

Saint Joseph School

New London, Connecticut



"A Holy Place Where We Discover Each Other in God's Love"

**Parent & Student Handbook
2022 – 2023**

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WELCOME

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

I welcome you to a new school year as we celebrate our 85th year in the ministry of Catholic Education at St. Joseph School. As a Catholic Elementary School including St. Mary Star of the Sea, St. Paul and surrounding parishes in the Diocese of Norwich and the Parish of St. Joseph, New London, our entire school family carries forward the tradition of an excellent academic education. Being the first educators of your children, we ask our parents and guardians to celebrate and support the mission and policies of our Diocese and of our St. Joseph School as we develop the spiritual, intellectual, and creative gifts your children have been given by virtue of their creation in God's image.

It is our hope that this Handbook and our adherence to the information within it will assist you and our faculty and staff in providing a faith-filled and successful experience at St. Joseph School.

Prayerfully,

Marianne Cote
Principal

Saint Joseph School Mission Statement

Mission Statement

Saint Joseph School is a vital part of the Saint Brendan the Navigator Catholic Community, including St. Joseph and St. Mary Star of the Sea in New London, St. Paul in Waterford and Our Lady of Grace in Fisher's Island, NY. Our school lives the moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Our Saint Joseph School Family welcomes and accepts the unique gifts all have been given by God. We answer the call to model Jesus as we work to build God's kingdom as a diverse and joy-filled family. We are an evangelizing community that educates and nurtures each person to be faith-filled, knowledgeable, confident citizens of the world. Saint Joseph School is a holy place where we discover each other in God's love. (Revised 01/2022)

- A** Accept each person as a unique creation in God's image.
- M** Model Jesus as we make everyone feel welcome in this holy place.
- E** Educate each other for life.
- N** Nurture the diverse gifts and talents of the whole school family.

Prayer life

If we are truly to come to know God, we must enter into a relationship with God through prayer. Each school day begins and ends with prayer either within the classroom or as a school community.

In addition to classroom prayer, our school community gathers to begin each week and for seasonal and special occasion prayer services and to celebrate the Eucharist. These opportunities include prayer services for Advent and Lent, for Catholic Schools Week, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, as well as the traditional devotions of the Rosary during October, the Stations of the Cross during Lent, and Lessons and Carols during the Advent season. The celebration of the Eucharist takes place monthly, prepared by individual classes, and on holydays. The students and teachers of grades three through eight gather to celebrate Reconciliation during the Advent and Lenten seasons.

Catholic Identity

Our Catholic Identity tells us “All are welcome” in this school family. Our curriculum and all that we do is rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the traditions of our Catholic Church. As a religious educational community, our mission includes the following goals.

- To help each student to relate the living Christ to his/her personal life in relationship with others.
- To share with our young people the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ in an atmosphere of love, respect, and understanding, that they may in turn share this message.
- To create a Christian community within our school and classrooms.
- To provide opportunities for the development of the prayer life of the school community.
- To give students a knowledge of Catholic Doctrine through the use a planned process of instruction.
- To enable our young people to grow in the love of Jesus Christ and one another through the sacraments, in particular through the Eucharist and Reconciliation where this applies.
- To provide opportunities for parental involvement and instruction through preparation for the children's reception of the sacraments (where applicable), through participation in prayer and sacramental celebrations, especially the Eucharist, and through written and verbal communication.
- To foster the understanding of our call to serve others, both within our community and beyond it.

As a Catholic Christian community, not only do we nurture our relationship with God through prayer and study, but also in serving others. Our school community offers many age-appropriate opportunities to answer our call to serve through food collections at Thanksgiving, Rice Bowl collections during Lent, and various outreach activities throughout the school year. Some of these opportunities include the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital Math-a-thon, and cards and letters to our troops overseas. Students experience service within the school community through our "buddy" programs, through peer tutoring, cooperative learning and other occasional activities. Students extend service to the soup kitchen through meal preparation and to local convalescent homes and other non-profit organizations, offering volunteer service during after-school hours.

Parent's Role in Education

St. Joseph School, in keeping with the documents of the Roman Catholic Church, recognizes parents as the first educators of their children. As parents entrust to us the most precious gift of their children, our mission calls the administration, faculty and staff of St. Joseph School to provide an excellent academic education within the spiritual development and faith formation that we are called to provide. It is the parent's role to assist their children and to support the mission and policies of the school, its administration, faculty and staff in carrying out this mission.

Upon enrolling their children at St. Joseph School, parents entrust to the School the precious gift of the education and faith formation of the children. Parents, administration, faculty and staff cooperate and collaborate through positive, personal communication with one another. The Home-School Association also acts a vehicle of communication between the home and the school. Parents are expected to observe and respect in word and action the mission, policies, administration, faculty and staff of the school. The expectation is that all in our school family will model for our children, Jesus the Master Teacher.

Administration and Faculty

Father Mark O'Donnell, Pastor
 Miss Marianne Cote, Principal
 Mrs. Tracy Allgaier, Kindergarten
 Mrs. Samantha Batch, Grade 1
 Mrs. Sandra Chapman-Pisarz, Grade 2
 Ms. Christina Lawton, Grade 3
 Mrs. Christina Baukus, Grade 4
 Mrs. Karen Podurgiel, Grade 5
 Mrs. Melissa Andriks, Grade 6
 Mrs. Jennifer Bustamonte, Grade 7 Homeroom, Grades 6-8 Literature, Grades 7-8 English
 Mrs. Gillian Egan, Grade 8 Homeroom, Grades 7-8 Religion, Grades 6-8 Science,
 Grade 8 Algebra
 Ms. Amanda Lakowsky, Math Grade 7, Grade 6 Religion, Grade 7-8 French, Technology K-8
 Ms. Maddie Kornacki, Health and Physical Education K-8
 Mrs. Jean Butchka, Art K-8, French, and Latin 4, Latin 5-6
 Mrs. Diana Blanda Smith, Music
 Mr. Johnny Lee Walton, Music Instrumental, Connecticut Future Musicians
 Ms. Christine Williamson, Librarian

Classroom Aides

Ms. Tabitha Ford, Grade 1

Support Staff

Mrs. Kathleen Bergeron, Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Jennifer Bustamonte, FACTS Administrator

Mr. Gregory Moore, Building Maintenance

Mrs. Mary Sweeney, MSW, Guidance

Mrs. Ana Tejera, School Nurse

After School Care

Mrs. Carmen Regalado

Saint Joseph School Advisory Board

Mr. Thomas Amanti, Chairman

Ms. Lilliam Almaraz-Brennan

Ms. Angela Arnold

Mr. Dan Adams

Ms. Theresa Ferryman

Mr. William Hannaford

Ms. Vivian Manzione

Mr. Sean Moore

Mr. Rich Muckle

Ms. Ethel Reed

Home and School Association Officers

Mrs. Kristin Massad, Co-President

Mrs. Susan Tierney, Co-President

Ms. Jennifer Bustamonte, Treasurer

The philosophy of St. Joseph School derives from our belief that our Roman Catholic Faith Tradition is the center of life. This philosophy defines the teaching/learning process, with respect to our society and to our community, in the context of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Teachers shall appreciate the individuality of each student as the student's potential develops through maturation and experience. Recognizing that to realize one's full potential is to be in God's image, teaching shall emphasize the steps of the learning process so that students may attain high standards of knowledge. Teachers shall exemplify the teachings of Jesus Christ in partnership with the parents, who are called to be the primary educators of their children.

