

Section 1. School Profile

1.1 Statement of Philosophy

The philosophy of St. Mary's Catholic School is:

1. to provide an atmosphere of faith, where students are called to academic excellence, self-discipline, and knowledge of God.
2. to provide a high quality education for each child regardless of race, religion, or socioeconomic background, while proclaiming the message of Jesus.
3. to work to develop both the mind and body of our students through our faith community and service to others.
4. to provide comfortable, well-tended facilities staffed by priests, lay teachers, support staff, and caring involved parents and patron volunteers of our school community.
5. to work as partners to provide a safe, comfortable, loving environment where students may grow spiritually and academically.
6. to encourage students to love and respect themselves and others, to be honest and fair, to have a rich and fruitful relationship with God, and to become lifelong learners.

1.2 Goals and Objectives

Broad goals of the Catholic school are to teach the Gospel message, to build a faith community and to be of Christian service. Specific goals flow from the fundamental understanding of the school as a Christian educational community. Because the school is CHRISTIAN, the goals are:

1. to create a Christian educational community where human knowledge, enlightened and enlivened by faith, is shared by teacher, students and parents in a spirit of freedom and love.
2. to develop religious understanding and provide opportunities for personal commitment to religious values.
3. to foster a Christian understanding of mutual responsibilities for another.
4. to help each student develop a positive attitude towards life-long education, including the power to think constructively, to solve problems, and to reason independently.
5. to facilitate and improve the student's opportunity to learn.
6. to guide the student toward the spirit of freedom, which recognizes discipline and personal responsibility.
7. to provide quality education for all children in the parish who desire to take advantage of such an opportunity.
8. to play a significant role in raising national levels of knowledge, competence, and experience.

1.3 Mission Statement

The purpose of St. Mary's Catholic School is to provide a quality education by promoting academic achievement, self-discipline, and a firm foundation of Catholic Christian ethics.

1.4 School Pledge

I pledge devotion to St. Mary's School, for the idea that stands behind it; that God is the Supreme Being and we are created in His image. In the name of faith and love, I pledge to live each day as a loyal and considerate student. I pledge to behave and be kind to others and work for peace and justice. I pledge to honor our Catholic heritage and carry on the atmosphere of academic excellence and Christian tradition.

1.5 Role of Parents

Parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. Children should be taught according to the faith received in baptism, to have knowledge of God, to worship Him, and to love their neighbor. While belonging primarily to the family, the task of imparting education requires the help of society as a whole. Catholic parents should call to mind their duty to entrust their children to Catholic schools, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along with them for the welfare of their children.

1.6 Parent-Teacher Organization

The purpose of the Parent Teacher Organization is to coordinate the various projects of parents and teachers, and to assist the school in the educational well being of our students. The Parent – Teacher Organization (PTO) does not currently charge dues. Parents/guardians of enrolled students are automatically members of this organization. Our PTO is a valuable arm of St. Mary's School. Each year the organization assists in fundraising efforts which help defray the cost of textbooks and helps make it possible to provide many extras for the school. All families are urged to participate in these activities in order to keep our tuition and book fees to a minimum. A sense of camaraderie and being a member of the school/preschool family is a benefit of participation.

1.7 School Board

St. Mary's has a consultative School Board composed of appointed representatives from the school and/or parish community. Each school board member serves a three-year term. The School Board works as an advisory group to the principal and pastor, as it pertains to school matters. The School Board follows the guidelines established by the Diocesan Policy Manual.

1.8 Accreditation

St. Mary's Catholic School is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The faculty is comprised of state-certified teachers and a highly qualified, experienced staff.

Section 2. Admission Policy

2.1 Admissions

Enrollment at St. Mary's Catholic School is a privilege. St. Mary's Catholic School offers a scholastic program from Preschool through Grade 6. Pre-registration for the coming year is held in the spring for currently enrolled students. Applications for new students may be completed at anytime following pre-registration. Final registration is held in early August. To enter any grade, evidence of satisfactory achievement, promotion, and behavior from the school last attended must be provided.

Students are admitted on probation for nine weeks. At the end of the nine weeks, the principal, in consultation with the pastor, reserves the right to determine if the student is to remain at the school.

2.2 Non-discriminatory Practices

Other than the admission priorities established due to the number of available slots at a particular grade level, St. Mary's Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, handicap, national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, or other school administered programs or activities.

2.3 Admission Priorities

Diocesan Policy (2.01) states the following admission priorities for elementary schools:

1. Catholic families who are parishioners with a child currently enrolled.
2. Catholic families who are parishioners without a child currently enrolled.
3. Other Catholic families with a child enrolled.
4. Other Catholic families wanting to enroll a child in either Preschool or K.
5. A family not Catholic with a child currently enrolled.
6. Catholic families from other parishes without a child currently enrolled.
7. A family not Catholic without a child currently enrolled.

2.4 Transfer Students

St. Mary's Catholic School will accept transfer students who have met the following guidelines:

1. An interview scheduled with the principal for the parents and student(s).
2. Copies of the past or current year report cards and previous standardized test scores must be presented at the interview.
3. A student transfer recommendation form from the previous school (6.13).
4. Proof of being in good financial, academic and behavior standing when transferring from a parochial or private school must be presented from previous school.

2.5 Enrollment Requirements

(As of July 31, 2004 – Subject to change) According to Diocesan regulations and Arkansas State Law, no child shall be admitted to the Preschool program for the current year, unless he/she has attained the age of three (3) by September 15. For kindergarten, he/she must be five (5) on or before September 15th of the current school year. A birth certificate, Social Security card and current immunization records are required for initial enrollment of new students. If a child is a Catholic, a baptismal certificate must also be presented at the time of registration.

