



# Saint Matthew School

*A Catholic School Devoted to "The Warrior Way"*



## Student and Family Handbook 2023-2024



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# Mission Statement of St. Matthew School

The community of St. Matthew Catholic School is dedicated to providing a faith-filled Catholic education that fosters the growth of the whole child. Through developmentally appropriate academics, we facilitate social growth in a safe environment and inspire self-discipline, personal responsibility, and a concern for others in the world.


## The Warrior Way


*It is appropriate that our nickname is the Warriors, as the very definition of the word offers many lessons on how we and our students can live our lives.*


**Warrior:** war-ri-or (wawr-ee-er, wawr-yer, wor-ee-er, wor-yer) (Fr 1250–1300; Middle English werreieor < Old North French, equivalent to werrei (er) )  
–n a person who shows or has shown great vigor, courage, or assertiveness<sup>1</sup>


*We as Warriors of St. Matthew School will be people who show great energy and enthusiasm, who are wisely courageous and brave, and who will assertively and ardently attack the task at hand. We will do so by modeling and embodying these points:*


 Warriors live by a code that pays homage to the ultimate Warrior deserving of respect. “The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is His name” (Ex 15:3). We will be a CATHOLIC SCHOOL, not just a school that happens to be Catholic.


 True Warriors show loyalty everywhere in their clan, with “common features including valuing honor in the forms of faith, loyalty and courage.”<sup>2</sup> We will be true to God and take care of ourselves, our families, our school, our parish, and our community in the model of Jesus and the Apostles.


 Each Warrior has strengths and a valuable contribution to make. Every member of the clan has a place and a job and fulfills it for the good of himself or herself and for the clan. We will encourage and develop the strengths of each and every student and staff member.


 Warriors are fierce in the protection and development of their young to follow them. We will work in partnership with our parents, the School Commission, the North Deanery, and the Office of Catholic Schools to ensure that students receive the best education, value those contributions, and make our successes known.

 The best Warriors are intelligent and respected as wise and resourceful. With their uncanny perception, they are superbly adaptable to live within their environment. We will develop life skills and real-world qualities in our students to prepare them for the challenges of high school and the 21st century.

 The most successful Warriors cooperate and work together. We will be good citizens and models for our world, show respect in all we do and work collaboratively for the betterment of all.

 The behavior of Warriors will live up to the highest ideals of discipline. “The code of the Warrior defines not only how he/she should interact with his/her own Warrior comrades, but also how he/she should treat other members of his/her society.”<sup>3</sup> We will maintain high expectations and behave in a manner befitting St. Matthew students and staff members.

 Warriors live by a Code of Honor and do not quit. Rather, they persevere to uphold it. “In many cases this code of honor holds the Warrior to a higher ethical standard than that required for an ordinary citizen within the general population of the society the Warrior serves.”<sup>4</sup> We believe that to those to whom more is given, more is, indeed, expected, and we will serve and act in this manner.

 All Warriors, students, staff, parents, and parish, will be joyful.

## **ARCHDIOCESAN ADMISSION POLICY**

1. The primary purpose of a Catholic school education is to form students in the values of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church.
2. Catholic schools are distinctive religious education institutions operated as ministries of the Catholic Church; they are not private schools but are administered and supported by the sponsoring parish(es), the archdiocese, or a religious community.
3. Attending a Catholic school is a privilege and a choice, not a right. As such, we welcome you as a member of our school family who is committed to the mission of our Catholic school. We are grateful that you, as the first teacher of your child, choose this Catholic school!
4. While academic excellence and involvement in extracurricular activity (i.e., sports, clubs, etc.) are important, fidelity to the Catholic identity of the school is a fundamental priority. We strive to integrate our faith into all aspects of our school culture and curriculum.
5. The school and its administration have the responsibility to ensure that Catholic values and moral integrity permeate every facet of the school's life and activity. Such is reflected in our policies, practices, and protocols.
6. In all questions involving faith, morals, faith teaching, and Church law, the final determination of admission in our Catholic schools rests with the Archdiocesan bishop.

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one quarter in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St Matthew School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final. If after admission, the educational and/or behavioral needs of a student exceeds what would be considered reasonable, the student may need to be separated from St Matthew School. This decision will be made for the student's educational and/or behavioral needs to be fully met in another educational setting. If the decision to separate the student from St Matthew School is made by the school, the student's tuition due would be prorated.

As a parent/guardian desiring to enroll my child in a Catholic school, I pledge support for the Catholic identity and mission of this school and by enrolling my child, I commit myself to uphold all the principles and policies that govern a Catholic school. In turn, I understand that we are now part of a Catholic school family that will do all they can to help in the formation and education of my child.

### ***NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS***

All schools and parishes under the guidance of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## OVERALL EXPECTATIONS

In educating the whole child, our school attempts to create an atmosphere for developing self-discipline within a child. If the school deems conduct as inappropriate, discipline measures will be taken.

Order is essential in the effective management of any school; therefore, procedures are a necessity. We trust the parents will cooperate with the school in enforcing these procedures so that each child may be successful at St. Matthew School.

Respectful behavior to individuals and property is always expected. When corrected, a student is to follow directions given at that time. If a student wishes to discuss the matter, the student does so at an *appropriate* time for all (usually at recess, lunch, or before or after school).

Students must be appropriately dressed according to school standards.

St. Matthew School does not tolerate any form of violence to or from students. Any child who participates in any form of violence or other inappropriate actions may be sent home immediately. The principal, assistant principal, or their designee deals with all situations on an individual basis. *Students who are suspended out-of-school may not be given credit for any of the work, tests, or quizzes missed.*

Cleanliness and good hygiene are expected so that the environment is conducive to learning for all students.

A good night's rest and proper nutrition are essential for optimum learning.

Although it sounds simple to say, students need to be in school to learn. Missing class time deprives the student of class discussions, activities, clarifications, and information that cannot truly be made up and thus can adversely affect learning and academic performance. A research study found "results that consistently indicate positive and statistically significant relationships between student attendance and academic achievement for both elementary and middle school students," including "GPA and standardized reading and math performance" (Gottfried).

## ATTENDANCE

In the interest of pupil progress, regular attendance, including punctuality, is imperative. **When a pupil is absent, parents should call the school at (317) 251-3997, Extension 3910, and report their student's absence by 8:30 a.m.** If the student is absent for three consecutive school days or more, he/she should have a written doctor's excuse. Notices will be sent to parents notifying them when their student reaches certain absence levels to be sure that everyone is aware and mindful of the importance of maintaining a good attendance record. *Upon reaching the 10<sup>th</sup> absence in a school year, parents may be required to meet with school administration to discuss the attendance record of the student. After 20 days of absence, placement/retention will be seriously considered. Parents and staff will work together to avoid reaching levels that reach these negative outcomes since we know that the goal for both parents and St. Matthew is simply for students to be in school learning. Missing extensive time may make it difficult for the student to master the standards necessary before moving on to the next grade level.*

Under Indiana Code 20-33-2, the absence of a student is excused under Indiana law only in cases of verified illness or injury of the student, in cases of medical care of the student, or a death in the family. The only other permissible absences under Indiana law for grade school students are exempted absences when the student is in service as a page for or honoree of the Indiana General Assembly or is issued a subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial proceeding. The principal shall have the right to demand verification that an absence is for one of the excused or exempted circumstances. Failure to provide appropriate verification can result in the absence being counted as an unexcused absence. Any unusual reason for absence due to extenuating circumstances may be referred to the principal who may make an exception if appropriate in his/her judgment.

After an excused absence, students will be given the same number of days as those that were missed to make up any missing work, unless other arrangements are made by the teacher. Homework that was due on the day the student was absent will be due the day he/she returns. Students are also asked to check on missing homework while absent and complete as much as they can so as not to fall behind. Teachers will work with students to give them a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Larger, long-term assignments will still have the same due date unless otherwise arranged with the teacher. **We know you will appreciate the fact that our office staff is busy, and as such, the office cannot assume responsibility to get homework assignments together for absent children.** *Please* work within the framework of the procedures your teacher has established to get assignments in these situations.

If an absence is unexcused, the student may not be allowed to make up any work missed, including tests or quizzes. **Vacations are not excused absences.** We discourage removing students from school for family vacations. Staff members are not required to prepare lengthy assignments ahead of time for a vacation. If extenuating circumstances necessitate absence from school for a special trip, please contact the principal.

**Co-Curricular Activities:** St. Matthew is happy to provide many co-curricular activities that require additional practice time at home and/or at school as well as special events where attendance is required. This is part of our commitment to forming well-rounded students and young people. Activities include but are not necessarily limited to participation in music programs, Science Fair, and other activities approved by the school administration. It is the expectation that ALL students participate and are present for the practices and/or performances for these activities even if they occur outside of school time, and it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure their ability to be present and on time. It is difficult for a group performance if students are missing, so we must insist on this provision as an expectation of attending St. Matthew School. Activities such as our annual music programs and participation by all 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade musical are NOT optional, and families agree to this as part of enrolling at St. Matthew School.

Teaching students the habit of good attendance as well as punctuality is an important life skill we want to impart so this habit is inculcated in our young leaders of tomorrow. Students are expected to be **in their classrooms no later than 7:50 a.m. each day** and to each class or activity on time. Excused tardies are determined by the school administration, but we ask parents to notify the office by phone or in person when you sign the child into school. Examples of tardies that will be excused include but may not be limited to medical or other scheduled important appointments or situations. The school administration in certain situations will also, at its discretion, waive tardies for weather, road conditions, and traffic. Examples of unexcused tardies include but are not limited to oversleeping, dropping siblings off at another school, forgetting materials, allowing students to sleep in, etc.

Students in Grades 3-8 must serve a detention assignment for every 10 unexcused tardies. Detentions will be decided by the administration and communicated to parents. In many cases this may be time needing to be served after school.

