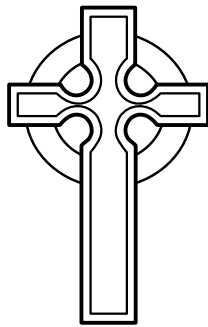


*Saint Mark the Evangelist
Catholic School*
"A School To Believe In"

Kindergarten
2009/2010



STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Pastor

Rev. Edmond F. Whyte, Pastor

Principal

Mrs. Shirley R. Sandusky

Assistant Principal

Mrs. Barbara Anne Egues

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INTRODUCTION

An interesting and challenging experience awaits you as a student or parent of the school. To answer some of your questions concerning the school's policies, the school has prepared this Parent-Student Handbook. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. The policies stated in this handbook are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school, as are all other policies, procedures, or programs of the school. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in policy. However, the school has the right to add, delete or revise any school policy or procedure with or without notice. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, and none of the policies or provisions should be construed as such. If you have any questions about the school's policies, please ask the principal for assistance.

PHILOSOPHY & MISSION

The Catholic Church's involvement in education has special importance in the pursuit of the development of youth as it aims to create an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit. It has been reinforced by the Second Vatican Council, which stated: **"True education aiming at the formation of the human person with respect to those societies... in responsibilities he/she will share"** (Declaration of Christian Education, Vatican Council).

The philosophy of Saint Mark Catholic School reflects this tradition and is summarized in the statement: **"Dum Tempus habemus, operemur bonum"** (While we have time, let us do good for the children who need us as parents and educators). It is our mission, in partnership with the parents, to maximize the development of the student intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. This is accomplished by a well-balanced program directed to meet each student's individual potential ability and achievement in order that they may become useful citizens with meaningful Christian values in a democratic society within an ever-changing contemporary world. As the school cultivates the child's development it also **"ripens the capacity for right judgment, promotes a sense of values and readies them for professional life"** (Vatican II)

The staff of Saint Mark Catholic School, along with the entire Church and school community, is committed to meet the needs of each and every student. Qualified and enthusiastic, they encourage confidence and an eagerness for learning. Students will ready themselves for the world and community in which they live, to become productive citizens and true followers of Christ. The teachers, students and parents strive together to create an atmosphere of understanding and trust, of sincerity and joy, like that of a healthy family. We also seek to instill in our students an appreciation for their own unique individuality, their cultural heritage and interests, as well as those of others. We view the multi-cultural nature of our society as a celebration of our diversity.

Saint Mark Catholic School is "A School To Believe In". Our main pastoral message is to teach as Jesus did, by forming a community life of the Spirit, teaching how to render service to the Christian community and the entire human family and develop a true love for the learning process. The curriculum reflects a balance of all areas of learning about the world, about life and about one another through an emphasis on the integrated learning of reading, science, math and the language arts.

The faculty recognizes, in accordance with the Bishops of the United States that:

The Catholic school has the opportunity and obligation to be unique, contemporary, and oriented to Christian service...All those involved in a Catholic school - parents, pastors, teachers, administrators, and students - must earnestly desire to make it a community of faith which is indeed "living, conscious, and active." (To teach as Jesus Did). Faculty and students understand their role in establishing and maintaining a safe environment to meet the mission and philosophy of the school.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to provide a safe Christ-centered learning environment

where students grow intellectually, spiritually, and physically to foster a desire for learning and to prepare each child to be a witness to the Catholic Faith and achieve their God given potential.

OBJECTIVES

We seek to form a partnership with the parents and the Church through the Parish Community in developing the whole person according to the gospel message of freedom and charity, by providing for the spiritual and by promoting the intellectual, physical and emotional well being of all students. The faculty and staff help prepare the individual for Catholic Christian living in both the home and the community. Consequently, the active participation of all parents in our Family School Association is essential to our mission.

At Saint Mark the uniqueness of each student as a child of God is respected. The faculty encourages an understanding of individual differences as well as a need to foster a sense of self-esteem in each child. Students are helped to recognize personal responsibilities to themselves, as well as social responsibilities to others, and children are encouraged to share their assets with others less fortunate. Parents and professionals are invited by teachers to address more specialized needs in cases where they occur.

The Faculty believes that the human body is a gift from God and that its proper care is essential to a well-developed person. Our family life emphasizes such beliefs.

Through the physical education program, students are given the opportunity to learn and practice physical fitness and healthy play. Within the classrooms, teachers provide for exercise and movement. Good health practices are both taught and stressed. Tests are provided for visual, auditory, or speech disorders, so that physical health can be monitored. Due to the many harmful substances available in our society today, efforts are continually made to help Saint Mark students become knowledgeable about the causes for their use, their effects, and the means for rehabilitation.

At all times, the administration and faculty, working with staff, parents and students, seek to create a genuine Christian community dedicated to the education of the total individual.

The following objectives present the ideals of the school philosophy and mission statement of Saint Mark Catholic School.

1. To help students acquire both experience and knowledge of their faith, and to instill in them a love for God and His Word, for self, family, and neighbor.
2. To create a Christian community environment which promotes positive interaction among parents, priests, teachers, administrators, and students, and which emphasizes the ideals of Christian living.
3. To promote within the capabilities and limitations of school resources, the continual growth and development of the students of varying intellectual abilities by developing the necessary learning skills.
4. To stimulate intellectual curiosity and critical thinking through research, reading, problem solving, discovery, and discussion in all programs.
5. To encourage good mental and physical health habits by developing in the students a healthy attitude toward the mind and body and an awareness of those substances dangerous to them.
6. To recognize the importance of students' families in the educational process by involving them

- in planning, evaluating, and instructing in various programs.
7. To help students acquire a sense of responsibility for fellow human beings by respecting all life, beginning with the unborn and continuing to the elderly.
 8. To encourage respectfulness and conservation of the natural environment and to teach the consequences of not protecting the earth.

HISTORY

Saint Mark Catholic School opened officially in August 1995 with pre-school, kindergarten and one first grade class. Construction began to add enough space to house 1000 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade. The construction was completed in August 1996.

The founding Principal is Shirley R. Sandusky, under the direct supervision of the Pastor of Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, Monsignor William Hennessey. Monsignor Hennessey was reassigned, after serving 10 years as the pastor, as he was appointed Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Miami. Monsignor Robert N. Lynch became the new pastor for a brief 6 months. Monsignor Lynch was then ordained the Bishop of Saint Petersburg. The current pastor is Father Edmond F. Whyte. Father Whyte was born in Ireland. In 2005 he celebrated his 41st year as a priest. He came to us from Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church. Under the guidance of Father Whyte many of the tentative plans were brought to completion.

A computer lab was installed for the 1997/1998 school year with 30 computers. An additional 5 computers have since been added to the lab. The computer lab has access to the Internet and is up to date with the newest technology.

Also added to the facility are a music room, an art room, and a playing field. The playing/soccer field was brought to completion in 2008 by installing a sprinkler system and new sod. A basketball court was built in 2006, which the children will enjoy for many years to come.

The media center has over 8700 books and 350 audio-visual items cataloged at this time and is networked to the classrooms with 2 computers.

A newly furnished state-of-the-art science lab was available to students beginning with the 1999/2000 school year.

A new playground was completed in the fall of the 1999/2000 school year and provides our pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students with an atmosphere of fun, learning and cooperative play.

A kiln room, in which student's ceramics and clay creations may be fired safely, was completed and the art department is making great use of this.

We received our accreditation from the Florida Catholic Conference in the 2001-2002 school year.

The building of a new church began in 2002 and the first Mass was held on May 21, 2006. The renovation of the parish center was completed in September 2008 and is now used as the school cafeteria.

GOALS OF EDUCATION

- T**o encourage students to understand and follow Christianity as a mode of living;
- T**o instill a sense of value for learning;
- T**o challenge every student according to his/her ability;
- T**o encourage students to develop the ability to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and think critically;
- T**o inspire in each student respect and care of persons and the environment;
- T**o encourage each student to become self-directed in work, leisure and discipline;
- T**o encourage each student to work with and support his/her fellow students;
- T**o establish service groups;
- T**o instill a sense of sportsmanship;
- T**o challenge each student to develop his/her personality to the fullest;
- T**o instill in each student an awareness of the richness of social and cultural diversity;
- T**o provide for the students and teachers a total atmosphere conducive to quality Catholic education.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Address/Telephone

Change of address or telephone numbers – home, work and cell - must be reported immediately to the school office and a note written to your child's teacher.