Students shall be active participants in the learning process. They shall observe, organize and experiment as they develop strategies for problem solving through creative and critical thinking. The students shall strive for high levels of spiritual, cognitive, and social growth, as every child develops and uses their God-given talents.

The school shall celebrate the cultural diversity and unique environments within the community, which it serves. The Saint Joseph community-pastor and associates, administrators, teachers, students, parents and parishioners-works together with the understanding that if we are to truly live our faith, we must do so in a community which serves God in a global society. The school models the importance of individual responsibility and group cooperation, enabling students to be active members of a peaceful and just society.

The moral teaching of the Catholic Church shall be the foundation of the ethics of all members of the Saint Joseph School Community. Individuals, understanding their responsibility as members of God's kingdom, will set goals and make choices reflective of this understanding.

- We will assist parents in the faith formation of their children by providing a variety of prayer experiences, including the Rosary and Stations of the Cross, sacramental preparation, and the celebration of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- We will provide instruction, which will enable an age appropriate understanding of Scripture, Doctrine, Church and Sacraments, as well as an awareness of our responsibilities within the global society in which we live.
- We will model the Beatitudes of Jesus, committed to each person's self-worth, to forming Christian relationships within our community and to understanding our call in Baptism to be "priest, prophet and king".
- We will seek to develop in each student a value system based upon the Gospel Message of love of God, self, family and neighbor through instruction, through a variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities that enhance and development the gifts of all.
- We will provide opportunities for decision-making and the acceptance of Christian responsibility (e.g., student council, outreach to the local, national and world communities, and service within the school community).
- We will provide opportunities for cooperation and positive competition among the students (e.g., achievement lists, class plays, reading and writing buddy programs, Art Exhibit, Games Day teams, Oratory Program, Science Fair, and sports programs).
- We will pursue an environment which models responsibility for choices, self-discipline, mutual respect, understanding and loyalty among all members of the school community.
- We will provide opportunities which foster awareness and understanding of those outside our school community through outreach programs to those in need.
- We will encourage open communication among members of our school community and the community at large through the written and spoken word.
- We will provide a planned program of integrated studies in the areas of religion, language arts, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, foreign language, fines arts, music, performing arts, physical education, and health.
- We will provide learning opportunities, which are interdisciplinary (e.g., Catholic values and traditions in all areas of the curriculum, cross-curricular field trips, technology as an integral part of the sciences and language arts, class plays integrated with content areas making use of the visual and performing arts,).
- We will provide extra-curricular activities, which enable students to use learned skills and behaviors in a variety of ways.
- We will foster creativity and to encourage critical thinking through writing, researching, listening and communicating.

The dream of St. Joseph School began with the first pastor of St. Joseph Parish, Fr. William Fitzsimmons. In the 1920's Fr. Fitzsimmons started a building fund to which parishioners donated twenty-five cents per week. Although this was during the time of the Depression, enough money was raised to purchase the property on which the school is built. Fr. Fitzsimmons' dream was not realized during his lifetime, as he died in 1933. He was succeeded by Father James Vincent Hussion, who died in 1936, also prior to the building of the school.

Under the pastorate of Fr. Denis O'Brien, a renowned scholar and educator at Mount St. Charles in Maryland, who also studied in France and Germany, announced the building of St. Joseph School in January 1937. The corner stone was set in place on May 30, 1937, before 800 parishioners.

St. Joseph School opened in September 1937 with an enrollment of 120 students in grades kindergarten through 3. The school was staffed by the Sisters of Mercy with Fr. O'Brien as the principal.

An additional grade was added each September until 1943, when St. Joseph graduated its first class of twenty-three students. At this time the school continued to be staffed by eight Sisters of Mercy and one lay teacher, Mary McCarthy Leiper. Fr. O'Brien remained active as the school's principal, and the school continued to provide an excellent religious and academic education for its children.

Upon the death of Fr. O'Brien in 1943, Fr. John D. Carey became the pastor and the principal of St. Joseph School. He served until his retirement in 1961. Under his leadership, the parish and the school enrollment continued to grow. Enrollment peaked at 300 students.

In January 1962, Msgr. Paul St. Onge was named pastor of St. Joseph Parish. At that time the need for Catholic Education in the intermediate and middle grades forced the elimination of Kindergarten through Grade 3, and the expansion of Grades 4 through 8 to two classes each. This allowed the school to serve this need.

A fund-raising drive, headed by Msgr. St. Onge, to make improvements in the school and church, was held during the 1960's. As a result, a new wing was added to the school, which provided a kitchen area, a small meeting room, an office, and an additional classroom on the second floor.

In September of 1968, Sister Susan Carlin, RSM, arrived at St. Joseph School to serve as its first teaching principal. In the spring of 1969, Sr. Susan became the full-time principal. In 1974, under her guidance, Grades 1 through 3 were reopened and in 1976, the Kindergarten was reestablished.

Due to the shortage of religious, lay teachers gradually replaced the teaching sisters and by 1979, Sister Susan was the only remaining sister at St. Joseph. Under her guidance, a library was

added within the school building and the St. Joseph Home and School Association was established. During Sister Susan's tenure as principal, St. Joseph School received its first accreditation from the Diocese of Norwich and as a result, approval by the State of Connecticut. Sister Susan resigned in May of 1984, leaving a completely lay staff at St. Joseph School.

In September of 1984, Mr. Frank A. Farina, formerly a teacher at St. Joseph School, returned to the school as principal. Under Mr. Farina's direction the curriculum was expanded to include computer science, French, art, music, and band. Curriculum innovations were put in place within the traditional curriculum.