All students attending Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Little Rock are subject to the immunization laws of the State of Arkansas.

1. The requirement for entry into school, irrespective of grade, are at least five doses of Acellular Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTP), Diphtheria/Tetanus (DT pediatric), or Tetanus/Diphtheria (Td Adult), at least four doses of polio vaccine; one dose of Rubeola (measles) vaccine, one dose of Rubella (German measles) vaccine and one dose of mumps vaccine. Additionally, three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine, and one dose of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine are required before entering kindergarten. **NO STUDENT MAY BEGIN SCHOOL WITHOUT APPROPRIATE AND UP-TO-DATE IMMUNIZATIONS.**

2. A child who has had any disease requiring immunization should not be required to have the vaccine for the disease, if the disease is documented by an attending physician.

3. An exemption to the immunization law may be made only by a certificate issued by the Director, Arkansas Department of Health, that the vaccine would be detrimental to the health of the child.

4. Students who transfer from another school either within the state or from out of state will be admitted conditionally. Only a maximum of thirty (30) calendar days shall be given for the student to produce documentation of immunization or be excluded.

2.6 Student Information

It is extremely important that student enrollment information in the office be kept up to date at all times. **If any information changes** (name, address, telephone number, emergency contact, parent's home or work numbers, medication information, method of transportation,

authorizations for pickup, etc.), **the office should be contacted as soon as possible. We must have an emergency number at all times.**

2.7 Records

According to the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act of 1988, student's records are confidential and will be open only to members of the professional staff and to the student's parents/guardian(s).

Section 3. Financial Obligations

3.1 Financial Obligations

We do not wish to deny any Catholic child a Catholic education. Limited financial assistance may be available to qualifying families. A confidential *Request for Financial Aid* form is available upon request. Any family that is a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church and not contributing to the support of St. Mary's Catholic Church will usually not be considered for tuition aid. Registration fee, tuition, and any general fees are mandatory financial obligation of all families. Annual amounts for the items are established and recommended by the principal, school board and approved by the Pastor. Parents/Guardians bear the responsibility of being aware of the status of their financial account. If a family is unable to meet the financial obligation, the parents will need to make an appointment to visit with the principal as soon as possible to discuss financial arrangements.

3.2 Tuition

Current tuition rates may be obtained from the school office. Tuition, fees, and dues must be paid on time with final registration in August and running through May. Tuition may be made annually, semi-annually, or monthly. Tuition payments are non-refundable. Families with delinquent accounts will be notified in writing. When a tuition account is two (2) months past due and satisfactory arrangements have not been made, the student must be withdrawn from school. All charges made to the school by banks due to insufficient funds, plus a \$25.00 fee, will be added to the family financial obligation to the school. **Students will not be enrolled at the beginning of a new school year if the family financial obligation has not been taken care of for the previous year.** Cash payments must be hand delivered by an adult directly to the principal or secretary. Receipts will be written for cash payments. Tuition of an enrolled student who is withdrawn before the end of the year and the tuition of a child who enrolls during the school year will be prorated.

3.3 Book Issue

Textbooks are issued on an annual basis and must be checked in at the end of the school term

or before withdrawal. Any student who loses or damages a book shall replace the book at full cost. (Average cost of a textbook is \$70.00). All students are required to have a book bag for carrying books. All textbooks must be covered to protect them.

3.4 Library Fees

Students are urged to use the library freely. However, many students use these books each year, and the expense of replacing them is great. If a book is lost or damaged beyond repair, the student will be responsible for reimbursing the library the amount of the cost of the replacement of the book. As with all fees, library fees must be paid by the end of the school year.

Section 4. School Day

4.1 Daily Schedule

The St. Mary's Catholic School day begins at 8:00 a.m. The first bell will ring at 7:55 a.m. **All students should be in their classroom for the morning prayers at 8:00 a.m.** Students are dismissed at 2:55 p.m.

Students should NOT be dropped off at the school before 7:40 a.m. Before school care is available for a nominal charge and begins at 7:00 a.m. Before care students should be taken to the preschool and clocked in each day.

An After School Care program is available until 5:30 p.m. Limited drop-in slots for students only requiring occasional care are also available. A student is considered a drop-in if the parent calls or sends a note requesting that the child be sent to After School Care, or, if the **child is left past 3:30 p.m.** Please notify the office if your child is to go to aftercare as a drop-in. Students that are not picked up by 3:10 will be escorted to aftercare where they may be picked up.

The school office and preschool must have emergency contact information on hand for before and aftercare students in case an emergency should arise.

All before and aftercare fees must be up to date by Tuesday of each week or the student will not be able to return until fees are paid. An additional charge will be charged the second time a child is picked up after closing time. Any parent that has not picked up their child by 5:30 p.m. will be required to pay the additional late charge at the time of pickup that day. Additional incidents will result in the child no longer being eligible for aftercare.

If a before or after school care account becomes delinquent by more than two (2) weeks, the students will not be allowed to participate in the program until the account is paid in full.

The first day of school is a full day for all students. Lunch will be served.

If the student is late for school, parents need to sign in the student at the office. Students will then be marked tardy and sent to class.

4.2 Early Dismissal

In the event of early dismissal for conferences or meetings, aftercare will be provided for a nominal fee. Early dismissal is at 1:30 p.m. and students not going to aftercare should be picked up promptly. Please make arrangements for aftercare before the date it is needed as space is limited. Aftercare is usually not provided if school is dismissed early for holidays or inclement weather.

4.3 Regular Dismissal

For the safety of our children, **please drive slowly and cautiously (5 MILES PER HOUR) in the parking lot.** If a child is going home differently than what is normal for that child, parents need to send a note to the teacher or contact the office before 1:30 p.m. This includes going home with another St. Mary's student.