After School Care Program

This program is an extension of our school day. It is available from 2:30 PM to 6:00 PM. The program includes recreation, study time, snack time and quiet time. On Angel days, after school care begins at 12:30 PM.

Angel Day

On the first Friday of every month, in a charitable effort, the students, faculty and staff will not be required to abide by the school uniform policy. Students may wear “regular” clothes, however, **NO** T-shirts depicting war, violence, or immoral material, no baggy pants, midriff shirts, tank tops, sandals, platform shoes, or short skirts will be permitted. Middle school girls are not permitted to wear skirts on Angel Days. If a child is in violation of this dress code they will not be allowed the privilege to wear “regular” clothes the next Angel Day and the parent may be called to pick the child up from school or bring a change of clothing. A donation of \$1.00 for this privilege is asked of all students and staff members. The monies collected will be donated to a charity in the name of the children of Saint Mark Catholic School. Students in kindergarten will be dismissed at 12:30 on Angel days and early release days.

In a faith-filled community, the greatest teaching tool is through example. Our students and families of Saint Mark live their faith by reaching out into the community to comfort, serve, clothe and feed those that are less fortunate.

Attendance

Florida State Law requires students attend classes 180 days, which constitutes a school calendar. We realize, of course, that sickness and family emergencies will arise during the school year (excused absences). Our attendance regulations seek to help the students develop habits, which will serve them best while in school and in later years:

1. Students returning to school, following an absence must present a written excuse signed by a parent stipulating the reason and the date of the absence. Three or more consecutive days absence requires a doctor's certificate for readmission to school. In cases of communicable diseases, a physician's note is also required.
2. **Excessive absences** - A student who is absent from school more than 18 days in a year or 6 days per trimester will not be promoted to the next grade unless the principal grants an exception, and determines a way in which the student may receive additional instruction.
3. **Excused absences** – The Principal has the right to refuse an excused absence in cases where the parents' reason for keeping the child out of school does not seem valid.
4. Parents have the responsibility to see that their children are on time for school. **Excessive tardiness in elementary school will result in a parent conference with the principal. A student is tardy after 7:45 AM. Students will not be admitted without a parent escorting them to the office.**

5. Parents are asked to schedule special appointments (doctors, dentists, etc.) when possible after school hours. For exceptions to this, a written note must be submitted to the school office and homeroom teacher stating plans to leave school.

Birthday/Holiday Celebrations

These celebrations will focus on our Faith (Christmas, Easter, Advent etc.). Celebrations will be scheduled via the room parent at the request of the teacher as deemed appropriate. All plans for parties/celebrations will be at the discretion of the teacher and the administration. When planning an out of school party, invitations are to be mailed. **No invitations or gifts are to be given at school.**

Students are permitted to have birthday treats **during lunchtime only**. Please check with your child's teacher to coordinate birthday treats. The preferred treats are cookies, cupcakes or brownies - please no juice, sheet cakes, etc. Balloons are not permitted for birthday celebrations.

Siblings are **not permitted** to be signed out from class to attend a birthday or holiday celebration in another classroom.

Cameras

Cameras may not be used during the regular school day. Cameras may be permitted for special occasions and celebrations with approval from teacher.

Car Line

Everyone is required to use the car line for arrival and pick up. Please display the sign provided with your child's name on your rear view mirror in order to assist us with dismissal. The use of cell phones is **prohibited** in car line. If someone is to pick up your child other than yourself, the teacher and office must be notified in writing. The school reserves the right to require proper identification from anyone who is coming to the school to pick up a student who is not personally known to the teacher or administrator and to refuse the release of the child without it. If the teacher is not familiar with the person picking up the child, they will be asked to park their car and proceed to the office, where their identification will be verified. Please refer to the Car Line Safety Rules at the back of the handbook for more detailed instructions.

Cellular Telephones

Students are not permitted to use cellular telephones while on campus. They must be turned off and in their backpacks. If a **phone is seen outside of the student's backpack it will be immediately confiscated – no questions asked.**

Child Protective Investigations

Florida law provides that any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person responsible for the child's welfare must report such knowledge to the Department of Children and Families. The school will cooperate with all child protective investigations by DCF or the local law enforcement agency. Reports should be made to Florida's Department of Children and Families by calling the Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

Child protective investigations by DCF or local law enforcement agencies sometimes include interviews of students at school and may occur without advance notice. When it is reasonably possible, the school will seek to notify the parents that their child has been asked to participate in a

child protective investigation. The school may also request the presence of a school staff member during investigative interviews on school property. However, please note that, under Florida law, DCF and local law enforcement have the discretion to conduct unannounced interviews and to disallow school staff member's presence during these interviews.

Clinic

You will be notified immediately in case of sudden illness or accidents of a serious nature. Please be certain that the office has the correct information and phone numbers for emergency contact. School clinics, by law, are for first-aid only. The school is not permitted to send a child to a doctor for emergency treatment without the permission of a parent or guardian. The signature on the back of your child's emergency contact card will allow the school to seek emergency care for your child should the need arise and we cannot contact you.

Directory

A parent directory is published at the beginning of the school year for use throughout the year. This directory contains all the names and numbers of our families listed by class for your convenience. Please contact the school in writing if you do not want your telephone number or address published. If the office does not receive notification in writing your name, address and telephone number will be listed in the directory.

Emergency Contact Cards

These cards must be filled out completely and returned promptly. Please notify the office of any changes during the year. It is imperative that the office has emergency numbers to contact parents during the day. In a situation that would require immediate medical care, we will contact the first person listed. Your signature on the back of the emergency contact card empowers the school authorities to exercise their own judgment in calling the physician listed or if not available, transport the child to a hospital emergency room.

Faculty Lounge

The Faculty Lounge allows the teachers to have some privacy and a space to call their own. No parent or student may enter the Faculty Room for any reason at any time.

Family School Association

The Family School Association (FSA) is the official parent organization of the school, which provides support to the school in order to assist in the achievement of its goals and objectives. **All parents of Saint Mark are expected to be active members and take part in school functions.** The organization is involved with the fund raising necessary to help meet the needs of the school. It coordinates the Service Hour Program (20 hours per year) and provides social functions and fundraising events during the year. General meetings are held four times throughout the school year. All parents will be notified of meeting dates via the communication folder and web site and are encouraged to attend. Election of the board members is held at the last meeting of the year.

Financial Obligations

The satisfaction of all financial obligations to the school, including tuition and fees, constitutes a material condition for continued enrollment in the school. The school may disallow students from taking quarterly, semester, or final examinations if the parents or legal guardians fail to meet any financial obligation to the school. In addition, the school may withhold the issuance of transcripts or any other student records and/or disallow participation in or access to school activities, and/or disenroll the student if any financial obligations are not met.

Fundraisers

Saint Mark will have fundraisers during the school year. Every family and teacher is expected to cooperate in these endeavors since it is they who benefit from the results, and improvements to the school cannot be achieved without them. We also have a partnership with the women and men's club of our parish, whereby we support each other's endeavors.

Fundraising

No student may solicit funds in the school's name unless such solicitation has been authorized in writing by the principal.

Holiday/Birthday Celebrations

These celebrations will focus on our Faith (Christmas, Easter, Advent etc.). Celebrations will be scheduled via the room parent at the request of the teacher as deemed appropriate. All plans for parties/celebrations will be at the discretion of the teacher and the administration. When planning an out of school party, invitations are to be mailed. **No invitations or gifts are to be given at school.**

Students are permitted to have birthday treats **during lunchtime only**. Please check with your child's teacher to coordinate birthday treats. The preferred treats are cookies, cupcakes or brownies - please no juice, sheet cakes, etc. Balloons are not permitted for birthday celebrations.

Siblings are not allowed to be signed out from class to attend a birthday or holiday celebration.

