

**THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO
MAKE ANY NECESSARY CHANGES OR ADAPTATIONS
TO THIS HANDBOOK.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the contents of this handbook.

We agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of St. Joseph School both stated and understood.

(Please Print)

Student Name

Grade

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____

Student Signatures:

Please sign and return to the Homeroom Teacher of the oldest child by **the end of the first week of school.**

Thank you.

Note: Teachers will collect and keep in classroom files.

Table of Contents

Principal's Message.....2	Library..... 16
St. Joseph School Philosophy.....3	Liturgies/Prayer Services 16
St. Joseph School Philosophy of Learning.....4	Lost and Found..... 16
Mission Statement of St. Joseph School.....5	Lunch 16
Accreditation.....6	Middle School Community Outreach 17
Admissions.....6	Money 17
Arrival and Dismissal.....6	Outreach 17
Attendance 7	Parent-Teacher Organization..... 17
Awards.....8	Peacemaker Award..... 17
Band.....8	Phone Calls..... 18
Before/After Care Program 8	Photographs 18
Cell Phones, Pagers, and Electronic Devices8	Physical Education/Health..... 18
Child Custody8	Professional Days..... 18
Child Protective Service Screening8	Records 18
Classroom Visits9	Religious School Activities..... 18
Communication9	Report Cards and Conferences..... 18
Crisis Management Plan.....9	Retention..... 19
Curriculum 10	Sacramental Preparation..... 19
Discipline..... 10	School Board..... 19
Dress Down..... 11	School Sponsored Events..... 19
Early Dismissal..... 12	Service Points 20
Emergency Information..... 12	Tardy Arrival 20
Fees/Tuition 12	Technology 20
Field Trips..... 13	Testing..... 20
Fire Drill..... 13	Textbooks..... 20
Giving Trees..... 14	Traffic Regulations/Procedures 21
Health..... 14	Transfers..... 22
Homework..... 14	Truancy 22
Honor Roll 15	Uniform Code 22
Incident Weather..... 15	Virtus Training..... 24
Insurance..... 15	Visitors 24
Interim Reports 15	Yearbook..... 24

Principal's Message

Education at St. Joseph Catholic School promotes the spiritual, academic, social, emotional, and physical development of its students. The faculty and staff members of St. Joseph Catholic School are dedicated individuals who profess a deep commitment to Catholic Education and the development of each child according to his/her God-given talents. In all daily tasks, we strive to provide opportunities, which will assist the students to possess solid Christian values as well as a strong moral and character formation. We recognize the need to prepare the students for the challenges of the Twenty-First Century and provide an atmosphere, which will encourage them to become life-long learners and to strive to work cooperatively in a multicultural, ever-changing society.

Ultimately, each student will benefit according to the effort he/she applies. To increase the degree of educational success, it is important that teachers, parents and administrators communicate openly and frequently concerning the progress of students. We stress the necessity to approach the learning needs of students in a TEAM fashion. Parents, as the first teachers of their children, must make a commitment to become active participants in the learning process of their children. The Service Point System requires that each family make an investment in their children by supporting the school with their time, talents, presence, and words of encouragement.

We are proud of St. Joseph School and the spirit and charism of St. Vincent de Paul is reflected in the positive and nurturing atmosphere one experiences in the halls of the school, meetings and social gatherings throughout the year. You are a member of a great TEAM. As a Home and School Member, you share in the awesome enterprise of shaping our future through our children. With your support and cooperation, we will not only touch the future but we will make it brighter as we serve the needs of God's youngest members.

Diane Young
Interim Principal

St. Joseph School Philosophy

St. Joseph School is a Catholic School where religious education forms an integral part of the entire school program. The faculty and staff commit themselves to engendering and understanding the basic beliefs of the Catholic faith, and to fostering Christian values as a way of life. Through the celebration of liturgy, and through prayer, the children are supported and nurtured in their faith development.

In addition to religious education, St. Joseph School offers a flexible and well-rounded curriculum. Incorporated into this curriculum are opportunities for developing physical well being, fostering creativity, instilling social awareness and engendering appreciation of the fine arts. In an effort to respect each student as an individual, St. Joseph School strives to provide a happy learning atmosphere. The faculty and staff believe that each member of the school community deserves respect. In accord with this belief, the school utilizes a discipline method with corrective and encouragement interventions designed to promote student self-esteem and self-discipline.

Knowing that a school program cannot succeed without the support of the home, the school encourages parental involvement and commitment. It attempts to foster a spirit of unity and cooperation to provide consistency in the educational process.

St. Joseph School Philosophy of Learning

We believe that all students thrive in a peace filled, spiritual environment where God given talents and potentials are respected and encouraged.

We uphold high expectations for students in citizenship, moral development, the creative processes and academic achievement.

We respect and encourage family and community involvement in the learning process.

Mission Statement of St. Joseph School

Founded in 1876, as part of the St. Joseph Catholic Church, St. Joseph School is a Catholic School committed to providing a faith-filled quality education.

CONSCIOUS of our MANDATE to teach as Jesus did, our PRIMARY FOCUS is to attend to the WHOLE CHILD, physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spirituality.

WE DO THIS THROUGH:

PROVIDING academic excellence by means of innovative and updated educational resources.

CREATING a climate permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love and the Vincentian charism to care for the poor.

INCORPORATING the Christian values in all curriculum areas.

GATHERING in prayer where we recognize the presence and action of God in our lives.

WITNESSING through ministry to the community.

ENABLING the students to attain a spiritual dimension while developing their full potential as a person.

TEACHING the students to become active participants in their education.

MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE WE ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF:

INVOLVING our students in becoming responsible, productive, and integral citizens in a society with a GLOBAL VISION of life and its dimensions.

RESPECTING and APPRECIATING the diversity of the traditions of those we serve, while standing firm in our Catholic Beliefs.

With faith in God and through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we venture into the Twenty-first Century.