Students will remain behind the fence until their vehicle comes to the front of the line.

Please do not come to the gate to get your child since this is a safety issue.

Please do not signal students to come to a vehicle that is in line or parked. Students will load only from the gate area and will only be loaded in cars waiting in the line to pick up. Parents can wait on the school parking lot until the school bell rings, but then cars should join the pick up line. Only a student who is to walk home will be allowed to leave with a walking parent/guardian. Students walking home unescorted will be walked across the street when students are being escorted to aftercare. A faculty member will escort students going to aftercare or not picked up by 3:10 pm to the preschool. **No child, of any age, should cross the street without supervision.**

4.4 Safety and Security

For the protection of our students, all outside doors are locked. We ask everyone entering the building or grounds for any reason to report to the office.

No student will be dismissed during the school day except through the school office.

Please come to the office, not the classroom or other locations, to pick up your child.

4.5 Attendance

To comply with state and diocesan policies, school age children should attend school daily. It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school of circumstances surrounding a student's absence. **Call the school office, 236-3681 before 9:00 a.m. to report an absence.** A student returning to school must present a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian stating the

reason for the absence. Excuses will be kept on file in the student's classroom folder. Parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments, whenever possible, after school or on non-school days. If an absence is necessary, it is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to make arrangements for completing the work missed. **Students absent for a short period of time may pick up their make-up work when they return to school.** When students are expected to be absent for several days, the parent should notify the teacher in advance to make arrangements to pick up assignments. Make-up work should be returned to school as soon as possible when the student is well enough to complete the work. A grade of zero (0) will be given for any make-up work provided to students that is not completed and returned in a reasonable amount of time after the child returns to school.

A student who accumulates 25 days of absences during the school year will be in jeopardy of retention or will need to have summer tutoring. Proof of attendance at summer tutoring must be presented at the time of fall registration.

Arrival after 8:30 a.m. and before lunch dismissal will be counted as a half (1/2) day's absence. Leaving before 2:00 p.m. will be counted as a half (1/2) day's absence.

NOTE: It is the duty of the school to maintain accurate records of student attendance. Parents/guardians must sign a student in/out.

4.6 Tardy Policy

For a student to make satisfactory improvement in school, it is necessary that students be present on a daily basis when classes begin. Tardiness interferes with progress in school and constitutes a disturbance for all members of the class. It is difficult for students to make up work when they are tardy or when they are picked up early. Students should be on time and should be picked up only in cases of emergency or medical appointments that cannot be avoided. This includes kindergarten students. **Dismissal for all students is 2:55 p.m.** If a student is late repeatedly, a conference will be scheduled with the principal, student, and parents. **All students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must be signed in at the office by an adult and receive a tardy. Parents are not to accompany students to the classroom.**

If students are leaving early, they must be signed out by an adult that is authorized to pick the student up (as listed on the student's Emergency Information Form). **All students leaving early must be checked out through the school office.** Students will be called to the office to meet parents. No students are to be checked out directly from the classroom, play area, or cafeteria.

4.7 Faculty Meeting/In-service

The faculty of St. Mary's school tries to avoid dismissing school early for meetings other than for monthly scheduled faculty in-service meetings. However, the Diocese of Little Rock does require faculty attendance at a yearly meeting held during the school year. This meeting will be announced in advance. No aftercare will be provided this day since all faculty members must attend.

School will usually be dismissed early the last day before Christmas vacation, spring break, and summer vacation, as well as conference days. Early dismissal will be noted on the school calendar each month.

4.8 Weather Closings

In the event of inclement weather, listen to local radio and television announcements for school closing information. Listen or watch for ST. MARY'S SCHOOL. This decision may or may not agree with the decision made for the public schools. A limited number of "Snow Days" may be built into the school calendar. Any missed days of school will be added to the school calendar if more than the allotted snow days are used. If a large number of days are missed due to weather, part of Spring Break may be used for make-up days.

4.9 Delayed School Opening

Adjustments may be made to the school day to allow for roads to become passable during inclement weather. When school opening time is delayed because of inclement weather, the school will open 30 minutes before the announced time. Do not bring your children to the school earlier as the building may not be open due to the late arrival of the teachers and staff.

Section 5. Dress Code

5.1 General Regulations

In order to encourage an environment of unity and school pride, it is the policy of St. Mary's Catholic School that a school uniform shall be worn by all students. Each student is expected to be clean, well groomed, and uniforms are to be in good repair. The Principal will announce casual days or exceptions to the uniform code. Parents will be notified of any changes in the uniform code. **The following dress code is mandatory and will be enforced with no exceptions.**

5.2 Girls K – Grade 6

- Navy jumper (drop waist or knife pleat) with white Peter Pan blouses (short or long sleeve).
- **No white polo shirts under jumpers.**
- **Navy blue (or black) bloomers or knit navy blue (or black) shorts are required under jumpers.**
- Navy blue, walking shorts, or skorts, with white polo shirt (long or short sleeve). Shorts or skort should be no shorter than 2" above the center of the knee. Shirt will be tucked in at all times.
- Navy blue cotton twill pants with white polo shirt (short or long sleeve). Shirt will be tucked in at all times.

- Navy or gray St. Mary’s logo sweatshirt.
- All polos and sweatshirts *must* have the St. Mary’s logo.

Skorts and jumpers – must be no shorter than 2” above the center of the knee.

Belts – navy blue, brown or black **BELT IS REQUIRED** with shorts and pants.

Socks – Socks should be white, navy or black only (**no logos or colored stripes**), and they should be seen at least 1” above the shoe. During the winter months, navy, black or white tights or knee socks should be worn under jumpers and skorts.

Shorts will be worn only during the first and fourth nine-weeks.

