2026-2027
Family Handbook

Mission and Culture

Our Heroic 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 first 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

All members of the school community are expected to strive to live a life of virtue guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church in all aspects of their lives. Our school's pastoral and policy practices are written in fidelity to the moral guidance and teachings of the Catholic Church in all areas that touch on human flourishing. The school establishes an environment of encouragement, mercy, healing, and love to accompany its members as we journey on the path toward holiness.

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 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
- Give teachers and staff the benefit of the doubt. Inciting other parents, spreading gossip or detraction whether verbally, online or via email is not only a sin but also, it breaks partnership with the school because it goes against the principle of subsidiarity. This is grounds for the school deciding it can no longer partner with a family.

Belief Statement and Core Principles

Catholic education is an expression of the Church's mission of salvation and an instrument of evangelization: to make disciples of Christ and to teach them to observe all that He has commanded. Through Catholic education, students encounter God, who in Jesus Christ reveals His transforming love and truth. Christ is the foundation of Catholic education; He is the Master who journeys with students through school and life as genuine Teacher and perfect Man. As a faith community in communion with the Church, all its members give witness to Christ's teachings as set forth by the Magisterium and especially as articulated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. With a Christian vision, Catholic education fulfills its purpose of the critical transmission of culture in the light of faith and integral formation of students in body, mind, and spirit.

- **Evangelization.** Our school assists in the salvific mission of the Catholic Church by preparing all students to seek and proclaim the Good News through education and formation in the Catholic faith.
- **Encounter with Christ.** Through daily interaction, prayer, liturgies, and participation in the sacraments, all members of the school community encounter Christ and His transforming love and truth and in so doing are drawn to proclaim and fulfill His calling for them and for the Christian community. Through this encounter, students are moved toward the fullness of their humanity, becoming more aware of the gift of Faith given them at Baptism, to mature into adults who will bear witness to the Mystical Body of Christ, respect the dignity of the human person, provide service, lead apostolic lives, and build the Kingdom of God.
- **Community of faith.** As members of a Catholic educational community, we are all called to model confident and joyful public witness in both word and deed and to live by the moral demands of the Gospel in order to model for students the integration of faith and life and to assist in the development of virtues characteristic

of the Catholic Christian. We do this by living in communion with the Church and its teachings. Believing in the mercy and forgiveness of Christ, we acknowledge our sinful and fallen nature and look to Christ and to the Sacraments He has given us as sources of grace and strength, particularly when striving to live according to the Ten Commandments given to us in the Old Testament and the Beatitudes given to us by Christ in the New.

- **Authority for teaching.** We profess that all authority for our moral and spiritual teaching is based on the Gospels of Jesus Christ and the traditions of the Catholic Church as taught by its ordinary and extraordinary Magisterium, and especially as contained within the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- **Transmission of culture.** Permeated by an evangelical spirit of authentic freedom and charity, our school provides a unique setting where everyone is aware of the living presence of Jesus Christ as evidenced throughout the daily rituals of prayer and Sacraments, harmonious and friendly relationships, and curricular selections where faith and culture are intertwined in all areas of school life. Cultivating within students their intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties in order to develop the right use of reason, promote a sense of values, and encouraging just attitudes and prudent behavior, our school environment strives to hand down the cultural patrimony of previous generations, in particular a Christian anthropology which teaches that man was made in the image and likeness of God.

Statement on Parental Partnership in Education

Parents are the primary educators of their children; this is an essential tenet of the Catholic faith.

We, the teachers and administrators of the Diocese of Manchester, consider it our privilege to work alongside you in the education and formation of our Catholic school students.

When you choose to partner with our Catholic schools, we both commit to a collaboration of effort and good will, opening the door to a world of goodness, truth and beauty. Your child will experience the transformative effect of God's love in his or her life and you will be amazed at the ways it touches others, both in and outside of school.

Parents have both the right and duty to act as role models – physically, mentally, and spiritually – and a good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God and your active involvement in the school community will influence the ways in which your child relates to God and others. It will enhance their education and create the next generation of societal leaders. The Catholic values and Christian behavior taught in our schools will take root in your child if they are also demonstrated at home. The Diocese of Manchester Catholic Schools will provide resources throughout the year which will seek to support and affirm your responsibility as the first educator of your child.