Accreditation

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACSCASI) accredit St. Joseph School. Through the Diocese of Richmond and SACSCASI, St. Joseph School is a member of the Virginia Council for Private Education (VCPE). Twelve members of VCPE have approved accreditation processes, which include the Diocese of Richmond and SACSCASI; these are in turn, recognized by the Virginia State Board of Education. As early as 1984, *“the State Department of Education challenged the private sector to find an alternate method of accreditation other than through the state. The Virginia Catholic Education Association (VCEA) was formed with the primary responsibility of overseeing the formation of the self study process of the schools of the Dioceses of Arlington and Richmond.”* (from the Office of Catholic Schools – Richmond). The association developed a process called Design for Excellence. In 2001, the National Board for SACS approved the process of VCEA with the addition of SACS standards. By 2006, SACS accepted the school system of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond as a **district** and a new instrument for accreditation was developed called Design for Growth. In order to be accredited, schools must undergo a formal evaluation process every five years, including a self study according to established SACS criteria and an on-site visit by professional evaluators. SACS requires that an annual plan be submitted based on the self study/evaluation report in order to keep accreditation current. This process enables St. Joseph School to focus on its areas of strength and focused improvements. The faculty is a highly motivated, professional group, dedicated to the Christian educational process. **All** teachers have a college degree, with advanced credits or Masters Degrees, certified in Virginia (and other states as well), or certification is pending (recognized as updating or changing areas of certification).

Admissions

St. Joseph School has a non-discriminatory policy, to admit and provide services for students of any race, religion, or sex.

Enrollment in St. Joseph School implies willingness and a commitment of parents and students to **comply** with the **policies, regulations, and activities** of the school. In order to realize the school’s goals, parents must also agree with and support the school’s philosophy and discipline code.

Admission Procedure

1. Parents make application, including application fee, baptismal certificate (if applicable), Birth certificate, Social security card, and immunization records to the school.
2. Children take an admission screening test.
3. The Principal interviews the parents.
4. The Principal reserves the right to select students who would benefit from the curriculum and resources of St. Joseph School.

Arrival and Dismissal

The playground is not supervised until 7:45 a.m. No child is permitted to arrive before that time unless registered for the **Before Care Program** (see page 8), in which case the child will be admitted to the Cafeteria where supervision is provided. A Petersburg City crossing guard is on duty beginning at 7:45 a.m. until 8:20 am to protect students crossing Franklin Street. A crossing guard is also present at dismissal time.

The first bell rings at 7:55am, at which time children report to their designated areas. **Children are considered late when they are not present in their grade line at the morning assembly in the schoolyard.** Parents are responsible for providing a written/oral excuse to the office when a child is late. **Excuses such as oversleeping, car trouble, and traffic are not acceptable.**

Promptness is encouraged. **Valuable** learning time is missed when a child is consistently late.

Dismissal will be at 3:00 pm and 12:30 pm on designated Wednesdays (ordinarily the first Wednesday of the month – please check the school calendar and updates for specific days.) Supervision on playground will be until 3:30pm Monday through Friday and 1:00 pm on half day Wednesdays (again, please check the calendar). Parents driving their children to and from school must observe the traffic patterns established by the school, and be prompt in picking up students after school. No student will be allowed to wait outside after dismissal. Students remaining after the majority of students have gone will be taken to the after care and a **late pick-up fee will be charged**, payable within 24 hours.

Parents are encouraged to use the carpool line rather than entering the school. (See page 21 for carpool line details.) Children may be picked up from the schoolyard. This provides the needed security to ensure that the teachers see the person retrieving each child.

If it is necessary to pick up your child early, a note to the office and your child's teacher is needed to ensure that the child is prepared with homework or class assignments. Parents/Guardians then report to the front office to sign the child out of school.

Attendance

Absence Policy

Parents are to call the school office each morning the child is absent, between 8:00am - 9:00am. Upon returning to school, every **child must present a signed absence note**, stating the date and the reason for the absence. Failure to bring a note within three days of returning to school will result in the absence being termed "un-excused".

Early Pick-up

Students who leave school early for reasons other than illness or family emergency must have a written request from the parent and permission from the principal. If someone other than a parent is picking up the child, this must also be stated in the note. Parents should report to the school office in order to pick up a child. Please do not go to the classroom.

Excessive Absences

Any student who has a total of 15 (fifteen) absences, excused or unexcused during the school year, without a doctor's written statement, may find it necessary to repeat the school year and grade level. The Principal, on a case-to-case basis, will review this policy before decisions of retention are made.

Extended Absence

If a student is to be out due to extended illness, a doctor's statement must be submitted to the school. In these cases, class assignments will be sent home. These assignments must be returned to the school before the end of the grading period or within 5 days of the student's return, which ever comes first

Missed Work

Requests for missed work must be given before 9:00 a.m. to allow teachers time to gather assignments.

Tardy arrival

School begins at 7:55 with the School assembly on the playground. Children are expected to be on time. Parents are responsible for providing a written/oral excuse to the office when a child is late.

Excuses such as oversleeping, car trouble, and traffic are not acceptable.

Students who are consistently late are at a disadvantage and are disruptive when entering the classroom. This policy is in effect for all grades Kindergarten through eighth grade and applies to all late arrivals. Frequent late arrival will be reflected in conduct grade. **Children who are tardy 5 times will receive a discipline notice and serve an after school detention. A total of five (5) tardies will constitute one unexcused absence.**

Awards

Awards are given at assemblies for academic achievement. Students are recognized for the Peacemaker Award (see page 17 for details) and Academic Achievement and Effort (For Honor Roll criteria, see page 15). Artist of the Week certificates are also distributed. Perfect attendance is given at the end of the year. Please note that parents are welcome to attend the awards ceremonies; see calendar for dates and times.

Band

St. Joseph School provides a Band/Instrument Program. Instrumental music is taught to students in grades three through eight who register for the program. There is an additional charge for this program.

Before/After Care Program

St. Joseph School offers a Before/After Care Program to assist parents. Registration forms, fees, and other information are distributed at the beginning of the school year. All fees are paid to the office and are due the week or month prior to use of the program. There is a flat fee for the week or month with no refunds for absences. If you are using the Before or After School Program regularly and wish to pay through FACTS (automatic withdrawal from the bank account), we can arrange that also.

