

# ST. VINCENT de PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## PARENT/STUDENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	i
Mission Statement	i
Philosophy	i
Goals	i
Accreditation	i
Parent Compliance Requirement	i
History	ii
<b>I. Admissions</b>	<b>1</b>
Nondiscrimination	1
Policy	1
Documents and Tests	1
Age Requirements	1
Factors Considered	1
Disclosure	1
Probation Period	2
<b>II. After School Care/Prime Time</b>	<b>2</b>
Enrollment	2
Hours of Operation	2
Personnel	2
Emergency Attendance	2
Snacks	2
Personal Property	2
Arrival and Dismissal	3
Prime Time Fees	3
Behavior	3
Illness	3
<b>III. Attendance</b>	<b>3</b>
School Hours	3
Absence from School	3
Notification of Absence	4
Half-Day Absence	4
Absence Because of Illness	4
Absence Because of Family Emergency	4
Absence for Other Reasons	4
Excessive Absences	4
Tardiness	4
Leaving School Early	4
Supervision Outside of School Hours	5
School Calendar	5
<b>IV. Behavior</b>	<b>5</b>
General Behavior Policy	5
Harassment/Bullying/Cyber-bullying	5
Bullying	5
Cyber-bullying	5
Harassment	6
Violations	6
Reporting	6
Etiquette and Conduct Standards	6
Academic Standards	7
Academic Misconduct	7
Cheating	7
Fabrication or Falsification	7
Plagiarism	7
Intentional Plagiarism	8
Inadvertent Plagiarism	8
Examples of Plagiarism	8

Honor Code.....	8
Students' Honor .....	8
Requirement to Report.....	8
Confidentiality .....	8
Pledge.....	8
Parental Responsibility .....	9
Student Responsibility .....	9
Internet Usage .....	9
Shared Responsibility .....	9
Investigation/Disposition of Improper Behavior.....	9
Violations of Law.....	9
Drugs and Alcohol.....	9
Grievance Process.....	9
V. <b>Discipline</b> .....	9
Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook.....	9
Classroom Rules.....	9
Rewards.....	10
Effect on Conduct Grade .....	10
Infraction System .....	10
Class I Infractions (1 Infraction).....	11
Class II Infractions (2 Infractions) .....	11
Class III Infractions (3 Infractions) .....	11
Class IV Infractions (4 Infractions).....	12
Consequences.....	12
Missing Work (Grades 4-5) Consequences.....	12
H.A.M. at Lunch (Grades 6-8) Consequences.....	13
Class I Infraction Consequences .....	13
Class II Infraction Consequences .....	13
Class III Infraction Consequences .....	13
Class IV Infraction Consequences.....	14
Disciplinary Probation .....	14
In-school Suspension.....	14
Out-of-school Suspension.....	14
Home Study .....	14
Expulsion .....	14
Extension of Discipline.....	14
Waiver.....	14
VI. <b>Dress Code</b> .....	14
Uniform Policy.....	14
Uniform Purchase .....	15
Proper Wear.....	15
Grooming and Accessories.....	15
Hair Color .....	15
Hair Length .....	15
Facial Hair.....	15
Piercings and Tattoos .....	15
Length of Uniform .....	15
Jewelry.....	15
Make-up & Polish.....	15
Hats & Caps.....	15
Headbands & Bows .....	15
Shoes.....	15
Socks .....	15
Noncompliance .....	15
Dress Uniform .....	16
Prekindergarten-Grade 1 .....	16
Grades 2-5 .....	16
Grades 6-8 .....	16
Other Uniform Items.....	16
Prekindergarten-Grade 1 .....	16

Grades 2-5 .....	16
Grades 6-8 .....	16
Tights and Leggings .....	16
Sweatshirts .....	16
Coats/Jackets .....	16
Modesty Shorts .....	16
P.E. Uniform (Grades 6-8) .....	16
Free Dress Days .....	17
Free Dress .....	17
Scout Uniforms .....	17
Costumes .....	17
Dances/Special Occasions .....	17
Spirit Apparel .....	17
<b>VII. Extracurricular Activities .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Participation .....	17
Tryouts .....	18
Archdiocesan Policy .....	18
TCCED/GHCAA .....	18
Eligibility Requirements .....	18
Enrollment .....	18
Attendance .....	18
Grade/Conduct Requirements .....	18
Academic Ineligibility .....	18
Conduct Ineligibility .....	18
Consequences of ineligibility .....	19
Effect of Suspension .....	19
Expectations .....	19
Transportation .....	19
Practice .....	19
Pick-up .....	19
Athletic Programs .....	19
Sanctioned Sports .....	20
Physical Requirements .....	20
Registration .....	20
Athletic Teams .....	20
Uniforms and Equipment .....	20
Spectators .....	20
<b>VIII. Grade Policy and Report Cards .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Grading Policy .....	21
Progress Reports .....	21
Report Cards .....	21
Distribution of Grades (2 <sup>nd</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> ) .....	21
Major Subjects .....	21
Primary Grades .....	21
Academic Evaluation .....	21
Grade Changes .....	22
Failure .....	22
Conduct Grades .....	22
Valedictorian/Salutatorian .....	22
Academic Honor Roll .....	22
Principal's Honor Roll .....	22
Mid-Term and Final Exams .....	22
Eighth Grade Final Exam Exemption .....	23
Requirements .....	23
Notification .....	23
Loss of Privilege .....	23
Valedictorian/Salutatorian .....	23
Mandatory After School Study Hall/Peer Tutoring .....	23
Standardized Testing/IOWA Assessments/CogAT .....	23
<b>IX. Other School Rules, Regulations and Safety .....</b>	<b>23</b>