Illness or Injury

If a child becomes ill or injured, the parent(s) shall be called. If we are unable to reach the parent(s), we shall call the person designated on the emergency contact card.

According to state guidelines, there are certain illnesses that require us to send the child home and to refuse admittance for a designated time period or until a physician has given permission in writing for the child to return to school.

The following is a partial list of such illnesses.

Chicken pox - all lesions are to be dry and crusted

A cold with green, nasal discharge

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) - 24 hours after start of medication

Diarrhea

Fever - Auxiliary temperature over 99 degrees - 24 hours fever free

Lice and Scabies - following medical treatment

Rash

Strep throat - no sooner than 48 hours after the start of oral medication or
24 hours following an injection

Vomiting - 24 hours after vomiting subsides

Immunizations

Every child must have a completed HRS form 3040 and 680 in order to be admitted to school. Immunizations must be up to date at all times. You will be notified when health records need to be updated. We hold the right to refuse admittance to school until health records are brought up to date.

Intervention Assistance Team Project (IAT)

The Intervention Assistance Team assists in both behavioral issues as well as academic issues. It is a form of interdisciplinary support whose primary purpose is to identify and assist students and teachers through the development of classroom interventions. The Intervention Assistance Team consists of the Administrator, the classroom teacher and other support personnel.

Items Brought From Home

At times, teachers allow students to bring items or materials to school that are not of a regular school nature. This should only be done with the teacher's consent. Expensive items should not be brought to school. This includes gameboys, cellular phones, cameras, CD players and I-Pods. **Toys or articles that symbolize war, violence or immorality are not acceptable at Saint Mark Catholic School.**

Lost and Found

To avoid frequent loss of items, please mark all belongings with your child's name. Lost items will remain in the office for two weeks. If they have not been claimed they are given to the needy. School uniforms without names and not claimed after two weeks will be put into the used uniform sale.

Lunch

If you do not purchase lunch please send your child to school with a nutritious lunch. Carbonated sodas or glass bottles are not allowed at any time. We have no provisions for refrigeration or heating. **Do not bring** special lunches for your child such as Burger King, McDonalds, etc. If a lunch is lost or left at home we will notify you as soon as possible. If you are unable to bring a lunch to school, your child may charge his/her lunch and bring in the money the following day.

Saint Mark Catholic School offers a hot lunch and milk program through Neil's Catering. The following are guidelines for students in Kindergarten – 2nd grade who purchase hot lunch: Lunch money needs to be sent to school in envelopes. On the outside of the envelope it should list your child's name, how much money is enclosed and what they are ordering for the day. Please send in the entire week's order at the beginning of the week so your child doesn't have to carry the money each day.

Mass

Children in grades K-8 celebrate Mass on Thursdays at 9:00 am. Our Parish community is invited and encouraged to attend. Our Masses are very well planned and create an image for the children of the major teachings of Christ and the gospel is sometimes presented in a brief but enjoyable living story form.

Media Center

Children have the privilege of visiting the media center to check out books and seek information. Books must be returned in a timely fashion and in the same condition that the book was checked out. If the book is not returned in a timely fashion a late charge of \$.05 per day will incur. Please work with your children and reinforce the importance of taking good care of books.

Medications

Students are not permitted to carry or distribute any prescription or non-prescription drugs or treatments, including aspirin, on the school grounds or at any school function. The administering of medicine to a student outside the doctor's office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should not be delegated to school personnel except under unusual circumstances. Parents should ask their physicians if it is possible to prescribe medication so it can be administered at home. Only when necessary will the school allow the administration of medication on campus, and only under the following guidelines:

1. An "Authorization for Medication" form must be completed and submitted by a parent or legal guardian of the student. The name of the medication and dosage should be indicated on the form.
2. Medications to be taken by students must be personally brought by the parent or legal guardian to the School Office. Medications to be dispensed at school must be labeled with the child's name and the exact dosage. The name and telephone number of the physician should also be on the label. Students may not bring the medication to school alone.
3. If a student must take any medication during the school day, the medication must be kept with the Nurse or School Office and the student must go there to take it.
4. While the school will monitor a student taking the medication, the school will not remind students to come and take their medication.

Monetary Collections

Money is not to be collected or solicited for any reason unless permission has been given by the principal. There are no exceptions to this.

Parental Cooperation

The school views the education of a student as a partnership between the parents and the school. Parents and students are expected to comply with the school rules and policies, and to accept and support the authority of school officials. Just as a parent can withdraw a child from the school if desired, the school has the right to disenroll a student if it determines at its discretion that the parent or student partnership with the school is irretrievably broken.

Photo Usage

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school publication and on the school's website. Any parent who does not wish his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year. **Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student or parent photos.**

School Advisory Board

The Saint Mark School Advisory Board consists of the Pastor, Principal, Assistant Principal and eight appointed members. The Pastor, in consultation with the Principal, appoints the members. The President of the Family School Association is an Ex-Officio member. The purpose of this group is to advise and support the Pastor and the Principal concerning school policies and guidelines.

School Hours

7:45 AM - 2:30 PM

The children are to arrive at school no earlier than 7:15 AM. **Any child who has not been picked up by 3:00 PM will be sent to the office and their parent/parents will be called. Due to the number of children in our After School Care Program, we are not always able to place your child in a classroom and they would remain in the office until they are picked up. For this reason, it is important that parents are prompt in picking up their children.**

The first Friday of each month kindergarten students will be dismissed at 12:30 PM. We ask that all children be picked up promptly. **Any student not picked up in a timely fashion on early dismissal days will be sent to the school office and their parent/parents will be called.** Due to the number of children in our After School Care Program, we are not always able to place your child in a classroom, and they would remain in the office until they are picked up.

School Property

Accidental damage to school or church property must be reported immediately to the school office staff. Students should develop pride in trying to keep their classrooms and school surroundings in good condition. Willful or deliberate damage to school property will be brought to the principal's attention. This is cause for suspension, detention, and/or dismissal from Saint Mark Catholic School.

Saint Mark Catholic School is co-tenant of student desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice.

School Sponsored Events

The school does not sponsor, oversee, or in any way control parties or social functions at private residences. School-sanctioned events are specifically identified in this Handbook or are identified as such in written notices generated and distributed by the school.

Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to attendance at parties or social functions at private residences or from attendance at functions not sponsored by the school. Students engaged in conduct that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the school may be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a school-sponsored function.

Scouting

We have scouting groups for boys and girls of elementary school age at Saint Mark. Scouting is an integral way of building community and friendships. Please refer to the newsletter and website at various times for registration information.

Service Hours Program

We believe that the involvement of the entire family in the educational process is essential for a successful learning experience for children. Saint Mark has every reason to be proud of what has been accomplished for the many students in attendance over the past few years. The success can be attributed to the united efforts and cooperation of the Church - Home - School with Time, Talent and Treasure. There are many forms of involvement for parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters that can benefit the school and make it possible to offer a wide variety of enjoyable school experiences for the students. Teachers will from time to time request parent volunteers for assistance with activities and/or projects.

EVERY FAMILY IS RESPONSIBLE TO ACQUIRE TWENTY (20) HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE ANNUALLY OR PAY A REQUIRED FEE OF \$200.00 BY THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL. Ten hours must be served by December 20th and the remaining ten hours must be fulfilled by May 15th. The Family School Association implements the Service Hour Program by establishing Committees to aid in the variety of school functions. A tabulation of hours earned is kept by the Service Hour Committee. Families must log their service hours in the volunteer sign in books. The following are some ways to obtain service hours during the school year.

- Annual Gala/Auction
- Athletic involvement
- Beautification & Maintenance of Grounds
- Book Fair
- Car line
- Carnival, various fund raisers (parish and school)
- Chaperones for field trips
- Clinic
- Fashion Show
- Field Day
- Lunch monitors to help with hot lunch program and daily assistance
- Room Parents
- Sharing specialized talents or interests
- Walk-A-thon

Telephone

Students will not be allowed to use the office telephone, except in an emergency situation. Forgotten books, homework, money, social plans, etc., **do not** constitute an emergency. Cell phones may not be used while on campus.

