



Parent/Student Handbook

**2020-2021**

*St. John the Baptist Catholic  
School*

1057 Hughes Road Madison, AL 35758  
Phone: 256-722-0772 Fax: 256-722-0151  
[www.stjohnb.com](http://www.stjohnb.com)

## 2020-21 FACULTY/STAFF

Principal	Sherry Lewis	<a href="mailto:slewis@stjohnb.com">slewis@stjohnb.com</a>
Assistant Principal	Brenda Villarreal	<a href="mailto:bvillarreal@stjohnb.com">bvillarreal@stjohnb.com</a>
Administrative Assistant	Patricia Kennedy-Bryan	<a href="mailto:pbryan@stjohnb.com">pbryan@stjohnb.com</a>
Business Office	Renee Dobbs	<a href="mailto:rdobbs@stjohnb.com">rdobbs@stjohnb.com</a>
KH4	Nancy Arzonico	<a href="mailto:narzonico@stjohnb.com">narzonico@stjohnb.com</a>
K4	Sandra Bukovac	<a href="mailto:sbukovac@stjohnb.com">sbukovac@stjohnb.com</a>
K4	Elizabeth Kvicala	<a href="mailto:ekvicala@stjohnb.com">ekvicala@stjohnb.com</a>
K4 Aide	Candice Canale	<a href="mailto:ccanale@stjohnb.com">ccanale@stjohnb.com</a>
K5	Sarah Beth Glasier	<a href="mailto:sglasier@stjohnb.com">sglasier@stjohnb.com</a>
K5	Alyssa Wilbanks	<a href="mailto:awilbanks@stjohnb.com">awilbanks@stjohnb.com</a>
K5 Aide	Susan Sturgis	<a href="mailto:ssurgis@stjohnb.com">ssturgis@stjohnb.com</a>
K5 Aide	Rita Nieves	<a href="mailto:rnieves@stjohnb.com">rnieves@stjohnb.com</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Sheila Chiskowski	<a href="mailto:schiskowski@stjohnb.com">schiskowski@stjohnb.com</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Valerie Martin	<a href="mailto:vmartin@stjohnb.com">vmartin@stjohnb.com</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Sylvia Brown	<a href="mailto:sbrown@stjohnb.com">sbrown@stjohnb.com</a>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Holly Keefer	<a href="mailto:hkeefe@stjohnb.com">hkeefe@stjohnb.com</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Jennifer Lones	<a href="mailto:jlones@stjohnb.com">jlones@stjohnb.com</a>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Caitlin Velasquez	<a href="mailto:cvelasquez@stjohnb.com">cvelasquez@stjohnb.com</a>
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Hannah Talley	<a href="mailto:htalley@stjohnb.com">htalley@stjohnb.com</a>
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Jennifer Zoeller	<a href="mailto:joeller@stjohnb.com">joeller@stjohnb.com</a>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Julie Godwin	<a href="mailto:jgodwin@stjohnb.com">jgodwin@stjohnb.com</a>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Robin McConnell	<a href="mailto:rmcconnell@stjohnb.com">rmcconnell@stjohnb.com</a>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom/Advanced Math	Jennifer Yobs	<a href="mailto:jyobs@stjohnb.com">jyobs@stjohnb.com</a>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom/Literature/Grammar	Anna Glosemeyer	<a href="mailto:aglosemeyer@stjohnb.com">aglosemeyer@stjohnb.com</a>
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom/Social Studies	Carol Hervias	<a href="mailto:chervias@stjohnb.com">chervias@stjohnb.com</a>
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom/Math	Natalia McInnish	<a href="mailto:lmcinnish@stjohnb.com">lmcinnish@stjohnb.com</a>
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom/Science	Stacie Lane	<a href="mailto:slane@stjohnb.com">slane@stjohnb.com</a>
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Homeroom/Advanced Math	Lynda Fulks	<a href="mailto:lfulks@stjohnb.com">lfulks@stjohnb.com</a>
Art	Mary Anna Brown	<a href="mailto:mabrown@stjohnb.com">mabrown@stjohnb.com</a>
Athletic Director		
Band Director/Music	Joe Bader	<a href="mailto:jbader@stjohnb.com">jbader@stjohnb.com</a>
BASC (Before/After School Care) Staff Manager	Katy Sperry	<a href="mailto:ksperry@stjohnb.com">ksperry@stjohnb.com</a>
Cafeteria Manager	Cathy Kucera	<a href="mailto:cafeteria@stjohnb.com">cafeteria@stjohnb.com</a>
Computer	Deacon Darrell Diem	<a href="mailto:ddiem@stjohnb.com">ddiem@stjohnb.com</a>
Counselor	Nancy Arzonico	<a href="mailto:narzonico@stjohnb.com">narzonico@stjohnb.com</a>
Facilities Manager	Dave McGuinness	
Library	Jeanne Crown	<a href="mailto:jcrown@stjohnb.com">jcrown@stjohnb.com</a>
IT	Susanne Terry	<a href="mailto:sterry@stjohnb.com">sterry@stjohnb.com</a>
Physical Education Teacher	Cathy Johnson	<a href="mailto:c.johnson@stjohnb.com">c.johnson@stjohnb.com</a>
Resource Teacher	Angie Songy	<a href="mailto:asongy@stjohnb.com">asongy@stjohnb.com</a>
School Nurse	Kim Murdzek	<a href="mailto:nurse@stjohnb.com">nurse@stjohnb.com</a>
Spanish	Karelin Rivera	<a href="mailto:krivera@stjohnb.com">krivera@stjohnb.com</a>

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Welcome to the St. John the Baptist Catholic School community! We hope your child's educational experience here is full of faith, formation and academic growth.

The purpose of this handbook is to present policies and procedures for our school. Please read this handbook in its entirety and keep this booklet available for future reference. Working together is a key component of a successful educational program. Please take time to discuss the handbook with your student(s). **After you have reviewed the handbook with your student(s), please sign the policy and procedure sheet (one sheet per student) and have your student(s) return to the homeroom teacher.**

We value your child at St. John's Catholic School, as a child of God. We strive for a safe, disciplined, nurturing Catholic environment and an education that develops excellence in the whole child. The faculty and staff look forward to working with you and together we will guide your child in discovering his/her abilities and individual gifts. Please contact us if you have questions or need assistance.