In our schools, we gladly welcome students of all faiths, at all stages along the journey to faith, and we need parents to support us according to our mission. Catholic schools will continue to be transparent about expectations, curriculum, and every aspect of our committed partnership. Students may not "opt out" of religion class, Mass, rosary, or any other of the Catholic practices that distinguish our Catholic schools from their secular counterparts. It is for the benefit of every child, in a true spirit of evangelization, that devotions are taught and required for all students.

During their formative years, your child needs constant support at home as well as at school to develop his or her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Parents and teachers must trust the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest to nurture and challenge each student to reach his or her potential. We follow the Catholic principle of subsidiarity; that is, concerns should always be brought, first, to the staff member, teacher, or administrator that the parent has the concern with. It is vital that both parents and teachers model respect. Open and two-way communications between family and school are foundational to your child's growth and accomplishment.

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 structure. At times, your child may perceive structure as restrictive. However, we believe appropriate boundaries and limits provide children with much needed guidance and security. It also provides the best learning environment, where everyone can learn free from distraction. As a partner, we will work alongside you, to uplift you in your role as primary educator, while creating an atmosphere where students can best be readied to achieve academic and personal success.

Nothing is more important, or more beautiful, than the task of forming knowledgeable, kind, effective and moral citizens of tomorrow. We are honored to have earned your trust, encouraged by your strong commitment, and we look forward to working alongside you.

Human Sexuality

St. Francis of Assisi School conducts and administers its policies and procedures in accordance with the *Catechism* and Magisterium of the Catholic Church. St. Francis, through its educational efforts, provides an essential ecclesiastical ministry, the primary purpose of which is evangelization through a critical transmission of culture in the light of faith and the integral formation of the human person, mind, body, and spirit to fulfill God's calling for all to a fullness of Catholic living in this world and the next. St. Francis' education is an expression of the Church's mission of salvation and an instrument of evangelization, to make disciples of Christ and to teach students and their families to observe all that He has commanded.

We believe that man and woman share the same humanity and "inalienable dignity which comes to them immediately from God their Creator." We believe "they are equal as persons ("bone of my bones…") and complementary as masculine and feminine." Therefore they are deserving of respect, and no harassment, violence, or discrimination because of one's sex will be tolerated. To this end, St. Francis offers pastoral and counseling services; however, offenses against chastity and marriage, including those described in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* will not be tolerated.

Mission Integrity

To uphold the integrity of St. Francis' mission, the teachings of the Catholic faith and morals in all fullness and especially as expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* are paramount and necessary for the School's success. Families, students, and members of the school community may not advocate, celebrate, or express such behaviors contrary to these teachings, share conversations or publications of a prurient nature, or otherwise impede chastity in the context of our Catholic school classes, activities, or events. Beliefs and practices that run counter to Church teachings will inevitably cause conflicts to the mission and integrity of the school. Sincere questioning of the practices of the Catholic

faith to more deeply understand it are welcome but openly hostile, public defiance and challenge of Catholic truth or morality, are signs that a student, parent, staff or faculty member may not be a fit for the school's primary evangelical mission and thus, may be denied admission or may be asked to leave the school.

At the heart of a Catholic school's unique educational charism is integral formation of the whole person. Because of our efforts at integral formation which including the integrity of body, spirit, and moral development, our school has a proper concern for the students and their families' behavior and development in the complex area of human sexuality.

Formal Titles and Names

Students will address all adults by their proper titles as based on school employment documents and surname. School personnel will address students by the original name with which the student was registered (or its common derivative) and correlating pronouns.

Gender Identity

The school will interact with students according to their biological sex as based upon physical differences at birth. A member of the school community who wishes to express a gender other than his or her biological sex is understood as operating outside of the "reality deeply inscribed" within. Assisting the person in his or her disconnect with this reality, however sincerely experienced, by agreeing to participate in any efforts to change natural gender expression is contrary to the pursuit of the truth. Authentic love, a gift of the self for the good of the other, requires that we compassionately dwell in the truth and assist those we love to do the same.