In the fall of 1988, Msgr. St. Onge retired as pastor of St. Joseph Parish, having given many years of his priestly life in service to the people of St. Joseph Parish and the children of St. Joseph School. His successor, Fr. Joseph Castaldi, continued to follow Msgr. St. Onge's tradition of the moral and financial support for Catholic Education, that had begun so many years before with the dream of Fr. Fitzsimmons. Mr. Farina continued as the principal through the fall of 1997, when Miss Cote was appointed principal.

In 1988, Marianne Cote, arrived at St. Joseph School as its first teaching assistant principal. Miss Cote continued as assistant until Mr. Farina's retirement in December of 1997. At this time Miss Cote became the second lay principal of St. Joseph School and remains as principal in this current school year of 2018-2019. During her tenure as the principal of St. Joseph School, Miss Cote has continued to engage the excellent religious and academic education of the School, adding Latin and Spanish to the foreign language curriculum, expanding the technology curriculum, and updating curriculum programs. The addition of extra-curricular programs including literary, math, science, and photography clubs as well as other after school activities has continued to enrich the student experience. With the closing of St. Mary, Star of the Sea School and the clustering of parishes, St. Joseph School welcomes the children of St. Mary Star of the Sea and St. Paul Parishes as in-parish students. The St. Brendan the Navigator cluster continues to flourish as we grow our St. Joseph School enrollment.

In January of 2012, Father Mark O'Donnell was appointed pastor upon the retirement of Father Castaldi. Since that time Father Mark has also been named the pastor of St. Mary, Star of the Sea, Our Lady of Grace, and St. Paul Parishes.

We are proud to claim three Bishop Michael Cote Seton Awardees for contributions to Catholic Education as our own: Father Joseph Castaldi, Ms. Marianne Cote, who has also been awarded the Patrici-Anne Diocesan Award, and Father Mark O'Donnell.

St. Joseph School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and approved by the State of Connecticut.

The Home-School Association continues to support the school, not only through financial means, but also through community building and service.

Major improvements have been made to the facility during the past several years, including a new heating system, roof, windows, the sealing of the front brickwork, new fencing and blacktop

for the playground, new flooring in all classrooms as well as playground equipment, intercom with phones, and security system.

The school maintains an enrollment of approximately 125 students.

This September 2022, St. Joseph School celebrates its 85th year of providing an excellent Catholic School Education. The Mercy charisms of excellence in faith formation and academic education, as well as hospitality, continue to be at the forefront of the mission of St. Joseph School. The St. Joseph School community is a welcoming one in which all members have the opportunity to “discover each other in God’s love.”

Accreditation

St. Joseph School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and approved by the State of Connecticut.

STUDENT SAFETY

Photo/Video Release

At the beginning of each year parents must sign a release allowing photographs of their children to be used in the Diocesan or local papers and on the school website. Without this permission, children's photos will not be used on any of the above.

Emergency Cards

An emergency card must be completed by all parents / guardians for each student. This card provides emergency contact information in the event that the school needs to reach parents /guardians or other adults designated by the parents. Emergency cards must be completed during the first week of school and updated as needed.

Walking Permission Slip

Occasionally, students are asked to walk (with appropriate supervision) to a designated location in order to participate in a class or team activity. Parents are notified of this in advance through the regular permission form, as would be the case with all field trips or sports teams.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Non-discrimination Policy

For the admission of students, Saint Joseph School does not discriminate based on race, color, or creed.

Parental Obligations

Parents registering their children at St. Joseph School have a responsibility to accept the mission and policies of the School, its administration, Board, faculty and staff. As parents/guardians accept the invitation to be a part of St. Joseph School, they accept all school policies, financial obligations, and responsibilities that are a part of their children's education at St. Joseph School.

activities. Families are expected to participate in fundraising activities to the best of their financial ability. Funds raised are used to provide additional activities for the students, as well as to enhance all school programs. The Home School Association works in consultation with the Principal and answers to the school administration with respect to all activities that it plans and carries forth. Four officers lead the Home-School Association and meetings. All parents, faculty and staff are members of this association. Meetings are held monthly and all are urged to attend.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Tuition Collection

FACTS Tuition Management, Inc. is the company through which tuition is collected. All families must register for this service and choose a payment plan, unless payment is being made in full by August 1 prior to the beginning of the pertinent school year. Registration is an online procedure and all families using this service must register on a yearly basis. To register one must access our school web site at sjsnl.com and click on the FACTS link. This link will provide directions for registration.

Saint Joseph School offers financial assistance to those families who need help in meeting the cost of tuition. There are several scholarships available through the Diocese as well as St. Joseph School and Church. Families may apply for assistance through FACTS Tuition Management. The determination of need is based on the FACTS scholarship application. If additional assistance is warranted, the principal (and in some cases the pastor) will assess the individual need and make a decision as to the financial assistance that will be given.

The Catholic Foundation and the St. Joseph School Adopt-A-Student Scholarships provide the main source of financial assistance to the families. The funds received from these scholarships are used to offset the cost of tuition. Parents may then choose a payment plan using FACTS.

Refunds/Transfers/Withdrawals

The deposits for the coming school year are non-refundable. Refunds for tuition after the school year has begun will be considered on an individual basis. (Revised 01/22)

Graduation and Class Fees

Students in grade 8 are expected to pay a monthly fee for class dues. This fee assists with 8th grade expenses, including class trips, class pins, caps and gowns and other pertinent expenses.

Miscellaneous Money

Any funds being collected by any class for various activities or expenses of the class or Home-School Association activities are to be sent in an envelope with the student's name, grade, and the activity for which the funds are being sent to school.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

The environment of our school is focused on ideals, beliefs and actions, which guide the student in his or her relationship with God, based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The school philosophy is to develop the whole child on this faith journey toward God's kingdom.

Graduate Profile

A Graduate of Saint Joseph School has the following characteristics

- Faith-filled fosterer of the next generation of thinkers and believers.
- Articulate, Confident Leader.
- Compassionate, Service-oriented,
- Knowledgeable, Life-long Learners, prepared for the next educational experience.
- Well-rounded person who sees St. Joseph School as "home".

General Curriculum

St. Joseph School espouses the curriculum set forth by the Diocese of Norwich Catholic School Office, which is inclusive of the National Catholic Educational Associate Standards and Benchmarks for Catholic Elementary Schools. Coupled with our Religion and Faith-formation curriculum, our Academic Curriculum provides our students with the tools needed to be successful, Christ-like citizens in a world of ever-changing technology, developing the skills to think and act critically, creatively and responsibly.

St. Joseph School provides a comprehensive program of spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, and physical activities to guide each student on the faith journey toward God's kingdom. Rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and focused on ideals, beliefs, and actions, we celebrate and nurture the diverse gifts and talents of each individual as we experience community in God's love.