Testifying in Divorce or Custody Proceedings

The Catholic Church recognizes marriage as a Sacrament. In the Union of Christian spouses, the sacrament of Matrimony celebrates the relationship of Christ to the Church. Therefore, the school strongly supports the sacrament of matrimony as the foundation of family life and of the domestic Church. In recognition of the importance of the matrimonial sacrament to the Catholic faith, parents agree not to compel the attendance, testimony, or deposition of any school or church employee in any divorce, custody, or other legal proceedings which may in any way involve the dissolution of marriage or the determination of parental/custody rights.

In the event that a parent or legal guardian breaches this policy, any school or church personnel who are required to attend legal proceedings may be represented by an attorney. In addition, any and all legal fees and costs incurred by the school will be charged and become the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

Textbooks

All textbooks must be taken care of during the year. **Writing in textbooks is forbidden.** If a book or workbook is damaged or lost any time during the school year a new book must be purchased. All books, except consumable workbooks, must be covered at all times. Textbooks and workbooks must be brought to class every day until the last day of school.

Tuition

Tuition is due on the 1st of the month, however a grace period is extended until the 10th of the month. Any payments received after the 10th of the month will be assessed a late fee of \$15.00. Any payments returned will be assessed a fee of \$25.00. All penalties and accrued fees must be satisfied before monies can be applied to tuition.

Visitors/Messages and Deliveries

Security is a priority. Students are not to bring visitors to school during regular class hours or during lunchtime for any reason, at any time.

Only family messages will be delivered at the end of the school day. **No delivery of balloons, flowers or other personal gifts will be accepted.**

All school personnel, parents and students are required to report any visitor, not identified with a badge, to the administration office immediately.

Volunteers

Volunteers must have a volunteer screening form on file in the school office - NO EXCEPTIONS. Any volunteer that is alone with children must attend a session of Protecting Gods Children (VIRTUS) workshop, hosted by the Archdiocese of Miami. Please refer to the school calendar for training dates.

Volunteers, parents, or any other visitors, must check in at the school office before entering classrooms or labs. No one is permitted to go through the building or directly to a classroom without stopping at the office and receiving a visitor pass. Volunteers are a vital part of our school. Parents are encouraged to become involved in our Family School Association. The Family School Association, which represents the parents, is active in fundraisers, contacting volunteers and organizing special events. Anyone who wishes to volunteer in the classroom must complete and return an Archdiocese of Miami volunteer application form. These are available in the school office. When assisting in individual classrooms, we ask that no discussion take place regarding a student's behavior or progress at any time. Confidential matters that are seen or heard in a classroom should remain confidential at all times.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to provide for integrated growth spiritually, intellectually, mentally, emotionally and physically. Saint Mark stresses a solid basic curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on Language Arts, Reading and Math. Subjects included in our curriculum are: Catholic Religious Studies, Math, English, Reading, Spelling, Science, Social Studies, Library Skills, Computer Literacy, Spanish, Art, Music and Physical Education.

Delinquent Fees/Tuition

If a family is delinquent in paying tuition or fees, the administration of Saint Mark Catholic School may refuse to allow the student to take quarterly, semester or final exams, re-register for the next school year, nor will grades or transcripts be released.

Field Trips

Field trips will be selected by each individual classroom teacher and organized with the help of the bookkeeper. Educational trips are considered to be an extension of the classroom learning experience. Appropriate follow up will take place in the classroom the following day. Information about the trip and a permission slip will be sent home for parent signatures and must be returned to the school. Because field trips are considered part of the educational process, **students who elect not to participate are still required to attend school.**

Make-up Class Work

Students are given time to make up work. If you know that your child will be out for a week or more, please notify the teacher ahead of time in writing so that he/she will have time to gather the assignments. Written communication is the most expedient form of communication. Please include an explanation of absenteeism, dates etc. This will give the teacher sufficient time to prepare your child's assignments for the time he/she will be absent.

Physical Education

Physical Education plays a significant role in the curriculum of the Archdiocese of Miami. A student requesting to be excused from PE class must submit a written notification from a parent with a valid explanation. Should this exemption be necessary for more than one (1) day, a doctor's note must be submitted to the school office. Please be sure your child wears sneakers and socks suitable for Physical Education on P.E. days.

Religious Education/Activities

Saint Mark Catholic School, an integral part of the Saint Mark Parish community, believes in our Christian responsibility to educate our children in an atmosphere of loving acceptance. Nurtured by a spirit of faith commitment in our Lord Jesus Christ, we strive to help our students achieve their God-given potential as individuals and as members of the community. It is for this reason that Saint Mark Catholic School exists. Because our philosophy is gospel oriented, the curriculum is taught in light of Catholic Christian values. Christian morals and values permeate our entire education system.

Parents and students are expected to attend and participate in weekly Mass as a family. The sacrament of reconciliation is available several times during the year at scheduled times for the students.

Children participate in the blessing of throats, reception of ashes, May Crowning and other Para liturgies at the appropriate seasons of the liturgical year. No student is exempt from taking religion class or participating in the liturgical celebrations.

a. **Spiritual Program**

We believe that all education must lead to the development of a mature and personal relationship with Our Lord Jesus Christ. Emphasis is placed on instruction in the classroom, a common prayer life, participation in Mass and the sacraments and community service. The program includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. At 7:45 A.M. each school day, there is a school-wide prayer and pledge of allegiance.
2. School Masses are held weekly on Thursdays. All students are required to attend and participate in school Masses.

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued three times during the school year. Please consult the school calendar for dates.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication between home and school is a vital part of the educational process. Teachers share with parents the privilege and obligation of educating their children. Therefore, every effort should be made by parents or guardians to remain informed of the programs of the school.

Communication Folders

Every child will be given a blue communication folder at the beginning of the school year. This folder is our way of providing you with all school notices distributed by the school office (newsletters, special events, calendars, lunch forms, etc.). This folder will be sent home every Friday and must be signed and returned the following Monday to your child's teacher. You may return forms, tuition, etc. via this system. Please take the time to carefully read this folder and all letters contained in it. The information received in this folder along with letters sent through the website, will keep you informed of everything that is happening at Saint Mark Catholic School. This folder is to be used for school business only. PLEASE RETURN THESE FOLDERS IN A TIMELY FASHION.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Faculty members are always eager to discuss a student's progress with parents or guardians. Appointments may be arranged through the school office. At **no time** are parents to present themselves to the teacher during school hours. At **no time** should parents try to contact the faculty at their residence. **No parent is to go directly to a classroom or distract a teacher during car line dismissal.** If a problem should arise concerning your child and a classroom situation, please contact the individual teacher first, before referring it to the principal or pastor.

Student Progress Reports

Report Cards and Portfolio Assessments are distributed to elementary students every twelve weeks. They may be withheld from those who are delinquent in the payment of tuition or other school bills. A child's progress can be monitored through the edline account. Academics, conduct and effort will all be taken into consideration when requesting a conference with a parent. Parent conferences are scheduled through the office.

DISCIPLINE POLICY STUDENT/PARENTS EXPECTATIONS

The faculty of Saint Mark Catholic School strives to make an environment for all students that is consistent with the Roman Catholic (and school's) code of moral and ethical conduct. We work hard to create a truly Christian atmosphere and expect both students and parents to do the same. Our goal is to develop the student's SELF DISCIPLINE and SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY to God, community, family, school and self. It will be an atmosphere characterized by an academic seriousness in class, respect for authority, cooperation with all school policies and good manners at all times while in

Regulations and Behavior Policy/Behavior Management

At the beginning of the school year, classroom rules and school policies will be discussed with the students. Appropriate behavior will be expected from all students and consequences of choices made will be fairly treated. Parents are expected to support these policies.

Students must learn and understand the need for order, discipline, and obedience of rules in our shared world. They must be responsible for their actions, behavior and the consequences that may occur as a result of their actions. This portion of the handbook explains the behavioral policy and consequences if rules are broken.