Cell Phones, Pagers, and Electronic Devices

Students **are not allowed** to bring cell phones, pagers or electronic devices (i.e. IPODS/MP3 players, Nintendo DS, Gameboy, etc.) to school. They will be immediately confiscated and not returned to the student until the end of the school year.

Child Custody

All custody concerns should be reported to the school office at the beginning of the school year. In cases of restricted visitation rights, the school should be given a copy of the court document stating the conditions for visitation.

Child Protective Service Screening (Sexual Abuse Policy)

The Diocese of Richmond and Bishop DiLorenzo require all individuals who work or volunteer at the school be screened by the Child Protective Services.

All families must complete the Child Protective Service and the Volunteer Select forms and submit to the office before any volunteer work is done. Volunteers include, but are not limited to: room parents, cafeteria workers, and field trip drivers. The school will pay the \$5.00 fee for this screening. In addition, all regular volunteers who come in contact with children must attend a VIRTUS training session (see page 24 for additional details.) and submit a copy of Attendance Certificate to the office. All Child Protective Service information is held in the strictest confidence.

Classroom Visits

Any parent wishing to observe his or her child is welcome to do so. We ask that the teacher be given a one day notification. This allows for optimum preparation for this visit. (It eliminates the planning of tests or other activities that may not give the parent the opportunity to view the class in action.)

Communication

Orientation Meeting

Orientation Meetings are held at the beginning of each school year. General classroom procedures used by the teachers are explained along with homework, school policies and methods of cooperation.

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences

Parent – Teacher Conferences are held for all parents at the end of the first quarter of school. A parent or teacher may request a conference at any other time. Parents are not permitted to interrupt classes to have a conference with a teacher. It is strongly suggested that when a conference is desired, an **appointment** can be made. All parties should be prepared for this important communication concerning our children so that it is not conducted in a haphazard manner.

Parent-Teacher Organization

This organization has been formed so that faculty and parents might become better acquainted and better able to meet the needs of the children. Meetings are held in the school auditorium during the months of September, November, January, March and May. (Meeting dates and times will be announced throughout the year.) Regular attendance at these meetings is strongly urged and incentives are given for attendees. See page 17 for more information about the Parent-Teacher Organization.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times a year. These reports include averages and comments earned by the student for a nine week period. During the nine week period, parents/guardians are encouraged to be alert as papers, test grades, and projects are returned in order to keep abreast of the progress of the children.

Family Communication Envelopes

Manila envelopes are sent home each Tuesday. The envelopes are from the office and contain school news and announcements. Parents are to read the contents and return the signed envelope the next day. Lunch menus are sent home monthly.

Parent Involvement

Parents are involved in many ways at St. Joseph School. Parents help in the cafeteria, library, tutorial assistance, chaperoning field trips, art activities, athletic programs, room mothers/fathers, and many more. Parents contribute greatly to the educational opportunities that St. Joseph School is able to offer. All volunteer hours are to be reported to the Service Point Coordinator to fulfill the Service Point Requirement for each family. For more information, see page 20.

Crisis Management Plan

St. Joseph School has a well-defined Crisis Management Plan, which has been approved by the Office of Catholic Schools, the School Board, and Parish Pastoral Council. Copies of the plan are kept in each classroom, and reviewed annually by the staff and faculty. Parents, who wish to review the Crisis Management plan, may obtain a copy in the school office.

Curriculum

St. Joseph School includes classes from Pre-Kindergarten 3 to Grade 8.

Pre-Kindergarten -----Age 2 ½ to 4 years
Primary -----Kindergarten to 4th grade

St. Joseph School follows the Consensus Curriculum, outlined by the Diocese of Richmond and based on the National Standards of Learning. Academic subjects include Religion, Reading, English, Language Arts (Spelling, Handwriting, Library Skills), Math, Science, and Social Studies. Physical Education, Computer, Art, and Music are also part of the St. Joseph School curriculum.

Textbooks and other supplementary materials are selected to meet the needs of the students and correspond to the consensus curriculum of the Diocese of Richmond.

Discipline

St. Joseph School complies with Diocesan Discipline Regulations as stated in the Administrative Manual of Policies and Regulations.

The discipline policies of St. Joseph School have as their aim to:

1. Develop true Christian character and a sense of responsibility
2. Create the atmosphere necessary for a positive learning experience.
3. Safeguard the welfare of each child and respect the rights of everyone in the school community.

Disciplinary Referral Sheets (DRS) are issued to students who have consistently made wrong choices. When a child receives a DRS, the parent will also receive a copy. In this way, parents will be aware of the problem and the action being taken by the school to help their child.

The St. Joseph School Discipline Code is divided into the following four (4) categories:

CATEGORY I

Students behaviors generally expected are:

1. Students conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and orderly manner in school, on the premises, or whenever representing St. Joseph School.
2. Students will abide by the dress code in school and on premises and/or representing St. Joseph School.
3. Students are to be obedient to classroom behavior guidelines.
4. Students do not chew gum on school property because of the inconvenience caused.

The teacher will handle violation of these guidelines.

CATEGORY II

Student misbehavior within this category will require a student-teacher or student-principal conference. Parents will be notified, denial of school privileges may result, or a discipline notice be given.

1. Repeated violation of any of the regulations of Category I. An action plan for correction of behavior will be established.
2. Forging another's name.
3. Use of vulgar language.
4. Possession or distribution of indecent literature or pictures.
5. Leaving the school property without permission during school hours or while waiting for parent/guardian.
6. Cheating or dishonesty
7. Disrespect in word or manner toward an adult or another student.

8. Failure to return a discipline referral requiring parent/guardian signature.

CATEGORY III

This section includes behavior, which may result in an in-school or out of school suspension. Students are referred immediately to the principal and parents are contacted. The length of suspension will not exceed three (3) days.

1. Repeated violations of Categories I and II
2. Smoking within the school building, on the premises, or during any school activity
3. Possession of any dangerous object
4. Destruction of school property
5. Stealing
6. Threatening or harassing another student
7. Hand to hand fighting, all parties involved
8. Hitting another student
9. Failure to return a discipline referral requiring parent/guardian signature

CATEGORY IV

This category contains behaviors, which may subject the student to immediate expulsion. The Principal and Parish Priest will send a written report to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools who will review these cases.

