



Saint Joseph School
132 High Street
Medford, MA 02155



Student/Parent Handbook
2023-2024

“Let Us Be Your Catholic School”

History

Saint Joseph School was established in 1929 under the direction of Father Daniel Hogan, the fourth pastor of Saint Joseph Parish. It was staffed by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston who continue to serve along with other religious communities. In 1999 part of the first floor of the convent was designated as the site of a pre-school facility. Saint Joseph preschool is now located in the upper school and accommodates our three- and four-year-old children. A qualified and dedicated faculty and staff educate children in an environment that supports, encourages and nurtures spiritual, intellectual, social and personal growth in the Catholic tradition. Saint Joseph School is fully accredited and continues to provide quality Catholic education to Saint Joseph Parish and many surrounding parishes and communities.

Mission Statement

Saint Joseph School is a nurturing Catholic school community that seeks to answer the call of Christ: To love God and neighbor. We support and teach our students to be respectful, creative, critical thinkers who strive for academic excellence and seek to serve, so that they can be confident and productive members of their community.

Philosophy

The faculty and staff believe in teaching to the heart, mind and soul of each child. We strive, strengthened by our faith in God, to provide each student with the highest quality education and create a passion for learning.

We at Saint Joseph School

- recognize that students bring unique learning styles that require different methods of instruction to develop their talents and achieve their goals.
- encourage family/school/community to provide a secure, nurturing environment thereby creating an atmosphere of life-long learners.
- believe that our identity as a faith community motivates us to instill knowledge while nurturing Christian attitudes and values thus preparing our students to become responsible members of the Church and society.

Policies and Procedures

Absences

When a student is absent, parents are requested to call the school in the morning and leave a brief message for the nurse at 781/396-3636 x4. Please provide a note when the student returns to school. If a student has been absent for **three days or more**, a doctor's note is **required** for readmission to school.

Accidents

Should a student be injured during the school day, he/she will be referred to the nurse and the parent will be called. Emergency protocol will be followed should a serious injury occur. Please be sure that emergency forms are complete, updated and returned to school.

Admissions

In keeping with the Christian concept of education, Saint Joseph School poses no conditions for admission other than the child's ability to function as a student in the structure of this facility and his/her willingness to abide by the rules governing social behavior. Saint Joseph School, as a school under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Boston, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded or made available to students at the schools. Saint Joseph School does not discriminate based on race, color, nationality and ethnic origin, in administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs and in the hiring of school personnel. The purpose for our existence is to impart the message of Jesus Christ according to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Students of other religions are welcomed, but they must participate in the religion classes and school liturgies.

Age for Admission

Children must be five years old by **December 31** of the year which he/she is entering kindergarten.

Announcements

Announcements regarding any changes in the regular schedule will be communicated by the school's information system. In the event that school is cancelled due to inclement weather, Saint Joseph School will follow the decision made by Medford Public Schools. School announcements will be made via the television and the internet.

Appearance

Appropriate grooming and attire are important. Hair must be clean, neat, of a natural color and professionally styled. Body piercings or multiple ear piercings (more than two in ear lobe) or cartilage piercings are not allowed. No visible tattoos.

Appointments (Dental – Medical)

Only emergency dental and medical appointments should be made during the school day. Student records will reflect tardy/dismissal status when appointments are made during the school day. Every effort should be made to keep appointments at a minimum during the school day. If necessary, please contact the office or send a note in with your child to let the school know of any upcoming appointments. **A note should be sent to school by the provider that the student was seen for an appointment, if they were dismissed from school.**

Appointments - Teachers

Teachers are not available to meet with parents before school in the morning or during the dismissal process at the close of the school day. Please contact your child's teacher directly to schedule appointments.

Attendance/Tardiness Policy

Homeroom teachers are responsible for recording attendance as part of a permanent entry log. They are also responsible for recording late arrivals and dismissals as well as collecting absence notes for each absence. **Students who are absent more than five days in a quarter must complete class work assignments from the sixth day forward.** All homework, quizzes and tests must be made up in accordance with individual teacher's classroom policies.

Books

Due to the cost of books, they must be kept in good condition. Textbooks must be covered, and each child must have a book bag or backpack and pen/pencil case. Respect for property is an important quality of character, therefore books, desks, equipment, etc., must be carefully handled by each student. If there is loss of materials or property damage, the student is responsible, and parents are required to reimburse the school accordingly. All students are encouraged to take pride in and care of school property and be aware that acts of vandalism are costly to the school, parish and other parents and will not be tolerated.