Disciplinary measures will be imposed separately or progressively as the situation indicates. Students who are persistently and habitually troublesome, unruly or uncooperative or who refuse to improve after counseling or reprimand make him or herself unwelcome. **The school retains the right to discipline students and to refuse re-enrollment the next school term. If the situation is of a very serious nature, or consistently habitual, the student will be asked to withdraw from school immediately.**

Expectations

1. Saint Mark believes that the ultimate responsibility for a student's behavior rests with the parents/guardians. Students are to respect authority, which includes adherence to school rules, regulations and procedures. Saint Mark anticipates that parents will be concerned and cooperative in dealing with behavioral problems and expects that this cooperation is made apparent to the student. Parents should always be certain that they have all facts from teachers and administrators before forming a final opinion.

2. Anti-Bullying Policy

The school is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. As such, bullying is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal or written conduct or gestures directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- (1) physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student;
- (2) damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- (3) placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm;
- (4) placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or

- (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or the Catholic mission of the school.

I. Definition

- a. **Bullying** may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites).
- b. This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

II. Scope

- a. This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:
- i. on school premises before, during, or after school hours;
 - ii. on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity; or
 - iii. during any school function, extracurricular activity or other school-sponsored event or activity.

III. Reporting Complaints

- a. Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the school principal. The principal will provide the student/parent with the Bullying Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated and signed by the complaining party so that the school may initiate further inquiry, when appropriate.

IV. Disciplinary Action

- a. Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the principal's discretion.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitutes a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

3. **Assignments** - All assignments are expected to be turned in **on time**. Students are expected to work independently without talking, making noises, displaying rudeness to the teacher or disturbing others in the classroom.

4. **Behavior** - No rudeness, use of vile, vulgar, or indecent language, or unsatisfactory moral behavior will be tolerated. We expect all students to behave in a Christian manner at all times. Poor behavior in addition to that outlined previously, will be subject to proper disciplinary action. Students of Saint Mark Catholic School represent the school wherever they go; while using public and school transportation, and at any school-related function. Students should therefore act like Christian ladies and gentlemen and reflect pride in being members of this community of faith. **When off campus and during non-school hours, students represent Saint Mark Catholic School. Students who behave in a manner that reflects unfavorably upon Saint Mark Catholic School, or is in contradiction to school's principles, or is unlawful, shall be liable to disciplinary action, including expulsion.**
5. **Cheating** – cheating is the copying of work of other students, books, magazines etc. (including but not limited to tests, homework, projects). Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. Cheating on any test, quiz, assignment, project, etc. results in a failure for that specific assignment. Cheating on a midterm or final exam will result in a failure for that trimester. A repeated offense may result in expulsion from school.
6. **Complicity** – A student present in the commission of an act by another student that constitutes a violation of school policy may be held responsible if his/her behavior constitutes condoning of the violation. Students witnessing such acts are required to report them to the proper authorities and their identity will remain confidential.
7. **Dismissal** - Students must leave the school building at dismissal with their class. Transportation for all students should be provided at regular dismissal time. After school plans are to be taken care of at home – students are not permitted to use the office phones to arrange after school activities.

8. **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over the counter drugs by any student on school property or while attending or participating in any school sponsored activity or at anytime the student is wearing a school uniform is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include expulsion from the school, even for a first offense.

Any student selling drugs on school property or at school functions may be immediately expelled.

The school is committed to a drug-free environment. This commitment may, under some circumstances, prompt a need for testing of students for evidence of substance abuse.

If a student exhibits the symptoms, or is suspected of substance abuse, the school may require that the student undergo substance abuse testing at the parents' expense. If the results of the test suggest abuse (and the substance was not used on or brought to campus or a school related activity), the school will normally use this information to help the student seek assistance. Refusal to participate in such a test may result in expulsion from the school. At times, the school may choose to conduct random drug testing of the student body at the parents' expense. While this measure may not often be implemented, given the seriousness of substance abuse, the administration may consider it an effective and justifiable way of combating the problem.

A school may conduct random searches as set forth in this handbook.

9. Fighting - No roughness or fighting in classrooms, lunchroom, at any school-sponsored activity, or on the school grounds at any time. Fighting is not tolerable. Any student involved in fighting on campus or at any school-sponsored activity is subject to suspension and/or probation or dismissal from school. Assault or unprovoked attacks will result in immediate suspension.

10. Gum chewing is not permitted in the building, or corridors or church at any time. Careless disposal of gum in drinking fountains, on furniture, cafeteria hardware, and floors is unsanitary and inconsiderate. For this offense, teachers may impose responsible monetary fines and demerits. Food shall be eaten only during lunch or snack time and only in the designated areas.

11. Harrassment and Discrimination

The school is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of a person's protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status. All employees, faculty members and students are protected under this policy. In addition, this policy applies to all conduct occurring on school grounds, at assignments outside the school, or at school-sponsored events. All students are responsible for helping to assure that any harassment or discrimination is reported. If a student witnesses or learns of any conduct that violates this policy, the student must immediately report the incident to his/her principal. If, however, the principal is the individual who is believed to have engaged in the inappropriate conduct, the student should notify the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Miami. If an investigation reveals that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school will take corrective action based on the circumstances.

12. Language - No derogatory name-calling will be allowed. Language unbecoming of a Catholic young lady or gentleman, including provocative gossip, is not tolerated on the campus, on the street or on the bus. Such behavior reflects disrespect for the student and lack of consideration for others that may be offended by unbecoming, foul or obscene language. Offenders are disciplined with a suspension and/or other disciplinary action. Students who orally abuse staff members, use profanity against staff or threaten them with physical harm are subject to dismissal from school.

13. Lunchroom/Pavillion Conduct - Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves by placing their own trash in the proper receptacles and helping maintain a clean eating environment. Running, shouting and horseplay are considered improper behavior in the lunchroom or pavilion and will not be tolerated.

14. Miscellaneous offenses, however if they become habitual they will be considered serious violations of the CODE OF CONDUCT. Initial offenses of this type may be punishable by detention, monetary reimbursement, or probation.

- Violations of attendance procedures
- Dress code violations
- Unacceptable haircuts or style
- Unacceptable application of makeup or fingernail polish
- Loitering in restrooms or hallways
- Gum chewing
- Unauthorized use of the school elevator

15. Communication from teachers - It is the student's responsibility to take all notes, and graded tests and assignments home to parents. If a parent signature is required, it is the responsibility of the student to have the note, letter, test or any other item signed by the parent and returned to the teacher the following school day.

16. Off Campus Activities - When off campus (including transportation and field trips) and during non-school hours, students represent Saint Mark Catholic School. Students who behave in a manner that reflects unfavorable upon Saint Mark or is in contradiction to the school's principles or is unlawful shall be liable to disciplinary action. Parents should be certain that any party or activity their child attends is properly supervised by responsible adults. **THE SCHOOL WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY EVENT THAT IS NOT OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED BY THE ADMINISTRATION OF SAINT MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL.**

17 . Public Display of Affection

The Catholic school promotes friendship, charity, kindness, love and respect for self and others. However, inappropriate displays of affection, such as kissing or embracing which connote more than simple friendship, are not permitted in school, at school dances, or at any school event. Those who violate these rules may be subject to disciplinary measures, including detention, suspension or expulsion. The administration reserves the right to determine what is, or is not, appropriate behavior in a Catholic school

18. Quiet and Order – In classrooms students should be seated and ready to work by the time the bell rings to begin class. Students are expected to be courteous and orderly at all times inside the classroom. Classroom discipline is absolutely essential for effective teaching and learning. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL INSOLENT, BULLYING, QUARRELSOME ARGUMENTATION OR SASSING, INSUBORDINATION (DELIBERATE REFUSAL TO OBEY A REASONABLE REQUEST MADE BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL) OR SIMILAR MISCONDUCT BE TOLERATED.**

19. Respect shall be shown towards all students, faculty and staff members at all times. Students have a right to a safe environment. They are not to be threatened or frightened by other students. There is no toleration for a student who uses physical force to exhibit their frustration or anger towards another student (UNWANTED TOUCHING, PUSHING, OR HITTING). Students are at all times to show respect to his/her fellow classmates, school faculty, and employees. Students guilty of these offenses are subject to suspension and/or probation or dismissal from school.