1. Repeated violation of Category III
2. Assault of a teacher
3. The carrying, using, selling, giving of any drug or medication, regardless of its nature, in the school building, on the premises, or during any activity supervised or sponsored by St. Joseph School.
4. Possession of weapon of any kind on school grounds or during a school sponsored event.

The Principal maintains the right to determine inappropriate behavior, and is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations, in compliance with the Diocesan Educational Directives.

Dress Down

On various occasions students will receive or purchase dress down passes. When using dress down passes the following dress code is effect:

- Jeans may be worn but must be clean, without holes, and worn at waistline. Belt must be worn with jeans
- Shorts must come to middle of thigh or finger- tip length.
- Shirts and/or blouses must cover the shoulders.
 - No spaghetti straps
 - Without rude or insulting images or wording
 - No see through or netted materials
 - No bare skin showing – must cover the abdomen
- Shoes: must be appropriate for school wear. No high heels, flip flops, boots, or clogs.
- Jewelry, if worn, must be within acceptable limits of good taste. No hoop or dangling earrings, large garish necklaces, or bracelets.
- No caps, hats, scarves, or headgear may be worn.

Early Dismissal

Early Dismissal of students is not permitted except in case of emergency. A written request for early dismissal for an appointment is required. If a child is to be dismissed early, the person calling for the child is required to go to school office, **not the classroom**. Parent/Guardian must “sign-out” the student at the school office.

Emergency Information

The emergency information form completed by the parent for each child **must** be kept up to date. Any change of address or phone number is to be reported to the school as soon as possible, also any changes in custody.

Fees/Tuition

Registration and Material Fees

1. A **Non-Refundable** registration fee per family is due at the time of registration, and re-registration.
2. If a student withdraws before July 30th, one-half (1/2) of the registration fee is refunded
3. A **Non-Refundable** materials fee per student is due by August 1. (This fee covers book rental, consumable books, tests, art supplies, library, computer, and insurance)

Tuition

Rates and payment plans are determined annually. Family rates apply to students of Kindergarten through Grade 8. Although no family is charged the full cost of educating a child at St. Joseph School, registered members of St. Joseph Parish are supported through a parish subsidy and receive a discount for tuition. All other families pay the stated “Out of Parish” rates.

Policies for Tuition Payment

1. Payments must be up to date for re-admission into school. Tuition collection is conducted by the school bookkeeper accordingly. Monthly payments are made through FACTS Tuition management which is an automatic deduction from a checking or savings account. Arrangements can be made with FACTS for credit card payment.
2. If the payment is two (2) months in arrears, the parent/guardian is required to meet with the Finance Committee and the student may be asked to leave school until the debt is paid.
3. For monthly payments, FACTS reserves the right to charged a returned fee of \$25 from the account within 20 days. A returned payment fee will be assessed for each payment attempt that is required.
4. **SHOULD ACTION BE NECESSARY TO COLLECT UNDER THIS AGREEMENT, THE SCHOOL SHALL BE ENTITLED TO RECOVER ALL EXPENSES INCURRED IN PURSUING COLLECTION, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ALL COURT COSTS AND ATTORNEYS’ FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF 25% OF THE PRINCIPLE AMOUNT STILL OWING AND ANY ACCRUED INTEREST.**
5. All records and report cards will be withheld until all debts are reconciled.

6. A \$25 fee is charged for insufficient funds on each returned checks. If any checks are returned, transactions thereafter are done on a cash basis or by money orders only.
7. Should difficulty arise in your situation, please discuss it with the Bookkeeper at once, so that drastic measures need not be asked of you or your children. The payment of tuition is your responsibility; please do not let your children be embarrassed through forgetfulness.
8. **Your child will not be able to graduate – 8th grade or PK 4 – unless all financial fees are satisfied.**

Field Trips

Field trips are planned through out the year in order to enrich learning. Parents will be notified about field trips and any costs by the teacher. Parent/Guardian must sign a standard permission slip detailing the trip for each child attending. **No other note is acceptable: no verbal/phone permissions are acceptable.**

While parents have the right to deny permission for their child to be taken on a field trip, the school also retains the right to deny participation. A field trip is a privilege and therefore, the privilege can be denied if the student does not meet behavioral or academic standards necessary for the optimum benefit to be gained by participation in the event.

A child without written permission will not be allowed to participate in a field trip.

Parents who drive on field trips must submit a copy of their insurance card as well as have VIRTUS training (see page 24).

Fire Drill

Fire drills are conducted on a periodic basis in accordance with the Petersburg Fire Department and Diocesan guidelines. Fire exit instructions are clearly visible in every room of the school including the auditorium, cafeteria, library, and the office.

Fundraisers

PTO fundraisers may be held from time to time throughout the year in order to help fund special projects to benefit the school and ultimately, our children. Participation in the PTO fundraisers is strongly encouraged so that tuition costs can be kept low. Please note that participation in fundraisers does not count towards PTO Service Points.

Giving Trees

Giving trees are a way for teachers to let parents/guardians know what their classroom needs are. The needed item is written on an apple and placed on the tree where it can be taken by a parent/guardian who will purchase the item requested. Service points are given for items purchased (1 point per \$10 value.)

Health

Virginia State Law requires that all children entering grades preschool through eighth receive primary immunization. A physical examination is a **must** for students in Pre- kindergarten through grade eight.

Administration of medication during the school day is discouraged. However, if a student needs to receive medicines during the school day, a trained person is permitted to administer prescription and non-prescription medication with the required documentation.

1. The parent and physician must sign required forms for all prescription and non-prescription medicine. This includes a permission form signed by the parent and the physician indicating dosage, time of administration, and side effects.
2. Medication must be in the **original container. (If you need the same medication at home, request a separate container from the pharmacy.)**
3. All medication must be delivered and picked up by a parent. Students should never have the medication on their person in school.
4. If the student is taking a new medicine for the first time, he or she must remain at home until the effect of the medicine is determined and the parent will be able to observe the child.

Necessary forms are available in the school office.