The school recognizes that occasionally there may be instances where young people experience dissonance between their biological sex and the roles and norms advocated by society. Some young people might feel drawn to dress, act, and even manipulate their physical bodies in ways contrary to God's plan. The school advocates that young people, working with their parents, bring these types of issues to their pastor as well as to other trained professionals who might best assist them in clarifying and defining issues of self (and sexual) identity in accord with Catholic teaching and God's natural plan. The school's pastoral and counseling services are available to all members of the school community.

Operational Policies

School Hours/ Flow of the Day

Before School Care: 7:15am-7:45am
Regular Drop Off: 7:45am to 8:00am
School Begins: 8:00am
Late Bell: 8:02am (parents must sign students in)
School Day: 8:00am-2:30pm
School Dismissal: 2:30pm
End of Pick Up: 2:50pm (after carline, students are dismissed to ASG, parents are charged)

Half Day Dismisses at 11:30am
After School Group (ASG): 2:50pm-6:00pm

School Office Hours

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

MORNING DROP OFF

Carline will remain one line for both buildings. All cars will line up by passing in front of the dumpsters. Students in grades 1- 6 will exit their vehicles and enter the main building. Cars dropping off students in Preschool, Pre K and Kindergarten will stay in line, pass in front of the playground, drive around the back of the PPC and stop parallel to the ramp along the left side of the driveway. Students can only exit their vehicles when they have reached the side of the PPC (Padre Pio Center i.e. modular) with the cones. Parents will then pull away to the left to exit the parking lot.

PPC parents of students who NEED to be walked to the door for drop off must wait in the carline and instead of driving around the PPC, they may park in the spaces between the buildings, parallel to the sandbox-not the spaces up against the PPC, not the spaces closest to the main building. Students may then be walked to the ramp. While this is not the ideal, we currently allow it in the morning but not in the afternoon.

TARDY

Once the cones are pulled, parents with students in grade 1-6 need to sign in at the Main Building. If parents have students in grades 1-6 AND students in the PS-K, they must sign in at each building. Parents dropping off only in grades PS-K must go directly to the PPC and sign their students in there.

11:30 AM DISMISSAL FOR PS & PK

Half-day students will be walked to the church entrance across from the PPC. Parents should park on the church side of the parking lot.

AFTERNOON PICK UP

Cars should line up in the same manner as morning drop off. Families picking up at the PPC that need to buckle should place their child in the car and then pull forward to park in the spaces between the buildings to finish safely buckling children. Parents picking up from the PPC should not park and walk up and give their last name to the person calling.

Note: Parents will not be able to park and pick up their children directly from the PPC. They must follow carline.

DISMISSALS

Parents dismissing students in Grades 1-6 must sign their students out at the main building. Parents dismissing multiple students from both buildings will sign their students out at the main building and either the PPC front desk staff or an aide will escort the student to the main building. Parents dismissing students JUST from the PPC may sign them out directly at the PPC desk.

Late Dismissal

All students in the car line are expected to be picked up by 2:50pm. If a child is left after 2:50 PM, they are dismissed to our afterschool program until a parent arrives. Your FACTS account will be charged $7 if the parent arrives before 3:20 pm or our going ASG daily rate if they arrive after 3:20 pm.

Attendance

A student's absence from school interferes with his/her academic progress. 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.

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.

Students who are absent from school or dismissed from school due to illness may not attend or participate in any extracurricular activities.

Admission to St. Francis School / Potty Training

St. Francis School is a private school and not a daycare provider. While we know accidents 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 from start to finish.
- He or she lets the teacher know when they need to use the bathroom.
    - Early Education teachers will initiate 3-4 trips to the bathroom each day. Teachers expect students to let them know if they need to use the bathroom outside of these times.
- He or she can dress and undress themselves on their own.
    - This includes changing themselves if they have had an accident.

Potty Training Readiness Guidelines

To ensure a positive school experience for all students, children must be fully potty trained before attending SFS. The following guidelines help determine readiness:

A child will be considered not fully potty trained if any of the following occur:

- Two accidents within one week, for two consecutive weeks during the school year; or
- Five accidents within a 30-day period.

Additionally:

- If a child has two accidents in a single day, they will be sent home.
- If a child refuses to allow staff to assist with changing, they will be sent home. If this occurs twice, a meeting with parents will be scheduled to determine school readiness.