## HISTORY

St. John's opened in 1996 with grades Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Each subsequent year added a grade and doubled a grade until it was fully developed K-8<sup>th</sup> grade in 2005. The founding pastor was Fr. Patrick Murphy (1986-1998). The school opened year 1 with the top floor of classrooms from the current school office to the library. The bottom floor of that same wing (south of the current school office) opened for use in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. The final phase, completed in 2002, allowed for the middle school classrooms, cafeteria, youth room and gymnasium to be utilized. Fr. Michael Sexton (1998-2007) was pastor during the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of construction. A K4 class was added in 2010 and housed in the existing classrooms. Construction of 4 additional rooms to grow the K4 program was completed and opened in August 2014. Construction of the K4 rooms occurred under the leadership of Fr. Philip N. O'Kennedy (2007-2017). Fr. Bryan Lowe became the pastor in 2017 and we are a thriving community with over 350 students.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

St. John the Baptist Catholic School envisions a school where all students, parents, and educators commit to achieving high academic standards focused on Catholic Tradition. Students will grow in faith, knowledge, and character with an intrinsic desire to participate fully in the life of the Church.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

St. John the Baptist Catholic School is committed to Catholic formation and academic excellence, preparing students to be productive citizens and faith-filled servants of God.

## **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

St. John the Baptist Catholic School

- † values and respects each individual as a child of God.
- † inspires students to grow in their commitment of service to God and others.
- † offers and encourages opportunities for students to grow spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
- † integrates Catholic identity and academic excellence through innovative instruction.
- † enables students to learn through a variety of teaching strategies across the curriculum.
- † ensures effective education through a partnership among parents, students, teachers, staff, parish and community.
- † provides a positive, safe and structured environment for learning.

## **ADMISSIONS**

St. John's admits students of any gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. John the Baptist Catholic School:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Members of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
3. Members of Most Merciful Jesus Catholic Church
4. Members of other parishes
5. Non-Catholic students

**K4** - Children must be four (4) years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Kindergarten** - Children must be five (5) years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

**First Grade** – Children must be six (6) years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

Students applying for admission to grades 1-8 must present a copy of current report card and standardized test results. Upon review of these records, determination is made whether the program at St. John's Catholic School meets the educational needs of the student. A student interview may be part of the admissions process. Students may receive full or conditional acceptance.

Upon acceptance into St. John's Catholic School, enrollment is complete when the office is provided a copy of the birth certificate, a copy of the social security card, items listed above for admissions consideration and payment of the registration fee (non-refundable).

## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

### Registration Fee:

\$150.00 per child, **non-refundable (unless relocating out of town), collected annually**

### Tuition

For the payment of tuition, St. John's has two options from which to choose. Tuition is either **paid in full by July 17, 2020** or **on a monthly draft of checking/savings account** for a period of ten months, beginning in August and ending in May. When paying across the ten month plan, the account is drafted on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month or the 25<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

Families are verified as parishioner by submitting a Parishioner Status form to the school office. Once the verification is completed, the tuition rate is established. Failure to support St. John the Baptist Catholic Church or Most Merciful Jesus Catholic Church through the Sacrificial Giving and/or through the Time and Talent Program can place a family in a non-parishioner status. The Church is responsible for placing families in parishioner or non-parishioner status, in accordance with the criteria established by the pastor and pastoral council.

If a student is withdrawn before the end of the year, the parent will owe the prorated amount based on percentage of the school year/month attended. The school reserves the right to withhold grades/report cards for delinquent accounts and moneys owed the school, including tuition, Before/After school care (BASC) bills, etc.

### Tuition Rates in Grades K-8:

	<u>Parishioner</u>	<u>Non-parishioners</u>
One Student	\$ 4,950.00	\$ 6,310.00
Two Students	\$ 8,470.00	\$10,910.00
Three Students	\$10,430.00	\$15,510.00
<u>Tuition Rate for K4* (full day):</u>	\$5,580.00 (w/o lunch) \$5,780.00 (w/lunch)	\$ 6,000.00 (w/o lunch) \$ 6,200.00 (w/lunch)
<u>Tuition Rate for KH4* M-F (half day):</u>	\$3,400.00 (w/o lunch) \$3,600.00 (w/lunch)	\$ 4,000.00 (w/o lunch) \$ 4,200.00 (w/lunch)
<u>Tuition Rate for KH4* MWF (half day):</u>	\$2,100.00 (w/o lunch) \$2,300.00 (w/lunch)	\$ 2,400.00 (w/o lunch) \$ 2,600.00 (w/lunch)

**\*Please note the K4 tuition is a separate fee from the family rate and is not included in multiple student discounts.**

### Student Fees:

#### **Technology 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

Chrome Books are issued to each 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade student. A fee of \$50.00 per year, per student is collected.

#### **Band:**

Band fees are \$75.00 per year, per student.

### Return Check Policy

All checks returned to the school for the first time are subject to a \$30.00 return check fee. Second time there is a \$30.00 fee. Third time there is a \$50.00 fee and all payments to the school must be paid with a money order or in cash for the remainder of the school year.

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of Alabama guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. In addition to these guidelines, teachers infuse Gospel values on a consistent and appropriate basis. St. John's Catholic School offers academic growth opportunities in the following major subjects:

### **Religious Education**

Religious instruction, according to doctrine of the Catholic Church, is given top priority. Daily classes about the Catholic faith are taught using "The Loyola Series" in alignment with Standards and Benchmarks established by the Diocese of Birmingham. Additionally, our students pray together throughout the school day. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated twice a year in grades 2-8. Children attend weekly Mass together where liturgies are planned by specific classes. Students attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament bi-monthly.

The Sacramental Program is conducted by the Director of Religious Education of the Parish. For our second grade students, preparation for Reconciliation and First Communion are included in the daily religious education program. Parents are required to attend informational meetings and students are expected to attend parish-wide activities in preparation for the sacraments. The preparation and reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation occurs in high school.