If a student becomes injured or ill during school hours, the school office contacts the parent or person listed on the “Emergency Form”. In case of serious injury or fever, the student must be picked up within the hour. Parents are responsible for keeping the emergency information up to date to prevent undue stress to the student in case of serious injury or illness.

Homework

Homework is a daily requirement in grades 3rd through 8th. Failure to complete homework assignments and turn it in on time can hinder your child’s progress. Work that is turned in one day late will receive a grade of 70%. After that no credit will be given for work turned. Extra credit work will not be given to make up assignments that were not completed.

Homework assignment books are provided by the school. They are to be regularly checked by both teachers and parents for updates on assignments.

AVERAGE HOMEWORK TIMELINE

This timeline is given so that you, the parent, can determine if your child is taking too long on homework. If your child is spending more than the time below, please contact the teacher to determine the cause.

It is highly recommended that families spend at least 15 minutes each evening to read together or out loud to continue the literacy training and to develop a love of books.

Kindergarten – No Specified time. On going language awareness experiences at home.

Grade 1	20 minutes with a break
Grade 2	30 minutes with one or two breaks
Grade 3	30 – 40 minutes
Grade 4	45 – 60 minutes
Grade 5	60 minutes
Grade 6-8	15 – 20 minutes per subject

Honor Roll

Students in grades 3 – 8, who have shown exemplary achievement, are recognized at an assembly at the end of the grading period. The following are the criteria for the Honor Roll:

- Principal's List
 - 95 – 100 in all subjects
 - At least a “B” in non-academic subjects
 - No checks in personal development and behavior

- First Honors
 - 90 – 94 in all subjects
 - At least a “B” in non-academic subjects
 - No checks in personal development and behavior

- Second Honors
 - 85 - 89 in all subjects
 - At least a “B” in non-academic subjects
 - No checks in personal development and behavior

Inclement Weather

St. Joseph School **does not** follow the decisions of Petersburg City Schools regarding school closing, late openings, or early dismissal due to inclement weather. The decisions regarding St. Joseph School are announced over local radio and television stations as soon as they have been made. **Please do not call the school office to ask questions about such decisions.**

An updated list of TV/radio stations will be sent home at the beginning of each school year. **When school is delayed or closed, the Morning Day Care will also be delayed or closed.** TV Channel 6, Channel 8, Channel 12, WRVA AM 1140, WHAP AM 1340, WRVQ/WRXL Radio, and K95 104.7 will be notified.

Insurance

All students are enrolled in the Diocese of Richmond Insurance Plan. This fee is included in the registration fee. Necessary information is sent home at the beginning of the school year.

Interim Reports

Reports are distributed at mid-quarter to all students in order to inform the parents/guardians of the recent progress of the student. These reports are not on the same level as report cards. Interim Reports give an idea of where the student is at mid-term so that if more effort is necessary, the student has time to pull the grade up. This is a communication with parents/guardians to assure notification in a timely manner to assess the degree to which a student may need to increase study time. These reports must be signed by the parent and returned the following school day.

Library

The School Library is available to students during school hours. Children are encouraged to use the library for independent study, enrichment, and enjoyment. Each child is provided with opportunities for checking out and returning books. Fines are charged for lost or overdue books.

Liturgies/Prayer Services

Liturgies are held in the school auditorium. These are times of prayer for the school community to come together in worship of our God. Children participate as Readers, Acolytes, and in other ministerial positions. All students in grades kindergarten through eight participate in liturgies. There may be times when special liturgies are held at St. Joseph's Church. This will require the students to walk to church. Parents are always welcome to attend.

Prayer times are held in the classroom at various times. Special times of prayer are conducted for Feast Days of particular Saints or other important people in our lives. The Rosary is especially prayed during the months of October and May which are times dedicated in the Church to Mary.

Lost and Found

Lost items may be claimed from the lost and found at any time. If your child has lost an item, please check the lost and found box located at the bottom of the stairs to the girls locker room or check with the school secretary for help. Be aware of the items children bring home as sometimes they inadvertently pick up another student's possession thinking it is their own. **Please label clothing and materials with full name and grade.**

Lunch

Children may bring their own lunches, or participate in The St. Joseph School Lunch Program. Milk only will be provided with lunch. Ice cream and snacks can be purchased in the cafeteria.

No fast food lunches may be brought to school because of Health Regulations.

Sodas and carbonated drinks are not allowed.

No microwaveable meals. Cafeteria can not heat any meals unless packed from home. The microwave is not for student use.

Ordering Lunches:

- The cafeteria does not return or credit money for occasional sick days or vacations.
- Menus are sent home monthly and are DUE BACK BY DATE POSTED ON MENU. If it is not received on that date the student will receive a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or soup, and not the scheduled meal. If the menu and money is not received on the due date, the money and the menu will be returned to the family. This is mandatory for students and faculty.
- Students who forget their lunch at home will be served peanut butter and jelly sandwiches or soup and milk. NO CHILD WILL GO HUNGRY. NO EXCEPTIONS IF FORGOTTEN.
- All monies must be paid the DAY AFTER charges have been made.

Middle School Community Outreach

Students in grades 6th through 8th are required to be involved in 25 hours of community outreach projects. This is in the form of outreach rather than home chores or responsibilities. **This is not to be confused with the parental commitment of 25 Service hours for the school.** Community outreach is part of the Religion curriculum, to minister as Jesus did, and the religion grades will reflect their participation or non-participation.

Middle school students might volunteer at a local nursing home, help elderly persons in their neighborhood with yard work or work around the house, participate in a project for the needy with their church youth

group, initiate a project that would benefit persons involved in a disaster, or provide a service for an agency that helps others. The types of community service are limitless with some creativity.

Money

Money sent to school **must** be placed in an envelope clearly marked with the student's name, grade, and intent.

Outreach

Students participate in several outreach programs each year. Math-a-thon is sponsored by St. Jude's Childrens Hospital. The children at SJS participate by getting sponsors for the math problems they solve. The Jump-Rope-For-Heart is sponsored by the National Heart Association. Students jump rope or use the hula-hoop and get sponsors for the number of times they jump or spin the hoop. Christmas families are sponsored by the students. Each year, Pennies for Leukemia is a program to collect pennies for children suffering from Leukemia.