For students in Grades K–6:

- Students who experience an accident will be sent home if they are unable to clean themselves independently and/or if the accident involves a bowel movement.

All students are required to wear underwear during the school day, i.e. pull-ups are not allowed.

Our goal is to support each child's independence while maintaining a healthy, respectful learning environment for everyone.

Potty Training / Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Are students required to be potty trained?**

Yes, students are required to be fully potty trained and to use the bathroom independently.

Here are a few reasons why:

a. St. Francis School does not offer private single-stall classroom bathrooms. All bathrooms are public with multiple stalls. Along with peer-distraction, potty accidents present a host of privacy issues.
b. St. Francis School does not have changing tables or space to adequately clean children from potty accidents.
c. St. Francis School does not have a school nurse or designee to handle potty accidents.

In summary, St. Francis School lacks the proper space and staff to accommodate regular potty accidents.

2. **Will my child get "kicked out" if the school deems, they are not potty trained?**

We prefer to characterize this as being told your child is not ready for school and here is the important part: **there is nothing wrong with that**. Given the reasons outlined above on why we require independence, it is in your child's best interest to wait until they are fully potty trained before attending our school. For whatever reason, children do not learn potty training at the same rate. It is often counterproductive to "force" a child if he or she is not ready to learn.

If the school determines a child is not fully potty trained, we typically offer a few options:

1. Parents or the school may decide the child must un-enroll
2. Parents may move the child from full day to half day attendance
3. Parents may have their child take a leave of absence to focus on potty training

St. Francis School Policy on Prolonged Distress

At St. Francis School, the well-being of every child is our highest priority. We recognize that moments of transition—especially for our youngest learners—can sometimes be difficult. While it is natural for children to feel upset at drop-off or during a new routine, we are attentive to their needs and committed to creating a nurturing environment.

If a child is crying or showing signs of distress for **20 minutes or longer**, a parent or guardian will be contacted. This practice is not meant to be punitive or discouraging, but rather to ensure that every child feels safe, supported, and cared for. We believe that learning and growth happen best when a child is comfortable and ready to engage.

If a difficult day occurs, we will invite families to "try again tomorrow." We know that each child adjusts at their own pace, and we want to partner with parents in making this transition as smooth and positive as possible.

At St. Francis, there is no shame in these moments—they are a normal part of early childhood development. Our goal is to work together with families to support every child's journey with patience, encouragement, and love.

Biting Policy

As a preschool, we understand that biting, unfortunately, is a part of a preschool setting. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten.

For the child that was bitten: 1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage. 2. Parents are notified. 3. The "Incident Report" form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit: 1. The teacher will firmly tell the child, "We do not bite." And ask them to check in with the child who was hurt. 2. The child will discuss with a teacher how the other child may feel and what other ways there are to deal with their frustration. 3. The parents are notified. The "Incident Report" is filled out documenting the incident.

> Moving forward: The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents. The child will be observed by the teachers to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.

If biting continues:

1. If a child inflicts 2 bites in a one-week period (5 days of school attendance) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.

2. If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one-week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the child will be asked to take a one week break from the school.

3. If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one-week period (5 days of school attendance) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the parents will be asked to make other day care arrangements.

Volunteers / Coaching

St. Francis 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.

St. Francis School has designated a Safe Environment Coordinator whose job it is to make sure that volunteers, coaches, and employees are properly screened to be working with children.

All individuals who wish to volunteer in the school have 30 days to complete the Diocesan mandated background check and the Safe Haven course.

Safe Environment: Obligation to Report Suspected Abuse

If a St. Francis School employee or volunteer suspects that a current minor has been abused, he or she must report suspicions to:

- DCYF: (800) 894-5533
- Litchfield Police: (603) 424-4047
- Bishop's Delegate for Ministerial Conduct: (603) 663-0128

Lunch at St. Francis School

St. Francis School partners with an off-site catering company to offer hot lunch Monday – Friday. Lunch menus are published one month at a time. Families order hot lunch through our SIS FACTS system.