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day unless the child has parental permission in writing and the permission of office personnel. A child must be signed out by the parent or appropriate designee in the school office. If the child returns to school during the same day, he/she must be signed back into the school office by the parent or appropriate designee. **Every attempt should be made to schedule appointments for students outside of school hours.**

All extra-curricular activities require attendance at school the day of the activity. The child must attend at least half of the school day or he/she will not be allowed to participate in sporting events, clubs, plays, programs, graduation, etc. or their practices that follow the school day.

## **CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT**

A great deal of information about concussions has come to light in recent years. St. Matthew takes this situation seriously and wants the best for a student suffering the effects of a concussion. St. Matthew has a Concussion Management Plan in place that is utilized in these situations and is available from the school office upon request. As noted in the policy, the Concussion Management Plan only goes into effect when the diagnosis has been made by a physician. St. Matthew will work with parents to follow the recommendations of the medical provider.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAYS (WEATHER-RELATED)**

St. Matthew School recognizes the importance of being open to provide as much instructional time as possible for our students. However, the safety of our staff and students in traveling to and from school is of paramount importance, as is having enough students present to continue with meaningful instruction. Therefore, in some weather-related situations, St. Matthew School may have a two-hour delay or even close. School staff will monitor the situation closely and consult with others before making these decisions.


A decision to delay or close will first be delivered via phone message at your phone number that you designated as your primary number for the school to use.


If the school operates on a delay, the Extended Morning Care normally provided will begin at **9 a.m.**

## **ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, EXTENDED CARE**

The parish will assume ordinary responsibility for students between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Students who arrive before 7:30 a.m. or staying after 3:00 p.m. must report to the Extended Care program. Students are permitted access to their classrooms at 7:30 a.m. on school days. There is no fee associated with K-8<sup>th</sup> arrival before 7:30 a.m.

**Arrival:** All drivers who bring children to school in the morning are asked to enter the front parking lot by way of the drive near the football field and drive behind the school to Carpool C. Drop the child at the “safety zone.” **(PLEASE DO NOT LET CHILDREN OUT OF THE CAR BEFORE REACHING THE SAFETY ZONE!)** The safety zone is where the cones begin, so please pull your car as far as you can forward to the final cone by the garage door at the far northwest corner of the school or to where traffic stops. In order to avoid double-stops, once traffic has stopped, students should exit at that

time. Children should not open car doors until the vehicle comes to a complete stop, all students in a car must depart the vehicle at the same time (no multiple stops for the same vehicle are permitted; students can walk the distance to their classroom with ease). Students should walk in front of their own vehicle when necessary to cross, although **it is much safer and extremely helpful if students can exit the driver side of the vehicle**. Upon leaving the parking lot during both morning and afternoon carpool, **ALL CARS MUST TURN RIGHT**  **on Forest Manor!** While it is our policy that all families are to utilize the back doors, we understand that there are some infrequent situations where a parent needs to conduct some business and come into the school. **Beginning at 7 a.m., if a student is dropped off in front, an adult MUST come into the building and have business to be conducted with St. Matthew staff.** Please do not park in the flow of traffic or in the safety zone and escort your student(s) into the building. However, **PLEASE ALSO REVIEW THE VISITORS POLICY ON PAGE 38 as parents should not plan to meet with teachers or staff before school or escort their students to classrooms after a reasonable period** as our staff has many busy preparations to begin the day in the best fashion for your children.

**Dismissal:** All students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Any student riding or walking home with someone other than normal must have a signed written note by his/her parent or legal guardian. Anyone with a Pre K-3 student to pick up will be in the back parking lot in Carpool C. Anyone with a 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade student only will pick up in the front. Siblings of Pre K-3 students in higher grades will be in the back with their ride. Once again, upon picking up children and exiting parking lot, **ALL CARS MUST TURN RIGHT**  **on Forest Manor!**

**After-School Extended Care Pickup:** All students who participate in after school care and are picked up after 3:15 p.m. must be signed out from the front office (Door #1).

**EXTENDED CARE:** St. Matthew provides the opportunity for Extended Care for those parents who cannot have their child picked up at 3 p.m. each day. The hours of operation for Extended Care are from 3:00-6:00 p.m. on all days St. Matthew is in session for a full school day (**there will be no Extended Care on the following early dismissal days, scheduled at this time to be 12/22, 3/29, 5/17, and 5/24**). Students who are not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be required to go to Extended Day at the parents' expense.

Fees for using Extended Care for the school year include a \$25 registration fee per family, and then there is a \$5.00 per hour fee for each child. **Any child picked up after 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$5 per minute past 6:00.** (This is meant to protect the valuable time of our Extended Care staff). Extended Care payments are due the following Tuesday for the previous week, and families delinquent in their payment of their accounts may be ineligible to use the program until the account is made current.

Students signed into Extended Care must be signed out at the table by parents, guardians, authorized adults, or high school age siblings. For safety purposes, please have a valid picture ID available to show staff members when asked to do so. Students needing to go to an extracurricular event from the Extended Care program will need a note from a parent or guardian giving them permission to be signed out by an Extended Care staff member.

Further information about the Extended Care program will be emailed and will be available on our school website.



## **ACADEMICS**

### ***HOMEROOM ASSIGNMENT POLICY***

Students are placed in homerooms based on many factors. The male-female ratio and the leadership, academic, and behavioral needs of each child and the composition of the entire classroom are included in determining class makeup. We do not accept parental requests for placement in specific classes. The sending teachers (previous school year's teacher) and the receiving teachers work together to develop the best possible class lists for the following year, with Administrator approval. Parents may alert the teacher to specific needs of their child, but it is not appropriate to request a specific teacher for the child. You have trusted us with your children; please trust us with their class placement. We do not change class lists once determined with the exception of new or withdrawing students or in the cases of extenuating circumstances.

### ***GRADING SCALE/REPORT CARDS/CONFERENCES***

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and St. Matthew School have adopted the following grade scale for all levels:

A	93-100
B	85-92
C	76-84
D	70-75
F	69 and below

Parents and students are encouraged to use the Power School online grading website frequently for an up-to-date grade report. Your personal user name and password will be issued during the first week of school. Teachers are expected to keep their online grade books current within a week's period.

Parents are encouraged to keep in close contact with their child's teachers concerning their child's academic and social progress. Parents also have online access to check their student's progress at any time, so there will not be a mid-term progress report. If you have any questions about the progress of your student or report cards, please contact your child's teacher.

Parent-teacher conferences, end-of-quarter dates, and report card issue dates are available on the school calendar.

### ***HOMEWORK***

Homework is expected to be completed and turned in when assigned. If a teacher needs to keep a child after school, the parent will be contacted; however, the parent is responsible for transportation or Extended Care fees. Grades 4 through 8 have specifically outlined their homework policy below.

### ***HOMEWORK POLICY***

Our school expects all homework to be completed and turned in on time. "On time" is at the beginning of the class period where that assignment is needed. In the case of absence, one day will be given for makeup work for each day

absent. It is the student's responsibility to turn in late work when returning from an absence. Projects and long-term assignments are excluded from this policy. Long term assignments and projects must be turned in on time for credit. In Grades 4-8 assignments can be assessed a 50% penalty when turned in one day late. If a student is late for a school day and he/she misses a class, then he/she is still responsible to turn in any and all assignments that were due that day. Students are also asked to check on missing homework while absent and complete as much as they can so as not to fall further behind.

Students need to plan homework time, so the work is spread out adequately. Homework includes not only completing classroom assignments, but also studying, reviewing, preparing for tests, preparing for class, and assembling classroom materials. Students also will be educated in and need to be aware of the consequences, academic, discipline, and otherwise, of cheating and plagiarism as we want all students to be young people of character and honor.

### ***COURSEWORK***

All Middle School (Grade 6-8) core classes will meet on a daily basis. Specials courses will be held once a week on a rotating basis and will include Flex Periods that may be used for many different purposes. This class schedule should allow students sufficient time to prepare for each core subject (Religion, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts).

Intermediate [4-5] Special and Core Subject daily schedules operate under a "mini-Middle School" concept and classes rotate among the Grades 4-5 teachers for specific subjects. They have common times for Special classes including Art, Computer, Library, Music, and Physical Education.

Primary [K-3] Enrichment and Core Subject daily schedules are classroom specific and vary by grade level. The Special classes include Art, Computer, Library (TBD), Music, and Physical Education.

### ***STUDY HABITS/GUIDE CHECKLIST***

The following is a list of suggestions for effective study time and practices by the students at home. It is important that all parents implement positive study habits so all students can be successful learners.

1. Your child should have a consistent time and place to complete homework.
2. The study area should be quiet and well-lit.
3. Check assignment notebooks daily for homework and due dates. Students in Grades 3-8 are required to keep an assignment notebook daily throughout the school year. The school will provide these on the first day of school. If a replacement is needed during the school year, it is the responsibility of the student/parent to purchase an additional assignment book at \$5.00 per book.
4. Review and correct graded work with your child. Return the work to school if requested by the teacher.
5. Parents, please check completion of all assignments. This is the number one way to help ensure academic success by avoiding missing assignments and allowing students to avoid developing bad habits.
6. Place completed work in book bags, folders, or backpacks.
7. Check that your child brings some work home each day. Homework is not merely completing classroom assignments. It also should include reviewing notes, texts, and materials, reading, and studying for tests/quizzes long before the actual assessment date.

8. If your child does not record assignments in his/her assignment notebook, thus resulting in incomplete or missing assignments, establish consistent consequences at home. Contact your teacher for ways to check on assignments.

Students should know and accept the academic consequences for incomplete, late, or unacceptable work. Grades 4-8 have other specific guidelines previously stated in dealing with late or missing homework.