Shoes –Tennis shoes or shoes with closed toes are to be worn to protect the student’s feet. Absolutely no sandals, cleats, clogs or boots are allowed.

All shirts and blouses must be tucked in.

Wednesday is T-shirt day. St. Mary’s logo t-shirts or current spirit shirts may be worn with shorts, skorts or pants that day. T-shirts must be tucked in.

No emblems other than St. Mary’s logo will be allowed on any part of the uniform (including socks). Also, please check regularly for holes or tears.

ONLY ST. MARY’S LOGO, AS WELL AS SOLID COLOR NAVY, WHITE OR GRAY SWEATSHIRTS OR HOODIES WILL BE ALLOWED. NO OTHER LOGO, PRINTING, DECORATIONS OR COLORS WILL BE ALLOWED.

5.3 Boys K – Grade 6

- White polo shirt (short or long sleeves). **Shirt must be tucked in.**
- Navy blue cotton twill pants
- Navy blue, walking shorts. Shorts should be no shorter than 2” above or below the center of the knee.
- Shorts are to be worn only the first and fourth nine-weeks.
- Navy or gray St. Mary’s logo sweatshirt.

Belts – navy blue, brown, or black **BELT IS REQUIRED** with all shorts or pants.

Socks – Socks should be white, navy or black only (no logos), and they should be seen above the shoes.

Shoes – Tennis shoes or shoes with closed toes are to be worn to protect the student’s feet. Absolutely no sandals, cleats, or boots are allowed.

All shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Wednesday is T-shirt day. T-shirts with the St. Mary's logo or current school spirit shirts will be allowed. T-shirts must be tucked into pants.

No emblems or markings other than the St. Mary's logo will be allowed on any part of the uniform (including socks). Also, please check regularly for holes or tears.

ONLY ST. MARY'S LOGO, AS WELL AS SOLID COLOR NAVY, WHITE OR GRAY SWEATSHIRTS OR HOODIES WILL BE ALLOWED. NO OTHER LOGO, PRINTING, DECORATIONS OR COLORS WILL BE ALLOWED .

5.4 Hair Styles K – Grade 6

Both girls and boys should wear their hair in a traditional manner and never extreme. A girl's hair style must be arranged as to be **off the face and out of the eyes**, with no extreme layering. Boys' haircuts must be **off the ears and not touch the back collar**. Hair color should be appropriate for school (no dyed or sprayed colors in hair for either boys or girls). Girls' hair ribbons or headbands should be navy, black, gold, or white color; and they should have no glitter or sequins. We appreciate that girls enjoy wearing other color bows and hair ornamentation, but this is not in keeping with our dress code. Small, colored barrettes are permissible.

5.5 Jewelry K – Grade 6

The only acceptable jewelry for students is a watch and a cross or religious medal necklace. Fashion jewelry with shells or rhinestones is not allowed. Girls may wear one pair of stud (post) earrings on the ear lobe and no larger than the lobe of the ear. Boys are not allowed to wear any type of earrings. Earrings that hang below the earlobe are a danger on the playground and are prohibited. Please do not allow your child to wear any jewelry that is valuable, since these items can be broken or lost.

5.6 Cosmetics K – Grade 6

Cosmetics are not allowed. This **includes colored nail polish** (only clear or natural colored fingernail polish is acceptable), artificial nails, foundation, mascara, lip-gloss, and eye makeup.

5.7 Casual Day Regulations

School t-shirts may be worn on Wednesdays. Students may pay \$.50 in order to wear jean pants or shorts also on this day. Jeans may not be decorated or have any holes. During winter

months a white, navy, or gray long sleeve t-shirt may be worn under the t-shirt.

5.8 Uniform Code Violations and Penalties

The following will be followed for violations to the Uniform Code:

First Violation: The student will be warned about the uniform violation or asked to remove the non-uniform item if it is deemed appropriate.

Second Violation: A note will be sent home stating the uniform infraction. This note must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school the following day.

Third Violation: When the same infraction occurs a third time, the student will immediately call his/her parents. The parents must bring the correct uniform.

NOTE: St. Mary's Catholic School Administration reserves the right to question any uniform item it deems improper.

Section 6. Behavioral Expectations

6.1 General Expectations

The Saint Mary's Catholic School community strives to develop a deep sense of respect in each individual student, for self and others. The school will enforce a code of behavior to promote a safe and secure learning environment during the school day and at school sponsored activities. St. Mary's Catholic School administration reserves the right to question any behavior it deems contrary to that environment.

- Students are expected to maintain a Christian learning environment by observing all Student Handbook rules.
- Students are expected to model Christian behavior at all times.
- Students are expected to be quiet and attentive during classes.
- Students are expected to adhere to the uniform policy, including overall appearance.
- Students are expected to refrain from chewing gum on the school premises.
- Students are expected to follow individual classroom procedures as outlined by the teaching staff.

Students are expected to respect other students, adults, and guests.

6.2 Discipline Procedures

The school is a community. It is responsible for educating those children who attend; therefore, it must establish and enforce guidelines and procedures that provide for reasonable order and an atmosphere where learning can take place. There must be a set of procedures for dealing with inappropriate student behavior should it occur.

For most students, simple corrective action will effect the appropriate change. Some disciplinary options may include, but not limited to:

- Individual Behavioral *Plan for Improvement*
- Additional supplemental assignments or projects
- Timeout
- Class Detention
- Loss of privileges
- Parental contact
- Parental “shadowing”

Individual circumstances and student needs will determine which methods a teacher will employ, with the focus upon improvement of the student’s behavior and enhancement of learning.

