Trip are expected to attend school and complete academic work. Students will be responsible to obtain the information they have missed by not attending the Field Trip.
5. Students not attending the Field Trip and who do not report to school will be counted absent for the day.
6. All monies collected for Field Trip are non-refundable unless the trip is cancelled.
7. Student cell phones are not allowed on Field Trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or Principal.

### **Promotion and Retention Policy**

Students will progress through the academic program at St. Francis of Assisi School by mastering curriculum standards at a reasonable pace as determined by teachers, Principal and parents/guardians. If a parent/guardian, teacher or Principal is concerned about the suitability of a student moving on to a higher grade, a conference should be initiated between all parties and the concerns discussed and dealt with in a timely fashion.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

The sacramental life of the Catholic faith is an important component of the Religion program at St. Francis School. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and First Communion, form the core of our religious instruction in Second and Third Grade. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Communion will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Communion.

Parents/guardians are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

## **Communication**

### **School Communication**

In order to ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, St. Francis School uses a weekly envelope system, weekly “School Update” email, emails directly from the principal, and our school website, which displays the School Calendar and all upcoming events.

- Tuesday Envelope: School envelopes containing correspondence are sent home – usually on Tuesdays - and should be returned the following day. Your child is responsible for returning the envelope to his or her teacher.
- School Update (Friday Email), Troubadour and Website: Other important information concerning school as well as upcoming dates and events will be sent home through the weekly email – usually on Fridays. Troubadour is a monthly email from the Principal that discusses school culture. Please make sure to provide accurate email address(es) to the school office and update the office whenever there is a change.

### **Parent/Guardian/Teacher/Student Conferences**

Conferences will be held periodically throughout the year to allow students, parents/guardians and teachers the opportunity to discuss a student’s progress. These conferences may be scheduled at the request of the parent/guardian, teacher or student.

### **Family Contact Information**

Parents/guardians/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts.

### **Student Academic Records**

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent/guardian in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. St. Francis of Assisi School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents/guardians to transport to the new school. Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must

make a request to the School Office at least five school days in advance. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents/guardians. No student records will be forwarded to another school until Business Office accounts have been settled.

### **School Telephone Use**

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from the classroom teacher and the school secretary. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. The telephone in a teacher's classroom is for the use of the teacher only. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home

### **Uniforms and Dress Code**

Parents/guardians, as first educators of their children and the primary models of respect for legitimate authority, are expected to support the uniform and dress code policies set forth by St. Francis of Assisi School. Since neatness and good grooming speak refinement, we ask all parents/guardians to see that the uniform regulations are kept. Training in good appearance encourages a child's sense of dignity and respect for oneself and others. Students who are out of uniform without an adequate reason or prior approval from the Principal will be sent to the office and the parent/guardian may be called to bring the proper clothing. All uniforms are currently available at [www.landsend.com/school](http://www.landsend.com/school) School # 900136813. Please select our school and all approved uniforms will appear.

Please see our website for our official uniform policy requirements.

### **GIRLS GROOMING**

#### **Hair**

- Neat with bangs trimmed above the eyebrows
- Accessories must be in the hair, not on wrists, and not distracting due to size or color – no beads or scarves allowed. Navy, Khaki, White, Burgundy are acceptable color choices for hair accessories.
- Unnatural coloring or bleaching is prohibited

### **Accessories**

- Cosmetics, colored lip gloss/chapstick or artificial and colored nails are prohibited.
- Visible tattoos – permanent or temporary – are prohibited
- Piercing – other than one set of pierced ears in which a pair of earrings no larger than a dime and without hoops may be worn – is prohibited.
- Jewelry – limited to one watch (non-beeping), one ring and a simple cross or holy medal on a silver or gold chain

### **BOYS GROOMING**

#### **Hair**

- Neat and trimmed above the shirt collar, around the ears and above the eyebrows. The school determines what is “neat”
- Mohawks, faux-hawks, and other extreme haircuts are not permitted
- Unnatural coloring or bleaching is prohibited

#### **Accessories**

- Cosmetics, colored lip gloss/chapstick or artificial or colored nails are prohibited
- Visible tattoos – permanent or temporary – are prohibited
- Jewelry – limited to one watch (non-beeping), one ring and a simple cross or holy medal on a silver or gold chain.