A number of families have reported great success in setting a routine allotted time for studying, homework, or reading. If your child completes his/her written homework in less than expected time, remaining time should be spent studying, reviewing math facts, reading, or with other educational activities and goals in mind.

### ***WARRIOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS***

St. Matthew School is committed to strive for educational excellence. Students who attend St. Matthew School are expected to maintain continued academic success.

If a student has a cumulative D or F in any subject at various times throughout the quarter and at the end-of-quarter report card, parents and teachers should be in communication to see what can be done to help the student improve. Percent equivalents for the D or F grades are as outlined in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis grading scale (percentage grades include a D being between 70-75 and an F being 69 and below). This parent contact serves as impetus to the parent that intervention may be necessary in order for the student to maintain C average work at the very least. Either party may schedule a parent/teacher meeting to determine any additional course of action needed as deemed appropriate. The administration at their discretion may implement an Academic and/or Behavioral contract for the student if they deem it necessary for accountability purposes. Parents will be notified of this additional expectation and a meeting will be held to confer about its expectations and consequences.

### ***PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION***

In the event that a student is not successful on an overall basis, consideration must be given not to promote the student to the next grade level. Any time a student receives two or more F grades in one subject in a given year, or a combination of any 3 F grades or 1 F and multiple D grades over the course of an entire year, the student will be a candidate for placement into the next grade level or retention. A meeting may be called by teachers or the administration with parents to inform them of this possibility before the end of the school year and to try to find ways to help the student improve. We want our students to be prepared to succeed at the next grade level, and the only way to ensure this is the completion of all grade-level expectations as noted by the academic performance of the student.

**Placement-** Placement means that a student will move to the next grade level with reservations. An academic contract will be put in place before the beginning of the following school year to define expectations for students, and progress will be reviewed regularly. A student cannot be “placed” in succeeding grade levels, so a student who receives a designation of “placed” will be retained a following year if proper academic performance is not achieved.

**Retention-** Retention means that a student is not promoted to the next grade level. It is not meant to be punitive, but instead it is to provide students with the additional time that is necessary to master grade level standards and expectations in order to successfully complete succeeding grade levels.

## **LITURGY AND SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Students will attend Mass at St. Matthew Catholic Church once each week, normally on Wednesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. Parents are welcome to attend. At times, Mass may be held on another day due to Holy Days of Obligation or other schedule needs. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in all liturgies and services.

St. Matthew Catholic Church sponsors sacramental preparation. Children who are Catholic receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the fall of the second grade and Holy Eucharist/First Communion in the spring of second grade. Parents are required to attend a parent program offered by the parish, and the children will be required to attend some meetings or practices outside of school time, as well. The Parish Coordinator of Religious Education is the coordinator for second grade sacramental programs.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will also be offered to older students during the school year. Each student who has made their 1<sup>st</sup> reconciliation is encouraged to participate in the actual Sacrament and all students are required to be present.

## **ARCHDIOCESAN POLICY ON CATHOLIC FORMATION**

The school respects the personal conscience of individual students and their families. This freedom is recognized by the Catholic Church. However, as a Catholic school it cannot relinquish its own freedom to proclaim the Gospel and to offer a formation based on the teachings of the Catholic faith and the values to be found in Christian education. Students are expected to participate in religious instruction and Catholic formation, including Christian service, offered at the school except those that are intended only for Catholics (e.g., reception of the Sacraments).

## **FAMILY SERVICE EXPECTATION**

In accordance with the provision of service noted above, and to help keep tuition and costs as low as possible by providing assistance in both funds and activities, each St. Matthew School family is expected to provide at least twelve (12) hours of documented service to the school and/or parish each year. This requirement will be tracked and monitored to ensure completion. Please take note of service opportunities listed in our school newsletter, "The Warrior World," and other communication venues to help complete your requirement. We thank you for your much-needed help that provides assistance in countless ways to our students, staff, and community.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The goal of the Discipline Policy of St. Matthew School is to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to learn to his or her potential in a safe, secure, orderly environment for himself or herself and others. As mentioned previously in the Welcome section, our Discipline Policy is founded on and attempts to instill in all students “The Warrior Way” concepts of working collaboratively together as good citizens while maintaining the highest expectations of discipline and behavior befitting St. Matthew Warriors.

### **ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS - GUIDELINE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ON RESPECTING PERSONS**

One of the benchmarks of authentic Catholic education is its commitment to the intrinsic dignity of each student as a child of God. In order to assist our Catholic schools in promoting this fundamental element of their identity, this guideline is required for incorporating into school handbooks.

*The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, staff member, and adult volunteer is vitally important. In order to protect students, employees, volunteers, and the school/archdiocese itself, each student is expected to treat the good name and reputation of other students, school employees, volunteers, and the school/archdiocese with dignity and respect and not engage in any activity or conduct, either on campus or off campus, that is in opposition to this policy and/or inconsistent with the Catholic Christian principles of the school as determined by the school in its discretion. Any derogatory, slanderous, hostile, or threatening remarks or actions toward any of the above by a student will be seen as a violation of this policy and will be viewed as an extremely serious matter, whether it is done physically, verbally, or electronically through the use of a home or school computer, phone, iPad, or other electronic media or by remote access during school time or after hours. Some examples include, but are not limited to, social media, text messages, blogging, images, pictures, etc. Any individual found to have made or participated with others in making, repeating, or forwarding any such remarks or actions will be subject to disciplinary action by the school, up to and including expulsion/dismissal.*

**In accordance with Safe Parish and Indiana Law, any report or suspicion of child abuse and neglect will be reported to the appropriate authorities for their investigation.**

### **GROUND FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION**

The grounds for suspension or expulsion apply when a student is:

- On school or parish grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; or
- Off school or parish grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
- Traveling to or from school on a school activity, function, or event; or
- When the student’s actions off school or parish grounds are deemed by the Faculty Climate Committee to endanger other students or community members or attempt to intimidate or bully others, or when these actions bring considerable disrepute to the name of St. Matthew or are contrary to the principles of the Catholic Church.

## ***STUDENT MISCONDUCT AND/OR SUBSTANTIAL DISOBEDIENCE***

Teachers, staff members, and administrators have an expectation to maintain order in a fair and consistent manner. Thus, staff members have the need to investigate and act in matters involving student misconduct. The principal or his/her designee has the right to search a student's locker, person, coat, book bag, and/or other personal belongings when deemed necessary.

Examples of student misconduct and/or substantial disobedience for which a student may receive consequences, such as detention, suspension, or expulsion, include but are not limited to:

- Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the type of conduct prohibited by this rule:
  - Occupying the school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
  - Blocking the entrance or exits of the school building, corridor, or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
  - Setting fire or damaging any school building or property.
  - Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or education function, or of any meeting or assembly on school or parish property.
  - Intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere with the ability of any teacher or any other person to conduct or participate in an education function.
  - Traveling to or occupying any room or areas deemed off-limits without proper supervision and/or permission.
- Engaging in any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another person or urging of other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to coercion, harassment, bullying, hazing, or other comparable conduct.
- Engaging in violence and/or threat of violence against any student, staff member, and/or other persons. Prohibited violent or threatening conduct includes threatening, planning, or conspiring with others to engage in a violent activity.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property belonging to others or stealing or attempting to steal private property belonging to others.
- Causing or attempting to cause physical injury or behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person.
- Threatening, intimidating, or cheating any person for any purpose, including obtaining money or anything of value.
- Threatening (whether specific or general in nature) damage or injury to persons or property, regardless of whether there is a present ability or intent to commit the act.
- Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
- Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, is represented to be a weapon, or looks like a weapon.

- Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by any controlled substance, prescription drug (that is not the student's own or properly dispensed), narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, intoxicant, or depressant of any kind, or any paraphernalia used in connection with the listed substances. Also prohibited is the consumption of any of the stated substances immediately before attending school or a school function or event.
  - Exception to the above rule: A student with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer prescribed medication for the disease or condition if the student's parent has filed a written authorization with the main office. The written authorization must be filed annually, and it is also the responsibility of the parent to provide immediately any changes that occur to the order during the school year. The written authorization must be done by a physician and include the following information:
    - That the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the physician has prescribed medication.
    - The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the prescribed medication.
    - The student has been instructed in how to self-administer the prescribed medication.
    - The student is authorized to possess and self-administer the prescribed medication.
- Possessing, using, transmitting, any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, intoxicant, or other controlled substance of any kind.
- Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by caffeine-based substances other than beverages, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), stimulants of any kind, or any other similar over-the-counter products.
- Possessing, using, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco products of any kind or in any form.
- Offering to sell or agreeing to purchase a controlled substance or alcoholic beverage.
- Failing to comply with the directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under the supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes of an educational function.
- Failing to respond completely and truthfully to questions from a staff member regarding school-related matters including potential violations of the student conduct rules or local, state, or federal laws.
- Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or of violating a school rule and/or local, state, or federal law.
- Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
- Aiding, assisting, or conspiring with another person to violate these student conduct rules and/or local, state, or federal laws.
- Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, copying answers, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination or homework, wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores, changing scores and grades, and
- Taking or displaying pictures (digital or otherwise) without the consent of the student or staff member in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
- Engaging in pranks that could result in harm to another person.
- Use or possession of gunpowder, ammunition, or a flammable substance.
- Violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function, including but not limited to:

- Engaging in sexual behavior on school or parish property.
- Engaging in sexual harassment of a student, staff member, or other person.
- Disobedience of administrative authority.
- Willful absence or tardiness of students.
- Engaging in speech or conduct, including clothing, jewelry, or hair style, that is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, refers to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, sexual behavior, or illegal activity, or that is plainly offensive to others and/or disruptive to school purposes.
- Violation of the school's Acceptable Use of Technology Policy or rules.
- Violation of the school's Administration of Medication Policy or rules.
- Possessing or using a laser pointer or similar device.
- The usage during school hours on school grounds any electronic device, cellular telephone, or any other telecommunication or mechanical device, in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function approved by a staff member. Devices will be confiscated until a parent retrieves them. Phones and other devices should be kept in a student's locker turned off and should not be connected to the St. Matthew WiFi.
- Use of any cellular telephone, electronic device, or any other telecommunication or mechanical device during Extended Care time without the permission of Extended Care staff.
- Chewing gum or eating or drinking any other item without express consent of a staff member at the specific time.
- Any student conduct rules the principal establishes and gives publication of to all students and parents in the school.
- Any activity that is unbecoming to the Catholic Faith or behavior that violates the Gospel standards.