At such time as the teacher has tried unsuccessfully to solve a discipline problem through a variety of methods or feels the immediate intervention of an administrator is required, a referral will be made to the principal. The principal will determine further options, which may include:

- Additional parental contact and/or conference
- Assignment to after-school, recess or in-school detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Corporal punishment is contrary to the Diocesan policy and is not used as a means of student control.

The ultimate responsibility for a student’s behavior rests with the student and his/her parents. For a few students, the school is neither equipped nor staffed to effect the substantial changes that are needed. With the advice and knowledge of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, St. Mary’s Catholic School reserves the right to exclude from school, through expulsion or denial of reenrollment, any student who, because of his/her violation of the rules and policies of this school, is considered by the principal and the pastor as deserving of this action. Any involvement, activity, or possession related to drugs, alcohol, firearms, weapons, explosives, or threats shall be considered serious enough to warrant immediate expulsion, if the principal and pastor so determine. For serious offenses, as determined by the principal or pastor, the police will also be notified.

6.3 Suspension

Suspension is the temporary expulsion of a student from school for disciplinary reasons. Students may be suspended by the principal, for serious reasons for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) days. The principal will notify, in writing, the student and the student’s parent (s)/guardian(s) of the reason for the suspension, the time of the suspension, and the requirements for reinstatement.

6.4 Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent dismissal of a student from school. Expulsion from school will be at the decision of the principal in consultation with the pastor. A written report containing the reason for the expulsion will be sent to the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) and to the diocesan superintendent.

6.5 Disorderly Conduct

All students attending St. Mary’s Catholic School will be held responsible for their conduct in school,

on grounds, or at any school activity. Disorderly conduct may include but is not limited to:

- Fighting
- Defiance of faculty, staff, or authorized personnel
- Cruelty to other students (verbal or physical)
- Willful destruction/defacing of school property
- Consistent lack of cooperation both within and outside the classroom
- Bringing or using alcohol, tobacco in any form, and/or illegal drugs on school grounds or at extra-curricular activities.
- Possession of firearms or other weapons on school grounds
- Profanity, verbal abuse, obscene gestures or pictures
- Theft
- Cheating
- Any other offense deemed disorderly and not conducive to good order and discipline.

The administration reserves the right to impose appropriate consequences, which are warranted for improper behavior or actions at the school. The administration reserves the right to dismiss a student when the attitude or behavior of the student is judged to be contradictory or harmful to the atmosphere and values of St. Mary's.

6.6 Due Process

Every student is entitled to due process in every instance of disciplinary action for which the student may be subjected to the penalties of suspension or expulsion. Due process is afforded to students in disciplinary cases of some magnitude such as:

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Statements removed from student's records
- Clearing one's reputation

The due process rights of students and parents are as follows:

- Prior to any suspension, the principal shall advise the student in question of the particular misconduct that they are accused of as well as the basis for such accusations.
- The student shall be given the opportunity to explain their version of the facts to the principal.
- Written notice of suspension or expulsion and the reason for the suspension or expulsion will be given to the parents of the student.
- Parents or legal guardian of a suspended or expelled student shall have the right to appeal to a board consisting of the pastor of St. Mary's and the principal.

6.7 Alcohol/Drug Policy

The possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs by anyone or alcoholic beverages (by students) is not permitted in the school, on the school grounds, or at any school function. A teacher is required by law to report to school authorities any incident of alcohol or drug abuse. Not to report such an incident is against the law (AR Statute 80-1917).

Students who have in their possession, or bring to school, or any function sponsored by the school, any alcohol or drugs, regardless of the time, will immediately be turned over to the police. It will be the responsibility of the police to notify the parents/guardians of the student. This will result in immediate suspension.

A contingency for the student to return to school is for the student to actively be involved in professional counseling. Any additional offense will result in immediate expulsion. Students involved in the distribution of drugs or alcohol to other students will be turned over to the police. This will result in automatic expulsion.

6.8 Property Damage

Malicious and intentional damage to the school property should be promptly reported. Students involved will face possible suspension or expulsion and the parent/guardian will be responsible to pay for the damage. In case of accidental damage to school property, the person(s) responsible for the damage should be promptly reported and should pay for the damage.

6.9 Leaving School Premises

No student may leave the school premises during the school day or absent themselves from school-sponsored functions and events without the expressed permission of the principal. Any student who violates this rule will be subject to disciplinary action.

6.10 Playground Supervision

All recess periods and outside activities are under the supervision of a teacher or designee. Recess is a privilege and not a right. Any student who cannot follow the directions of the duty teacher, will have their recess privileges removed for a specified amount of time. Students will not enter the school building during recess without the permission of the duty teacher.

Section 7. Academics

7.1 Grading Standards

Grade reports are provided throughout the school year. Interim reports are given at mid-quarter, followed by the report card at the end of each nine (9) week quarter. Parents may request additional grades or progress information at anytime during the school year by contacting the teacher. Some standardized testing and diocesan testing is also used during the year. You will be notified by your child's teacher of those that will affect your child. The Diocesan grading scale is shown below.

A	Superior Achievement	93-100%
B	Above Average	85-92%
C	Average	77-84%
D	Passing-Below Average	70-76%
F	Failure-Unsatisfactory Below	70%

Kindergarten reports cards will be a report of basic skills mastered during the grading period. Kindergarten uses a checklist for skills and receives:

- O = Outstanding
- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

Parents will be notified in advance when failure seems unavoidable. If a student is doing unsatisfactory work, teachers will make every attempt to notify parents prior to the quarterly report. Good communication is essential to the success of your child. The report card should be viewed as one way of recording the progress of the individual child. It is not to be compared to other students, nor should it be used as a basis for punishment. Good work should be rewarded by positive praise. This attitude will help develop the student's confidence.