With the ideal of academic excellence integrating faith with life, we provide instruction in Religion, Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics and Science, Social Studies and History, Technology, Music and Art, Foreign Language, Health and Physical Education. The teaching/learning process seeks to realize the full potential of every child by actively engaging students in a range of differentiated age-appropriate opportunities for a variety of learning styles. Carefully balancing the advances of technology in accelerating transmission of information with appreciation of reflective personalized communication, students are recognized for "Summer Reading" accomplishments, "Young Authors" original works, and successes in oration and essay competitions. The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary Schools inform our collaboration with parents in this shared ministry.

Our school family has chosen during the past several years to embrace the following as our spoken mission (derived from our mission in paragraph format).

- A** **Accept** each person as a unique creation in God’s image.
- M** **Model** Jesus as we make everyone feel welcome in this “holy place”.
- E** **Educate** each other for life.
- N** **Nurture** the diverse gifts and talents of the whole school family.

Participation in liturgy and communal prayer as well as active service to those who are need are integral components of the student experience. The curriculum is enriched by cultural assemblies and performing arts opportunities in drama and music through monthly class plays, instrumental and choral music, attendance at opera and ballet, and the eighth grade New York theater trip. Student council membership and sports teams inspire self-expression and cooperation to develop the whole child in the image of God.

Students in grades kindergarten through eighth develop the skills to become confident and productive citizens in a multi-cultural society and the future leaders of our Church and nation. With a clearly defined mission and commitment to our Catholic identity, we provide an authentic program for all students of the twenty first century.

Curriculum

The information below regarding the curriculum of St. Joseph School, which follows the curriculum standards set forth by the Diocese of Norwich Catholic Schools, begins with Religion. Content areas following are presented in alphabetical order.

Religion and Faith Formation

The **Religion and Faith Formation Program** at St. Joseph School is a reflection of the Mission of our Catholic School—to be a holy place where we discover each other in God’s love. The program follows the curriculum and standards set forth by the Roman Catholic Church and the Diocese of Norwich. All students are expected to participate in classroom instruction and prayer.

Believing that the learning teaching process must be a cooperative and active one, the Religion program provides activities consistent with this belief. Students are engaged in prayer and worship, learning, and service that are consistent with the moral theology and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Faith and the mission of the Catholic Elementary School. The doctrine of the Roman Catholic Faith is approached at each level in an age appropriate manner. Prayer and Worship, Sacraments, Scripture, Theology, Church history, and moral development are a part of each level’s instruction through the current texts, and supplementary materials.

Students actively participate in prayer and worship as individual classes and within the whole school setting. Classes begin and end each day with prayer. The entire school begins each week with prayer, gathering in the auditorium. The Eucharist is celebrated on a monthly basis and on

holy days and other special occasions. On special holidays and during specific seasons (Advent and Lent) of the Church year, the whole school comes together to celebrate the ongoing traditions of the Church (e.g. Advent wreath lighting, Jesses Tree, Stations of the Cross, The Rosary during October).

The school prepares students for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. In keeping with the family nature of our school, parents are invited and urged to be present and participate in celebration and instruction when appropriate.

Called in Baptism to serve, our students are nurtured in this understanding. Students make cards and drawings for those in need of cheering up, whether due to illness or being away from families in the armed services. Students serve within the school family and in the local and global communities. Students become reading and writing buddies with those younger than themselves, serve as helpers in the lunch room for primary students, cook and serve meals for the local soup kitchen and provide donations to the food pantry and local shelters, participate in the St. Jude Research Hospital math-a-thon, earn funds and donate to local tragedies and world disasters. Eighth grade students are expected to be of some service on a weekly basis.

The mission of Catholic Education and in particular, the mission of St. Joseph School, is evident throughout the curriculum and its delivery. The Art program at St. Joseph school contributes to

Fine Arts

The **Art program** at St. Joseph school contributes to the mission of the school as students develop their God-given gifts and talents through artistic expression.

The Art Program is offered to all students in K-8 and is further integrated into the curriculum in a variety of activities that help develop the whole child. In the lower grades, attention is given to development of fine motor skills including cutting, pasting, and identifying primary and secondary colors and shapes. Students are also introduced to a variety of artists, styles and media. In the upper grades, the program expands the emphasis on creativity and originality in order to develop an appreciation of individual and unique style. There is more attention given to art history and exploration of the artistic expression of other cultures in the upper grades.

Teaching methods include lecture, modeling and demonstration, allowing students to create original works through a variety of techniques. Art instruction incorporates various papers, paints, adhesives clay, and other creative materials and utensils. The Catholic Schools' Week cooperative art project brings all students together in a unifying creative experience based on our faith. During Catholic School Week, students also participate in the St. Bernard School Art Exhibit. A Saint Joseph School Art Show at the end of the year also showcases the talents of each child. Despite modest space available for the art department, individual creativity and self-expression are encouraged and affirmed, inspiring students to achieve personal goals and to appreciate the work of others.

Foreign Language

The **Foreign Language Program** reflects the mission of St. Joseph School, modeling respect for oneself and others. Students grow in their understanding of the concept of cultures and in appreciation of commonalities and diversity. Instruction in foreign language is as follows: Primary Spanish – Grades K-3; Latin/French – Grade 4; Latin – Grades 5-6; French – Grades 7-8. This includes acquiring information through use of technology as well as print and audiovisual resources, written expression, and conversational opportunities. Students communicate information, express their feelings and exchange opinions. Individuals are encouraged to use the study of languages for personal enrichment and to prepare for future study in high school and beyond.

Health

The **Health Education Program** at St. Joseph School contributes to our mission by exploring respect, cooperation and conflict resolution. Intellectual, physical and emotional development are addressed through discussion, print media, experimentation, audiovisual materials and goal setting. Social and communication skills are fostered as students analyze the influences of culture, media and technology on life style choices of fitness and nutrition. Complementing the life science and social studies areas of our program, health education nurtures students to advocate confidently for personal, family, and community safety and wellness.

Language Arts

The **Language Arts Program** reflects the Diocesan Standards and Goals with grade-specific objectives and teaching methodologies. The school-wide academic goal of improvement in spoken and written language is addressed frequently in full faculty discussions. Professional Learning Cluster meetings among teachers at each level assess progress, provide for continuity, and clarify individual student needs. Faculty members are supported in attending workshops and diocesan in-service days for professional growth.