20. Search and Seizure Policy

The principal and his/her designee has access to any lockers, handbags, book bags, desks, cars or any other object that is brought onto the campus of the school, and may remove any object which is illegal or contrary to school policy.

21. School Property - Damaging or mishandling any school property, desks, walls, etc. or theft of personal or school property will be considered serious violations of good conduct. The teacher's desk is her/his domain. Students must respect the right of privacy of each teacher. No messages or materials of any kind are to be removed from the desk without the teacher's permission. Removal of tests, grade books, texts or personal items is a serious offense and cause for disciplinary action.

22. Stealing and Vandalism are not tolerated. Students guilty of these offenses are subject to suspension and/or probation or dismissal from school.

23. Tardies - Students that are tardy must report to the school office **WITH A PARENT** for a late pass before they are permitted to enter class. Do not drop off students in car line after the bell has rung. **Excessive tardiness will result in a parent conference with the administration.**

24. Threats of Violence

The disciplinary consequences for a student whose verbal or written comments, including email messages, that threaten serious bodily harm to another student or member of the faculty or staff or destruction of property, may include, but not be limited to:

- a. Immediate suspension from the school;
- b. Treatment or consultation by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the parents' expense and/or by the school counselor, both of whom may be asked to submit a written evaluation. If it is determined that the child was serious about the threat and has the capacity to carry it out, the child may be expelled from the school. If it is determined that the child did not seriously intend to do harm to others, the child may be allowed to return to the school, at the discretion of the school principal.
- c. If allowed to return to school, the child may be placed on probation with an indication that, should a similar threat occur, the child will be expelled from school;
- d. The school should inform the Department of Schools of these cases. The school may submit an informational report to the police.

25. Uniform All students are to be in complete uniform at all times during school hours. This includes the proper shoes and socks. If an emergency arises necessitating the wearing of an incomplete uniform, a note must be submitted stating the reason and giving the approximate date when the student will return to complete uniform attire. It is at the discretion of the principal as to whether a student may attend school out of proper uniform.

26. Weapons Policy - Weapons are not permitted anywhere on school grounds. Anyone who brings a weapon on school grounds, who is in possession of a weapon, or who threatens others with a weapon may be expelled from the school. Any item used to threaten or cause bodily harm may be considered a weapon.

Penalties For Violations

First Violation: A conduct report will be sent home with the student. A parent must sign and return the report the next morning, followed by a Parent/Teacher conference.

Second Violation: Conduct report must be signed by parent and returned. Conference will be scheduled with parent, teacher and principal. At this point it will be determined if the Intervention Assistance Team will be utilized.

Intervention Assistance Team Project: A timeframe for the IAT project will be determined and a final meeting will be held with the parent, teacher, principal and the IAT to analyze responses and other alternatives.

If as a result of the IAT evaluation, it is determined that the student has a disability that prevents him/her from benefiting from the Saint Mark program, the child's educational options will be reviewed. The IAT will make recommendations for the appropriate placement of the child that will meet his/her educational needs.

Permanent Expulsion - Students who repeatedly do not conform to school rules and/or are a disruption to their class, face possible dismissal from Saint Mark Catholic School.

Statement of Changing Policy

The school administration maintains the right to change a specific policy or rule in individual cases for exceptional circumstances.

REGISTRATION

Open Admission Policy

The school has an open admission policy. No person, on the grounds of race, color, disability or national origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in the receiving of services. Nor does the school discriminate in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, gender, or national origin.

Admissions

Given the mission of the school as an agent of Catholic Christian formation, the school will accept only those children whose parents demonstrate an understanding of the specifically Christian nature of the school and a desire to participate in that mission. Some students may not be accepted because the school's educational program and facilities are not able to meet the needs of the child. In matters of admission and registration, the decisions of the pastor/principal are final.

The following records/requirements must be completed for every student entering Saint Mark Catholic School:

1. A completed registration form
2. A copy of your child's Birth, Baptismal, Reconciliation and First Communion Certificates.
3. **Florida Certificate of Immunization** (form 680) with date of immunizations
4. **Evidence of Medical Examination** (form 3040) within the past 12 months.
5. It will be verified whether families are active, supportive members of the parish in order for the family to receive the Parishioner tuition rate. An active, supportive member of the parish contributes \$1000 in the parish envelope per year **or** has an active building fund of \$3000 or more in existence.
6. The building fund fee must have begun before your child enters the grades K-8.

Students entering kindergarten must be five by September 1st.

Students entering first grade must be six by September 1st.

Re-registration for students already attending Saint Mark and registration for siblings of these students is held during the month of January. All tuition and fees must be current to re-register your child(ren) for the new school year. New family registration begins immediately afterwards from the waiting list. Parishioners of Saint Mark Catholic Church are given preference.

Financial Policy

Supply and Instructional fees are due on **May 1st**. Tuition is made in **ten** payments. The first payment is due on **June 1st**. **The remaining 9 payments will be made from August 1st - April 1st**. Fees and Tuition payments are due on the 1st of the month. Any payment received after the 10th of the month will have a \$15.00 late fee added to the account. Students' records will be withheld if there is an outstanding balance on their tuition/fees and/or building fund. **No exceptions**. Returned checks are subject to a \$25.00 fee. Prolonged delinquency in paying tuition will result in a student's suspension and possible dismissal from school. **The registration fee is non-refundable.**

Withdrawals

Please notify the principal in writing at least two weeks in advance stating your reason for withdrawal. A withdrawal form must be completed and signed and accounts settled before records are forwarded to the new school. Library books and textbooks belonging to the school must also be returned.

SAFETY POLICIES

Before/During/After School Safety

Students receive school supervision beginning at 7:15 AM at the drop off/pick up area. The car line **must** be used for drop-off and pick up. Students in Kindergarten will proceed directly to their classrooms.

If a child must leave school early, they must be picked up in the school office and signed out by their parent or authorized persons.

For the safety and security of our students, if a child is to be picked up by someone other than the designated person, written notification must be given to the teacher and the school office. No exceptions.

All students not picked up by 3:00 PM will be sent to the office and when space is available, to the After School Care Program.

Car Line

The car line **must** be used for arrival and pick up. A sign with your child's name must be hanging from your rear view mirror when you pick up your child. The use of cell phones is prohibited in car line. **If someone else will be picking up your child, you must send a note to the teacher and the office.** The person picking up must have a sign with the child's name in the front windshield. If this procedure is not followed, the person picking up the child, must park their car and go to the school office for verification. Please adhere to this rule, as no exceptions will be made. Please refer to more detailed information regarding the car line rules at the back of this handbook.

Field Trips

Classes will take part in field trips of an educational nature during the school year, as planned by the teacher. Permission slips for these trips must be completed, signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school to enable the child to take part in the field trip. **A child may not participate in the field trip if the permission slip is not returned. Verbal permission is not sufficient.** Unless otherwise designated, students will wear their school uniform on such field trips.

Inclement Weather

Please tune in to our local radio and television stations for up-to-date information regarding early dismissals or school closings.

Security

Saint Mark is aware and has taken appropriate measures to provide a safe, secure and peace of mind environment for our students and our employees. Please do not open doors for **anyone that you do not know**. The office will assume responsibility for this. We have filed a plan of evacuation/security with the Broward Sheriff's Office and the Archdiocese of Miami Department of Schools should the need arise.

Transportation

Be sure your child fully understands transportation arrangements **BEFORE** leaving home in the morning. **Please, unless it is an extreme emergency, we ask that you avoid calling the school at the last minute to relay a message to your child.** We appreciate your cooperation.

Tropical Storms

If a tropical storm or other emergency arises during school hours, parents are encouraged to come to school and pick up their children. We will observe the same regulations as Broward County Schools as to whether or not school will be in session during hurricanes or severe storm days. Please tune in to our local radio and television stations for up-to-date information regarding early dismissals or school closings.