### **Computer Literacy**

Word processing, data base, spread sheets, web design, programming and integration with curricular subjects are the focus of the weekly computer classes. Internet access is available through the classroom, library or computer lab. Students must adhere to the Internet Use policy and appropriate user guidelines to maintain computer privileges.

### **Fine Arts**

Weekly music and art classes are scheduled for all students in grades K4-5<sup>th</sup>. Band begins in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Drama (grades 4-8) is available as an extra-curricular opportunity.

### **Handwriting**

Students in K4-4<sup>th</sup> grade participate in handwriting development.

### **Language Arts**

Reading, English, spelling, vocabulary, composition, library skills and literature appreciation make up the Language Arts coursework across the grade levels.

### **Library**

**K4** - Students have a 20 minute weekly library period that includes finger plays and story time. The books remain in the K4 classroom and do not go home.

**Kindergarten** - Students visit the library weekly for a 30 minute story time and book check out. The books remain in the Kindergarten classrooms and do not go home.

**First and Second grade** - Students have a 30 minute library period weekly, with story time and beginning library skills being taught. The students may check out one book for one week. The book may go home, but the student is responsible for returning the book on time. If a book is not returned on time, the student may not check out another book.

**Third and Fourth grade** - Students have a weekly 30 minute class in the library with the focus on learning library skills. Third Grade may check out one book for one week. Fourth Grade through Eighth Grade may check out two books for two weeks.

Overdue notices are sent out on a weekly basis to the students with overdue books. If the book(s) are still needed for class, the students may renew their books. The library has open times where there are no classes scheduled and students may come in and browse or do research. Teachers are also able to schedule class time in the library as needed. Students with lost or damaged books will be assessed a fee according to the circumstance. Library fees follow the same procedures as other fees and must be settled before report cards and records are issued.

### **Mathematics**

Mathematics Skills are developed in all grade levels. Students apply foundational math concepts to develop problem solving skills and a solid foundation of basic math skills.

Advanced Math - St. John's offers an advanced math program beginning in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Upon completing 4<sup>th</sup> grade, students' records are reviewed for placement in advanced math. Student math averages, ITBS math stanine scores and teacher recommendation based on observations of student skills, effort and ability determine placement in the middle school advanced math program. Students are placed in advanced math at the beginning of the school year only. To remain in advanced math, students must maintain an A or B at the time of each issued report card (every 9 weeks). Advanced math in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade is Algebra I. Algebra I is a high school level course.

### **Physical Education**

Physical Education (PE) is part of a well-rounded education. PE grades (4-8) are based on dressing out in required uniform including athletic shoes, behavior, sportsmanship, participation, cooperation, effort, written tests, and homework. For each infraction, the student's grade will drop a percentage point. After the 7<sup>th</sup> infraction in a quarter, the student will drop one letter grade. Grades are entered weekly into FACTS and infractions are listed in the comment area. Students are not allowed to miss PE in order to make up other class work. Special situations may be worked out among the administration, teachers and students involved. A student must have permission from the principal to miss PE for any reason other than a doctor's excuse. If a student sits out of PE class due to injury or illness, the student athlete will not practice or play in school sponsored extra-curricular sporting events that day.

No child may be excused indefinitely from PE with a note from parents. Parent notes for minor illness/injury will remain in effect for two days. A doctor's note is required for a more lengthy absence from PE.

PE clothes are required for grades four and above. Uniforms consist of an official St. John's gray gym shirt and navy knit gym shorts. Sweatshirt and sweatpants are an option for a winter PE uniform. Navy or white socks and athletic shoes are required. Shoelaces must comply with classroom uniform requirements. Without the proper uniform, which includes athletic shoes for K5 -3, students will not be allowed to participate and will lose points from their grade.

### **Science**

General science and laboratory experiences are offered to all age groups. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade are required to complete and present a science fair project.

### **Social Studies**

History, Geography, Current Events as well as Alabama history (4<sup>th</sup> grade) are part of the curriculum offered.

### **Spanish**

All students experience instruction in vocabulary, grammar, conversation and culture. Spanish is offered weekly in K4-5<sup>th</sup> and bi-weekly in grades 6-7.

## **ATTENDANCE**

The school day officially begins at 7:55am. In order to promote a positive learning environment, students should be in the classroom on time and ready to learn by 7:55am. K5 and above students enter the cafeteria by the cafeteria doors or the gym doors after 7:30am where they will remain until dismissed to their homeroom. **Any student arriving late must report directly to the office and be signed in by the parent.** Students unescorted by a parent when tardy, automatically receive an unexcused tardy. Students who are habitually tardy will be subject to disciplinary action and administration will schedule a conference with student and parents. School is dismissed at 3:05pm. Students who are not picked up by the end of the afternoon car line will be placed in after school care.

Maximum absences allowed are **ten days** per semester. Excessive absences can result in a student being retained. Students absent for five or more consecutive school days are required to submit a doctor's certificate before being readmitted to school. Any student who has had a contagious disease (except for minor colds and viruses) is required to submit a doctor's certificate before being readmitted to school.

The following are considered valid (excused) reasons for absence from school: illness, death in family, health treatment, permission from principal and inclement weather. Students missing for excused reasons will be allowed to make-up work. **Parents must send a handwritten note or a doctor's excuse explaining the reason for the absence. Electronic notes, such as emails, and phone calls are not sufficient.** The absence note must be submitted upon the student's return to receive an excused absence. Notes to excuse an absence will not be accepted after the fifth day the student has returned to school and therefore the absence will remain unexcused.

### **Make-Up Work**

When a student is absent for two or more days due to illness, a parent may contact the homeroom teacher by 9:30am, to arrange for missed assignments. These assignments may be picked up in the school office between 3:00pm–3:30pm. Students have one day for each day missed to complete make-up assignments. If extenuating circumstances apply, it is the responsibility of the student to request additional consideration from the teacher. AGAIN, any request for make-up work should come after two or more days of absence.

**Any student absent from school more than ½ day may not participate in school sponsored events that afternoon and evening.** A student is counted absent the entire day if missing more than three and a half hours, (3 hours and 30 minutes).