Daily literacy experiences include vocabulary development, pre-reading discussion and graphic organizers to establish readiness for comprehension, silent reading, teacher-directed reading-thinking activities, partner and small-group activities, written response, whole-group discussion for critical thinking and problem solving, and independent use of enrichment resources. At the primary level daily writing activities include journals, correspondence, writing cooperatively with older student buddies, and the full writing process applied to a variety of genres—fiction, retelling stories of our Faith, research and simple reports, poetry, and questions for oral history interviews. At the intermediate and middle school level, students write in a variety of styles including expository, persuasive, descriptive, narrative, poetry and letter writing.

Students are expected to research and to correctly document their research. Many times writing activities are used to develop speaking skills. School-wide public speaking presentations occur in grades 5-8.

An assortment of cultural experiences –including author and poet visits, onstage dramatic presentations by each grade and by professional touring players, Summer Reading and Young Authors programs—provide enrichment and inspire creativity. Classroom libraries provide a rich diversity of quality children’s literature for independent choice and teacher-read listening enjoyment in a variety of genres—biographies, Bible stories, periodicals, poetry anthologies, scientific and multi-cultural nonfiction.

Our Language Arts program demonstrates consideration for our individually gifted and diverse student population and assists students to realize their full potential as they grow and learn.

Mathematics

The **Mathematics Program** at St. Joseph School is designed to promote student success and to nurture the development of each student’s God-given gifts and talents. We hope to generate appreciation that mathematical patterns reflect the perfect design of God’s creation. The Diocesan approved curriculum is presented using Sadlier Progress in Mathematic in grades kindergarten through 6, and Sadlier Foundations and Fundamental of Algebra and Algebra I in Grades 7 and 8.

Daily math lessons reinforce math vocabulary, promote higher order thinking skills and include extension and enrichment activities. Instruction progresses at a purposeful pace designed to allow children to develop understanding and competence in the academic environment as well as confidence for applications in the student’s everyday life experience.

Music

Our **Music Program** provides general music at all levels. Hand-bell instruction is provided seventh and eighth grade. A variety of topics and activities include music theory and the place of music in history and world cultures. Individual and small group instrumental lessons as well as the opportunity to participate in a school band are provided by Future Musicians of Connecticut. Chorus is open to students in grades three through eight.

Recognizing the role of the school within the community, students prepare music to enhance monthly liturgy and provide the Advent service of Lessons and Carols, participate in civic and service concerts, and seasonal school-wide prayer.

Physical Education

The **Physical Education Program** at St. Joseph School contributes to the school mission by developing God-given gifts and talents through learning and participating in various games and activities. Good sportsmanship, cooperation and respect for others are encouraged not only in a classroom setting, but also within the community.

In Physical education classes, students are grouped by grade in consideration of physical, intellectual, emotional and social development with the level of difficulty in activities increasing

to foster growth and promote success. The program incorporates age appropriate equipment from kindergarten through eighth grade for each specific activity. Addressing the range of learning styles, instruction includes oral presentation, demonstration and active participation by students to enhance comprehension.

Reading and Literature

The **Reading Program** at Saint Joseph School is coordinated with careful consideration given to our mission to nurture our students to reach their full potential with Jesus as our model. Recognizing each individual student's talents and needs, we provide the learning experiences to build community and to contribute our gifts confidently toward a better world.

With the goal of forming strong independent readers, our curriculum provides a variety of reading experiences and quality literature. The reading activities are teacher directed, small group or partner based, independent and technology related. The focus of our reading instruction supports comprehension and reading strategies including prediction and use of prior knowledge summarizing, text and self-connection, personal experience, and re-telling. Instruction incorporates phonics as vital to vocabulary and fluency development. The curriculum offers a broad range of quality children's literature to foster a life-long appreciation for literature and a love of reading. Students are exposed to a wide variety of genre including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, short stories, folk tales and trade books that explore other cultures to appreciate diversity. Individual student interests are addressed through daily independent reading time and classroom libraries that offer a variety of literature.

Our reading curriculum offers a continuity of instruction across all grade levels. We build on previously taught skills and reinforce knowledge with developmentally appropriate, grade specific goals and objectives that reflect the diocesan curriculum and develop the whole child.

Science

The **Science Program** at St. Joseph School promotes strong Catholic values by teaching the students to respect and value all forms of life, and to understand and appreciate the physical phenomena that are exhibited in the world that God created. Learning the process of scientific inquiry, students engage in many hands-on activities, design and execute projects for an annual Science fair for grades 5-8, and broaden their explorations through field studies and cooperative learning groups.

Primary grade students relate actively to their everyday world- exploring their own five senses, investigation animals and plants, observing matter and energy, measuring and predicting changes, and appreciating the wonders of our universe. The intermediate curriculum builds upon and deepens these concepts through demonstration and hands-on lab experiences to include all general science areas and research reports. At the middle school level, the scientific method is

emphasized in laboratory activities with formal lab write-ups, and more informal journaling on topics of current world and local scientific developments encourages critical and analytical

thinking. Independent projects culminate in the science fair with oral presentations to the school and local communities.

The shared space of the science/computer laboratory for Grades 6-8 facilitates the integration of technology with science instruction. Throughout the program active hands-on learning, field trips to utilize local resources, guest lecturers and aquarium visiting classrooms, combined with oral and written response offer opportunities for each student to develop their individual talents and to become lifelong learners.

Social Studies

The **Social Studies Program** is designed to further our mission by nurturing gifts and talents in the service of our local, national and global society. Following the Diocesan standards, the curriculum addresses the strands of civics, economics, geography, history, world cultures, and Catholic social teachings. The wide range of learning activities includes content reading, discussion, note taking, map skills, small group cooperative problem solving and conflict resolution, research opportunities for analysis, critical thinking and written applications. Projects, preparation and tasting of international foods, journaling, virtual and actual field trips and guest speakers enhance the student experience.

A school wide unit of study on New London enriches our curriculum with the knowledge of the local area past and present.

An active student council provides experience in parliamentary procedure and social justice applications.

At the primary level, students develop concepts of family and community through “Friends with Special Talents” speakers, trips to the fire and police stations, oral history interviews with grandparents, constructing a model town and participation in a Hawaiian luau. At the intermediate level, students deepen their understandings of citizenship, stewardship of the environment and their appreciation of the richness of diversity in our nation and world. Connecticut history is a focus of Grade 4. Field trips to Fort Trumbull, the Mashantucket Pequot

Museum and the state capital, as well as living history reenactments of Revolutionary heroes, reinforce and expand learning. The middle grade levels concentrate on ancient civilizations, geography, world cultures and American history to foster concepts of our place in history, our role in the global community and our vision for building the kingdom of God. The Civic Oration and Patriot’s Pen Programs offer authentic vehicles for expression of these understandings.