We understand that life at home may be hectic and sometimes students forget to bring lunch. Since **it is our policy that all students have a snack and lunch each day**, if a child forgets to bring a bag lunch, SFS will enact the following protocol:

1. If we are aware of the forgotten lunch prior to lunchtime, we will attempt to call home and ask if a parent is able to bring a lunch.

2. If it is either too late or if a parent is unable to bring a lunch, the child will be given either a hot lunch (if available) or a cold lunch (uncrustable, mac and cheese, etc.) from the lunchroom. Families will be charged via FACTS at the current lunch rate for the day.

Please note that students will not receive refunds or credits for lunches if/when they are absent or when a snow day occurs.

Absence Due to Sickness

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 classmate's 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, diarrhea 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 strep or another illness requiring antibiotics, your child should not return to school for 24 hours after the first dose unless there is a doctor's note.
- 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.
- A fever is defined as 100.4 or above.

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 at the Main 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 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. What a student needs to make up on any given day is left to the teacher's discretion.

Fevers, Vomiting, Diarrhea

If a child is sent home from school because of a fever, vomit, or diarrhea, he or she must be fever, vomit, and diarrhea free for 24 hours to return. Please note this applies to children even when they are sent home within the first hour of school, i.e. do not drop them off the next morning in carline as more than 24 hours must pass before they return. Please note that if a child runs a fever, vomits, or has diarrhea during the day, they will be sent home.

Absences for Reasons Other than Sickness or Medical Appointments

The school calendar provides extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times to eliminate the interruption of a child's learning process.

When a child is absent for reasons other than sickness, teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments. Whether this happens or not is entirely left to the teacher's discretion. If a teacher allows the student to make up work or missed tests, then the teacher will set the schedule of when things are due.

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 in and sign out their child at the Main School Office.

Immunization Policy

All parents or legal guardians shall have their children who are residing in this state immunized against certain diseases or provide an exemption form. These diseases shall include, but not be limited to, diphtheria, mumps, pertussis, poliomyelitis, rubella, rubeola, and tetanus. The commissioner shall adopt rules under RSA 541-A relative to other diseases which require immunization.

No child shall be admitted or enrolled unless the following is demonstrated: (a) Immunization under paragraph I; (b) Partial immunization relative to the age of the child as specified in rules adopted by the commissioner; or (c) Exemption under RSA 141-C:20-c.

Restraint Policy

- Restraint and seclusion can only be used by trained personnel in situations when necessary to prevent injury to the student or to someone else.
- Restraint can only be used in an emergency. Under the law, an emergency is when there is a "substantial and imminent risk of serious bodily harm" to the student or another person. Restraint is allowed only "when all other interventions have failed or have been deemed inappropriate."
- Seclusion may only be used when there is a "substantial and imminent risk of physical harm" to the child or others. Seclusion is allowed only after attempting other approaches to control the student's behavior, or if trained personnel have determined that, based on the history of actual attempts to control a particular child's behavior, that alternative approaches to control the student's behavior are unlikely to succeed.
- Pursuant to RSA 126-U:14, the school shall review the individualized education program (IEP) or section 504 plan of a child with a disability following the first use of restraint or seclusion on the child, or upon request of the child's parent or guardian, and make adjustments to the IEP or 504 plan as indicated to reduce the future use of restraint or seclusion.
- A school employee has a duty to report a violation of RSA 126-U when that person has reason to believe that the action of another constituted a violation of RSA 126-U and misconduct or suspected misconduct, pursuant to Ed 510.

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 by the parent.

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 stay home.
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.

Student Placement when there are Multiple Class Sections

Please note that developing class lists is a thoughtful and prayerful process. Class assignments are made based on the information available at a specific time, however, as enrollment changes or student needs become better known, St. Francis School reserves the right to adjust class placements. Such changes would be extremely rare and would only be made after careful consideration and with the best interests of all students in mind.

Records Retention Policy

St. Francis School will permanently maintain individual student records that include:
(1) Pupil registers as required by RSA 189:27-a that include the following information: Name, Date of Birth, Town of legal residence.
(2) Transcripts of academic performance for each year that a student attended the school

In the event of a school closing or termination of operations, the school shall notify the department no less than 90 days prior to the closing date and provide the following:

- Permanent location of student records, as described in (a) above, which shall be: Submitted in a format determined by the school if the school chooses to deposit the records to the local school district or other third-party agency; or electronically if the school chooses to deposit the records with the department.
- Reason(s) for closure; and
- The name and contact information of 2 school representatives who the department may contact after school closure.