### **GENERAL POLICIES FOR GIRLS AND BOYS**

- Uniform should be clean and pressed with all buttons attached and hem intact.
- Shirts should be tucked in at all times during the school day, as well as during any school-sponsored events.

Repeated uniform violations may result in a student being prohibited from participating in the next non-uniform day.

### **Non-Uniform “Dress Down Days” Guidelines**

Students are given the privilege of dressing out of regular uniform from time to time. In order to maintain this privilege, students must take care to abide by the guidelines set forth regarding non-uniform day attire. At all times students should be dressed and groomed neatly and ready to engage in learning.

## **Conduct and Discipline**

### **General Expectations**

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, members of the St. Francis of Assisi School learning community, students, faculty, staff, parents/guardians and volunteers are expected to be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All members are expected to cooperate with the spirit and letter of the policies of the school, which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors, which the members' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them. The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Weapons, implements or emblems of violence, illegal substances and items deemed dangerous in a school or public setting (e.g. knives, guns, explosive devices, matches, lighters, accelerants and inhalants) are never permitted at St. Francis of Assisi School.

Other items, while not harmful in and of themselves, are also not permitted at school unless the Principal and classroom teacher grant explicit permission for appropriate educational use. These items include radios, cell or smart phones, computers or tablet devices, video equipment, iPods, or other mp3 players.

The Principal and faculty, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school.

The items listed above as well as any other item deemed distracting, dangerous or inappropriate for a learning environment will be confiscated from the student. The student's parent/guardian or guardian may request the return of confiscated item from the Principal.

### **Social Media and Internet Presence**

Remembering that parents/guardians, teacher, staff and administration are to set the highest moral example for our students, special care must be taken when engaging in public discourse on social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and any other venue in which public

discourse occurs. As responsible digital citizens, we must commit to representing ourselves online in a dignified and accountable way.

If a parent has a concern with the school, the internet is not the place to voice that. The school asks parents to partner with itself for the education of children. Questions, concerns and any negative feedback should all be shared with either the teacher or principal in a private manner and not through social media.

In the interest of safety and privacy of our St. Francis of Assisi School community – parents/guardians, students, teachers, staff and administration – we request that pictures and videos of anyone within the school NOT be posted on these sites without their explicit permission.

In addition, any communication posted on the Internet that may be considered libelous or defamatory to individuals within the St. Francis of Assisi School community, or of the school itself, is strictly prohibited and may be actionable by law.

### **Diocese of Manchester Bullying Policy**

As Catholics, we believe that everyone is created by God and loved by God. As followers of Jesus, we are called to value other people's dignity and to treat them with respect just as Jesus did. Bullying of any kind goes against our call to be like Jesus and it is never acceptable.

Saint Francis of Assisi School is committed to providing all students with a safe school environment in which all members of its community are treated with respect. The school believes that protecting against and addressing bullying is critical for creating and maintaining a safe, secure and positive school climate and culture; supporting academic achievement; increasing school engagement; respecting the rights of others; and upholding our Christian values.

The Principal or Principal's Designee is responsible for ensuring that the Anti-Bullying Policy is implemented.

### **Definitions**

Bullying means a single, significant incident or a pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical

act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another pupil which:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- Causes emotional distress to a student; or
- Interferes with a student's educational opportunities; or
- Creates a hostile educational environment; or
- Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Cyberbullying means bullying conduct (as defined above) that is undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones, computers, pagers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, electronic readers, videogames, and websites.

### **Statements of Prohibition**

Bullying and cyberbullying shall not be tolerated and are hereby prohibited.