Parents should make every effort to schedule doctor/dental appointments after school hours. If not possible, then every effort should be made to have the child miss a minimum amount of instructional time. Parents must come into the office to sign out a student for an appointment. Upon return to school, the parent must escort the student into the office to sign him/her back into school. The student is responsible for checking with the teacher(s) about missed work.

*Any scheduled absences must be pre-approved by the principal.* In order for a requested planned absence to be excused, please submit a note with a parent signature giving the reason and the date(s) the student will be absent. Upon returning to school from a scheduled absence, it is the student's responsibility to secure missed assignments. Excessive abuse of this procedure can result in a student being denied the opportunity to make up missed work. **Assignments will not be given in anticipation of a vacation.**

## ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

### Homework

The purpose of homework is to reinforce concepts taught in school. Homework is assigned on a regular basis. A general rule of thumb is 10 minutes for each grade the student has been in school, beyond kindergarten (for example, 5<sup>th</sup> grade can expect 50 minutes of homework). **If your child is taking an unusual amount of time to complete homework, it is your responsibility to contact the teacher for a conference (and we request that you do so).**

### Grading

Report cards are issued quarterly. The Diocese of Birmingham uses the following grading system in all its schools:

#### Kindergarten (K5):

A checklist with the following qualifiers:

S = Satisfactory

P = Progressing

NI = Needs Improvement

X = Not covered yet

#### Grade 1:

A checklist with the following qualifiers listed below:

M = Mastered

I = Improving

NP = No Progress

NA = Not applicable at this time

#### Grades 2 through 8:

Grading at these levels will be letter grades with a scale given on the report card. The electronic grading system will provide you a numeric. The following subjects will be graded with letters: religion, reading/literature (language arts), math, science, social studies, music, art, physical education, and Spanish. Computer Literacy does not receive letter grades since it is a tool to be integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

The grading scale will be as follows:

A 93 - 100

B 84 - 92

C 74 - 83

D 65 - 73

F 64 and below

### Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are distributed every nine weeks for K5 through eighth grade. Parent - Teacher Conferences are held at the end of the first quarter. Progress reports are emailed home at mid-term (about the fifth week of each quarter) to indicate the student's standing in academic and behavioral areas. Families are issued passwords and logins to access the online grades through FACTS. K4 parents will have conferences in January.

### Honor Roll

Honor Roll certificates are issued at the end of each quarter for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and above, an "All A" and an "A & B". Students must have no "U"s (unsatisfactory) in conduct to qualify for Honor Roll each quarter. Students maintaining an A in all subjects in every quarter will be recognized on Honor's Day.

### Promotion/Retention Policy

At the end of the school year, students are either promoted or retained. A student fails for the year if he/she has a yearly average below 65 or "F" in two or more of the following areas: Reading, English, Math, Science, or Social Studies. Students may be retained for reasons other than grades if a decision is reached cooperatively among the teacher, principal, and parents. When there is disagreement, the decision of the principal is final.

### Assessments

St. John's uses the standardized assessment: IOWA Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Students in grades 3-8 participate in this week long assessment period. Students need to be present unless ill. Please do not make routine doctor's appointments during these scheduled assessments.

### Graduation

Participation in the eighth grade graduation ceremony is a privilege and indicates a successful completion of all requirements. Should academic or disciplinary circumstances arise, the principal reserves the right to deny the privilege of participating in the ceremony and associated activities to those who do not complete these requirements.

## **ADDITIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION**

### Water Bottles

Students are permitted to keep water bottles, containing only water, with them during instruction. Middle School students' water bottles must be clear. Three filtered dispensers have been installed.

### Extracurricular Activities

An "extracurricular activity" has the following characteristics:

1. Extracurricular activities are an out-of-class event, usually supervised by the school.
2. Extracurricular activities are not part of the regular school curriculum, are not graded, do not earn credits, generally take place out of classroom time, and often involve performance before an audience or spectators.
3. Extracurricular activities may include but are not limited to: athletic teams, bands or orchestra, musical performing groups, school publications, clubs and dramatic groups, and school dances.

Students in grades 5-8, may not be allowed to participate in any activity if they have an average below "C" in any of their subjects at the time report cards are distributed. Ineligible students will be re-checked every two weeks from the official marking period. Additionally, student athletes in grades 7-8, who are playing sports through JP2, must also adhere to academic requirements by the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA).

### Field Trips

Educational field trips enhance classroom learning and students are expected to attend just like any other school day. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior on field trips as well as in the classroom prior to the trip. Students that choose to challenge rules during the course of a normal day may be denied the privilege of attending a field trip. Students that lose the privilege of attending a field trip or are not given permission by the parent may be required to complete an alternative assignment.

According to the procedures outlined by the Diocese of Birmingham, proper permission is required for students as well as parent drivers. Drivers must go directly to and from destination with no additional stops. Additional fees will be collected as needed for field trips.

### Field Trip Reminders for Parent Drivers

- Make sure each student is buckled securely.
- Student may not ride in the front seat (except the child of the driver).
- Please make sure you have enough gas for the trip and follow all speed limits.
- Please refrain from smoking at all times during the field trip.
- Drivers are not to use cell phones while driving.
- Drivers must transport only students provided on a list by the teacher.
- Teachers should provide each driver with a set of written directions and the school phone number.
- During the program, please refrain from talking to model proper listening manners for the students.
- Please refrain from showing videos in the car unless preapproved by teacher or administration.
- Siblings may not attend class field trips.

### Illness

The First Aid Room at St. John's exists to provide **temporary** care for students with minor injuries. A school nurse is in the clinic on a part-time basis. Parents are required to complete a **Medical Emergency Form** for each student to be kept on file in the office. Injury reports are filled out and filed for serious injuries. Students entering school using crutches **must have** a doctor's excuse.

A student will not be kept nor admitted to school if the student is known to have a communicable disease or parasite that may be spread by any form of casual contact and considered a health threat to the school population. Students sent home with any of the below symptoms must be free of these symptoms for a **twenty-four hour period** (without medication) before being readmitted to school.