Technology

The use of **Technology** across the curriculum and grade levels takes on many forms. CDs, DVDs, digital cameras, camcorders, overhead projectors, interactive white boards and LCD projectors, and Internet accessible computers and iPads are used to enhance learning and instruction and to provide the best possible educational opportunities for students and educators.

While all of the above are viable technological means of enhancing the educational process, the technology curriculum gives its focus to the Internet accessible computer and tablet. Prior to engaging in the use of computers at school, an Internet Usage Agreement is signed by each student and parent. Instruction is given in the safe and appropriate use of technology. Emphasis is given to the responsibility that accompanies the privilege of using computers and the Internet. Internet etiquette and responsibility is reviewed as it applies to our Catholic moral teaching and our school philosophy and mission. Instruction in the care of hardware and software is given and reinforced at all levels through classroom instruction and weekly technology classes.

At all class levels technology is used as a tool for research to enhance instruction and learning, for reinforcement of skills in all curriculum areas, to create greater awareness of the world around us, to generate reports and graphs and to publish written works. Technology offers opportunities for differentiated learning and to accommodate a variety of learning styles.

Weekly computer classes and computer use in the classroom demonstrate the endless possibilities that technology provides in the learning process. In computer classes, students are exposed to grade appropriate software and websites to help them grow educationally in the world of technology.

It is important to our mission and philosophy that a balance be achieved between the student's responsibility for learning the life skills of communication and the written word as well as electronic communication skills. Students are reminded that computers are a tool toward learning, not simply a toy or a convenience.

The **Kindergarten Program** embodies the Mission of Saint Joseph School as we strive to teach the acceptance of all God's children and to recognize the unique gifts and talents given to each of us by God. We nurture their social, emotional and intellectual growth, as they become vital and active members of our school, parish and global families. Kindergarten offers a full-day academic program within a safe environment while laying the foundation for active participation in a school community, following directions, learning cooperation, accepting responsibilities and consequences, listening to each other and taking turns. Each student is given opportunities to shine and grow as contributing members of our school family.

Homework

Homework is given for the purpose of reinforcing concepts already introduced. It is given in grades one through eight. The time to be spent on homework is determined on an age-appropriate basis Monday through Thursday nights. The following are time guidelines for expected homework. This should include reading and math.

Grades 6-8	1-1 ½ hours per night.
Grades 4-5	45 minutes-1 hour per night
Grade 1-3	25-35 minutes per night

Students in grades three through eight are expected to keep an assignment notebook for all homework assignments in order to build upon organizational skills and personal responsibility. This assignment book is purchased through the school and will be checked on a regular basis by the classroom and/or curriculum area teacher. This assignment book also provides space for written communication between teacher and parent and vice versa. It is important that as the teacher checks this book regularly, so also should the parent check it.

Kindergarten

Grading in the kindergarten places the greatest emphasis on the physical, emotional and social development of the child. Frequent conferences with parents are urged and extremely important at this level.

- M+ Exceeding Standards
- M Meeting Standards
- P Approaching Standards
- I Improvement Needed
- N Not Assessed at this Time

Grades 1-2

Student evaluation on this level deals with work habits, conduct, and academic achievement.

- M+ Meets with Distinction
- M Meeting Standards
- P Approaching Standards
- I Needs Improvement
- N Not Assessed at this Time

Grades 3 through 8

Evaluation will be based on the student total performance including tests, homework, effort, oral participation, projects and class work.

The following grading will apply to report card grades as well as student work.

- A+ 98-100
- A 93-97
- A- 90-92
- B+ 88-89
- B 83-87
- B- 80-82

- C+ 78-79

C	73-77
C-	70-72
D	65-69
F	0-64
M+	Meets with Distinction
M	Meeting Standards
P	Approaching Standards
I	Needs Improvement
N	Not Assessed at This Time

Promotion/Transfer/Retention

Students, who successfully complete the program of their current grade assignment, will be promoted to the next grade on the final day of the school year. When a student is in academic difficulty, the principal and the teacher will notify the parents in writing in order that appropriate intervention may occur.

Internet Policy

All those wishing to use the Internet at school must familiarize themselves with the Diocesan/School Internet Usage Policy and sign the Internet Users Agreement. If any student violates this agreement, he/she will forfeit the use of the Internet at school. (See Diocesan Policy section of this handbook.)

Covering Books

All textbooks must be covered at all times to safeguard the condition of these books. Any textbook that is lost or marred and cannot be repaired will be billed to the parents as appropriate.

Self-discipline enables children to learn and to interact with one another and with the administration, faculty, and staff in a loving, caring environment. In order to ensure a safe learning environment in keeping with the mission of our school, a code of discipline is necessary. This code of discipline not only provides safety for all concerned, but also, enables each child to grow in respect for others as God's children, and in the understanding that each of us is held accountable for our own actions.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

Detention

Detention may be given by a teacher (with approval from the principal) or by the principal when a student shows disregard for school rules or school policies. Parents will be notified in advance of the detention in order that transportation arrangements may be made. Detention slips must be signed by the parent and presented by the student on the day of the detention. Detention slips will be kept on file. Accumulation of detention slips may result in further disciplinary action.

Suspension

Suspension means that a student is excluded from classes for a given period. During this time, it is expected that the student will be either at home or at school, separate from the rest of the student population. In - school suspension will be assigned at the discretion of the principal and supervised by the principal. When in suspension at home, the student shall be supervised by the responsible adult.

During the period of an out-of- school suspension the student is not to be in school or on the school premises. He/she will be given school assignments, which are to be completed and handed in upon his/her return to school. Suspension from school excludes a student from participation in any extra-curricular activities being conducted during this time. Suspension may also be held in school at the discretion of the principal.

Expulsion (permanent dismissal from school)

When the spiritual, intellectual, social and/or physical development or safety of any one of our students, faculty or staff, or administration is threatened by another child through harmful conduct, (e.g., fighting, cheating, stealing, smoking, drinking, using drugs, or carrying a weapon or threats of physical harm), this child may be subject to expulsion. The decision to expel a student from school is the responsibility of the pastor and principal.

Detention may be given for the following:

- Failure to accept the leadership and authority of the principal, teachers or other staff members.
- Failure to cooperate with the administration, teachers, staff members or other students.
- Failure to be honest and respectful in carrying out the role of student.
- Failure to use acceptable language.
- Failure to accept responsibility for keeping school property clean and safe (e.g., lavatories, lunchroom, classroom and playground).
- Failure to abide by the rules set forth by the school, affecting personal behavior.
- Failure to adhere to uniform policies (e.g., changing out of school uniform without proper permission, consistently not wearing the uniform pieces as required).
- Consistent failure to complete assigned schoolwork in a timely manner.
- Any reason for which the principal deems it necessary due to the lack of respect for school policy and/or disruption of school order or safety.