St. Francis of Assisi School reserves the right to address all forms of prohibited conduct and, if necessary, impose discipline for such misconduct that occurs on or is delivered to school property or a school-sponsored event on or off school property; or occurs off of school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity or event, if the conduct interferes with a pupil's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of the school or school-sponsored activity or event.

False Reporting- A student found to have knowingly made a false accusation of bullying may face disciplinary or remedial action within the discretion of the principal or principal's designee.

Retaliation- Retaliation or false accusations against a victim, witness, or anyone else who in good faith provides information about an act of suspected bullying or cyber bullying is prohibited.

Any student found to have engaged in retaliation against those described above shall be subject to disciplinary action.

If an alleged victim or any witness expresses to the principal or other staff member that he/she is fearful of retaliation, the principal or principal's designee shall develop a plan to protect that student from possible retaliation.



## **Reporting Incidents of Bullying**

Note: The identity of the reporter will be protected unless otherwise required by State or Federal law.

### **Reporting During School Hours**

#### **Reporting by Students**

- Any student who believes that he/she has been the victim of bullying should report the act immediately to a teacher or to any other school employee.
- Any student who has knowledge of or observes bullying of another student is encouraged to report the bullying to a teacher or to any other school employee. If a student is unsure whether an incident learned of or observed may constitute bullying, the incident should be discussed with a teacher or another school employee.

#### **Reporting by Parents/Guardians and School Volunteers**

- Any parent, guardian, or school volunteer who suspects, has witnessed, received a report of, or has information that a student may have been subjected to bullying is encouraged to promptly report such incident to a teacher, a school employee, or the principal.

#### **Reporting by School Employees**

- Any teacher, staff member, or school employee who suspects, has witnessed, received a report of, or has reliable information that a student has been subjected to bullying or suspected bullying as defined above shall promptly report such incident to the principal or principal's designee.

### **Reporting Outside of School Hours**

The diocese has made available a phone number to be used by those who wish to report suspected incidents of bullying outside of school hours. Reports made by this method will be recorded and forwarded to the appropriate school the following business day. Reporters will be encouraged to provide their names, but anonymous reports will be accepted.

The Bullying Hotline Number is 603-663-0148

## **Investigation**

The principal or principal's designee shall promptly (within 2 business days) initiate an investigation into any report of bullying or suspected bullying.

## **Initial Notice to Parent/Guardian**

The principal or principal's designee shall promptly (within 2 business days) notify the parents/guardians of the reported victim of bullying and the parents/ guardians of the reported perpetrator of bullying of the incident. Such notification may be made orally or in writing. A waiver of this notification may be granted by the Superintendent of Schools if such waiver is deemed to be in the best interest of the victim or perpetrator.

## **Timeline for Investigation**

The investigation will be concluded within 5 business days. An extension may be granted by the Superintendent of Schools if necessary.

## **Notification to Parent/Guardian upon Completion of Investigation**

Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the principal or principal's designee shall promptly report the findings of the investigation to the parents/ guardians of the reported victim of bullying and the parents/ guardians of the reported perpetrator of bullying. Such notification may be made orally or in writing. The notification must comply with school policy and rules of confidentiality.

## **Written Record**

A written record of any substantiated act of bullying shall be maintained by the school.

## **Disciplinary Action for Substantiated Bullying**

If an investigation concludes that a student has engaged in bullying conduct prohibited by this policy, the principal or principal's designee shall determine the consequences on a case-by- case basis. Bullying behavior can take many forms. Accordingly, there is no single, appropriate response to substantiated acts of bullying.

When acts of bullying are identified early and/or when such acts do not reasonably require a severe disciplinary response in the judgment of the principal or designee, students should be counseled as to the definition of bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying.

While bullying as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the student responsible for the bullying, whether and to what extent disciplinary action is required is a matter for the discretion of the principal or designee. The goal is for the child responsible for the bullying to receive redemption, learn, and refrain from bullying others in the future. Any disciplinary or remedial action shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent future occurrences of such behavior, protect the victim, provide support and assistance to the victim and perpetrator, and prevent the likelihood of retaliation.