1. Temperature of one hundred (100°) Fahrenheit or higher.
2. Vomiting and / or diarrhea.
3. Discharge of fluid or mucus from the nose, eyes, or ears that is green or yellow in appearance.
4. Rashes of unknown origin. (Students may be readmitted with evidence of physician's diagnosis and treatment required.)
5. Conjunctivitis. (Students may return to school after having undergone a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of treatment.)
6. Streptococcus or other infection. (Student may be readmitted with evidence of physician's diagnosis and a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours of antibiotic treatment.)
7. Head Lice. School must be notified. (Treated with proper medication required. Parent must accompany student to school for the student to be rechecked by the administration or school nurse for readmission.)

Re-admittance will be denied if the 24 hour symptom free time period has not been met. In accordance with public health guidelines designed to decrease the spread of communicable diseases, should a student become ill during school; parents will be contacted to pick their child up in a timely manner. If the school is unable to locate the parents, the emergency contact will be called to pick up the student.

### Medications:

Medication may be dispensed at school only under the following conditions:

- A Parental Request Form for Administering Medicine at school has been properly completed and returned to the office along with the medicine. This form may be obtained in the office or on the website.
- All medication must be in its original container with dosage information and directions.
- Medication must be delivered to the school office by the parent or guardian.
- A written doctor's order must accompany the prescribed medication and will remain on file in the office stating the name of the drug, the time to be given, and the dosage. The label on the prescription bottle may serve as the physician's order.
- All medication will be kept in a locked area of the clinic.
- Students are not to have prescription or non-prescription medication in their possession during school hours on school / parish premises or at school sponsored events and field trips away from school.
- In order to administer non-prescription medication, a signed clinic card must be on file. The parent will be called before the medicine is given.

*\*Only the Principal has the authority to make exceptions to this policy.*

### Before/After School Care (BASC)

**BASC contact number: 256-603-4648.**

St. John's Catholic School offers a BASC program as a service to parents.

BASC Rates: \$3.50 per hour, per student.

BASC activities:

1. Homework time is given for older children.
2. Recreational activities include board games, puzzles, etc. outside playground or gymnasium, which are planned and supervised.
3. Snack is provided between 4:00-4:15pm

BASC hours:

Before school: 6:45am – 7:30am for grades K5 thru 8<sup>th</sup> at the cafeteria entrance  
7:15am for K4 at the K4 entrance  
After school: 3:05pm – 6:00pm

K4 students may be dropped off after 7:15am at the K4 entrance. Students in K5-8 dropped off before 7:30am or picked up after 3:15pm will be placed in BASC and invoiced accordingly.

**Any student not picked up by 6:00pm will accrue a charge of \$1.00 per minute per family.**

Invoices are sent electronically during the first week of the month and payment is due by the tenth of that month. Electronic drafting is an option for payment. Failure to pay fees may result in the loss of BASC use. A \$5.00 late fee will be automatically added to all invoices not paid by date due.

Students are to be signed out by parent/guardian and require photo identification. For parent/guardian to allow another person(s) to pick up students, the parent/guardian must fill out the BASC form and submit to the school office. These forms are maintained at BASC.

**Students who exhibit an uncooperative or disruptive behavior at BASC may be denied BASC services.**

### Lunch

A lunch program is provided for \$3.50 per meal and is a **PREPAID PROGRAM**. Families should deposit monies in the student's lunch account and monitor the balance thru FACTS. The lunch menu is posted on the school website.

Lunches may also be “brown bagged”. Milk or juice may be purchased for \$0.50 per carton. If a parent wishes to join their child for lunch, please email the cafeteria (cafeteria@stjohnb.com) by 08:30am. Parents may begin joining lunch after Labor Day. Please indicate if you will also be purchasing a lunch. **Fast food or carbonated drinks are not allowed for students or parents/guests.** The school offers a free milk program to qualifying families.

### Organizations

St. John’s Catholic School encourages each student to become a faith-filled, well rounded citizen in our community. Participation in clubs and/or activities sponsored by the school or parish provides an opportunity for this type of growth. Those activities available to students are listed below.

#### Student Organizations:

- Athletics
- Band
- Book of the Month Club
- Chess Club
- Drama
- Math Team
- National Junior Honor Society
- Safety Patrol
- Student Government
- Yearbook Staff

#### Parish Organizations:

- Altar server
- Children’s Choir
- Football/Cheer
- Scouts

### Student Activities

- Duke University Talent Identification Program (T.I.P.)
- Geography Bee
- Religion Scholars’ Bowl
- Science Fair (Grade 7)

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Catholic Education supports student growth in all areas. Self-discipline is a life skill that can and should be achieved. School rules and regulations are no more than basic courtesy, good manners and the creation of a Christian community where learning can take place. The authority to control student behavior extends to all activities of the school including Mass and religious services, all games and public performances, field trips, and all other school sponsored activities.

The student should be fair with him/herself, with fellow students, and with the teacher. No form of cheating, lying, or stealing will be tolerated. We ask that our students tell the truth at all times, conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen, respect law and order and follow the Commandments in all phases of life.

Students are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity. This includes reporting incidences of inappropriate or bullying behavior. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner towards everyone. Disrupting the learning environment of other students is not acceptable.

Adhering to school/classroom rules is another expectation for students at St. John's Catholic School. Some examples of behaviors that are considered routine and appropriate are (but not limited to):

1. being honest and truthful
2. being respectful and polite
3. getting along with others
4. using acceptable language
5. following classroom rules
6. no gum chewing
7. being responsible for school property
8. respecting others' property
9. being on time to class

These rules are samples of general school expectations and may be adjusted during the year by the principal.

### Disciplinary Measures

Teachers will handle routine classroom discipline using assertive discipline techniques and positive reinforcement when possible. Repeat or serious breaches of behavior will be referred to administration.

**K4 - 5<sup>th</sup> grade students:** follow a systematic procedure which encourages self-regulation and involves warnings and consequences that escalate if the behavior does not improve. Each teacher will provide a classroom management plan to the student and parent.

**6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students:** For student misconduct, the teacher will give a logical consequence to the student if applicable. On the second offense, the student will receive a written warning (W) marked in the student's planner by the teacher. On the third offense, the student will receive silent lunch with a notification form stapled in the planner. The form requires a parent signature and must be returned to the assigning teacher the following day.

If misconduct continues, whether on the same day or a different day of the month, a second silent lunch will be issued and a notification form will be sent home requiring a parent signature. At this point, a student-parent-teacher conference will be scheduled.