KINDERGARTEN UNIFORM POLICY

The uniform code becomes effective on the first day of school. Parents are asked to reinforce these policies with their children. **Any student not in compliance with the uniform policy will be issued a statement to that effect to be signed by the parents. If a child receives a second warning, they will be sent to the office and their parents will be called.** The child will not be readmitted to class until the uniform is in compliance. Students are expected to be well groomed and to have sufficient uniforms. Uniforms should be clean and in good condition each day. Please replace faded, torn, etc. clothing as needed. Students are to be neat at all times. Shirts/blouses are to be tucked in.

Dress Uniforms are to be purchased ONLY at:

Sunshine School Uniforms
The Plaza (84 Diner)
11550 State Road 84
Davie, FL 33325
1-800-354-7724 or (954) 382-0951

Boys

Uniform walking shorts with or without cuff (Kindergarten and First Grade only - pull on shorts), uniform long pants, brown belt, polo shirt (**short sleeve** - blue and red striped rugby, white, red, or white with red and blue striped collar) (**long sleeve** - white), navy cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, school windbreaker or baseball jacket, uniform school shoes and uniform socks.

Girls

Plaid or navy culottes, uniform shorts with brown or black belt, shift jumper, uniform dress, white peter pan collared blouse, polo shirt (short sleeve - blue and red striped rugby, white, red or white with red and blue striped collar) (long sleeve - white), navy cardigan sweater, fleece jacket, school windbreaker or baseball jacket, white tights may be worn on cooler days, uniform shoes, uniform socks.

The length of jumpers, dresses, skirts, shorts or culottes must be no shorter than three inches from the middle of the knee.

SHOES

All students are to wear the non-marking shoe available at Wee Feet – 2204 North Flamingo Road – In the Fresh Market Plaza – 954-450-0150

PE Uniforms are to be purchased at Saint Mark Catholic School.

Blue gym shorts, Saint Mark School T-shirt, white athletic sneakers with good support and traction, and socks. Saint Mark jackets, sweaters, windbreakers and warm-up suits must be worn for cooler days. Students may wear Catholic Schools Week t-shirts and Saint Mark sports teams t-shirts also. Please do not deviate from this policy.

Backpacks

Students are to carry a blue backpack. No wheels.

Hair

Girls - parents should use good judgment in selecting hairstyles. **Haircuts are to be traditional and conservative.** Extreme hairstyles (fads, tails, dyed or bleached) are not permitted. Final determination as to what is traditional and conservative will be determined by the Administration.

Boys - parents should use **GOOD** judgment in selecting hairstyles. **HAIRCUTS ARE TO BE TRADITIONAL AND CONSERVATIVE.** Extreme hairstyles (fads, tails, shaved, buzzed, dyed, bleached, highlighted, etc.) are not permitted. When getting a hair cut, a number 3 blade and blended styled is required. Final determination as to what is traditional and conservative will be determined by the Administration. Boys must be clean shaven.

Jewelry

A cross or medal and chain and a watch are acceptable for all students. Girls may wear small (**post**) earrings only. Please no hoop earrings, as they cause a danger to our students. **Earrings are not acceptable for boys.** No other jewelry may be worn. If the Administration determines any jewelry to be inappropriate, it will be taken from the student and sent home.

Lunch Boxes

Plain/solid colored lunch boxes are preferred. Lunch boxes with pictures symbolizing war or violence are not permitted.

Make-Up

Make-up or nail polish is not permitted at any time.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM

Hours of Operation

Regular School Days: 2:30 - 6:00 PM

Early Release Days: 12:30 PM - 6:00 PM

(954) 434-3712

PHILOSOPHY

The After School Care Program is an extension of the school program and, therefore, the philosophy of a Christ-centered program extends to after school care.

The After School Care Program strives to provide an enjoyable atmosphere with varying activities, including outdoor play, art activities, study time and indoor games. After School Care is only available while school is in session.

ADMISSION POLICY

Only students who are enrolled in and are in good standing at Saint Mark Catholic School may attend the After School Care Program.

Attendance in the program is a privilege, not a right. After School Care is considered a convenience and a service for our families. Children in attendance must adhere to the rules and regulations set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook of the school.

COMMUNICATION

Staff is available if parents have any questions at all times. If you need to reach someone in the After School Program, please call (954) 434-3712 after 3:00.

DISCIPLINE CODE

Every child is expected to abide by the rules of the After School Care Program and all the rules delineated in this handbook. Children are not permitted to run inside the building. Pushing, shoving or fighting of any kind is prohibited. Outside equipment is to stay outside. Throwing of toys or objects inside will not be permitted. Furthermore, children are expected to respect staff members, other students, and all property.

If a child violates these standards, we will first take action by removing the child from the group and seating them by themselves for a 5 to 20 minute period depending on the age. If the behavior persists, the parent will be called in for a conference. Should there continue to be problems, a second conference will be arranged with the principal and After School Care Supervisor.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Parents must sign their child out from the After School Care Program **every** day. Children will only be released to designated persons. Parents should communicate to the After School Care staff of any changes or conditions of child pickup in writing. The After School Care staff holds the right to require identification of anyone who is picking up a child.

If any question arises regarding the release of a child, the After School Care staff will call the parent. Furthermore, if there is a question in the mind of the After School Care Staff as to the physical or emotional state of the person to whom the child is to be released which in the judgment of the After School Care staff would result in harm to the child, the principal or pastor will be called for a determination before releasing the child.

SAINT MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM CLOSSES AT 6:00 PM. ANY CHILD REMAINING AFTER THIS TIME WILL HAVE A FEE ASSESSED AT \$10.00 PER CHILD FOR EVERY 15 MINUTES TO BE BILLED SEPARATELY FROM TUITION AND FEES. If a child is continuously picked up after 6:00 PM you will be asked to make other after school arrangements.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted at home or at work. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed by the parent will be contacted. In the case of an extreme emergency, 911 will be contacted first. Please be sure the After School Care Supervisor is notified of any changes in your contact numbers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The most important component of the After School Care is the safety and well being of the children in our care. An emergency/information form will be filled out by every parent during the first week of school. At least two emergency phone numbers must be provided. Rules for attendance apply the same as for school. If your child is sick or has a fever, you will be notified to come and pick up the child. The giving of any medication must adhere to the rules of the school handbook.

NO TOYS, TAPES, CDs, VIDEOS OR GAMES MAY BE BROUGHT TO AFTER SCHOOL CARE FROM HOME WITHOUT THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE STAFF. THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATENESS OF MATERIALS.

LOST AND FOUND

Please put your child's name on all personal items; e.g., clothing, sweaters, backpacks, etc. The After School Care program is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

STAFF

After School Care staff is easily identifiable by their Saint Mark Catholic School shirt.

TROPICAL STORMS

If such an emergency arises during the After School Care hours, parents are encouraged to come to school and pick up their children. We will observe the same regulations as Broward County Schools regarding school closings during hurricane days. It is up to the individual school, depending on the damage incurred during the storm as to when they will reopen. Please watch the TV or listen to the radio and the Archdiocese of Miami will post instructions for which schools will reopen.

TUITION

I understand that I must sign a tuition agreement for the coming academic year. I accept the policy that no student will be permitted to attend after school care classes unless the tuition account is paid on time and in full.

VISITORS

Only parents or their designees are allowed on the After School Care site. Any visitors on official business will be directed to the school office.

Saint Mark Catholic School

Car Line Safety Rules

2009/2010

Morning procedure:

- Access to the campus is only permitted from 3 points of entry
 1. Northbound Flamingo Road
 2. Southbound Flamingo Road
 3. S.W. 55th Street coming across with the light from the east side
- Methodist Lane cannot be used during the morning line.
- Once across the bridge we will form TWO (2) lanes of traffic headed northbound on the perimeter access road, then curving westbound towards the wetlands.
- When you reach the western part of the property the cones will help direct you and cars must weave one at a time into one lane through the overhang. Unless the corner is attended by a volunteer. If attended, we will allow a full lane from the left lane, followed by full lane from the right. This will safely speed up our load/unload process. **NO EXCEPTIONS-BE COURTEOUS!**
- **DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES UNLOAD WHILE IN DOUBLE ROW. THIS IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS AND WE WILL HAVE A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY.**
- **PLEASE ROLL DOWN YOUR DRIVERS SIDE WINDOW FOR COMMUNICATION PURPOSES.** We cannot communicate with a closed window. It is a safety issue.
- All students are directed to exit from the drivers' side. We will only make exceptions if you do not have a vehicle an accessible door on the drivers' side i.e. traditional vans.
- Volunteers or Staff will help your child safely exit the vehicle and direct them safely to the building. Preschool students are always escorted for safety reasons.
- Traffic will be directed to move all at once for safety reasons.
- Do not stop until you are directed to, and please, for safety sake, keep your eyes forward.
- Right turn only onto Flamingo Road when leaving campus.