Nothing in this policy prevents the school from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school.

### **Notification**

Handbooks- St. Francis of Assisi School will provide notice of this Policy to students, staff, parents/guardians, and volunteers via student and employee handbooks.

### **Training**

Students shall participate in education programs which set forth expectations for student behavior and emphasize an understanding of bullying, the school's prohibition of such conduct, and the reasons why the conduct is destructive, unacceptable, and shall lead to discipline.

Parents- Periodically, the principal or principal's designee shall provide parents/guardians with information about bullying.

Staff and Volunteers- The principal or principal's designee shall develop appropriate methods of discussing with staff and volunteers the meaning, substance, and application of this Policy and the importance of promoting a positive school climate to minimize the occurrence of bullying.

### **Violence**

Violence of any kind is not tolerated on school grounds. Any student who physically pushes, kicks, punches, shoves, holds another student down, bites, or in any other way physically harms another student may face suspension and/or expulsion. Any student who initiates or retaliates with violence will be handled in the same manner. If a situation arises, students should seek the assistance of the school staff rather than resort to violence.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Students who possess illegal drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function will be reported to local law enforcement and may face suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Off-Campus Conduct**

The administration of St. Francis of Assisi School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day.

### **Cheating**

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Cheating is generally described as representing someone else's work as one's own. Students guilty of cheating – including plagiarism – may face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

### **School Property**

The parent/guardian of a child who destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to replace or repair the item(s) at the parent/guardian's expense. Textbooks owned by the school and loaned to the student for use during the school year must be properly covered at all times. Students shall not write in borrowed textbooks and shall make their best efforts to prevent damage to the textbooks while in their possession. Student must pay a fine or replace damaged or lost textbooks before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are released.

### **Detention**

In the unlikely event that a student is required to serve a detention for conduct at school, the classroom teacher will contact the parent/guardian to arrange for the detention day and time. Detentions take precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, ballgames, etc.

### **Suspension**

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work on assignments in isolation from the student body, but under the supervision of an adult. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but failing grades will be recorded for this work.

### **Expulsion**

Terminating a student's enrollment at St. Francis of Assisi School is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from St. Francis of Assisi School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Food Allergy Policy**

St. Francis School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all students with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, St. Francis School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian, and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life threatening allergy.

#### **Training**

In order to minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, St. Francis School will provide training and education for all St. Francis School staff. In conjunction with the student's parent/guardian and primary care provider and/or allergist the school will maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student identified with a potentially life-threatening allergy.

The training will be provided to ALL school employees (including office staff, food service staff, etc.), and will include (but not be limited to):

- A description/definition of severe allergies and a discussion of the most common food, medication, latex and stinging insect allergies.
- The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis.
- The correct use of an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen).
- Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency.
- Activating Emergency Medical Response - Dial 911

- Location of emergency EpiPen.
- Policy and procedure review at the beginning of every school year.

### **Notifications**

The front office will be responsible for notifying classroom teachers about the nature of the life-threatening allergies faced by students. This notification will include an explanation of the severity of the health threat, a description of the signs and symptoms to be aware of and what allergen (food, materials, etc.) to avoid.

### **Classrooms**

Teachers must be familiar with the Emergency Action Plan of students in their classes and respond to emergencies as per the emergency protocol documented in the Emergency Action Plan. All teachers and substitutes will be educated about the risk of food allergies. In the event of a suspected allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history), the school office will be called and the school's Emergency Response Plan activated. The emergency medical services will be called immediately.

A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent or guardian.

### **Field Trip Excursions**

The administration will determine the appropriateness of each off-campus trip for any student with life-threatening allergies. If the student attends the field trip, his/her medications including an EpiPen and a copy of the student's Emergency Health Care Plan will accompany the student. The adult carrying the EpiPen will be identified and introduced to the student as well as the other chaperones and will carry a cell phone at all times.