Suspension may be given for the following:

- Failure to accept the leadership and authority of the principal, assistant principal, teachers or other staff members.
- Failure to cooperate with the administration, teachers, staff members or other students.
- Failure to be honest and respectful in carrying out the role of student.
- Failure to conduct himself/herself in a safe and appropriate manner, either verbally or physically.
- Failure to accept responsibility for keeping school property clean and safe (e.g., lavatories, lunchroom, classroom and playground).
- Travel on a school bus to which he/she is not assigned without permission from the school authority.
- Possession of matches, tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
- Leaving school property before dismissal and without permission.

- Threatening a member of the school community with physical or emotional harm.

- Use of electronic devices or the Internet in any way that is contrary to the directives of the School or Diocesan policies, including but not exclusive to having a cell phone or personal tablet in your possession during the school day or on field trips without the permission of the principal or the principal's designee.
- Receiving more than three detentions within the same marking period.
- Any reason for which the principal deems it necessary due to the lack of respect for school policy or the disruption of the safety and order of the school.

Expulsion may occur for the following:

- Misuse of the Internet and/or personal electronic devices for the purpose of harming self or others.
- Possession of any potentially lethal weapon.
- Negatively influencing the entire school community.
- Possession of illegal drugs.
- Threatening a member of the school community with physical harm or emotional harm.
- Receiving more than one suspension.
- Any rule violation, which in the opinion of the principal and pastor seriously affects the safety and order of the school and its community.

The Achievement List is available to all students in grades 4-8 who consistently work to their personal best, both academically and behaviorally. The Principal's List is available to students in grades 6-8 who receive all A's, and exemplify behavior in keeping with the Mission of St. Joseph School.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are distributed three times per year as indicated on the yearly calendar. Progress reports are issued at least three times per year, and at additional times when necessary for specific/necessary circumstances.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are held for all parents are held in October, prior to the first report card distributed in November. All parents/guardians are expected to attend. Additional conferences are held as needed and requested by parents/guardians and/or teachers.

Cheating

Cheating is never acceptable and is in violation of our mission. Parents will be notified of any transgression. Students found cheating will receive age-appropriate disciplinary action.

Special Services-Title 1, Speech and other Special Needs Services

Students at St. Joseph School who qualify for special academic or speech services receive these at St. Joseph School in keeping with the policies of St. Joseph, New London Public Schools, and State and Federal regulations. Student referrals are made through St. Joseph School at the request of the parent/guardian, teacher, and principal. Referrals are made through the principal in consultation with the respective teacher and parents, and the New London Public Schools liaison to St. Joseph School.

Library Policies

St. Joseph School maintains an elementary school library. Students spend one class period per week at the school library, where they may avail themselves of reading material and a venue in which to conduct pertinent research. Books may be signed out for a period of one week, and may be renewed if necessary. All books not returned will be billed to the parents/guardians for replacement. During Library time, students will also be instructed in appropriate library skills. The same behavior expected in our classrooms is also expected in our school library.

Uniform and Personal Appearance

Dress Girls' Uniform	Dress Boys' Uniform
White Blouse w/pointed collar with logo (6-8), White blouse with round collar with logo (K-5)	Blue and white pin stripe button down with logo (6-8) White button down with logo (K-5)
<i>Uniform</i> Navy knee socks and tights permitted (Available from Donnelly's)	<i>Uniform</i> Tie (machine washable) Socks are to be navy, black, or white. Black, brown or navy belt.
<i>Uniform</i> navy V-neck vest (Gr. 6-8)with school logo Long sleeve sweater for Gr. 6-8 is optional. Cardigan (Gr. K-5) With school logo	<i>Uniform</i> navy sweater (V-neck, cardigan, or vest)
<i>Uniform</i> jumper Gr. K-5 vest and skirt Gr. 6-8 Knee length or below the knee all year.	Navy trousers w/traditional pockets and belt
	No colored t-shirts or t-shirts with print should be worn under the boys dress shirt.

Shoes Both girls and boys are required to wear the uniform shoes. This is the light tan buck (also known as the dirty buck). These are tie shoes, not Velcro. **No exceptions will be accepted.**

WARM WEATHER UNIFORM FOR ALL STUDENTS – 1st day of school through Columbus Day and May 1 through the last day of school.

Dress Code for Warm Weather Uniform Gr. K through 8 (Boys & Girls)

Khaki Shorts (Bermuda length only) (no “cargo” pockets or “basketball” shorts)

Royal Blue Polo Shirt with the school logo embroidered (purchased through Donnelly’s)

Schools Shoes or black, white, grey or navy sneakers (NO high tops)

Crew or sport socks in white, navy or black. No No-Show socks.

Exceptions to this uniform (days when the traditional uniform shall be worn) will include Mass days and special occasions as designated by the school, such as Awards Day.

Accessories and Make-up

Jewelry worn at school must be kept to a minimum. One pair of earrings (for girls only) may be worn. For the sake of safety, these shall be studs or small (1/2 or 3/4 inch) hoops. No additional piercing is allowed. One bracelet and a watch may be worn. Religious jewelry (necklaces) may be worn on the outside of the uniform. Any other jewelry should be kept underneath the blouse or shirt. Special holidays may be exceptions to this rule with permission only. **Elaborate hair ornaments (e.g., large flowers or bows, wide bands, and scarves are not acceptable with the uniform.)**

Make-up is never allowed. This includes lipstick, eye make-up, nail polish or any other type of make-up. No type of tattoo is allowed.

Students may not bring perfume, cologne, or spray type bottles to school for any reason. Many students have allergies or are asthmatic and fragranced items cause difficulties.

Hair Styles

It is expected that hair will be neat and clean at all times. Boys’ haircuts shall be above the ears and collar. No extreme haircuts or styles will be allowed. This includes Mohawks, tails, spikes, and lines cut into the hair, or shaving one's head. Hair coloring of any kind is not allowed for any student.

Failure to adhere to uniform policies will result in disciplinary action.

While we have no uniform for our physical education classes, we do expect students to be properly attired (**shorts must be fingertip length**). Students in grades K-5 need only remember to bring sneakers for this class. Those in grades 6-8 will need to change into shorts or sweat pants, and t-shirts, as well as sneakers. Cotton or flannel sleep pants are not allowed. Failure to follow this dress code may result in a lower grade for this curriculum area, exclusion from participation, or detention.

Dress Down Days

At times, a “no-uniform day” is allowed. On these days, specific information is given regarding appropriate dress. It is important that this information be taken seriously, as noncompliance with the specific directives may result in disciplinary actions or a request for parental involvement (e.g., bringing appropriate clothing to school.)