Required Courses in Civics

St. Francis School students shall be given regular courses of instruction in the history, government and constitutions of the United States and New Hampshire, including the organization and operation of New Hampshire municipal, county and state government and of the federal government. While civics is focused on in Grades 3 and 4, lessons are integrated throughout our curriculum and with other subjects.

Communication

School Communication

St. Francis School uses a weekly Friday Update email to communicate with parents. The Friday Update contains important information as well as upcoming dates and events.

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. 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

Front Office Calling Home / Medical

Ouch! Bumps, bruises & cuts are bound to happen when our beloved children are playing outside every day. The Front Office handles caring for our students if they have any physical complaints, and we have found it helpful to have a few standards for parental notification when your child gets hurt.

What we deem to be minor scrapes, bumps, or bruises do not normally result in parental notification. However, we are certainly happy for parents to reach out to the Front Office for clarification if they have any questions after the fact.

Any injuries deemed more significant are tracked in our database systems and an email is automatically sent to parents. These generally include falls that involve minor head or facial cuts or bumps, tick removal with swelling or bleeding, deeper cuts, and multiple or lengthy bloody noses.

More serious medical injuries that merit an immediate phone call to a parent would include any swelling or bleeding that is challenging to control, any concerns about possible sprains, broken bones, stitches, etc. The rule of thumb for calling parents is when we believe a student may benefit from seeing a medical professional.

Finally, we will of course enact emergency protocols for any major medical injuries or health crises, immediately calling 911 and then the parents (or emergency contacts if parents are unavailable).

Blessed Mother, please watch over and protect our children!

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

See separate attachment or https://www.stfrancisschoolnh.org/preparingforschool for current uniform requirements.

Enforcement of the dress code is primarily the responsibility of parents. Students who are not in dress code will be given a uniform to wear for the remainder of the day; if a uniform is not available in the student's size, a Uniform Notice will be sent home and/or parents will be asked to bring alternate clothing. After multiple Uniform Notices, parents will be required to Conference.

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.

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.

Grievance Policy / Principle of Subsidiarity

St. Francis School is committed to working collaboratively with families to address concerns in a timely, respectful, and charitable manner. In keeping with the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, concerns should be addressed first at the level closest to where they arise before involving additional levels of administration.

1. **Teacher:** If a parent has a concern regarding a classroom matter, school policy, or an incident that occurred during a school-related activity, the parent should first schedule a meeting with the teacher to discuss the matter and seek a resolution.
2. **Principal:** If the concern is not satisfactorily resolved after meeting with the teacher, the parent should schedule a meeting with the Principal. The Principal will determine whether the teacher should also be present for this meeting.
3. **Pastor:** If the parent remains dissatisfied after meeting with the Principal, the parent should submit a written statement describing the grievance to the Pastor of St. Francis School. Upon receiving the written grievance, the Pastor will review the matter and schedule a meeting with the parent as appropriate.

4. **Diocesan Superintendent:** If the concern remains unresolved after meeting with the Pastor, the parent may request a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Manchester.

Throughout this process, all parties are expected to communicate respectfully and in a spirit of Christian charity, always seeking solutions that promote the well-being of the students and the mission of St. Francis School.

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.

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.

VBIS: VIRTUOUS BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS

Virtuous Behavioral Interventions and Supports (VBIS) is a proactive approach that St. Francis School uses to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. The focus of VBIS is prevention, not punishment. At its heart, VBIS calls on schools to teach students positive behavior strategies, just as they would teach about any other subject—like reading or math.

BE SAFE & BE VIRTUOUS

VBIS recognizes that students can only meet behavioral expectations if they know what the

expectations are. Everyone learns what's considered to be appropriate behavior and uses a common language to talk about it. Throughout the school day—in class, at Mass, and on the playground—students understand what's expected of them. VBIS has a few important guiding principles.