Parent-Teacher Organization

The purpose of the Parent-Teacher Organization is to foster a closer union between the parent and teacher, home and school. Through the annual activities, funds are raised for special projects to foster a spirit of community among families and staff. General meetings are held in September, November, March, and May. These meetings take place in the school auditorium. The dates and times of the meetings will be announced throughout the school year and service points are awarded to attendees. Each family is expected to be involved with school activities, and to contribute 25 service hours to the school (see page 20 for more information about service points.)

Peacemaker Award

The Peacemaker Award is given to a student in each grade who exhibits **Respect, Responsibility, and Reverence** throughout St. Joseph School. The award ceremony is held each month. The parents of the child receiving this award are notified prior to the ceremony. Below is the Pledge of Peace. The students recite this pledge at the beginning of each morning.

St. Joseph Catholic School Student Pledge for Peace

I Pledge to do my duty, to respect myself, my fellow students and teachers.
I promise to take Pride in my work and promote school spirit throughout Saint Joseph School.
I will strive to make good choices and encourage others to do so.
I pledge that I will act as a Peacemaker in all that I say and do.

Phone Calls

Ordinarily children will not be allowed to use the school phone, except when judged necessary by the school staff. We ask the cooperation of parents in helping students develop responsible habits concerning notes, assignments, lunch, etc.

Photographs

Photographs are taken throughout the year of events, activities in the classroom, field trips, and any number of other occasions. These photos are used at the end of the year for a slide presentation as the year in review. They are also used for advertising purposes, but never with names attached. You will be asked your disposition on this aspect of the publishing of pictures which will be in writing and on file so that we will follow your wishes.

Physical Education/Health

Students participate in physical education classes and health classes on a weekly basis. The homeroom teacher will notify parents of schedules. If a child is unable to participate in class, a note explaining the reason should be sent to the child's teacher. A doctor's note is required to excuse a child for an extended period of time. Students are required to wear the approved PE uniforms on PE day.

Professional Days

Professional days and half days have been established by the Diocese School Office to provide necessary in-service education for all teachers in the Diocesan schools. On these days, school will not be in session. All professional days are listed on the school calendar.

Records

If a parent/guardian or student wishes to review their own records, the school is to be given a 24 hour notice by putting the request in writing to the principal. Only the contents of the academic file will be forwarded to the new school of the child transfers. Parents must sign a Release of Records form at the time of the transfer. The receiving school will ordinarily send a request for the records to be sent.

Religious School Activities

We are a Catholic school and all children are required to participate in religious activities. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend these functions.

Report Cards and Conferences

Students are evaluated in terms of individual growth and development. Teachers follow guidelines established by the Diocese of Richmond. Report cards are distributed quarterly to students of grades Kindergarten through eighth. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for parents on an "as needed" basis for the first quarter report or at request of parent / guardian. A notice will sent regarding times and dates. If a child is experiencing difficulty in school, a conference should be arranged by contacting the teacher. Since teachers have many responsibilities during the day, they are **not** to be contacted during class time.

Retention

If the developmental stages and academic progress of a child are inconsistent with his/her chronological age and non-promotion seems probable, parents are to be involved in the decision during the third quarter of the school year. After a parent, teacher and principal conference, all parties sign a letter summarizing the parent decision to have the child retained in the present grade or be placed in the next grade. This letter shall be retained in the child's records. All students are expected to complete the requirements for each subject studied at their particular grade level. Failure to pass three of the core subjects of curriculum will result in the child being retained at the particular grade level.

Sacramental Preparation

Instruction in the sacraments is provided in the general religion curriculum. However, it is clearly a privilege and a responsibility of the parents and the parish to provide for the **immediate preparation** for the reception of the sacraments. Parents who wish sacramental preparation for their child should contact their parish. St. Joseph School administration and faculty cooperate completely with the parish in the implementation of the program as outlined by the Pastor, CRE, and the St. Joseph Pastoral Council.

School Board

St. Joseph School Board acts in an advisory capacity to the school administration. The purpose of the St. Joseph School Board is to work with the Principal to ensure that the parish school functions in a manner consistent with the policies and guidelines of the Diocese of Richmond and is in harmony with the total educational mission as a consultative body to the Principal of the school in the following areas:

1. Financial Management, including budget preparation and tuition scales.
2. Strategic planning for the school.
3. Public Relations and development efforts by the school.
4. Buildings and Grounds.
6. Legislative Issues

School Sponsored Events

Most events are held on school grounds under direction of the PTO, the school, or other sponsoring agency (Boy Scouts, sports...). The event must be well chaperoned so that children are under **direct** supervision of an adult (VIRTUS training) at all times. The use of alcohol at school sponsored activities for youth, on or off school property, including private homes, is never permitted.

School Supplies

Parents provide all necessary school supplies, clearly labeled with student's name. A list of required supplies is sent home and is available on our website. Parents are asked to periodically check to make sure that their children have all necessary supplies.

Service Points

Requiring each family to be an active participant in the school is one way we are able to keep our tuition at a reasonable rate. Each family is required in their contract to earn 25 Service points.

These Service points may be acquired in a variety of ways and are easy to accumulate. Suggestions are, but not limited to: attending PTO meetings, chaperoning a field trip, serving on a committee, donating items to yard sale (1 point for every \$10.00 donation), volunteering special skills to school environment (painting, planting, yard care, etc.), being a room mother, work in cafeteria, volunteering time with sports teams,

volunteering in the classroom or for special events, donating needed items for school or classroom, (one point per \$10.00 value)

Service Points not earned by May 21 are assessed a \$10.00 fee for each point not earned. Promises of service after May 21 in writing will be honored; however, all paperwork must be in the office by May 21 for processing. These fees are considered an outstanding debt to the school, and student report cards and records will not be released until all fees are paid.

Tardy Arrival

Students are to be brought into the school by the parent/guardian to sign in and to submit the excuse. (See page 6 for additional details.)