7.2 Conduct Grades

Conduct grades are based on the following scale.

- O = Outstanding
- S = Satisfactory
- N = Needs improvement
- U = Unsatisfactory

Students will receive a conduct grade from their teacher. The grade will be based on the student's behavior in the individual teacher's class.

7.3 Learning Disabilities

A diagnosed learning disability is a condition that has been evaluated by a psychologist and/or psychological examiner and determined as severe enough to prevent a child from learning through traditional classroom instruction. Copies of test results and suggestions for educational modifications and/or an individual plan for learning must be filed in the school office. A modified grading scale may be used in the student's area(s) of disability. In areas of academics not affected by the particular disability, standards for non-disabled students will apply.

On the report card, an asterisk (*) will be placed beside the modified subject area(s). The description of the subject modification will be attached to the student's permanent record card. Letter grades given in the modified areas will be based on the academic performance as defined in the student's individual plan for education.

7.4 Promotion

St. Mary's follows the Diocesan policy concerning promotion. Promotion of the student requires the recommendation of the teacher and principal. Promotion is based on a passing

grade of 70%. Failure in a major subject area constitutes a promotion failure unless the failure is made up during a summer school approved by the principal. Proof of attendance at summer school and proof of passing marks must be presented to the principal before the student will be promoted. Major subject areas are Language Arts (Reading and English), Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics. **Failure of more than two major subjects constitutes a grade failure.**

Promotion of students in Grades 1 and 2 is based largely on reading ability and on the recommendations of the teacher and principal.

7.5 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are expected and encouraged. At least one conference is scheduled in the school calendar for each semester. Dates will be announced at the beginning of the school year. Additional conferences may be scheduled by contacting the school office. Contact the office by telephone or send a note to the office to set up an appointment. Conferences can be held before school hours, during teacher's planning period, or after school hours. **TEACHERS SHOULD NOT BE STOPPED BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL TO DISCUSS STUDENTS UNLESS ARRANGED BY BOTH THE TEACHER AND PARENT. TEACHERS CANNOT LEAVE CLASS FOR CONFERENCES OR VISIT WITH ANYONE WHILE STUDENTS ARE IN ATTENDANCE UNLESS PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS SUPERVISION HAVE BEEN MADE.**

7.6 Standardized Testing

To assist the teacher and staff in providing the best possible instruction, a standardized achievement test accepted by the Diocesan Office is administered to all students in Grades K through 6 during the spring semester. The results of these tests are sent to the parents and to the school. The results also become part of the student's permanent records. A thorough review of the results by the faculty provides valuable information for curriculum development.

7.7 Homework

Homework is essential for reinforcing learning and achieving mastery in academic skills and concepts. Homework consists of both written and study assignments. Parents need to provide a quiet place and a definite time for the student to work, as well as the necessary materials with which to work. Homework study times will vary according to the needs of the individual student. All assignments are to be turned in on the date due. Each teacher/grade level has a class/classroom procedure for communicating with the parents concerning late assignments. **Students who are absent are responsible for inquiring about missed assignments and meeting established times for turning in the work.**

Section 8. Medical / Health

8.1 Medication

As stated in Diocesan Policy 2.13, “Medicine, whether prescription or over-the-counter, is **not** to be provided by the school.” If your child needs to take medicine of any kind at school, a medication consent form should be completed. The medication (in its original container), should provide the following information: **DATE, CHILD’S NAME, NAME OF MEDICATION, HOW AND WHEN IT IS TO BE GIVEN.** All medication will be kept and administered in the school office. The school office will maintain a log of medication given to students. This log will contain date/time medication is given, child’s name, name of medication, and amount of medication given.

A medication consent form should also be completed for students with a condition where an inhaler or epipen may be required. If possible such medication should be locked in a teacher’s desk drawer or in the office since distances to be traveled to get such medication are minimal.

8.2 Health

Each year students are tested for hearing, vision, and fifth and sixth grade students are screened for scoliosis. Permission slips are sent home in advance for the scoliosis testing. Parents will be notified if there is a problem in any of these areas, as they may wish to seek further review by their child’s physician.

8.3 Immunizations

All students attending Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Little Rock are subject to the immunization Laws of the State of Arkansas.

ALL IMMUNIZATIONS WILL BE CURRENT PRIOR TO STUDENTS STARTING SCHOOL AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR.

1. The requirement for entry into school, irrespective of grade, are at least five doses of Acellular Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTP), Diphtheria/Tetanus (DT pediatric), or Tetanus/Diphtheria (Td Adult), at least four doses of polio vaccine; one dose of Rubeola (measles) vaccine, one dose of Rubella (German measles) vaccine and one dose of mumps vaccine. Additionally, three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine, and one dose of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine are required before entering kindergarten. **NO STUDENT MAY BEGIN SCHOOL WITHOUT APPROPRIATE AND UP-TO-DATE IMMUNIZATIONS.** An exception to the immunization law may be made only by a certificate issued by the Director, Arkansas Department of Health, that the vaccine would be detrimental to the health of the child.

Students who transfer from another school either within the state or from out of the state will be conditionally admitted. Only a maximum of thirty (30) calendar days shall be given for the student to produce documentation of immunizations or be excluded from school.

8.4 Illness

A member of the school staff takes care of minor accidents. In the event of a serious injury or accident, the office will contact a parent as soon as possible. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency number on file will be tried. If the emergency number cannot be reached, the injured child will be taken to the hospital immediately. If a child becomes sick at school, the parents will be contacted so that they or a designated adult can pick the child up from school. No student will be allowed to go home alone. **Any child running a fever must be picked up from school and should not return until the fever has been gone for at least 24 hours.**

8.5 Head Lice

If a student is found to have nits, parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child at this time. The student will not be allowed to return to school until the principal or designee has determined that the student is “nit free”. Notification will be sent to all students in the affected grade(s). Parents/guardians are encouraged to check their children during the next several weeks when the notice is received.