- Students can learn behavioral expectations for different situations.
- Students learn expected behaviors for each school setting through explicit instruction and opportunities to practice and receive feedback.
- Stepping in early can prevent more serious behavior problems.
- Each student is different, so schools need to give many kinds of behavior support.
- How schools teach behavior should be based on research and science.
- Tracking a student's behavioral progress is important.
- Schools gather and use data to make decisions about behavior interventions.
- School staff members are consistent in how they encourage expected behavior and discourage infractions.

ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL COMMON EXPECTATIONS

All Settings	Hallways	Restrooms	Lunchtime
Treat everyone in a Christian manner, showing **respect** and **courtesy** in speech and action. **Respect** everyone and everything. Be helpful and **responsible**. Exercise **self-control** on all occasions. Keep hands and feet to yourself Be in the correct uniform Follow directions from all adults Only one person at a time should be speaking to an adult.	Walk single file and stay to the right Move quietly Hands by your side Allow others to pass when sharing the hallway Practice quietly smiling as others pass Line leader may say 'hello' to adults or guests	Get permission to use the restroom Report any vandalism or concerns Be quiet Be quick Flush the toilet Wash your hands Keep water and soap in the sink One person per stall Keep privacy Only use as much soap and paper towels as needed	Eat your own food Raise your hand before leaving your seat Clean your area Use manners when eating Say "please" and "thank you" to our lunch helpers Avoid negative comments about your classmates' snacks and lunch

Be a Christ-like model			

Recess	Church / Mass	Classrooms
Be aware of others around you Dress for the weather Line up when bell rings, put all equipment away Enter the building quietly waiting for a teacher Throw trash in the appropriate receptacles	Stay in your assigned pew Sit, stand, and kneel quietly Use the restroom before Mass If you are sick, have tissues with you Speak the spoken prayers and sing the songs Show reverence during prayer	Be obedient to your teacher Show respect to everyone Be kind and practice charity Practice Self-Control in speech and action, do not talk when another is talking, raise your hand to speak Students should respond to directions the first time Teachers will signal when it is time to learn, this means students are listening with their whole bodies. Students should be able to quietly line up to leave the room. Teacher will not leave until the line is ready. Students should not enter a classroom without a teacher, they should line up outside the door. Students should be at their desk and quiet during the afternoon carline.

St. Francis' VBIS program sets up three tiers of support for students and staff.

1. Tier 1 is a schoolwide, universal system for everyone in school. Students learn basic behavioral expectations, like how to be respectful and kind. School staff members regularly recognize and praise students for good behavior. They may also use small rewards within the classroom to recognize when students meet the expectations.

2. Tier 2 provides an extra layer of support for students who continue to struggle with behavior. The school gives those students evidence-based interventions and instruction, especially in small group or 1:1 format. Interventions here would be speaking to the teacher 1 on 1 or to the principal for guidance.

3. Tier 3 is the most intensive level. It's for students who need individualized supports and services because of ongoing behavioral concerns. Supports are mainly 1:1 in this tier. Interventions here would mean setting up a Behavior Plan and meeting regularly with parents to ensure expectations are being met.

Consequences for Grades 1-6

Minor Classroom Disruptions (most common)
Failure to honor the requests of the teacher
Failure to honor classroom rules
Purposeful distraction of fellow students
Talking out
Talking over the teacher or fellow student
Passing notes

First Time	Second Time	Third Time	More than 3
WARNING Will be addressed consistently within each classroom.	**NAME ON BOARD** Will be addressed consistently within each classroom.	**REFLECTION** Some recess will be taken away so that the student can do a reflection sheet. This must be signed by parent. Reflection sheets should be done outside principal's office.	Parent call or meeting with teacher / principal. If behavior persists, move to detention.

Low level aggression, significant disrespect
Teasing / Belittling others
Improper gestures or swearing
Disrespecting the teacher
Excluding a fellow student from a recess group game

First Time	Second Time	Third Time	More than 3
Loss of one recess. Student will do a reflection sheet. This will be signed by parent.	Loss of two recesses. Teacher will contact parent notifying them that detention is possible.	Detention	1 Day Suspension

Exclusion, false reports, or stealing

Starting or spreading rumors
Telling others not to be friends with someone. Other actions that would cause someone to be without friends.
Falsely reporting a behavioral incident
Taking someone's property or damaging books, desks, or other school property
Lying
Foul language

First Time	Second Time	Third Time	More than 3
Loss of one recess. Teacher will contact parent. Student will do a reflection sheet. This will be signed by parent.	Student will call parent. Detention.	Principal will call parent. Suspension (1 day). Student sent home.	Suspension (1-3 days).