Technology

Students in classes Kindergarten through Eight receive weekly instruction in technology skills. Classrooms are equipped with computers with internet access, and all classes have access to the Computer Lab. Students pledge to follow the Computer Usage guidelines. Anyone who uses the internet to defame or slander St. Joseph School and its students, staff and faculty runs the risk of prosecution.

Testing

Students in first, third, fifth, and seventh grades take the Terra Nova Assessment test every spring. This test allows all concerned to see the individual child's strengths and weaknesses. Results are given to parents in late spring. The DIAL-R testing is administered to children entering the Kindergarten program. ACRE Religion testing is administered in the spring to Grade 5 and Grade 8.

Textbooks

The materials fee covers the expense for consumable workbooks and rental for textbooks. Students are responsible for the care of texts and are expected to keep them **covered** at all times. Book fines are charged for damage to texts or for their replacement.

We teach respect for people and property through the SJS Peacemaking Program; therefore, we expect the children to maintain **QUALITY** appearance in all of their belongings.

Traffic Regulations/Procedures

The safety of your children is of utmost importance to us. We realize that mornings can be hectic, and everyone can feel a bit rushed, but please take a little extra time to consider the safety of all our children.

Morning Drop Off

Cars are not to enter the schoolyard during school hours (7:45 to 3:00). Stop along Franklin Street near the driveway or crossing guard in front of the school building. Please use the cross walk in front of the school

and allow the crossing guard to help you and your child safely cross the street. Students are to walk to the yard in the rear of the school until the opening bell. When a student is **late**, you will need to walk the child into school to sign him or her in. In the case of inclement weather, the student may enter through the front door, also.

Please be considerate by not congesting the traffic areas around the school property.

Afternoon Pick-up

All families and car pools must dismiss from the schoolyard. Cars enter from Franklin Street and proceed into the schoolyard. As cars pull into the yard, it is important to follow the directions of the teachers on duty. Teachers will direct traffic, keeping cars lined up until students have boarded. It is extremely important to be patient so safety can be assured. Cars will move up only when the boarding area is cleared.

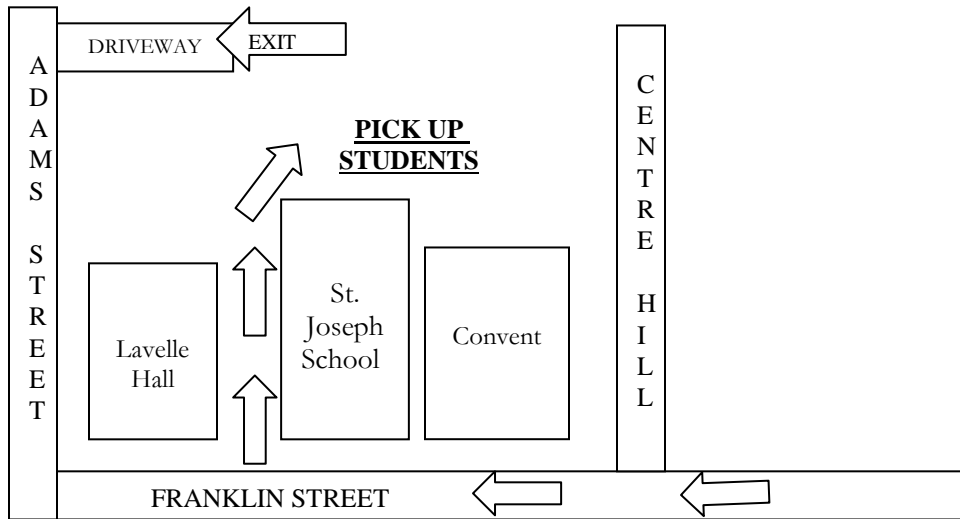
Drive slowly when entering the school property.

No parking is permitted in the faculty and staff parking lot.

No parent or child will be permitted to walk down the alley or cross the flow of traffic once cars have entered the playground.

Please do not come into the school between 2:45 and 3:00 to retrieve students. The office can not handle that type of gathering at that time.

Please be considerate! Do not cut in front of cars waiting in line



Transfers

Parents are asked to notify the school when a transfer is being considered. Written permission is required for transfer of records. Requests for transfer of records are honored only when **all** financial obligations have been fulfilled.

Truancy

Truancy is a serious infraction of school discipline. “Skipping” school will not be tolerated, and will lower the academic grade of a student.

Uniform Code

The school reserves the right to determine appropriate attire and accessories.

- Uniforms are to be purchased from the Rose Uniforms of Richmond (9708 Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, VA 23235, 1-804-327-9001 (www.roseuniforms.com)).
- Gently used uniforms are available for sale by the PTO. Items are sold at PTO general meetings or by special arrangement with the office. Most items cost \$3 - \$5 and proceeds benefit the school PTO.
- Uniforms are to be clean and neat at all times.
- All grooming should take place at home. No hairspray, makeup, nail polish, etc. are to be brought to school.
- All clothing must be labeled with your child's name.
- Administration determines the time for wearing shorts.

Uniform Components

All skirts, slacks, PE pants must be worn at the waist! All articles of clothing must have the child's name clearly marked. Uniforms all look alike and get confused during recess or in the classroom.

Boys Grade K-5

Navy blue dress pants with black or brown belt

SJS white golf shirt with school emblem

Shirts must be tucked entirely into the belt with no overhang. Shirt must be buttoned.

Navy blue or white socks (low rise not acceptable)

Navy blue walking shorts: To be worn during warm weather with black or brown belt.

Optional: Navy blue cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, or gym sweatshirt.

Girls Grade K-3

Plaid jumper (knee length) or Navy pants with black or brown belt

SJS white golf shirt with school emblem buttoned at the neckline.

Navy blue or white ankle or knee socks or solid tights.

Navy blue walking shorts: To be worn during warm weather with black or brown belt.

Optional: Navy blue cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, or gym sweatshirt.

Girls Grade 4-5

Plaid kilt skirt (knee length) or Navy pants with black or brown belt

SJS white golf shirt with school emblem buttoned at the neckline.

SJS Knit shirt - (long sleeves or short sleeves) with school logo

Navy blue or white ankle or knee socks or solid tights

Navy blue walking shorts: To be worn during warm weather with black or brown belt

Optional: Navy blue cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, or gym sweatshirt.