### **BULLYING**

This rule applies when a student is:

- On school grounds immediately before, during, or after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group.
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.
- Traveling to or from school on a school activity, function, or event.
- Using property or equipment provided by the school.
- At any time when the results of the action (including but not limited to online postings) are meant to bully, intimidate, embarrass, harass, ridicule, humiliate, or cause harm to, physical or psychological, another student and whose effects can reasonably be expected to continue through the school day.

Bullying by a student or groups of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other student through overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted, and/or physical acts committed, or any other similar behavior is prohibited.

Parents of students who suspect that repeated acts of bullying are taking place should report the matter to the school principal or designee. School personnel will investigate all reports of bullying.

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate interventions, restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation.



Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying.

St. Matthew School encourages all parties to engage students, staff, and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through the PFA.

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learning in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behavior and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to benefit fully from the educational opportunities available at St. Matthew.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behavior, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft, etc.)
- Verbal (Name calling, racist remarks, etc.)
- Indirect (Spreading rumors, excluding someone from social groups, etc.)

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behavior, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences, or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration, or truancy from school. Students will be encouraged and supported to report bullying to school to teachers, administrators, or other staff members as well as to their parents and/or responsible adults.

School staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this school policy. Indiana schools have a legal duty under Indiana law to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents, and students.

The following steps may be taken by the school when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of the staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be written and given to the office.
- The principal or his/her designee will interview all concerned and will write further to document the incident.
- Parents will be informed.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Students who have committed acts of bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken in acts of bullying:

- Official warnings to cease the offending actions.
- Detention
- Exclusion from certain school activities.
- Minor fixed-term exclusion
- Major fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent expulsion

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in a character-building program, assemblies, and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behavior.

### ***St. Matthew Grades 3-8 Discipline and Detention Policy***

As students grow older, even more is expected of them when it comes to their behaviors and how they treat others. As such, beginning in Grade 3 a Student Conduct Grade will be earned. All Student Conduct Grades will begin at 100% at the start of each quarter, with a corresponding letter grade assigned per the Archdiocesan scale on Page 10. Points will be deducted when conduct infractions occur. Parents and students will be able to view the conduct grade on PowerSchool. Conduct grades will be updated before 3:00 p.m. each Friday. The Conduct Grade **WILL** be counted as a class grade for honor roll and National Junior Honor Society eligibility. The following consequences will be in place for the conduct-grade:

***Written warning= 3% deduction***

***Detention= 9% deduction***

***Suspension (in or out of school) = 12% deduction***

***3 Written Warnings in a Semester= Detention***

***4 Detentions (all year) = In-School Suspension***

Detentions will be time where the student is mandated to stay after school (3:15-4:00) (written detentions are no longer required, although there may be some reflective components based on the infraction). Below are examples of infractions that can result in written warnings and detentions. However, situations are unique, and all consequences will be at the discretion of administration.

The following behaviors are the type that may warrant a written warning. As noted above, this is at the discretion of the school staff. Behaviors include but are not necessarily limited to:

***-Chewing gum/eating food without permission***

***-Not turning in cell phones and smart watches at the start of the day***

***-Not following directions/classroom expectations***

***-Disrupting behavior***

***-Excessive talking out***

***-Inappropriate language (depending on the severity of the language and the intent, more serious consequences of detention or suspension may be issued)***

**\*\*Uniform infractions will result in a written warning but will be tallied separately from behavior. Three uniform infractions will result in a detention.**

***-untucked shirt***

***-Make-up/nail polish***

***-Missing a belt***

***-Skirt/short length***

***-Wearing a hoodie/non-school sweatshirt***

The following behaviors can warrant a detention and/or suspension or other consequences. They include but are not necessarily limited to:

***-Physical fighting of any kind***

***-Cheating on any school assignment (test, homework, or project)***

***-Plagiarism of any kind \* see below***

***-Disrespectful behavior/talk to a teacher***

***-Intentional damage to property or stealing***

***-Inappropriate behavior on school technology device***

***-Gossip/rumors/intentional hurting of another student/teacher (in person, texting, or online)***

***-Being tardy to class and being out of passports***

***-Bullying***

St. Matthew expects all Warriors to be honest in all they do, including and especially their coursework. Adequately preparing as noted above will prevent the temptation to engage in any academically dishonest behavior. However, if any cheating, academic dishonesty, or plagiarism should occur, disciplinary action may be taken, including but not necessarily limited to the progression below:

**First incident of Cheating/Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:**

The student receives a zero on the assignment, test, quiz, worksheet, etc. Parents are notified of the inappropriate action through a written warning and student meets with appropriate Principal and/or Assistant Principal to discuss infraction. (Note: Plagiarism on a detention will result in an ADDITIONAL detention to the one that also must be re-done.)

**Second Incident of Cheating/Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:**

The student will receive a zero on the assignment, test, quiz, worksheet, etc. Parents are notified of the inappropriate action and student will receive a detention to review the importance of academic integrity.

**Third incident of Cheating/Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:**

An in-school suspension will be assigned, and a meeting held with parents. An Academic Contract may also be considered. A Climate Committee meeting may be called if necessary to review further penalties.

School officials may find it necessary to discipline students when their behavior interferes with school purposes or educational functions of the school. In accordance with the provisions of I.C. 20-8.1-5.1, administrators and staff members may take the following actions:

- **Removal from class or activity (Teacher)** - A teacher may remove a student from the teacher's class or activity for a period of one school day with administrator approval, if the student is assigned regular or additional work to be completed in another school setting.

- **Suspension from school (Principal)** - A school principal (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of up to 10 school days.
- **Expulsion (Principal)** - A student may be expelled from school permanently.

### ***St. Matthew Grades Preschool- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Discipline Policy***

Teachers use age appropriate classroom discipline strategies with administrator intervention as needed.

## **ADMITTANCE AND USE OF BUILDING POLICY**

On the playground and all other areas of the St. Matthew buildings and grounds, the students are expected to obey the people on duty. All school expectations and procedures are to be followed while on the playground before, during, and after school hours. Students may not leave the playground or re-enter the building during recess without permission of the adult on duty. There is to be no eating, gum chewing, or drinking while on the playground before, during, or after school hours. During the winter months when snow has been plowed and piled on the parking area, no student is permitted to play upon the snow piles.

Outdoor recess will be held unless the outdoor temperature (or equivalent wind chill factor) is 20 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Parents should plan to provide students with warm clothing in layers, hat, and gloves for outside recess during the winter.

St. Matthew School accepts no liability for use of buildings or grounds before or after school, when school is not in session, or when waiting for parish or non-school activities, athletic practices and events, social activities, or any other activities outside of the school day.

## **COMMUNICATION**

If any concerns or questions arise throughout the year concerning your child and his/her performance in the classroom, the following steps should be followed:

1. Contact your child's teacher first to discuss the manner in a private phone conference or to schedule an in-person conference, as needed.
2. If after discussing the matter with the teacher, then set up a private meeting with the school principal **and** the teacher. Research and experience show that most matters can be resolved between the parents and the teacher, so please do not skip this important step. However, if after doing so you still have concerns, a meeting between all parties can help develop needed action steps by all involved.

It is important that these steps are followed for the welfare of each child and the professional educators in our parish school. Concerns and issues are handled on an individual basis. The Office of Catholic Education and the pastor and principal of St. Matthew School do not advocate nor hold group sessions to discuss concerns or situations due to privacy concerns and in order to protect the integrity of the students, parents, and educators.

Access to homework assignments as well as online grade access is provided through PowerSchool, the preferred online student information system of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Parents can utilize their unique login data to check on their student's progress regularly. Once again, we know you will appreciate the fact that our office staff is busy, and as

such, the office cannot assume responsibility to get homework assignments together for absent children, so utilizing PowerSchool regularly will help keep you informed of assignments.

You may email your teacher at their address listed on the last page of this directory, or you can call and leave a voicemail at their designated mailbox number. The teacher will make every attempt to return your email or call within a 24-hour period except on weekends and holidays or vacations. However, as in any business, it may be difficult to have a complete telephone follow-up in a short time. As noted, contact numbers and information for all staff members are included at the back of this Handbook.

Through our phone system, you may also leave your message regarding your child's absence for any particular day. **Please make us aware of your child's absence or late arrival by 8:30 a.m. on the day he/she is absent;** otherwise, you may receive a follow-up call or email that day.

## **DRESS CODE UNIFORM POLICY**

**Pants:** Navy blue or khaki pants of cotton, twill or corduroy material. No denim is allowed. The pants are to be plain, straight leg, and free of ornamentation. For example, no lower pockets, no five-pocket style (cargo), no front seams, and no brass/silver studs are permitted. Pant legs can have no cuts or flaring at the bottom. Elastic waistbands are acceptable if neat in appearance. Pants must be worn at the waist with a belt. They must be of proper fit in both size and length.