Bus

The City of Medford provides bus transportation to students who live in specific parts of the city and meet the distance eligibility. Parents are asked to instruct their children regarding proper behavior while riding the bus. Drivers are instructed to report any misconduct. Undisciplined behavior will result in taking away the privilege of riding the bus, and other transportation arrangements will need to be made. The safety of all students is the major concern.

Cameras

Cell phone cameras are **not** allowed to be used as they violate the privacy of our students. The privacy of each child must be respected; and any picture that may be taken violates this trust.

Cell Phones

Students may bring cell phones to school to be used **after** school, off school premises, and not in front of the main building. They must be turned **off** and in student backpacks while they are in the building. If a student uses the phone during the school day or allows another to use it, the phone will be held in the office, the parent must pick it up and the student will lose the privilege of bringing it to school thereafter. This is a safety issue, and the rule will be very strictly enforced.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism involve acquiring and using information dishonestly. Students who cheat/or plagiarize will lose the right to have his/her work presented for credit. No make-up work will be allowed, and the student will receive zero as a grade. Parents will be notified.

Clothing

Please label all student's items (**sweaters, boots, coats, hats, mittens, books and lunch boxes, etc.**) with the student's name. The school cannot be responsible for lost items.

Communication

Parents can expect to have frequent communications from school. A calendar for the school year is sent home in September, updates to this calendar will be communicated to the parents through the school's communication system and is posted on the school website (www.sjsmedford.com). Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child/ren's teacher regarding any issue that would help the teacher to work effectively with the student. Please check with your child to determine if any written notices were distributed and give the information contained therein your attention. The school's communication system will also be utilized to communicate pertinent information.

Confidentiality

The administration and faculty will keep private information that has been entrusted to them for the benefit of the child or family. However, if the health, safety or life of another is in jeopardy, proper procedures will be followed, and parents will be notified of the concern.

CORI Forms

The Archdiocese of Boston mandates that all parents, visitors and volunteers fulfill the **Criminal Offenders Record Information** check. Each year a copy of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts **CORI form must be completed by parents who plan to volunteer in any capacity during the school year**. Blank copies can be found on the school website under **Parents/Forms**. They must be completed and returned to the school in person and accompanied by a valid driver's license or passport for verification.

Crisis Plan

A detailed Crisis Intervention Plan has been developed for the safety of the students. Should the building need to be evacuated, the students will be relocated in Saint Joseph Church. Fire drills are practiced with the students throughout the school year. Parents and Guardians will be notified in advance in the event of a practice lockdown/evacuation drill. Appropriate drills will be conducted within the school building. The school's communication system will be used to notify parents of the incident as soon as it is feasible. The administration will make the best possible decisions depending on the situation at hand.

Curriculum

Saint Joseph School follows the curriculum designated by the Archdiocese of Boston Catholic School Office and is aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks. This curriculum encompasses sequentially ordered learning experiences and may be adjusted to meet the needs of the students. It teaches Christian values, respect for human rights and appropriate skills.

Custody

Saint Joseph School abides by the provision of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding

the child/ren. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court certified copy of the court order.

Discipline

At Saint Joseph School we believe in positive, fair and consistent discipline. Teachers will not allow disruptive behavior in classrooms, school yard, cafeteria or gymnasium. Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others, can expect disciplinary action to be held accountable for the former. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the student and the nature of the infraction. Parents will be notified in the case of a serious violation of school policy.

Dismissal

If for some reason your child must leave school early, please send a note to the teacher **in the morning** and pick up and sign out the child in the Main Office. A parent or authorized adult must accompany the child from the school. A child will never be allowed to leave the school alone before the regular dismissal time.

Early dismissal

The first Wednesday of every month there is a faculty meeting with **dismissal is at 11:30am.**

Emergency Information

An Emergency Form requesting information that will assist us in caring for your child, should an unexpected incident arise during the school day, is sent home each year. Parents must complete the form in its entirety and return it to the office immediately. If a change occurs to a cell phone number or an email address during the year, please be sure to send the updated information to the school office.