ATTENDANCE

Students must be in their respective classrooms at 8:30 a.m. for opening exercises. Late arrivals must report directly to the office entering through the front door of the school. A note or statement explaining the reason for tardiness is expected. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action. Acceptable reasons for an excused absence are: the sickness of the child or a death in the immediate family. Frequent and prolonged absences impede the student's academic progress. In the event of an absence, parents are asked to do the following.

Absence Due to Injury or Illness.

- Call the school office at 442-1720 on the day of the absence and report the reason for the absence. Calls should be made between 8:45 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. A note written by the parent must accompany the student upon the student's return, giving the reasons for the absence.
- In the event that a student returns after an injury requiring a cast or other medical device, the doctor's order must accompany the student.
- Children who are absent from school due to contagious diseases must have written permission from the family physician before being readmitted to school.
- Appointments with doctors and dentists should be made during after school hours. Late arrivals and early dismissals disrupt the learning process.
- In the event that a child becomes ill during the school day, parents/guardians will be contacted. A parent or designated representative must come for the child. An up-to-date emergency number must be on file in the office. Please notify the school office of any changes in these telephone numbers.

Request for Early Dismissal

If it should become necessary to remove your child from school earlier than the usual dismissal time, a written request signed by the parent/guardian must be submitted to the school office by the morning of the early dismissal. Students will not be dismissed early without written or personal confirmation of this dismissal from the parent or guardian.

Arrival at school

School begins at 8:30 a.m. There is supervision on the playground starting at 8:10 a.m. When students do arrive prior to 8:10 a.m., the office must be notified and students should proceed to the gymnasium. When it is raining, snowing or too cold, all students proceed to the auditorium to await further instructions.

When bringing students to school, parents are asked to leave their children at the front door or at the gate of the playground, whichever is appropriate. The exception would be the first day of school or a special circumstance.

Before and After School Care

The school does not have a before school program. On occasion parents may drop off students prior to 8:00 a.m. Parents must notify the office prior to the drop off time.

The after school care program begins immediately after dismissal and ends promptly at 5:15 p.m. Applications and brochures listing parental responsibilities and financial obligations related to the after school care program are available in the office.

School hours

The opening bell rings at 8:30 a.m. Dismissal begins at 2:30 p.m.

Tardiness

Anyone arriving after the 8:35 bell is considered tardy. As required, a record of tardiness is kept by the school and becomes part of the permanent record of the student. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Delays/Cancellation

In the event of severe weather, St. Joseph School will follow the decision of the local Board of Education as to whether or not school will be in session. This decision will be announced over TV Channels 30 and 3 in the name of St. Joseph, New London. Announcements will also be sent by email, text message or voicemail through the school "Notify" System. **We ask that your email addresses and phone numbers are kept up-to-date with the office. When receiving a message, please check its content prior to calling the school.**

Vacation Policy

Family vacations should always be planned during school vacations so as not to interrupt the educational process. In the event that this is not possible, student work that is missed will be provided upon the student's return, due to instruction that is necessary to appropriately meet the needs of the student. The completion of this work will be expected within a week's time. Vacation absences are not excused absences and must appear on the report card and the official record of absences.

Communication

Parent/Teacher/Administration

It is expected that all parents and guardians familiarize themselves with all written communications sent by the administration and teachers. These include, but are not exclusive to, the principal's weekly letter, school calendar information, and classroom communications. All communications sent to school by parents/guardians must be written and signed by the appropriate adult. Notes written by students and signed by parents/guardians are not acceptable. Non-custodial parents have the right to school information. A non-custodial parent may request that a folder of information be kept in the office to be picked up weekly by that parent. Grade reports and progress reports are mailed to these parents, when the address is provided to the office.

Health/Safety Policies

Birthday Observations

While the school wishes to allow birthday observances, any family wishing to send treats for birthday celebrations or other holiday celebrations must consult with the teacher and the school nurse prior to sending these. Allergies would prevent certain treats from being sent to school. Birthday treats should be those that are finger-type foods.

Bullying/cyber bullying

Bullying behavior of any kind will not be tolerated at St. Joseph School. This is not in keeping with our Mission. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken with any student found guilty of this behavior.

Cell phones, tablets, smart watches or other wireless means of communication belonging to students or their families may not be in the student's possession during the school day. This is for the well-being of all concerned. If brought to school, cell phones must be placed in a plastic bag and left in the office during the school or while on field trips.

Immunizations

In keeping with the health regulations of the State of Connecticut and the City of New London, appropriate immunizations are required.

All entering Kindergarteners and seventh graders must have had a complete physical examination prior to entering school. Anyone transferring from another state or country is also required to obtain a physical and present this information to the nurse's office.

Medication

All medications must be in the original container and accompanied by the doctor's order. Only parents may carry medications to school. No child may have any medication in their possession on the trip to school or during the school day. Medication is dispensed by the school nurse or the designated and trained administrator or faculty member only.

Fire Drills/Lock-Down Drills

Fire drills and Lock Down drills are conducted regularly during the school year.

Food Service Program

Saint Joseph School does not serve lunch. All students are expected to bring their lunch with them in the morning (NO glass items). Refrigeration is not available and therefore, lunch bags and boxes should be packed with ice packs. Milk is available for \$35 per year. Any family wishing to complete the form for assistance with the cost of milk may do so, and will be notified of their eligibility by the office.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Athletic programs include Soccer and Basketball. Students participating in these sports must complete all appropriate forms.

Clubs – A variety of after school clubs will be available; e.g., science, math, knitting, Rubik's cube, chess, cooking.

Chorus is conducted on a weekly basis for students in Grades 3-8. The music teacher directs the chorus, which sings at school and local events, prayer and liturgy. The chorus participates in two concerts per year.

Band is open to students in Grades 4-8. Future Musicians, Inc. provides this service to the families of our school on a fee basis that is paid directly to FMI. Instruction takes place on a weekly basis during the school day. The schedule is rotating in order that students do not miss the same instructional period each week. Students are responsible for any missed work.

Before and After School Care - The school does not have a before school program. On occasion, parents may drop off students prior to 8:00 a.m. Parents must notify the office prior to the drop off time. The after school care program begins immediately after dismissal and ends promptly at 5:15 p.m. Applications and brochures listing parental responsibilities and financial obligations related to the after school care program are available in the office.

Field Trips are planned throughout the year on all levels. Appropriate permission forms are required for attendance on field trips. All chaperones must have completed the training for the Office for Safe Environments.

Student Council is open to interested students in grades 5-8. The organization is service oriented and plans service activities for the school, local and global communities.