8.6 Communicable Diseases

Any student having or suspected of having a communicable disease, as defined by the Arkansas Department of Health, will be excluded from school for the period of time designated in the department's policies.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome – Decisions regarding the type of educational setting for the child who is infected with AIDS (HIV) virus will be based upon the behavior, neurological development, and physical condition of the child. The principal will decide the appropriate educational placement in conjunction with the pastor and the superintendent of schools, after reviewing the recommendation of the attending physical and the public health personnel.

8.7 Child Abuse Reporting

It is the responsibility of every faculty and staff member to report suspected child abuse. It is not the administration’s responsibility to investigate the allegations. Child Abuse is defined as any mental or physical injury or injuries inflicted on a child other than by accidental means. Where the injury appears to have been caused as a result of abuse or neglect, the county SCAN or social services office shall be contacted in a prompt manner.

Section 9. Miscellaneous Matters

9.1 Non-Custodial Parents

St. Mary's Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the right of non-custodial parents.

Non-custodial parents are not to use the school as a meeting place to visit with their children. However, they can make arrangements to eat lunch with their child in the cafeteria. In the case of divorced parents, a copy of the court order, stating visiting rights will be required to be on file in the school office. The principal will allow a non-custodial parent to take the child as specified in the court order. A copy of the child's report card may be given to the non-custodial parent. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to keep the school informed about any custodial matters, which may involve the school.

9.2 Field Trips

Several educational trips may be scheduled throughout the school year. To participate in these activities, students must have **parent permission and pay the appropriate fees**. In addition, **regular school attendance and behavior must be satisfactory**. Parents of students not participating will be notified in advance so that arrangements can be made for the student for that day. All school and class rules and procedures will apply while students are involved in the field trip activity. **FIELD TRIPS ARE A PRIVILEGE AND NOT A RIGHT**. Parents who volunteer as chaperons, drivers, or participate in any form, may not bring siblings or other children not involved with the field trip activity.

9.3 Class Interruptions

Every effort is made to avoid class interruptions. Messages will be delivered several times throughout the day. **Visitors and guests are asked to call in advance to make appointments if they wish to visit with a teacher or visit a class. Teachers cannot visit with anyone while they are responsible for students.**

9.4 Money/Checks/Valuables

Students are discouraged from bringing cash or anything of value to school. Cash for tuition, fees, or other charges should be dropped off in the office by an adult. **Checks or money, of any amount, should be in an envelope with the student's name, the amount, and the purpose clearly labeled on the front**. Nothing of monetary or sentimental value should be brought to school. The school is not responsible for personal items due to loss or damage.

9.5 Awards/Assemblies

Students are recognized for Academics, Citizenship, Attendance, and Religious Formation throughout the year. The dates will be established and sent home in the monthly calendar. Parents, grandparents, and friends are invited.

9.6 Telephone Usage

To avoid class interruptions, neither students nor teachers will be called to the phone, except in an emergency. Students may use the school phone with the principal's permission.

9.7 School Insurance

Application blanks are available in the school office at the beginning of the school term. The student accident insurance is approved by the Diocesan School Office, but is not administered by the Diocese of Little Rock or St. Mary's School.

9.8 Flowers and Gifts

Flowers, balloons, and gifts should not be sent to students at school for birthdays or other special occasions. This causes disturbances in the classroom and can be the source of friction and disappointment among the students. The school office reserves the right to refuse delivery of such items.

9.9 Class Parties

Class parties, which take place during school time, must be cleared through the principal. Room parents will coordinate the parties, treats, activities, and time with the teacher.

9.10 Student Birthdays

Birthday parties will not be held during school hours. However, if a student wishes to celebrate the occasion by treating the class to cookies, cupcakes, or such, he/she may do so after conferring with the teacher.

Birthday party invitations may only be distributed on campus when everyone in the class is invited. Invitations to individuals in other classes are not permitted on campus, including in the drop-off and pick-up lines. Students should not exchange individual gifts at school.

9.11 Toys, Games, Cell Phones and Other Nuisance Items

Nuisance items may not be brought to school unless requested by an individual teacher. Items

such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, trading cards, pagers, cell phones, palm pilots, laser lights or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time. Any decorations on notebooks, book covers, backpacks... must be in keeping with the school's philosophy. The administration will determine the appropriateness of decorations. Unauthorized items will be taken away from the student and **NOT** returned until the end of the year or unless a parent meets with the teacher to pick-up the item.

9.12 Forgotten Books, Homework, and other paraphernalia

Our philosophy of education is teaching children to accept responsibility. This particularly applies when they have forgotten books, homework, and other paraphernalia. We will not give permission to students to make telephone calls for such items.

9.13 Harassment Policy

Each Catholic school shall maintain learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence. It shall be a violation of this policy to harass another student or an employee through conduct or communication. The administration shall investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written and take appropriate action

9.14 Use of School Grounds

The use of school buildings and/or grounds is to be approved by the principal or the pastor. All dates and times for using the Parish Hall must be coordinated with the sacristan, principal, or the parish secretary. There is a nominal fee for the use of the parish hall. The sacristan and/or the pastor reserve the right to refuse the use of parish facilities. Organizations associated with St. Mary's Parish or School have priority in the use of all facilities and/or grounds.

9.15 Photo Video Release Policy

Any photographs or videos of St. Mary's Catholic School students that are to be released to the public will require a signed consent form by a parent/guardian. This may include, but not limited to, school directories, advertisements, press releases, etc. The principal will make the final decision as to whether a consent form is required.