Extended Day Program

Saint Joseph School provides after school care from the close of school to 6:00pm on days that school is in session. It is available on half day sessions before faculty meetings as well as half day sessions before holidays. This program is available at an additional cost. After-school activities are age appropriate and are separate from regular school programs.

Weather permitting, students will have outside play. Depending upon the length of time the student is in the program each day, time will be provided for homework. Students must be picked up **promptly** by 6:00pm or a \$25 late fee will be incurred. Registration forms for this program are available on the school website (www.sjsmedford.com – under the Parents Tab).

Faculty Meetings

Our monthly faculty meeting will take place on the first Wednesday of each month. Students will be dismissed at 11:30am. **It is imperative that students be picked up promptly.** If a delay occurs, the student will be sent to the Extended Day Program **and parents will be charged the appropriate fee.** When other additional meetings or Professional Development Days are scheduled, a notice will be sent out and it will be noted on the monthly calendar.

Field Trips (When Allowed)

All classes are allowed to participate in a field trip that is related to a particular area of the curriculum. Field trips are privileges and students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or behavioral standards. They are considered extensions of the school programs and all school policies are in effect. Whenever appropriate, the school uniform will be worn. The Saint Joseph field trip permission slip, stating all pertinent information regarding the field trip must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher before the day of the trip. Verbal permission for participation in a field trip will not be accepted.

Fundraising

Fundraising is an important source of funding that ensures the financial stability of the school. Fundraising programs may be initiated by the administration. Full details of these programs will be communicated to parents and will elicit their support. Special collections for natural disasters may also be requested.

Graduation Requirements

To receive a diploma, each student must complete the courses prescribed by the Archdiocese of Boston. All major subjects must receive a passing grade. All financial obligations must be completed prior to participation in graduation activities.

Harassment/Bullying: Saint Joseph School follows the Bullying and Harassment Policy developed by the Archdiocese of Boston Catholic School Office. Please refer to our website to view this policy.

Health Records

Saint Joseph School respects the parents as persons responsible for the health care of their children. The school nurse will cooperate with all reasonable medical requirements and requests, but parents must understand that the school is primarily an educational institution.

Homework

Homework is an essential complement to the school curriculum. Every student at Saint Joseph School has an organized agenda book that should contain the daily assignments. The following guidelines are suggested for different grade levels:

K:	10-15 min
1:	15-20 min
2, 3:	20-30 min
4, 5:	30-60 min
6,7,8:	60-100 min

Although most homework is written, some assignments are study assignments. The former is work where parental help is necessary.

Immunizations

All students are required to have the immunizations mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts unless specifically exempt. Students must be excluded from school until proper records are obtained. Physical examinations are **required** in the following grades: Pre-K1, Pre-K2, Kindergarten, four and seven. Records should be updated annually and are required to be current for participation in sports and all summer programs.

Medication

The school nurse will administer only medication that has been prescribed by a physician or nurse practitioner. Medication must be in the original prescription bottle or the over-the-counter bottle and brought to school by the parent. **No students** may bring medication to school. **The Medication Consent and Release of Liability Form** must be completed for each child and kept on file in the nurse's office. If your child takes a medication that is to be administered three times a day, please administer it before school in the morning, after school and at bedtime thus eliminating the necessity of bringing it to school. If the child attends the after-school program, medication will be given at dismissal time. No child will be allowed to have medication on his/her person at any time. All medications must be given to the school nurse for appropriate dispensing according to the above-mentioned regulations.

Money

When sending money for any purpose, please send it in an envelope with your child's name, teacher's name and purpose for which the money is sent. Lost/found money cannot be identified unless this procedure is followed.

Outside-of-School Behavior

The students are Saint Joseph School students at all times. A student who engages in conduct, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside the school, may be disciplined by Saint Joseph School administration.

Parking

The presence of a Catholic School in the area should be a source of edification and pride. Please be aware of the property rights of our neighbors, and **do not park on their property, block driveways, fire hydrants or allow your children to trespass on private property.**

Parties/Invitations

If you are planning an off-site party and are inviting classmates, if every child in the class is invited, invitations may be distributed in the classroom. However, if every child is not invited, you may **not** pass out the invitations at school. While it is understandable that limitations are necessary, the feelings of all classmates must be respected.

Photographs

Often there are opportunities to publicize an activity or event in the local newspapers or on the web site and student's names and pictures may be used. A permission form will be sent to parents each year requesting permission to use photographs. Parent's wishes regarding the use of their children's photos and/or names will be stated and honored.