**Shorts:** Shorts may be worn at the discretion of the parent. Please be advised even in winter they may go outside for recess, emergency drills, etc., so you will want to be sure they dress accordingly and appropriately. Shorts must be navy blue or khaki walking shorts. Shorts **MUST** be of appropriate length. Appropriate length is at the discretion of the school administration. The shorts must also be the correct size and not too tight or too baggy. Sagging of clothing is not appropriate, and neither is clothing that is too tight for the student. No lower pockets, no five-pocket style (cargo), no front seams, and no brass/silver studs are permitted. Elastic waistbands are acceptable if neat in appearance. Shorts must be worn at the waist with a belt.

**Shirts:** Plain, red polo-type knit shirts with collars are expected. Students are expected to wear an SMS red logo shirt on Mass days or on study trips outside of the building unless otherwise indicated by the supervising study trip teacher. In recognition of the excellent leadership they provide, 8<sup>th</sup> grade leadership shirts are permissible for 8<sup>th</sup> graders in lieu of the required SMS logo shirt. The opportunity to wear these leadership shirts is a privilege, not a right, and behavior should exemplify the privilege as we know it will. No denim shirts are allowed. Shirttails must be tucked in for both boys and girls. If an undershirt is worn under the uniform shirt, it must be plain red or white with no ornamentation or designs.

**Sweaters:** Navy blue or red long sleeve pullovers, cardigans, or vests are permitted (no logos). Fleece sweaters are permitted if they are St. Matthew fleece.

**Sweatshirts:** St. Matthew School crew-neck sweatshirts purchased through the PFA or Schoolbelles may be worn as part of the school uniform during cold weather. No hooded sweatshirts are allowed to be worn during the school day unless otherwise stated. St. Matthew Athletics' sweatshirts may be worn in season if it is not hooded.

**Shoes:** All shoes must be closed-toe and closed-heel. No sandals, “heelies”, crocs, or clogs are allowed. Laces must be tied properly, and shoes are not permitted to be loose-fitted or flopping. No high-heeled or platform shoes are allowed at school.

**Socks:** Socks must be worn at all times and be visible. Multi-color (three or more colors) or any other disruptive hosiery are not permitted. Full crew or half-crew socks are most appropriate, but whatever style must be visible.

**Tights (Girls):** Tights or leggings are optional, but if worn the color must be black, navy blue, or white.

**Skirts (Girls):** An SMS plaid uniform skirt or SMS plaid uniform “skort” is recommended for Grades 4 through 8. SMS uniform skirts or “skorts” are available at SchoolBelles. Skirts or “skorts” should be hemmed to no shorter than 1 inch above the knee. SMS uniform skirts or SMS uniform “skorts” should be properly fitted to allow girls to tuck in shirttails completely. Rolled shirts and untucked shirts may result in a non-uniform detention notice.

**Jumpers (Girls):** An SMS plaid uniform jumper is recommended for girls in Grades Kindergarten through 3. SMS jumpers should be hemmed to no shorter than 1 inch above the knee.

**Physical Education Attire:** All students in Grades 3 through 8 are required to have a change of clothes for physical education class. Students may purchase red “basketball type” shorts and a white Saint Matthew T-shirt through Schoolbelles or use the spirit wear website. However, students may also supply their own athletic shorts as long as they are longer in length (must be fingertip length) and any St. Matthew T-shirt (walk-a-thon, SMS sport, or any SMS spirit wear). If a student is in need of deodorant for after gym use or other times in the building, he/she will be permitted use of roll-on or stick deodorants only provided from home. Spray aerosols are not permitted. **Please note: Students may not call home to retrieve a forgotten gym uniform.**

**Miscellaneous Items/Hair/Jewelry/Etc.:** Boys and girls must maintain hair that is clean and neat in appearance, at the discretion of the administration. No student may wear disruptive hairstyles. The administrator will decide if a hairstyle is disruptive to the school environment. No coloring or dying of hair by boys or girls is allowed, particularly in non-traditional colors. Boys also must be clean-shaven as determined by the administration. Boys may not wear earrings, and girls may not wear dangling earrings. Earrings worn by girls must be worn on the lower lobe and only one earring for the girls in each ear lobe is permitted. Other body piercings and tattoos (including henna and fake tattoos) are unacceptable for all students. Students may not wear flashy or disruptive jewelry. Colored nail polish, lipstick, eye shadow, mascara, eyeliner, etc. are not permitted to be worn (unless authorized by the administration as a privilege). Students will be sent to the office to remove such items, and a written warning will be given.

**Non-Uniform Days/Spirit Days:** Special Non-Uniform and Spirit Days are held occasionally throughout the school year and are scheduled as approved by the principal. On these days the attire must be keeping in the spirit of the day and meet all announced requirements. Attire may include denim or jeans or sweatpants as announced but can have no excessive holes, tears, tattered edges or bottoms, fringes, and/or decorations. Hooded sweatshirts are also acceptable on non-uniform days. As with the regular dress code, all clothing should be of appropriate fit and length (i.e. not too tight, not sagging, not too short {special note: running shorts are NOT permitted}). Yoga pants, leggings, etc. are NOT appropriate to be worn on their own for Grades 3-8 without other pants or skirts as they violate the appropriate fit clause noted above.

**Non uniform/ free dress passes may not be used on Mass days.**

If questionable uniform items are worn at any time throughout the school year, it is the sole discretion of the school to have final approval and/or to request a clothing change.

## HEALTH

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis believe:

- \*in fostering positive relationships that exemplify the love of God;
- \*that Catholic school communities are enriched by the unique image and likeness of God that is present in each individual;
- \*that formation best occurs within faith-filled cultures of learning that are inclusive;
- \*that parents are the primary educators of each young person and that it is the responsibility of Catholic schools support the domestic church;
- \*that Catholic schools are part of the evangelizing mission of the Church, forming disciples through the intentional integration of faith, culture and life; and
- \*that “excellence” is defined by and achieved through the growth and holistic development – spiritual, intellectual/academic, social, emotional and physical – of the individual within the context of community.

The best way in which Catholic schools can practice these beliefs is by operating the Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities in their preferred form – in person – whenever possible. Therefore, Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities will continue with new health and safety precautions in place, unless there is a resurgence of a pandemic and/or canonical and /or civil authorities requires(s) closure. The Catholic school will take every precaution possible to protect students and adults. Heightened protocols related to cleaning and sanitization will be in place as needed. Expectations of proper handwashing, physical distancing to the extent possible and minimal sharing of resources to the extent possible will be enforced. Guidance from IDOE, CDC and local authorities will be employed as best fits our Catholic school community as determined by administration.

Parents understand the following:

1. I understand that the School will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe environment, including specific measures to guard against the spread of a contagion such as Covid-19. I accept that no matter the precautions taken by the School there is no way to fully assure that such measures will be successful in preventing injury, exposure to a contagion or illness. I understand that by allowing my child to participate in Catholic school ministry and its extra-curricular activities, there is some assumed risk on behalf of students and their parents.
2. I will provide my student the necessary equipment, resources and supports needed for participation. These needed materials will be communicated by the teacher(s), coach(es) and/or moderator(s). I will also reinforce to my student the need to maintain all expected protocols related to his/her health and that of others.
3. I understand that parish and school leaders, united in the mission of the Catholic Church, work collaboratively to make sure shared spaces are as safe and secure as possible for participants in all ministries.

Per Indiana state law, all required immunization records **MUST** be on file or a student is not allowed to attend school until compliance is achieved. An annual Student Emergency Form should also be completed online before Orientation. It is imperative to update the status of your child’s health throughout the year. For example, parents should notify the office if their child has a contagious disease or a newly diagnosed health disorder (i.e. bee sting reaction).

Please do not bring your child to school if he or she is experiencing vomiting, diarrhea, fever or significant cough. If a student is exhibiting one or more of these symptoms at school, parents will be notified and your child will need to be picked up immediately. Students must remain at home until they are vomit, diarrhea or fever free for 24 hours, without medication.

In case of serious accident or sudden illness, parents are notified immediately. It is imperative that parents keep the Emergency Information Sheet up-to-date with any changes in telephone numbers so the office can reach parents or other emergency contacts at any time. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the school informed on how to contact the family in any situation, including being out of town for a short or extended period of time.

When a student is injured, school personnel are permitted to wash a wound with soap and water. In order to dispense regular medications, an authorization form must be on file, and any medicines should be sent into the office by parents clearly marked with the student's name, the type of medicine, and directions for distributing to the child.

In cases of serious injury or other emergency, the student will be transported to the hospital of the parents' choice by ambulance.

## **LUNCH**

Students may bring or purchase their lunch at school each day. St. Matthew School offers lunch and milk under the Federal Government Lunch Program. Cost for the hot lunch menu items or the cold salad bar is set at \$3.85 per student and includes milk. Milk may also be purchased individually for students who bring their lunches at 50 cents each. The cost of lunch for parents and visitors is \$5.05.

An online payment system and cafeteria software are in place which allow parents the ability to place money in their student's account as well as track their purchases.

Students who forget their lunch or money to purchase may charge a lunch. The price of the borrowed lunch is \$3.85. Per the Code of Federal Regulations 7 CFR 210.19(a)(1) and 7 CFR 220.13(i), as a participant in the National School Lunch Program, we cannot forgive school lunch balances, and we **MUST** collect these amounts from our families. Also, per these guidelines, a la carte items **CANNOT** be charged by any student, and any student with a negative account balance will not be allowed to purchase a la carte items. Complete copies of our charging procedures and collection and bad debt policy are available upon request.

In conjunction with our Wellness Policy below, parents may bring an outside lunch for their child only. Parents may not bring outside lunches or drinks for any other students. Also, no delivery drivers from a commercial establishment may be utilized to deliver a student's lunch. As a school committed to wellness, we encourage students to limit themselves to one treat only to be bought from the cafeteria, and we may at times limit the sale of any treats at our discretion. Please no soda, pop, or caffeinated beverages.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**



St. Matthew School, in recognition that children need to be physically fit, eat properly, and maintain mental wellness, has instituted a Wellness Plan. Copies of the policy can be obtained by calling the school office or by visiting the school website at <https://www.saintmatt.org/school> under the Forms tab.