9.16 Acceptable Telecommunication Policy

St. Mary's Catholic School recognizes the need to effectively use computers and the Internet to further enhance educational goals. Faculty, staff and students are expected to use computers and the Internet responsibly. All computing resources must be used in an ethical and lawful manner. All activities while using the computers, or in accessing the Internet in this school

must be in support of education and research, and consistent with the educational objectives of St. Mary's School. **Use of the computers and the Internet is a privilege, not a right**, and is subject to terms and conditions. Users are expected to learn and follow normal standards of polite conduct and responsible behavior.

9.17 Bullying

Taunting, name-calling, or bullying of any kind is not just mean, it's against the rules. The policy of St. Mary's Catholic School makes unacceptable "any pattern of behavior by a student or a group of students that is intended to harass, intimidate, humiliate, or instill fear in another student." This pattern of behavior can lead to suspension or expulsion.

9.18 Traffic Safety and Regulations

For safety and security, the gates to the school grounds are secured from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on days children are present on campus. The only day that the gates will not be secured is when funerals or parish functions require access to the parking lot.

Drop Off Procedures – Vehicles are to enter the school grounds through the gate directly behind the church. Students are to be dropped off at the rear entrance to the school (at the canopy) between 7:40 and 7:55 a.m. Vehicles are to exit the school grounds through the rear entrance to the parking lot (between the playground and the parish hall). **Vehicle speed should never exceed 5 MPH. Please watch carefully for children crossing the pavement to go to the church on Mass days.**

Pick Up Procedures – Vehicles should not enter the school grounds until after 2:30 p.m. During dismissal, students will remain inside the fence until their vehicle comes to the front of the line. **Please do not come to the gate to get your child since this is a safety issue.** Please do not signal students to come to a vehicle that is in line or parked. Students will load only from the fenced area and will only be loaded in cars waiting in the line to pick up. Parents can wait on the school parking lot until the school bell rings, but then cars should join the pick up line. A faculty member will escort students going to aftercare by 3:10 pm to the preschool. **No child, of any age, should cross the street without supervision.** Students that are to walk home will be escorted across the street (when other students are being escorted to aftercare) or released to the person accompanying them as they walk home.

9.19 Visitors/Volunteers

Volunteers are always needed in the school to assist the teacher in various academic programs such as oral reading, library assistance, special projects, etc. For safety purposes, all doors will be locked during the normal school day. All volunteers, parents, and visitors are asked to use the main entrance by the office. **All parents, volunteers, and visitors must check in at the office** before going anywhere in the building. There is a Volunteer Book in the school

office and all volunteers should log in and log out. The Diocese of Little Rock requires that all volunteers and employees attend VIRTUS (a short program about spotting child abuse) and fill out a screening form. This same screening form applies to all parents who drive for field trips or volunteer in their child's classroom.

9.20 Complaints

Any person feeling aggrieved concerning any matter connected with the school will contact the individual concerned before discussing it with other patrons.

- If a person has a complaint about a teacher, the individual will go first to the teacher to seek a solution to the problem.
- If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the person will contact the principal for an appointment.
- If the problem is still not resolved, the person will contact the pastor to discuss the matter.
- If no solution is found to the problem, the matter will be referred to the superintendent.
- School board members are not to attempt to solve school problems but are to refer the aggrieved person to the above procedure. If a board member is approached, he/she will notify the principal.

9.21 Title 1 Funding

While we do not actively participate in the free/reduced school lunch program, St. Mary's receives Title 1 Funding from the Federal government based on the number of free/reduced students attending the school. This money is used to provide programs, teacher in-service and equipment to improve student's weak curriculum areas. Parents may find out more about this program by calling the school office. All parents/guardians of St. Mary's School are asked to fill out a form that will be used to determine the amount of Title 1 money we will receive each year.

9.22 Lunch Program

A hot lunch is available for students beginning the first day of school and each day throughout the school year. All lunches are prepared on-site. The cost of the school lunch is included in tuition payments. We ask that students not bring their lunch unless they have special dietary needs. Parents should notify the school of any food allergies or the need to bring a lunch packed at home. You will receive a menu every month.

9.23 Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire drills are conducted once a month and students are informed of the fire exit plans. Tornado drills are conducted several times during the school year.

9.24 Search of Property

Since desks are the property of the school, periodic checks of desks together with their contents may be made by authorized personnel. Such action may also be taken when the principal has reason to believe that they contain certain illegal or forbidden substances or other items that would be harmful to others in the school community. Personal property such as purses and backpacks may be searched.

9.25 Smoking

Smoking within the boundaries of St. Mary's Catholic School campus by any student or adult is prohibited. Violations by students will lead to suspension and/or possible expulsion. Adults smoking on campus will be asked to properly extinguish and dispose of the smoking items. Repeated violations by adults will result in the adult being removed from the property.

9.26 Withdrawal from School

Parents of students withdrawing from school must notify the principal's office of the intended withdrawal and clear all accounts. These accounts pertain to the lunch program, tuition, textbooks, library books, and any other fines or fees. It is essential that students be withdrawn properly in order that the records can be transferred to their next school.

NOTE: The administration reserves the right to amend these policies throughout the school year.

2010-2011 School Year

My family has received a copy of the St. Mary's School Handbook or reviewed the copy posted on the school website www.stmarysparagould.org. I have read and I understand the written policies and procedures in this handbook. I have also discussed the stated policies with my child/children.

St. Mary's School/Preschool reserves the right to amend its policies and procedures as necessary to help achieve educational goals and/or for the benefit and well being of the students and staff.

I understand that tuition is payable the first of each month.

Please sign below and return this page only to the school. All enrolled family members (students) in K-6 should also sign below.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Student Signature _____