Physical Education

Physical education classes are an important part of children's development and must be considered by the students as an integral part of the curriculum. Every effort must be made to provide your child with a Saint Joseph School gym uniform. Gym uniforms may be purchased from Collegiate House, 14 High Street, Medford (781/219-4952).

Promotion/Retention

Possibility of non-promotion will be communicated to a parent by the classroom teacher in March, and a conference will be arranged. The decision to repeat a child in a grade rests ultimately with the teacher and principal.

Property

Since school property does not belong to the students, they must use with respect the books, materials and furniture. Saint Joseph School is co-tenant of lockers and desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice.

Reporting

Saint Joseph School will issue formal report cards three times each year. Mid-way through the marking period, parents will receive a progress report or a warning notice indicating the child's lack of progress. The teacher may request a meeting with parents, and parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting at this time or whenever a problem is determined.

School Hours for Grades 1-8

7:30am -7:45am - Students file into school

7:50am - Opening exercises

2:10pm - Pre-K and bus student dismissal

2:15pm - All remaining students dismissed

Saint Joseph School cannot be responsible for any child who is on the premises before 7:30am or after 2:15pm unless they are in the Before School Program, extra help or the Extended Day Program.

Students who are not picked up at 2:15pm will be sent to the Extended Day Program and parents will be charged the appropriate fee.

School hours for PK and Kindergarten: 7:50am– 2:10pm, doors open and staff on duty from 7:30am - students may enter and to go to their classrooms. Students arriving after 7:50am are considered tardy and are required to enter through the main front door on High Street.

Sacramental Programs

Students in grade two will be prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. They are welcome to receive these sacraments at Saint Joseph Parish or the parish of your choice.

Safety

Every member of the Saint Joseph School community is responsible for his/her own safety and the safety of others. Any behavior that poses a threat to safety cannot be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. Serious infractions may result in dismissal from school.

Shadowing

Shadowing or visiting perspective schools during the school day is highly discouraged. There are ample opportunities to learn about high schools rather than missing a day of school. Saint Joseph School provides opportunities for local Catholic high schools to visit our students during the school day as well as attending other high school fairs that are scheduled in the area on weekends, evenings or after school. If a student does attend a shadow day at another school, it is their responsibility to make up any missed work within a 24-hour period.

Spiritual Welfare

Parents bear a loving responsibility for the spiritual development of their children. Placing your child in a Catholic school indicates your interest and concern for your child's religious education and formation. Students will participate in the parish liturgies on Holy Days of Obligation when students are in school. Other liturgies and prayer services may be scheduled during the academic year, and all students are expected to participate.

Sports

Students who maintain prescribed academic and behavior standards will be allowed to participate in school and extra-curricular activities. An up to date medical record for each participant must be on file in the nurses' office.

Student Council

Students in grades five through eight are eligible to participate in the Student Council. Academic and behavior standards apply. Major offices are held by grade eight students. An election process takes place each spring.

Substance Abuse/Weapons

Saint Joseph School makes every effort to make students aware of the dangers and consequences of the unlawful use of substances. It defines drugs as the improper use of legal drugs/substances to include tobacco, steroids and/ or illegal drugs/substances. Students who unlawfully use, consume, possess or distribute drugs, or who use, consume possess or distribute alcohol and/or possess or threaten to use any weapon (e.g. knife or firearm) to include firecrackers and/or any explosive device that would bring potential harm to people and/or property on school property, at school activities or near school property with access to students attending the school or against any member of the school community are subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to expulsion.

If school officials believe a student is under the influence of an illegal substance, parents will be notified. School officials reserve the right to require the student be taken for drug testing within 24 hours and the results of the testing be shared with the appropriate school officials.

Suspension and Expulsion

Membership at Saint Joseph School is a special privilege. On occasion some students are involved in unacceptable behavior. Unacceptable forms of behavior that could result in a student's suspension and or expulsion are behaviors that are deemed inappropriate by the administration. Suspension and expulsion appeals may be made to the school administration.

Tardiness

1. Students are expected to be in their classroom by 7:45am.
2. Tardy students will receive a late notice indicating excused or unexcused tardiness. After third unexcused tardiness, teachers will keep student after for at least 15 minutes (distance consideration). Due to transportation issues etc., we will give a one-day leeway for completing after school time for tardiness and other non-academic issues.