If misconduct persists, whether on the same day or a different day of the month, a third silent lunch will be issued requiring the student to write a letter notifying the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and administration. The letter requires parent/guardian's signature and has to be returned the following day. A student detention will be issued and the parents will be notified by the homeroom teacher. The detention form is to be signed and returned to the homeroom teacher.

Warnings do not carry over from one classroom to another or from one day to the next. Patterns of misbehavior, however, will be addressed by that specific class teacher with the student and the parent. Silent lunches, detentions, or office referrals may be given immediately in incidents of severe misbehavior. Each student starts over on the first day of the month.

**Should discipline procedures move beyond time out and loss of privileges for younger students or beyond detention for older students, the following actions may occur:**

1. Mandatory Parent Conference - Required disciplinary meeting by custodial parents with the teacher and/or principal for a discussion of the problem and potential solution.
2. In-House Suspension - Isolation of a student from his/her peers at school during the school day. Teacher will provide lessons, work, and tests to be done during the day. No extra-curricular participation allowed.
3. Out of School Suspension - Removal of the student from the school setting (1-10 school days). The student stays home and receives zeroes on all missed work. A parent conference is mandatory for re-admission. No extra-curricular participation allowed.

4. Expulsion - Removal of the student from the student body and the school. The following activities will result in suspension or expulsion: (extreme disrespect of authority, harassment of another student, fighting/violence, stealing, sexual misconduct, vandalism, bomb threats, possession of weapons or use of objects as weapons, possession of illegal substances, truancy, repeated violation of school rules). Behaviors not listed here but deemed by administration to be of like severity also result in suspension or expulsion.

Students are removed from the school by the principal with notification given to the Pastor and the Superintendent of Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham.

### **Diocesan Policy on Bullying**

The Diocese of Birmingham is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment in its schools. Bullying, which involves an imbalance of power or strength, is repeated aggressive behavior that may include physical, verbal, racial, sexual, or emotional intimidation. This includes cyber-bullying which is defined as destroying or smearing a person's reputation through the use of internet connected devices. Any and all witnessed or reported incidents will be addressed. Students involved in bullying or harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by the local school's handbook or policy statement.

### **Definitions of Harassment/Bullying**

Harassment/bullying is a specific type of deliberate and sustained misconduct which hurts the dignity of another person by isolation, intimidation, and/or humiliation and thus jeopardizes physical and emotional safety and undermines the well-being of the school community. Harassment/bullying repeatedly hurts another person through, but not limited to, the following behaviors:

Physical  
Cyber-bullying

Verbal  
Sexual

Social/relational  
Retaliation

### **Reporting**

1. Student practices self-talk behaviors taught in response to alleged bully.
2. Student addresses bully.
3. If the bullying behaviors do not stop, he or she reports the bullying concerns to the teacher or adult caregiver in a verbal/written report.
4. An observer/bystander of a harassment/bullying incident is expected to report the incident to a teacher or adult caregiver.
5. St. John's follows a "zero indifference" approach which means that all witnessed or reported instances of harassment/bullying will be addressed.

### **Administrative Investigation**

All reports of harassment/bullying will be investigated by the employees and administration of St. John's. The following steps will be followed once a report of bullying is received by administration:

1. Ensure there is a safe and secure environment.
2. Investigate - An administrative investigation and written report will be prepared.
3. Determine Remedial and Disciplinary Action - Following a reasonable investigation, administration will determine a probable cause; what remedial action is most warranted to prevent reoccurrence and allow reconciliation; and what corrective or disciplinary action is most appropriate.

## DRESS CODE

An established dress code at St. John's Catholic School is reflective of our Catholic faith and promotes a positive learning environment through neat and tidy appearance as well as minimal distraction to the daily instructional atmosphere. Students are expected to abide by the dress code policy. Students who choose not to abide by the dress code policy will not be admitted to class until the proper uniform attire is brought to him/her at school. If these uniform regulations are to succeed, it will take the combined effort of students, parents, and faculty/staff, to insure every child comes to school in the proper uniform. The principal will have discretion in all questions pertaining to student's dress code.

Coats/jackets are not allowed to be worn in the classroom.

Hats are not allowed to be worn in the building.

Boy Scout and Girl Scout uniforms are permitted on the day of the scout meeting.

**Please print the student's name in all articles of clothing worn to school.**

Dennis Uniform Company provides the uniform St. John's students wear. **Clothing indicated with an "\*" must be purchased through the Dennis Uniform Company.** Any items previously purchased from Dennis Uniform Company that are different than what is listed below are not allowed.

### Grooming

#### Girls:

Hair must be neat, may not be distracting, and must remain out of the eyes without assistance. Extreme hair coloring and bleaching with non-natural colors and/or patterns is not permitted. Nail polish must be light in color. Only one pair of earrings may be worn and those must be stud earrings. No make-up in grades K-7. 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls are allowed modest amount of make-up. No henna tattoos.

#### Boys:

Hair must be neat, may not be distracting, and must remain out of the eyes without assistance. Hair length cannot extend over the collar. Haircuts must be of a traditional nature and no unusual cuts. Examples of unusual cuts are partial shavings and/or taller row of hair in the middle. No facial hair. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings. No henna tattoos.

### Kindergarten (K5)-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys:

\***Short** - blue walking shorts

\***Pants** - navy

\***Polo shirt** - green or white, long or short sleeve: must have St. John's logo

\***Sweaters** - optional; navy, cardigan, vest or pull-over style. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

**Sweatshirts** – The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

**Belts** – black, brown or navy for grades K5-8

**Shoes** – Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black.

Only one accent color is allowed and **cannot be neon**. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoes worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

**Socks** - White or navy and **crew** in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names.

\***PE Uniform** – Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 4-8. Students in K-3 do not wear a PE uniform.