## **MONEY AND VALUABLES**

Any money that is sent to the school with the students should be in an envelope marked with the child's name, homeroom, amount enclosed, and the purpose of the money. One check is acceptable provided the breakdown is itemized on the envelope. Please make checks payable to *St. Matthew School*. It is not advised for students to have large amounts of cash or any valuable items on their person, in their bags, or in their lockers as St. Matthew cannot accept responsibility for the loss or theft of any items.

## **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Junior Honor Society chapter of St. Matthew School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in five areas of evaluation: scholarship, service, leadership, citizenship, and character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of National Junior Honor Society and have been revised to meet our local chapter needs. Students are selected to be members by the Faculty Council, appointed by the Principal, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the school after the second quarter of the student's 7th grade year or upon 8th grade graduation.

Students in grades seven or eight are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have a grade point average of 3.3 in all core classes AND conduct, with no grade below B in ANY class (including specials), each quarter of their 6th grade year and the first two quarters of their 7th grade year. This grade point average is for each quarter, not cumulative. The requirements include a 3.3 grade point average in core classes and also receiving no grade below a B. If eligibility is not met as a 7th grader, students may become eligible again upon graduation by achieving a grade point average of 3.3, with no grade below a C, the last two quarters of their 7th grade year and each quarter of their 8th grade year. Once again, this grade point average is for each quarter, not cumulative, and includes ALL classes.

Those students who meet these criteria are invited to complete a Student Activity Form that provides the Faculty Council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and citizenship. A history of leadership, additional service, and citizenship experiences and participation in school, parish, or community is reported on the Student Activity Form. To evaluate a candidate's character, the Faculty Council review school disciplinary records and provide input on their own professional reflection on a candidate. A majority vote of the Faculty Council is necessary for selection. Candidates will be notified of their selection status after the full review. For selected students, an induction ceremony is held at the school. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all five criteria that led to their selection and participate in helping other students when needed.

Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations can contact the chapter adviser.

## **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT**

St. Matthew Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1975 with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court document to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child(ren). If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. The school asks all divorced parents to furnish the school with a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. This information is also necessary to help the school determine when, if ever, the child can be released to the non-custodial parent. St. Matthew School will abide by all completed court rulings of which we are made aware by a copy on file in the school office.

## **PARENT FACULTY ASSOCIATION (PFA)**

Membership in this Association consists of all parents or legal guardians of children who attend St. Matthew School, with a mandatory Association fee due at Orientation. Regular participation in meetings and events is strongly encouraged to help promote the education at St. Matthew for our students and to create a vibrant community.

Teachers and school staff are also considered members of the PFA. The purpose of the PFA is:

- To provide a medium for parents and faculty to work together for the welfare of St. Matthew School.
- To provide a means of communication between parents and faculty. (This, however, does not include curriculum or instructional issues).
- To raise funds to augment the various programs of the school.
- To provide volunteers to assist teachers and staff.
- To provide a means for parent education.

## **PEST CONTROL**

St. Matthew School regards safety of students and staff in the highest regard. As such, the school and parish are in compliance with the Indiana Pesticide Use at Schools Rule (357 IAC 1-16). If you would like to be notified 48 hours in advance of any pesticide application to be made when students are in school, please contact the school office to submit your name. Only employees or contractors who are trained and licensed personnel are engaged to apply pesticides in or around St. Matthew School, and applications are standard pesticides only (no industrial use pesticides) and are normally scheduled outside of school instructional time.

## **RESOURCE AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

St. Matthew School is happy to provide a quality Student Support Program through our Resource department. The Student Support Services staff provides the services of licensed teachers for students in need of remedial or other supportive-type services. A referral process determines student placement in the program. We are able to service a wide variety of needs, including approved Service Plans as well as other needs on an as-determined basis. We are happy to provide additional services to other students as we can. **However, please be aware that our resources are limited, and we cannot offer specific services to everyone.** If you have any concerns, please contact your student's teacher for more information about these services.

## **SCHOOL COMMISSION**

The St. Matthew School Commission is a commission that represents all parents and students. Membership on the Commission is comprised of representatives from St. Matthew School parents and parishioners. School Commission meetings are held once a month. Individuals wishing to address the Commission should submit their request in writing to the School Administrator or Commission Chair at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Only those issues brought to this group in writing in advance will be on the agenda for that month's meeting.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Pictures of each student are taken each year. It is the parent's decision to purchase the pictures. If a parent chooses not to purchase the pictures, they must be returned to the school, or the family will be charged for the pictures. Students are not required to wear school uniforms for these pictures, but dress must be modest and appropriate. Picture Day is scheduled in early fall and announced through various communication devices. Sports and group pictures are planned at different times throughout the year. Only school-sponsored photographs will be used for the official yearbook photos.

Pictures of students are taken throughout the school year at various events. Parents who do not wish individual pictures of their student published in various media need to indicate this on the Media Release Form at the beginning of each school year. This does not apply to group photos, only individual photos, or photos where the student's name is noted.

## **SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT PLAN**

The Seclusion and Restraint Plan for St. Matthew School mandated by the Indiana Legislature is available in the school office.

## **SHARING OF INFORMATION**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1975 addresses the privacy of student records and information about the student to external parties. St. Mathew School will respect the right of privacy of student and families and cannot share information with other families regarding their student. As such, families should not expect to learn specific information about another student without that family's expressed written consent, as noted in the FERPA wording.

## **SHADOW DAYS**

All of the local Catholic high schools hold Open Houses for students and families to visit their facilities and meet their staff. Some may also wish to have 8<sup>th</sup> grade students visit during a school's "Shadow Day." This is something that does not necessarily have to be done, but it is permitted by St. Matthew School with the following stipulations:

- The school office should be notified at least two days in advance.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are limited to two visit days for the year.
- The student is responsible for all work to be made up.

- Provided these provisions are met, this will be considered an excused absence for the student.

## SPORTS

The St. Matthew Catholic Athletic Organization sponsors after-school sports to students attending St. Matthew School and Parish. Other Catholic schools may participate in our programs, as well, provided their home Catholic parish school does not sponsor such a sport and that they meet the guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Catholic Youth Organization.

St. Matthew is happy to offer the following sports:

**Girls:** Cross Country, Kickball, Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer, Track, Softball and Cheerleading

**Boys:** Cross Country, Football, Basketball, Wrestling, Soccer, Track, Volleyball and Baseball

### ***SMS AND CYO ATHLETIC POLICIES***

Team members may remain on school grounds after 3:00 p.m. dismissal only if the coach or an adult is present to supervise. Team members must dress for practice in the gym locker rooms and be responsible for the orderliness of the locker rooms and surrounding areas. If a coach is late for practice after school, then those students must report to Extended Care until the coach arrives at St. Matthew. **No student is allowed be unsupervised, even for a short period of time. This includes roaming the building, being in the gym or on the field in any way without the team's coach.**

If practices are held outside, team members must use the outdoor restroom facility near the soccer/football field. Students are not permitted to re-enter the school building for restroom purposes. If practices are scheduled in the gym, team members must use the restrooms in the gym. ***Cleats and other similar footwear should be removed before entering the building for any reason!***

Team members should make arrangements before leaving their home in the morning as the office telephones generally should not be used by students for these arrangements. All students who are not team members must leave the parish premises at dismissal time or go to the Extended Care program.

Any student who has been assigned an in-school or out-of-school suspension automatically forfeits his/her right to participate in any meeting, practice, or game on those same days.

If a student is absent for an entire school day, he/she is not eligible to participate in practices or games on the same day. However, if a student is in attendance for half of the school day of classes, he/she is able to participate.

## STUDENT ACCIDENTAL INSURANCE

St. Matthew School and the Archdiocese carry supplemental insurance that helps cover common accidental injury such as falling on the playground, etc. The insurance covers what your personal family insurance does not cover **with the exception of a \$500 deductible that is the responsibility of the family**. We work hard to avoid situations where students get hurt, but accidents do happen. Parents will be notified of any serious injury that might require a visit to a

doctor or other follow-up. Contact the school office for a simplified claim form for reimbursable costs. Please note that this insurance also covers injuries from CYO sports.

## **STUDY TRIPS**

Study trips or field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to attend any trip or activity. Therefore, students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. Parents also have the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in a study trip.

St. Matthew School uses a standard form for all study trips. A signed permission slip to attend a specific out-of-building trip must be on file. If a student forgets to return the proper permission form signed by the parents, he/she will not be allowed to participate in the study trip. Parents may, however, email a scan of their signed permission form on the day of the event. Per Archdiocesan guidelines, verbal permission cannot be allowed in lieu of a signed document. If parent chaperone are required, all parents must complete Safe Parish and have a current background check on file.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

St. Matthew School has a computer lab as well as other computers and a networked system available for appropriate student use.

St. Matthew may provide the privilege of Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, tablet use, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more. This policy applies to both school-owned technology equipment and privately-owned devices that are accessing the St. Matthew network on school property. The policies in this document cover all available technologies now and in the future, not just those specifically listed or currently available.

### **Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

St. Matthew School (hereafter referred to as SMS) is committed to the effective use of technology to enhance both the quality of student learning and the staff efficiency of school operations. It also recognizes that safeguards must be established to ensure the protection of our staff. Safeguards also protect the school's investment in hardware and software, ensure the benefits of technology and prevent negative side effects. This technology will help propel our school through the communication age by allowing staff and students to access and use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups around the world, and significantly expand their available information base.