### **Medication Policy**

If a child must take any medication in school, either prescribed by a doctor or over-the-counter, that medication must be sent to the School Office with a signed note from the parent/guardian. The medication must be in its appropriate container and labeled with the following information:

- a) Child's name
- b) Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
- c) Frequency

## **Emergency Drills**

State Law requires that fire drills be held regularly. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Close windows and doors;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
4. Stand in a line;
5. Return to building when signal is given.

## **Weather Emergencies**

If it should be necessary to close the school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made on WMUR and when possible, on the school website. In the event of early release due to weather, the After-School Program will also be discontinued or shortened for the day.

## **Mandatory Reporting Law**

St. Francis of Assisi School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of New Hampshire. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

## **Student Life and Special Programs**

### **Before Care Program**

Supervision begins at 7:00 a.m. each morning. Students may be dropped off at any time between 7:00-7:30 a.m. On 2-hour delayed openings, Before Care begins at 9:00 a.m.

### **After School Group (ASG)**

The After-School Group is held from 2:45-6:00 p.m. on regular school days. Students not picked up by the end of school (approximately 2:30 PM) will be sent immediately to the After-School Care Program. Parents/Guardians are charged the daily per child for using this program. ASG is not available on Early Release days.

Parents/guardians who fail to collect their child(ren) in a timely manner (by 6:00 p.m.) without contacting the school, or who routinely abuse this service:

- May receive official correspondence from the school outlining their neglectful behavior;
- May have their child(ren) escorted home by the Litchfield Police Department if all attempts at contacting the parent(s)/guardian(s) have failed;

- May forfeit the privilege of participating in the After-School Group indefinitely.

### **Gifts / Student Parties**

Students should not exchange individual gifts or distribute party invitations at school unless the entire class will be receiving the same gift or invitation. These gestures unnecessarily cause hurt feelings among students.

In the event a student would like to have a party with select students in the class, please contact the invitees off of the school campus.

### **Classroom Celebrations**

Classroom teachers may arrange for seasonal parties. Typically, there are four class parties a year: Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, All Saints Day, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Parents/guardians may assist the classroom teacher with these parties under the direction of the classroom teacher.

Students celebrating birthdays should check the guidelines for bringing a birthday treat with their classroom teacher. Certain classrooms have allergy restrictions. Please divide birthday treats into individual servings.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school secretary to be placed in the Lost and Found basket. Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items will be donated to charity.

Students who lose a textbook or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy.

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is committed to fostering a responsive, caring, and inclusive culture where all feel valued, supported, and hopeful. FCPS also believes that students have a right to attend a safe, welcoming school and belong to a community that values and promotes learning alongside social and emotional skill development through a positive behavior approach.



## **Financial Information**

### Tuition Payment Options

Families have three options for tuition payment.

### ALL TUITION IS PAID THROUGH FACTS

1. Annual payment in full. Those received by July 5<sup>th</sup> are eligible for an additional percentage discount off their tuition balance. There is no fee associated with using the FACTS Tuition Management Plan when electing the Annual payment option.
2. Semi-annual payment on July 5<sup>th</sup> and December 5<sup>th</sup>. There is a service charge associated with the FACTS Tuition Management Plan
3. Payment through the FACTS Tuition Management Plan in 11-month installments. Payments begin in July and end in May. There is a service charge associated with the FACTS Tuition Management Plan.

## **Financial Aid**

Financial aid is made available each year to families who demonstrate need through the FACTS Aid and Grant Program. Families wishing to apply for financial aid must do so through the FACTS program either online or by manual application. No financial aid awards will be considered without completing this process. All applications for financial aid must be submitted by April 30<sup>th</sup> for the following academic year.

## **Title IX**

St. Francis of Assisi School adheres to the tenets of 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 discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

## **RIGHT TO AMEND**

St. Francis of Assisi School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments may be sent to parents/guardians via the Tuesday Envelope and/or electronically through email and the school website.