### **Kindergarten (K5)-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls:**

**\*Shift (jumper)** – plaid (must wear navy shorts underneath). Jumpers must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

**\*Skorts** – plaid. Skorts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

**\*Shorts**- plaid

**\*Pants**– navy

**\*Blouses** – round collar, white, long or short sleeve

**\*Polo Shirt** – Green or white, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

**\*Sweaters** – Optional; navy; cardigan, vest or pull-over styles. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

**Sweatshirts** – The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

**Belts** – black, brown or navy for grades K5-8

**Shoes** – Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black. Only one accent color is allowed and **cannot be neon**. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoes worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

**Socks** - White or navy and crew or knee-hi in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names. In cold weather, girls may wear blue, black or white tights instead of socks.

**\*PE Uniform** – Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 4-8. Students in K-3 do not wear a PE uniform.

### **5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys:**

**\*Shorts** - navy walking shorts, khaki walking shorts

**\*Pants\*** – navy or khaki

**\*Oxford shirt** – white oxford button down, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

**\*Polo shirt** – green or white, long or short sleeve: must have St. John's logo

**\*Sweaters** – optional; navy, cardigan, vest or pull-over style. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

**Sweatshirts** – The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

**Belts** – black, brown or navy for grades K5-8

**Shoes** – Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black. Only one accent color is allowed and cannot be neon. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoes worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

**Socks** - White or navy and crew in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names.

**\*PE Uniform** - Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 4-8.

### **5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls:**

**\*Skirts** – Plaid Skirts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

**\*Shorts** – khaki or plaid

**\*Pants** – navy or khaki (flat front or pleated front)

**\*Oxford Shirts** – white button down collar, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

**\*Polo Shirts** – Green or white, long or short sleeve with St. John's logo

**\*Sweaters** – Optional; navy; cardigan, vest or pull-over styles. This is the only sweater allowed in the classroom.

**Sweatshirts** – The plain green sweatshirt (NO hoodies), purchased through the Crusader Club, is acceptable to wear over a school shirt.

Belts – black, brown or navy for grades K5-8.

Shoes – Tennis shoes may be worn. They must be non-marking and should be predominantly white, navy or black. Only one accent color is allowed and cannot be neon. Shoes with lights, sounds, characters, beads, wheels or colored laces are not allowed. Other shoe worn must be brown, navy, or black leather. No boots or open toed shoes may be worn. Only athletic shoes may be worn for PE.

Socks - White or navy and crew or knee-hi in length. Socks may not have any emblems or brand names.

**\*PE Uniform** – Gray shirt with logo, navy gym shorts required for grades 4-8.

## **NO UNIFORM DAYS**

Certain days will be designated as “no uniform day.” Students will arrive in clothing that represents the Catholic teachings of integrity and dignity. Non-compliance will result in a loss of out of uniform privilege and parents called to bring the school uniform. The following will be strictly enforced:

1. All clothing will be neat and clean
2. Clothing may not contain messages that are not in keeping with the teaching of our faith
3. Skirt length is to be closer to the bend of the knee than the torso of the body
4. NO spaghetti straps or tank tops; shirts must have a sleeve
5. NO open toed/open heeled shoes
6. While socks are required, crew socks are not
7. Non marking athletic shoes are required for PE
8. Earrings (girls only): only studs allowed
9. NO worn, frayed, torn or soiled clothing

School related events, such as graduation and dances, will have dress code requirements provided to the student before the event.

**Spirit Shirt Days** are allowed 4X a year with the official spirit shirt (purchased each year). Non-uniform bottoms are allowed on this day.

## **PARENT - SCHOOL RELATIONS**

### Parental Commitment

The Catholic Church believes that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. Therefore, in addition to taking this role at home, parents are encouraged to be active and interested in the life of the school community. The operation of a successful school depends on participation and support from the parents and friends in the community. The school depends on volunteers for many activities. All parents are encouraged and expected to get involved in activities, including volunteering in the classroom, driving on field trips, and fundraising.

### Youth Protection for Adults

Any parent that wishes to volunteer at school must complete the Diocesan Youth Protection course and complete an “AS1” form to allow the school to run a background check. **Training must be renewed every three years. This is required for all adult volunteers.** Classes can be taken on line at the Diocese website [bhmdiocese.org](http://bhmdiocese.org) and are free.

### Parent – Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is a service and information organization for the parents and teachers of St. John’s Catholic School. Its purpose is to offer support and financial aid for the betterment of the school. All parents and teachers are members of the PTO. Membership dues are collected at the beginning of the year. All families should make an effort to

attend the meetings and support the efforts of the PTO. Occasionally, classes will offer a performance at the PTO meeting. Student attendance is mandatory at these events unless otherwise arranged with the principal.

### Crusader Club

The Crusader Club is a parent support group for our P.E. and athletic programs. Every parent is automatically a member of the Crusader Club and is encouraged to be involved, especially if their student participates in athletics.

### Communication Procedures

Communication between parents and teachers is very important. The following methods of contact are suggested:

1. Notes sent via your child
2. Email
3. Conferences\*

\*Conferences may be scheduled through the school office or directly with the teacher. Formal conferences for all parents are scheduled in the fall.

Issues and concerns of any kind should be addressed first in a conference with the individual teacher. Typically, most problems will be resolved in this way. If the issue is not resolved with faculty and the parent needs to explore additional support, the following sequence must be followed:

1. A parent is to contact the principal. The principal may arrange a joint meeting between the parent, teacher and or other staff member.
2. If still unresolved, the parent (s) may contact the pastor for consultation.

**Students will not be called out of class to speak with a parent.** In the event of an emergency, parents should contact the administration for assistance with student notifications.

### Communication Responsibilities

The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member as well as the good name of each school in the Diocese of Birmingham as an institution of the Catholic Church, is vitally important. Two specific aspects of this are:

1. Internet activities (games, apps, social media, etc.) that a student may independently choose to participate in can make the student vulnerable to predators. We strongly advise our students to be very careful about the personal identification information they share via the Internet. We also advise parents to monitor these sites to be sure their child remains safe. Should information come to the school regarding a student sharing personal identification information and/or information concerning a student demeaning him/herself, the school will notify the parents and it will be the parents' responsibility to take action.
2. In order to protect each and every student as well as employees and the institution itself each student enrolled in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School is expected to treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect. The same is expected of each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in our schools. Public defamation of any student, employee, or Catholic school by a student or parent/guardian is serious whether this be done orally, in writing, via email or on the web and whether it is done on a school computer or not and on school time or not. Therefore any student or parent found to be participating in any defamatory activity will be subject to disciplinary/responsive action by the school. This could include dismissal of the student whether the action is by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

### Parent to Parent Communication

Class notes from parents to other parents must be approved in advance by the teacher or principal.