Technology

The purpose of making technology available is to enhance teaching and educational discovery. Acceptable use is an extension of Saint Joseph School's code of conduct. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior while using computers throughout the school and when on the network. Appropriate network etiquette will be expected. Any infraction of network computer use rules may lead to discipline as well as suspension of the use of the network/computer.

The following issues are considered unacceptable use of the computer/network:

- Using the network for non-school related activities
- Plagiarism/violating copyright laws
- Destroying or vandalizing computer equipment
- Depleting resources intentionally, such as paper, ink cartridges
- Violating the privacy of others, revealing passwords
- Using someone else's account
- Using abusive language or profanity
- Spreading computer viruses
- Posting other's materials
- Sending or retrieving inappropriate material
- Posting personal information that would jeopardize your safety or others
- Failure to obtain permission prior to the use of the computer/computer network
- Permission must be granted by a teacher or authorized adult supervisor each time the network is used
- Visiting Internet sites not authorized by the school
- Using the Internet or Intranet (in-school network) without permission
- Reproducing software or shareware

Uniforms

The way a child dresses influences his/her academic performance; therefore, the respective uniforms must be worn each day. Students who disregard the uniform directives will receive a notice to be signed by the parent. Repeated infractions will result in serious penalties.

Uniform Distributor

Collegiate House School Uniforms (www.collegiatehouse.com)
14 High Street
Medford, MA 02155
781/219-4952

Preschool - Sports grey t-shirt with school logo
Navy sweatpants with school logo
Navy mesh shorts with school logo
Sports grey t-shirt with school logo (long or short sleeve)

Boys

Grades K-8 Khaki pants with adjustable or elastic waistband (**cargo pants are not allowed**)
Khaki shorts with adjustable or elastic waistband (through October 13 only and after April 8, 2024)
Navy polo shirt with school logo (short sleeve or long sleeve)
Black or brown dress shoes (no construction type boots or Crocs)
All black or all-white sneakers **only** may be worn (**no colored logos or soles**)
Navy blue socks
Solid navy blue cardigan, pullover sweater or fleece with school logo (**no hooded sweatshirts** of any kind may be worn in school even if they have the school logo on them)

Girls

Grades K-8 Khaki pants/skirt/skort and navy polo shirt with school logo
Solid navy-blue cardigan or fleece with school logo
Black, blue or dark brown dress shoes (**no high heels, platforms, clogs, backless shoes or Crocs**)
Only all black or all white sneakers may be worn (**no colored logos or soles**)
Navy blue knee socks or tights

* **UGGS or similar boots may be worn to school in bad weather but must be changed to regular footwear during the day**

* **No outerwear jackets or hooded sweatshirts of any kind may be worn in school during the school day.**

Gym Clothing

Boys & Girls grades K-8 (all items must include the school logo)

Sports grey t-shirt
Navy mesh shorts

Optional:

Navy sweatshirt and sweatpants
Navy warm-up jacket and pants

Vacations

Vacations should be planned to **coincide** with school vacations. If you plan otherwise, teachers cannot be responsible for schoolwork and tests that are given during this absence. Any work covered and tests given during this time will not be made up. The child will not be penalized with a zero.

VIRTUS Program (Protecting God's Children)

The Virtus Program is **mandated** by the Archdiocese of Boston for all parents and persons who volunteer in any capacity at Saint Joseph School/Parish. The program addresses sexual abuse issues and the safeguards that are in place for the protection of children. Program schedules will be sent to parents and posted in the parish bulletin.

Visitors

All visitors including parents must report to the Main Office when entering the building. Parents are **not** allowed to go to classrooms during the school day. If there is a reason to see your child, the child will be called to the office.

PARENTAL AGREEMENT

I/we have read and agree to abide by the policies contained in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Please sign and return this form to the Main Office. Thank you.

Directory

School Office 781/396-3636 x0

Anne Campbell

Email address: acampbell@sjsmedford.com

School Fax: 781/396-5478

School Nurse 781/396-3636 x4

Michele D'Ampolo, RN

Guidance Office 781/396-3636 x5

Thomas Mahoney

Tuition Office 781/396-0423 x117

Pat Cappucci

Extended Day Program 351/201-3578

Felicia Forziati

Rectory 781/396-0423

School Website: sjsmedford.com