The provisions of this policy and associated guidelines and agreements are subordinate to school, local, state, and federal law. This document is an overview of the complete St. Matthew Acceptable Use Policy for Technology and Electronic Devices that can be obtained from the office or found at <http://www.saintmatt.org/school/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Technology-St-Matthew-Acceptable-Use-Policy-for-Electronic-Devices.pdf>. St. Matthew School computers are to be used in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission and rules of St. Matthew School. SMS has the duty to investigate any suspected violations of this policy.

1. Access to the Internet must be related to a student's class work responsibilities, or for the purpose of education or research, and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Archdiocese and school.
2. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges, disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion) and/or appropriate legal action. Whether the use is considered inappropriate or violates this policy is a matter within the discretion of the principal, and his/her decision is final.
3. Some examples of unacceptable use include but are not limited to:
  - a. Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or State law;
  - b. Unauthorized downloading of software, regardless of whether it is copyrighted;
  - c. Invading the privacy of individuals;
  - d. Using another user's password or account. Computer accounts and passwords are confidential and must remain so. Do not use another individual's account and confidential password;
  - e. Using pseudonyms or anonymous sign-ons;
  - f. Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, sexually-oriented, gambling, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, illegal material or other information and/or materials that are inconsistent with objectives and/or teachings of the Archdiocese and/or school;
  - g. Using inappropriate language;
  - h. Use of any proxy sites to access sites that are restricted by the normal course of the network; SMS will lock down the network using filters and/or additional software to keep some/most inappropriate information away from users, but cannot guarantee this in all situations, particularly given the inappropriate use of proxy sites.
  - i. Damaging computers, computer systems, files, programs, or networks;
  - j. Vandalizing or damaging the property of another individual, including data files;
  - k. Employing the network for commercial purposes (i.e. to buy or sell items).
4. Unacceptable use may also include online activities occurring outside the school that may carry over into the school environment (defamation, threats, harassment, etc.)
  - a. Posting of a photograph, image, likeness, video or personally identifiable information regarding any employee, student, parent or parishioner on any Internet or web-based site, or in any electronic communication without their knowledge or approval, is prohibited, except with the express permission of the principal.
  - b. Using school equipment to create a website or social media presence (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) or to transmit the likeness, image, photograph, video or personally identifiable

information about any employee, student, parent or parishioner is prohibited, except with the express permission of the principal.

c. Students may not permit or encourage any other individual or entity from creating a website or social media presence (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) for the school, Archdiocese, or from photographing, video graphing, or otherwise creating the likeness or revealing personally identifiable information regarding any employee, student, parent or parishioner for commercial purposes, advertising purposes, or for Internet transmission or posting, except with the express permission of the principal.

d. Students may not allow a non-employee or non-student to use a school computer, account or other equipment unless the person is specifically authorized to do so by the principal.

5. The school reserves the right to monitor student use of school computers including Internet use and e-mail use and content.

The confidentiality of electronic messages is normally respected. However, students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school-owned computers, the Internet, or e-mail. All messages composed, sent or received via electronic communication are and remain the property of the school/Archdiocese and as such may be reviewed with or without notice. These policies and measures are designed to protect both students and employees and to ensure the integrity of the electronic information systems used for educational and administrative purposes in this school.

Inappropriate use of SMS computers may result in a loss of access to use them as well as other disciplinary and/or legal actions, including but not limited to those outlined in the complete St. Matthew Acceptable Use for Technology and Electronic Devices policy.

The Technology Acceptable Use Policy as well as the following statement must be read and explained in appropriate terms to a student if he or she is too young and/or unable to read and understand it for he or she to sign:

I have received training on appropriate use of technology and the Internet, and I have received, understand, and will abide by the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

Signatures are required each year of all parent(s)/guardian(s) who wish to allow technology and Internet access for their child(ren).

#### Use of Devices

The use of any technology device at St. Matthew School must be obtained by asking the teacher prior to use or instruction by the teacher for use. Students may not use netbooks, iPads, Tablets, cell phones at their convenience. Permission or instruction needs to be granted.

#### Internet Access

St. Matthew provides students the privilege of access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and other various tools for school projects and activities. Student use of this tool is governed by the Acceptable Use Agreement. Students are expected to respect the web filter that has been put in place by the administrators at St. Matthew School as a safety precaution, and shall not attempt to circumvent the web filter when browsing the Internet. The determination of whether the material is appropriate or inappropriate is the discretion of St. Matthew School and is based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on whether a website has been blocked

or not. Students do have access to the Internet at St. Matthew. Inappropriate use of the school network will not be tolerated, permitted, nor allowed and may result in disciplinary action in violation of this clause.

### Plagiarism

St. Matthew students should not plagiarize (use as your own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Students should not take credit for materials they did not create themselves or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Information found online should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author. All teachers have the right to check and compare any and all materials submitted by students.

### Cheating

The Internet, tablets, cell phones, and other personal and/or school devices should not be used to exchange assignments, answers, or any other type of information that would break the Mission of St. Matthew School. Personal growth and development is vital to ensure each student is becoming the best leader, student, servant, and spiritual person possible.

### Personally-Owned and/or Mobile Devices

Students should abide by this same policy when using such devices while on the St. Matthew network. These devices should be used for the educational advancement of each student, not for communication with one another or people outside of St. Matthew School. If a student needs to contact a parent, he/she must go to the office to use the phone and not use a personal cell phone. Using these devices in any way that breaks the Technology Policy and Mission of St. Matthew is prohibited. Devices will be confiscated if used in violation of school policies. They will be placed in the school office, and a parent must come in to retrieve the device. Upon the third confiscation of any device by a student, it will not be available to be retrieved for a period of one week.

### Security and Safety

Students are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. If any student believes a computer or device they are using might be infected with virus, they should alert the teacher immediately. Students should not attempt to remove the virus themselves or download any programs to help remove the virus. Respect of others' files and copyright laws are expected. Diskettes, thumb drives, memory sticks, etc. and software from outside the school are not permitted on our computers unless approval is granted in each instance by the teacher. Students must also exercise caution in handling school equipment. Damages caused can result in reparations being required by the student's family.

### Netiquette

Students should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner that is in conjunction with the goal of St. Matthew School.

Students should recognize that among the valuable educational content there is online there is also incorrect and/or inappropriate content online. Students should only use known or trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. Students should not post anything online that they would not want all students, parents, teachers, or future



colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it cannot be completely retracted and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways the user never intended.

### Personal Safety

Students at St. Matthew School should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information over the Internet without adult permission. Student should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

If students see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes them concerned for their personal safety, they should immediately bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff member if on St. Matthew grounds or parent if at home).

### Cyberbullying and Social Media

In conjunction with the values of St. Matthew School, cyberbullying, including but not limited to harassing, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyber stalking will not be tolerated. Users should not send emails or post comments with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student a hostile school environment. This includes behaviors performed by using St. Matthew devices or networks as well as personal devices or off-campus and non-school time behaviors.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any other online activities that cause emotional or physical harm to another, will result in disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. All students should remember that online activities may be monitored and retained.

Examples of responsible use with technology include:

I will:

- Use school technology for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful and responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Encourage positive and constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technology.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content online.
- Use technology at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational purpose.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

Examples of irresponsible use with technology include:

I will not:

- Use school technologies in a way that can be personally or physically harmful to myself or anyone else.
- Use technology to cheat or plagiarize any assignments or documents.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct towards others.
- Use technology to send spam or inappropriate chain mail.

- Use language that would be inappropriate in the classroom.
- Use technology for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Participate in any activities not previously mentioned that break the St. Matthew Character Code and do not allow me to grow as a Leader, Student, Servant of God, or participant of extracurricular activities.

### Discipline

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary consequences, including:

- \* Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges
- \* Notification of parents
- \* Detention, suspension from school and school-related activities, or expulsion
- \* Reduction of grade in class
- \* Legal action and/or prosecution

Students and families understand the set consequences can vary based on offense, number of offense, severity, etc. Cases are reviewed on a case by case basis.

Technology issues that result in a breach of academic integrity and honesty at St. Matthew are taken extremely seriously. Disciplinary action may include items listed on Page 10.

## TESTING

The ILEARN standardized test will be given to all children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade during the testing window established by the Indiana State Department of Education during April-May. The results of all tests will be available on a schedule announced by the Indiana Department of Education. St. Matthew School strives to continue its high rating by the State of Indiana by maintaining high student achievement on the ILEARN and academically overall, but we recognize the importance of the daily quality Catholic education students receive as paramount. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade students will participate in the mandatory IREAD-3 assessment in March. Re-tests for the IREAD-3 are determined by the state and school during the summer only. All students will also participate in formative assessment testing through the NWEA to provide valuable data for teachers and parents. Results will be provided to parents at different points throughout the year, and a parent can request. The usual windows for NWEA are Fall, Winter, and Spring.

## TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL RESOURCES

St. Matthew School does not charge a separate textbook fee for our families, and all required textbooks are provided to the students for their use throughout the school year. Students have a responsibility to treat these school-issued materials with care. They are simply borrowing them and do not own them, so they should not be marked on or in (unless directed by the teacher), ripped, torn, broken, exposed to food or water, etc. or treated in a manner that can lead to damage. St. Matthew School attempts to be good stewards of our resources and has a plan of re-using textbooks, so please help us by keeping the materials you are given in good condition. Textbooks and other materials will be inspected at the end-of-the-year, and in the event that in the opinion of St. Matthew School they are not in usable condition going forward, the parent may be charged to replace the textbook or resource. Families will be charged for lost textbooks that need to be ordered or replaced.

## TUITION POLICY

The school's tuition plan and policy are available from the office upon request or on the website. This policy includes the requirement that ALL families, regardless of payment plan selected, must sign up through FACTS for tuition payment.

## VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. We welcome and encourage parental involvement, but do insist that it is done in an appropriate, respectful, and safe manner. **A parent who wishes to visit a particular classroom must send a request to the teacher ahead of time and be scheduled by the teacher.** There are to be no visitors in the classroom at any point in the day unless there is a pre-established time agreed to by both the parent and teacher. This includes but is not limited to: helping your child carry something to the classroom, briefly communicating with the teacher, helping your child unpack in the morning, seeing that they arrive to the classroom, or picking up missed work. If your child requires assistance with carrying something, please trust that one of the many helpful staff members will gladly see that your child has the necessary assistance. If there is something you want to tell your child's teacher, please email or leave a note at the office. It is an *imperative* part of the daily morning routine for the child to enter the classroom independently without interruption and distraction of parental assistance. It is a very pivotal time for teachers to get their morning started and establish classroom procedures free from outside distraction. We greatly appreciate your willingness to comply and acknowledge the importance of your child's successful and independent transition from home to school. To keep our school safe and orderly, **all visitors must check in at the school office and receive a visitor's pass.** Along with promoting an environment of academic success and independence, it is also a safety measure to ensure that all adults having interactions with our students have fulfilled the necessary measures by completing Safe Parish, along with having a current background check on file. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in following these expectations to keep our students and school safe.

## DISCLAIMERS

1. Although we have attempted to cover every phase of school life, we know there are areas that may not be covered by this handbook. Therefore, any decisions regarding matters not specifically written in this handbook will be left to the discretion of the school administration.
2. After reading the handbook and reviewing it with your child, you will be asked to sign and return the "Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form."
3. Excerpted from "The Rights and Responsibilities of Catholic School Parents," published by the National Catholic Education Association:  
"Catholic School students and parents, as well as the Catholic school and its employees, have rights conferred by contract law. In enrolling a child in a Catholic school, a parent agrees to follow the rules of that school. It is impossible to identify every situation that can arise in a handbook; thus wording {is used} such as 'other appropriate conduct' or 'conduct whether inside or outside of school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school...' Your child is representative of the Catholic school twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and is responsible for acting in way that brings credit to Church and School. You will be required to sign a form stating that you have read the handbook and agree to be governed by it. Your signature serves as evidence that you entered into [this] contract and that you understand the provision of the contract."

4. Revisions made after this printing will be posted on the St. Matthew Catholic School website

## **PHYSICAL PLANT**

The safety and well-being of our students, staff, and visitors is of the utmost concern. St. Matthew School has an extensive emergency plan prepared in coordination with the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. All staff members are aware of this plan and prepared to act in many different cases of emergency in the school setting to help ensure the safety of all students and staff members, and these procedures will help ensure as smooth and orderly a process as possible. Details of this plan are reviewed yearly and kept confidential under the advice of experts for the purpose of safety.

In the event of a necessary evacuation of St. Matthew School, all students will be moved to an off-site area. Parents, after being notified of such evacuation, will be instructed on the next steps and their ability to pick up their student at that site.

In the event of a Red Alert, the Governor has the authority to close schools. SMS will only close school in such situations in response to a directive from the Governor's Office or the Archdiocese of Indianapolis' Office of Catholic Schools (OCS). Please be aware that an alert announced on media will **NOT** trigger this procedure. Only an announcement from the Governor's Office or OCS will begin the process, and parents will be notified. Please be aware that it is also possible that a nationwide or statewide Red Alert may be in force, but the Governor or OCS may choose to close schools only in specific parts of the state in response to a specific credible threat. In that case, SMS will operate on a normal schedule.

This closing will be handled in the same fashion as a weather-related closing unless otherwise necessary. All field trips will be called back to school and then students will be sent home.

## St. Matthew School Contact Information

The following is a listing of our school staff and personnel, their email addresses, and their extension number to reach their voicemail at school by dialing (317) 251-3997. Please be aware that teachers and staff may not check voicemail or email during weekends, vacations, or summer break, so please allow time for a response, or contact the Main Office for time-sensitive matters. Please check Powerschool regularly utilizing your unique login information for online grade and homework information.

### Voicemail Number

Absentee Reporting	3910
School Office	3913
Parish Receptionist	1002

		Ext.	E-mail address
Principal	Mrs. Cara Swinefurth	3301	<a href="mailto:cswinefurth@saintmatt.org">cswinefurth@saintmatt.org</a>
Assistant Principal	Mr. Chris Arnold	3301	<a href="mailto:carold@saintmatt.org">carold@saintmatt.org</a>
School Operations Manager	Mrs. Kathy Gray	3904	<a href="mailto:kgray@saintmatt.org">kgray@saintmatt.org</a>
School Enrollment Manager	Mrs. Elizabeth Ellis	3905	<a href="mailto:eellis@saintmatt.org">eellis@saintmatt.org</a>
3's Program	Mrs. Haylee Teeple	1103	<a href="mailto:hteeple@saintmatt.org">hteeple@saintmatt.org</a>
Pre-K 4's	Mrs. Erin Campbell	1101	<a href="mailto:ecampbell@saintmatt.org">ecampbell@saintmatt.org</a>
Pre-K 4's	Mrs. Stephanie Mills	1101	<a href="mailto:smills@saintmatt.org">smills@saintmatt.org</a>
Pre-K 4's	Mrs. Kate Cuniffe	1102	<a href="mailto:kcuniffe@saintmatt.org">kcuniffe@saintmatt.org</a>
Kindergarten	Ms. Terri Buehner	1104	<a href="mailto:tbuehner@saintmatt.org">tbuehner@saintmatt.org</a>
Kindergarten	Mrs. Sam Padgett	1105	<a href="mailto:spadgett@saintmatt.org">spadgett@saintmatt.org</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Mr. Greg Clark	1106	<a href="mailto:gclark@saintmatt.org">gclark@saintmatt.org</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Miss Jess Worlin	1107	<a href="mailto:jworlin@saintmatt.org">jworlin@saintmatt.org</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Mrs. Teresa Hvidston	1108	<a href="mailto:thvidston@saintmatt.org">thvidston@saintmatt.org</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Mrs. Christy Donnenhoffer	1109	<a href="mailto:cdonnenhoffer@saintmatt.org">cdonnenhoffer@saintmatt.org</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Miss Jackie Doyle	3313	<a href="mailto:jdoyle@saintmatt.org">jdoyle@saintmatt.org</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Mrs. Dolly Naddy	3314	<a href="mailto:dnaddy@saintmatt.org">dnaddy@saintmatt.org</a>
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Mrs. Jeanna Greene	3311	<a href="mailto:jgreene@saintmatt.org">jgreene@saintmatt.org</a>
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Mrs. Megan Rathz	3312	<a href="mailto:mrathz@saintmatt.org">mrathz@saintmatt.org</a>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Mrs. Jenny Hanrahan	3309	<a href="mailto:jhanrahan@saintmatt.org">jhanrahan@saintmatt.org</a>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Mrs. Michelle Semon	3308	<a href="mailto:msemon@saintmatt.org">msemon@saintmatt.org</a>
MS Language Arts	Mrs. Anna Jennings	3307	<a href="mailto:ajennings@saintmatt.org">ajennings@saintmatt.org</a>
MS Religion	Miss Haley Hubert	3304	<a href="mailto:hhubert@saintmatt.org">hhubert@saintmatt.org</a>
MS Science	Mrs. Colleen Middleton	3302	<a href="mailto:cmiddleton@saintmatt.org">cmiddleton@saintmatt.org</a>
MS Social Studies	Mr. Brian Moyer	3305	<a href="mailto:bmoyer@saintmatt.org">bmoyer@saintmatt.org</a>
MS Math	Miss Elizabeth Muller	3303	<a href="mailto:emuller@saintmatt.org">emuller@saintmatt.org</a>
MS Language Arts		3306	
Art	Miss Emily Lindbloom	1110	<a href="mailto:elindbloom@saintmatt.org">elindbloom@saintmatt.org</a>
Computer		4401	-
Music	Mr. Nate Arrowood	4411	<a href="mailto:narrowood@saintmatt.org">narrowood@saintmatt.org</a>
Physical Education	Mrs. Amy Dinwiddie	3703	<a href="mailto:adinwiddie@saintmatt.org">adinwiddie@saintmatt.org</a>
Library		4413	
Student Support	Mrs. Susan Sobieski	3315	<a href="mailto:ssobieski@saintmatt.org">ssobieski@saintmatt.org</a>
Social Worker	Mrs. Elizabeth Baratz	4409	<a href="mailto:ebaratz@saintmatt.org">ebaratz@saintmatt.org</a>

Cafeteria	Mrs. Mary Lucas	3907	<a href="mailto:mlucas@saintmatt.org">mlucas@saintmatt.org</a>
Extended Care/MS Spanish	Ms. Mary Brooks	3913	<a href="mailto:mbrooks@saintmatt.org">mbrooks@saintmatt.org</a>
Pastoral Associate	Mrs. Ann Tully	2211	<a href="mailto:atully@saintmatt.org">atully@saintmatt.org</a>
Business Manager	Mrs. Judy Good	2212	<a href="mailto:jgood@saintmatt.org">jgood@saintmatt.org</a>
Director of Faith Formation	Mrs. Pam Fleming	2215	<a href="mailto:pfleming@saintmatt.org">pfleming@saintmatt.org</a>
Parish Admin. Assistant	Mr. Stephen Sulka	2216	<a href="mailto:ssulka@saintmatt.org">ssulka@saintmatt.org</a>
Parish Director of Music	Mrs. Deb Ward	2213	<a href="mailto:dward@saintmatt.org">dward@saintmatt.org</a>
Youth Minister	Mrs. Pam Fleming	2210	<a href="mailto:pfleming@saintmatt.org">pfleming@saintmatt.org</a>
Pastor	Msgr. Bill Stumpf	2100	<a href="mailto:bstumpf@saintmatt.org">bstumpf@saintmatt.org</a>

■ Extended Care Phone can be contacted after 3 p.m. at Extension 3907