### Fund Raising

All fund raising must be done through an organization, with approval in advance from the principal.

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

### **Drop Off/Pick Up**

Morning drop off (if not using Before/After School Care (BASC) begins at 7:30am. After school, students who are not picked up in carline will be placed in BASC. Please remember that school starts at 7:55 am and students need to be in class ready to begin learning. Proper arrival time is at least 10-15 minutes before 7:55am.

**When signing a child in or out of school, parents must use a lined parking space in the parking lot and not leave vehicle engine running.**

During carline, refrain from conversation with the faculty/staff during drop off and pick up. Be patient; watch for pedestrians and drive slowly. The playground is “off limits” during pick-up and drop-off for safety reasons. **No cell phone use on campus at any time you are at the wheel of a moving vehicle.**

Each family will have a name card containing their last name. Please display this card(s) in your windshield during pick-up to assist the faculty/staff in locating and loading your children. These name cards will be provided to each family. If you will be car-pooling, please be sure to get a name card of the family with whom you are carpooling.

**Any student walking to school alone must have a written note on file in the office. Please, do not allow children to walk to school if they have to cross Hughes Rd.**

### **School Records**

Parents / legal guardians have the right to inspect all official records relating to their own child. Records are confidential. Requests to review should be made directly to the principal. Records must be reviewed in the school office in the presence of the principal. The school respects the right of a non-custodial parent to review the records unless a copy of the divorce decree stating otherwise is supplied by the custodial parent and is on file in the office.

### **Custody Issues**

When there is a divorce resulting in custody issues, the school must have a court certified copy of the decree for custody for the permanent records. This document is needed in order to give the school direction regarding the non-custodial parent visiting the school, going on field trips, and picking up the student. Without the correct court papers, the school must assume that both parents have full equal access to the child.

### **Personal Belongings**

Only those items deemed by the teacher to be necessary for school are to be brought to school. All students are encouraged to have a book bag. Children in grades 4-8 may have rolling backpacks. For children in grades K-3, backpacks with wheels are unnecessary and not allowed. **Please be sure that all items related to school (lunch boxes, uniforms, books, etc.) are labeled with the child’s name.** Be sure the following items are not brought to school: glass, sharp objects, breakable, precious or items of great value. Students do not need to bring large amounts of cash to school.

### **Electronic Devices**

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Birmingham make every effort to assure that each student is safe while they are at school. Each school also tries to ensure that the teaching/learning process is interrupted as little as possible. Only approved electronic devices may be utilized during the teaching/learning process. A non-approved personal electronic device (such as a cell phone, camera, etc. but not limited to only these devices) that is used, seen or heard during school hours will be confiscated. Iwatches are not allowed. Consequences will be determined by the principal.

### Birthday Celebrations

In recognition of their birthday, students in K5 through Grade 8 may come to school dressed out-of-uniform on their birthday or half birthday (6 month date if birthday occurs outside of school year). The student will arrange the out of uniform with the homeroom teacher. In addition, a healthy birthday treat may be sent to school for students in **Grades K4-Grade 1** only. Balloons, etc. are not permitted.

### Visitors

All visitors, parents, and volunteers must report to the office immediately upon entering the school. Parents wishing to visit classes should make arrangements through the office and teacher. Students visiting from other schools, even St. John's alumni, may not be on campus unsupervised. Arrangements for visitors must be pre-approved by the office at least 24 hours in advance.

### Telephone

The school phone is to be used only by school personnel. In the event of an illness or emergency, the school personnel will contact the parent. Emergency messages will be conveyed to your child. We cannot call him/her to the phone.

### Textbooks

All hardcover books are rented and should be covered all year (no contact paper, please). No writing in the books except for the student's name. Lost or damaged books are to be paid for at the replacement value. If workbooks are lost, students must purchase new ones. Rental books are turned in at the end of the school year.

### School Closings

In determining the need to close during inclement weather, St. John's follows the City of Madison School system. Additionally, you will be contacted through our FACTS system. Please ensure all contact information (phone, email, mailing address, emergency and pickup contacts) are up to date. If Madison City Schools close, then St. John's will close as well. There will not be a separate announcement for St. John's; please follow the Madison City School announcement. Be alert to radio and/or television stations regarding re-opening and delayed openings. Parents are not allowed to pick up their children during tornado warnings. They are welcome to wait in safe areas with their children

### Safety/Crisis Management Plan

St. John's has developed a plan describing procedures for various possible crisis situations. A copy is maintained in the office. Routinely, St. John's practices drills to enhance preparedness in the event of an emergency.

### **RIGHT TO AMEND**

St. John the Baptist Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be communicated through the "Wednesday" folder and/or email.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BASC – Before and After School Care

FACTS – The school management software used for communication as well as displaying the student gradebook in grades 2-8. Families should log in as soon as possible and become familiar with it.

Back to School Night – An event for the entire family to attend. Meet the teachers, purchase spirit wear, and volunteer to help with the various parent organizations, pick up school supply kit.

Youth Protection for Adults I – Training that is required for volunteers. Once training is complete, send certificate to school office along with a completed AS-1 form (so principal can run a background check). All forms, etc. are on the school website.

### Events throughout the Year:

1. Family FAITH Night – Scheduled 2-3 times a year where all school activities, including homework, are suspended for the evening and the community focuses on faith-filled activities. Events may be held at school or suggestions sent home.
2. Advent program – Grades Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> have a short program in December to celebrate the season of Advent. Held in the church and lasts about 40 minutes.
3. Catholic Schools Week – held nationwide the last week of January. Events are scheduled for each day to celebrate Catholic Schools.
4. Spirit Shirt Days – Spirit shirts are sold by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class as part of fund raiser for their class trip. If students purchase the spirit shirt sold at the beginning of the school year, they will have four designated days to wear that shirt to school with non-uniform bottoms. Only the current spirit shirt for the current school year is allowed to be worn. Previous spirit shirts are not permitted.