Afternoon procedure:

- **TIMING IS EVERYTHING**—regardless of when you arrive the earliest the line will move is 2:35pm and that is RARE.
- Access to the campus is only permitted from 3 points of entry
 1. Northbound Flamingo Road
 2. Southbound Flamingo Road
 3. S.W. 55th Street coming across with the light from the east side
- **PLACARD MUST BE HANGING FROM REAR VIEW MIRROR. IF LOST or SOMEONE ELSE IS PICKING UP A SHARPIE AND PAPER WILL DO. DO NOT STOP AT ANNOUNCERS SPOT AS THIS DELAYS THE LINE.**
- **Please do not arrive before 2:20pm** on regular release days. We have nowhere to put 300+ cars so if you arrive earlier than 2:20pm you are creating a potential hazard. Your children are safe and enjoying some fresh air while socializing with friends. Our 2:30 release students are outside until about 3:00pm so experiment with different pickup times to ease traffic & frustration.
- A volunteer will bring your child safely to the vehicle. Please help us by training children to buckle up immediately. Those who may need extra help **may be** asked to park in a holding zone to help speed up carline.
- **If your child is not loading during the stop of the carline**, please do not panic or become frustrated, you will be directed to a holding area (center of south parking lot). Even if your child is standing next to the Director we cannot stop the line once in motion. Simply park and we will radio for your child if needed and then escort your child safely to you. This will ensure that the maximum numbers of students are safely loading during each stop of the carline. Additional stops are dangerous and will not be allowed.
- **We reserve the right to refuse to load a child into your vehicle if there is no seat belt available. Be sure if you are carpooling, that your vehicle is equipped with enough seatbelts for every child.**
- When directed resume driving and exit the campus. Passing other vehicles is prohibited.

BASIC SAFETY & PROCEDURES:

- **Cellular phones are strictly prohibited – ZERO TOLERANCE, ZERO EXCUSES.** To ensure the safety of the children, staff and volunteers **there will be no exceptions.**
- Practice **PATIENCE & RESPECT**—it is extremely warm and our volunteers are just that. If we lose them we will be forced to implement a mandatory carline service hour program.
- Regardless of Arrival time, the front of carline is at the southern curve of the south side parking lot. **Do not stop while carline is in motion.** Eliminating gaps removes as many cars as possible from Flamingo Road. That is why you are asked to eliminate **ALL** Gaps in carline. **When you stop the vehicle must be placed in Park.**
- **DO NOT STOP WHILE LINE IS IN MOTION TO ALLOW ARCHBISHOP STUDENTS TO CROSS.** For safety reasons these students have been advised daily to cross in a designated area that does not interfere with our traffic flow.
- **Drivers or other adults are never permitted to exit the vehicle.** Please save yourself the embarrassment of having to be asked to get in your car. Staff or volunteers will assist your children.
- **PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE EARLIER THAN 10 MINUTES PRIOR TO PICKUP.**
- Maximum speed of **15 mph.**
- **Parent Teacher conferences may not be conducted during carline.**
- **Parking is prohibited in all coned areas.**
- **All parents are to conduct themselves in a Christian manner. Tempers, arguments and all other inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated and will be directed to the Priest and Principal for intervention.**
- When directed resume driving and exit the campus. Our exit route will be on the south side of the Parish Center and it will have incoming and outgoing traffic so please remain in the right lane. Passing other vehicles is prohibited.
- **On Angel Day do not arrive earlier than scheduled release.**

Very Simple:

- Use Car Line
- Be Timely
- Remain in your Car
- Be Patient

Suggestions are always welcomed. WE can always use volunteers NO RSVP'S NEEDED - WE WILL TRAIN.

Appendix

COMPUTER USE

The school may provide its administrators, faculty and students with access to computers and various information technology resources including email and Internet access in order to enhance the teaching and learning environment of the school and to improve the school's operations. Students must use these resources in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the school and the Catholic teachings. Therefore, students must abide by the following general rules of conduct:

1. Respect and protect the privacy of others;
 - a. Use only assigned accounts and passwords;
 - b. Do not share assigned accounts or passwords with others;
 - c. Do not view, use or copy passwords, data or networks to which you are not authorized;
 - d. Do not share or distribute private information about yourself or others.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources;
 - a. Observe all network security practices;
 - b. Report security risks or violations to the school principal;
 - c. Do not vandalize, destroy or damage data, networks, hardware, computer systems or other resources;
 - d. Do not disrupt the operation of the network or create or place a virus on the network;
 - e. Conserve and protect these resources for other students and Internet users.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others;
 - a. Do not infringe on copyright laws including downloading or copying music, games or movies;
 - b. Do not install unlicensed or unapproved software;
 - c. Do not plagiarize.
4. Respect the principles of the Catholic school;
 - a. Use only in ways that are kind and respectful;
 - b. Report threatening or discomfoting materials to the school principal;
 - c. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that violate the school's code of conduct (such as indecent, threatening, rude, discriminatory or harassing materials or messages);
 - d. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that are illegal (such as obscene, stolen, or illegally copied materials or messages);
 - e. Do not use the resources to further any other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct;
 - f. Do not use the resources for non-educational purposes such as visiting chat rooms, social websites or networks like My Space or Facebook;
 - g. Do not send spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings;
 - h. Do not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business or political campaigning without prior written approval from the school's principal.

Supervision and Monitoring

The school and its authorized personnel may monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. The school reserves the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline or security of any student or other person or to protect property. It may also use this information in disciplinary actions and may furnish evidence of a crime to law enforcement.

Unacceptable Use of Outside Technology

The school expects students to use information technology (including, but not limited to, the Internet, email, instant messaging and text messaging) in a responsible and ethical fashion in compliance with all applicable laws and with Christian moral principles, both in and out of the school setting. Accordingly, students may not post, place, upload, share, or communicate any images, photographs, statements or inferences relating to or including profanity, vulgarity, indecency, illegal use of drugs, illegal use of alcohol or other illegal or illicit activities. Additionally, students may not use information technology for the purpose of defaming, threatening, teasing or harassing any other student, staff member, parent, faculty member, or other person. This includes, but is not limited to, communications on social networks such as My Space and Facebook. In addition, this rule applies to communications both during the school year and while students are on vacation or summer breaks. Students are responsible for all materials and communications made on personal websites and social networks and the materials and communications should be consistent with Christian moral principles, including any materials or communications posted on their sites by other individuals. Moreover, any unauthorized use of the school's name (or common names associated with the school) or any likeness or image of the school or its employees or agents is strictly prohibited.

Consequences for Violations

A violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privilege to use the school's information technology resources and any additional consequences at the principal's discretion including expulsion.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should complete the Request for Release of Student Records and submit it to the School principal [or appropriate school official] identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic School

Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I, as Parent or Legal Guardian, acknowledge that I have read the entire contents of the Parent-Student Handbook and understand the consequences of any violations of the rules and policies of the school.

I agree to cooperate with the school in the interpretation and enforcement of the policies outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. I also understand that the school has the ultimate authority over the administration of the school and the interpretation of the school's rules and policies. Moreover, I further understand that all of the school's policies, whether written or verbal, are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school, with or without notice.

I also hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms of the **RELEASES** outlined in the School Sponsored Events Policy, the Participation in School Athletics or Organizations Policy, and the Use of Photos Policy.

Print Parent/Legal Guardian Name

Date

Signature Parent/Legal Guardian

Print Student Name

Grade

Student Signature