Hitting, bullying, or cyberbullying (see Diocesan Anti-Bullying Policy) threats of violence, retaliatory behavior, or intimidation.

Punching, kicking, or grabbing the private parts of fellow students
Other acts such as using objects to hurt others, biting, choking, swearing, or spitting at someone
Retaliating against someone who made a report or intimidating a witness or a target
Threats of physical aggression including those made through comments, notes, gestures, or drawings. This includes using any electronic method to make threats.

First Time	Second Time	Third Time

Student removed from the classroom. Principal will contact parents. Student cannot go back into the classroom until principal meets with parents. Possible out of school suspension (1 Day)	Out of school suspension (1-3 days).	Expelled from school.

DETENTION

Students in grades 2-6 may be given a detention if inappropriate behavior persists or the student behavior warrants. Parents will be given notice, and the detention is to be served after school from 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm. It is understood that for many parents, detention may cause a dilemma in providing transportation to and from school. However, we believe that this consequence will protect our respectful learning environment and promote the social and emotional growth of our students. We hope that this clear, consistent communication will encourage students to adjust any inappropriate behaviors before negative consequences occur.

Some reasons for detention may be:

- Disturbing class; verbally and non-verbally
- Objectionable language
- Dishonest and deceitful behavior
- A serious offense or a series of minor infractions of the rules
- Classroom, hallway, Church, or recess disturbances
- Unnecessary talking in class
- Disrespect to other students through words or actions
- Disrespect to a teacher through words or actions
- Disrespect and/or damage to property
- Use of personal electronics without permission and/or misuse of school technology

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 7:15am each morning. Students may be dropped off at any time between 7:15-7:45am. On 2-hour delayed openings, Before Care begins at 9:15 am.

After School Group (ASG)

The After-School Group is held from 2:50-6:00 p.m. on regular school days. Students not picked up by the end of school 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.

After School Space

Our After School Group has exclusive use of the playground between 3-5pm each school day. If parents arrive early to pick up their child from an afterschool club or the like, they should respect ASG space and not utilize the playground. After 3pm, our ASG Director oversees all outside and inside space. For the school to run a safe and effective after school program, parents must respect this authority. Children who are not in ASG must be closely watched by parents at all times.

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.

Financial Information

Tuition Payment Options

Families have three options for tuition payment.

ALL TUITION IS PAID THROUGH FACTS

1. Semi-annual payment on July 5th and December 5th. There is a service charge associated with the FACTS Tuition Management Plan
2. 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.

Enrollment Contract

All St. Francis School families are liable to the latest version of the enrollment contract. If a family withdraws a child from School, they are responsible for remaining tuition costs according to the following schedule:

Withdrawal Date: July 1, 2026 - August 31, 2026 (20%), September 1, 2026 - October 31, 2026 (50%), November 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026 (80%) After January 1, 2027 (100%)

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 30th for the following academic year.

Right to Amend

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

Family Acknowledgement / Commitment to the Mission

I hereby affirm that I have read the Family Handbook.

I certify that I consent to and will submit to all governing policies of the school, including all applicable policies in the Family Handbook.

I understand that St. Francis School exists to further the mission and objectives of the Catholic Church by teaching students to love God and the truths taught by His Church. As a parent who wishes to partner with the school, I am expected to support the teaching of these truths.

I understand that the standards of the school do not tolerate profanity, obscenity in word or action, disrespect to the personnel of the school, or continued disobedience to the established policies of the school.

I understand that the services of the school are engaged by mutual consent, and that either the school or I reserve the right to terminate any or all services at any time. I understand that the Family Handbook does not contractually bind St. Francis School and is subject to change without notice by decision of St. Francis School's governing body. Admission to the school is a privilege, not a right, and admission for one school year does not guarantee automatic admission for future school years.