Middle School Uniforms – Grades (5th) 6th – 8th

Middle School Boys:

Khaki dress pants with black or brown belt

SJS light blue golf shirt with school emblem, buttoned at the neckline.

Shirts must be tucked entirely into the belt with no overhang.

Khaki, navy blue, or white socks (low rise not acceptable)

Khaki walking shorts: To be worn during warm weather with black or brown belt.

Optional: Navy blue cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, or gym sweatshirt.

Middle School Girls:

Khaki kilt skirt (knee length) or khaki pants with black or brown belt
SJS light blue golf shirt with school emblem buttoned at the neckline.

Shirts must be tucked entirely into the belt with no overhang.

Khaki, navy blue or white ankle or knee socks or solid tights

Khaki walking shorts: To be worn during warm weather with black or brown belt

Optional: Navy blue cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, or gym sweatshirt.

Shoes

Dress shoes for boys and girls must be non-athletic; brown or black leather with non-marking rubber soles.

Example-loafers, hush puppies or oxfords. **Shoe heel and sole must not exceed 1½ inches in height.**

Laces must be solid black, brown, or blue. No “Heelies” (Skate shoes).

No high heels, sandals, clogs, or boots are permitted. This includes high-topped shoes (hiking boots and platform heels)

PE Uniform

Fall/Winter Uniform: Navy blue sweat pants, SJS blue tee shirt, and navy blue sweatshirt.

Spring/Summer Uniform: P.E. shorts and SJS blue tee shirt

The above uniform must have the St. Joseph logo.

Plain athletic shoes (no flashing lights or emblems) may be worn on gym days with appropriate P.E. uniform. They must be kept laced, with solid white laces.

Accessories

Acceptable

Girls: Clear nail polish **only, one pair** of stud earrings (no multiple piercing or dangling earrings or hoops), navy blue or dark green or white headbands, bows, ribbons or clips.

Boys and Girls: Watches are permitted – no alarms, buzzers, or games, one religious necklace with a small appropriate chain may be worn – no large chains or other emblems.

Not Acceptable

Boys and Girls: Make up, decorative jewelry, long dangling earrings, artificial nails, **dyed or spiked hair**, other body piercing.

Hair

Hair must be neatly groomed. No fad haircuts, hairstyle, beards, mustaches. Hair color must be a natural shade. Boy’s hair must be trimmed above the top of the ear and off the collar and eyebrows. Side burns must be trimmed to no longer than bottom of the ear. Young men in the Middle School must be clean-shaven. No facial hair or side burns.

Head wear

Students will abide by the etiquette of **NO** caps, hats, or scarves, or other headgear indoors. “Do rags” are not acceptable school wear.

Pre K 3 and 4 Program

Children who are enrolled in the Pre-K 3/4 program must purchase the light blue P.E. shirt with the St. Joseph emblem. This shirt is purchased through our uniform company, Rose Uniform Company. Shirts will be worn on field trips and other special activities noted by the teacher.

No sandals or cowboy boots may be worn.

Virtus Training

VIRTUS training is a mandatory seminar for all adults who volunteer at Saint Joseph School. This training educates all employees and volunteers within our school in the prevention of child abuse and how to recognize abuse if it happens. All bishops nationally have directed that each diocese implement this training program within each and every parish and school. **VIRTUS** training sessions are available at no charge throughout the year. Please go to www.richmonddiocese.org to find a training session that will be convenient for you. In order for any adult to volunteer for activities within the school, they must have a certificate stating that they have successfully completed **VIRTUS** training, along with a **Volunteer Select Form**.

Please see the School Secretary for information concerning this form. Failure to take this training will result in exclusion from all activities involving children within the school. If you have any questions concerning this, please refer your inquiries to the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, 804-359-5661 between the hours of 8:30 and 4:30 Monday through Friday.

Visitors

All visitors, including parents are required by law to report to the office immediately upon entering the school building.

THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE SPECIFIC PROTECTION OF THE CHILDREN AND FOR THE VISITORS.

After reporting to the office, you will sign-in and be given a VISITOR'S PASS. This is a security measure so that our students will know that all visitors are recognized as a friend of St. Joseph School.

Yearbook

A yearbook will be available for purchase and is not included in the registration fee as in the past. More information will be sent via the Family Communication Envelopes.

A

Accreditation, 6
Admissions, 6
Arrival and Dismissal, 6
Attendance, 7
Awards, 8

B

Band, 8
Before/After Care Program, 8

C

Cell Phones, Pagers, and Electronic Devices, 8
Child Custody, 8
Child Protective Service Screening, 8
Classroom Visits, 9
Communication, 9
Crisis Management Plan, 10
Curriculum, 10

D

Discipline, 10
Dress Down, 12

E

Early Dismissal, 12
Emergency Information, 12

F

Fees/Tuition, 12
Field Trips, 13
Fire Drill, 14

G

Giving Trees, 14

H

Health, 14
Homework, 14
Honor Roll, 15

I

Incident Weather, 15
Insurance, 16
Interim Reports, 16

L

Library, 16
Liturgies/Prayer Services, 16
Lost and Found, 16
Lunch, 16

M

Middle School Community Outreach, 17
Mission Statement of St. Joseph School, 5
Money, 17

O

Outreach, 17

P

Parent-Teacher Organization, 18
Peacemaker Award, 18
Phone Calls, 18
Photographs, 18
Physical Education/Health, 18
Principal's Message, 3
Professional Days, 19

R

Records, 19
Religious School Activities, 19
Report Cards and Conferences, 19
Retention, 19

S

Sacramental Preparation, 20
School Board, 20
School Sponsored Events, 20

Service Points, 20
St. Joseph School Philosophy, 4
St. Joseph School Philosophy of Learning, 4

T

Tardy Arrival, 21
Technology, 21
Testing, 21
Textbooks, 21
Traffic Regulations/Procedures, 22
Transfers, 23
Tuancy, 23

U

Uniform Code, 23

V

Virtus Training, 25
Visitors, 26

Y

Yearbook, 26