Animals .....	23
Asbestos .....	23
Beta Club .....	23
Bicycle Safety .....	24
Books, Workbooks .....	24
Students Responsibility .....	24
Extra Books .....	24
Damaged Books .....	24
Lost Books .....	24
Collection of Consumables .....	24
Cafeteria .....	24
Meals .....	24
Visitors .....	24
Forgotten Lunches .....	24
Carpool .....	24
Procedures .....	24
Cell Phone .....	25
After Carpool .....	25
Walkers/Bikers .....	25
Cell Phones .....	25
Possession and Use .....	25
Unauthorized use .....	25
Lost Phones .....	25
Change of Information .....	25
Communication .....	25
Conferences .....	25
Counseling Services .....	25
General .....	25
Referrals .....	26
Assessments .....	26
Curriculum .....	26
Dances/Special Occasions .....	26
School Dance Requirements .....	26
Dress Guidelines .....	26
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation .....	26
Electronics/Nuisance Policy .....	26
Emergency School Closing .....	27
Field Trips .....	27
Enrichment .....	27
Participation .....	27
Permission Slips .....	27
Chaperones .....	27
Dress .....	27
Forgotten Articles/Lost & Found .....	27
Fundraising .....	27
Gifts .....	28
Grievance Procedure .....	28
Gum & Food .....	28
Health Clinic .....	28
Emergency Contact Information .....	28
Medical Emergencies .....	28
Student Illness .....	28
Health Screening .....	29
Immunizations .....	29
Medication .....	29
Ongoing Monitoring .....	30
Required Medical Physical .....	30
Homework .....	30
Insurance .....	30
Library .....	30

Book Care.....	30
Book Check-Out Limits.....	30
Damaged/Lost Books.....	31
Unreturned books.....	31
Fines:.....	31
Magazine Check Out.....	31
Lockers.....	31
Non-school Teams.....	31
Parents/Guardians.....	31
Bound by Handbook.....	31
Parent Involvement in School Activities.....	31
Parental Supervision of Students.....	32
PTO.....	32
Parties.....	32
Permission to Arrive and Leave Campus Unaccompanied.....	32
Publication of Student Work/Images.....	32
Consent to Publish.....	32
Revocation of Consent.....	33
School directory.....	33
Yearbook.....	33
Group Photographs.....	33
Student Records.....	33
School Board.....	33
Smoking.....	34
Special Needs.....	34
Telephone.....	34
Tutoring.....	34
Visitors.....	34
Weapons.....	34
Web Site.....	34
Principal's Right to Amend Handbook.....	35
Reporting of Child Abuse.....	35

## Appendices

A. Carpool Procedures.....	a-c
B. Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy.....	d
C. Chromebook Pledge – Middle School Only.....	e
D. Financial Information.....	f
E. Adopt-A-Student Financial Assistance.....	g
F. Special Needs Learners and Referrals.....	h-i

# ST. VINCENT de PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## PARENT/STUDENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

### MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School to develop students to their fullest potential in an environment permeated with Gospel values.

### PHILOSOPHY

We, the members of the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic community, firmly believe:

- Children learn best in a comfortable, nurturing environment where they feel safe, secure, and valued.
- All children should be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential through instruction in the Catholic tradition and the academic disciplines to achieve intellectual competence and to learn service to others as modeled by Jesus Christ.
- The partnership of parents and teachers working together greatly enhances a child's success in school.
- All children deserve a school that challenges them to develop as life-long learners with self-respect, self-confidence, and self-discipline.

### GOALS

The goals of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School are as follows:

- to encourage the building of a strong, faith-filled community among the students, faculty, administrators, parents, and parishioners,
- to nourish a close-knit parish school community of members who are supported and guided by their Catholic faith, and
- to offer a program of studies that will provide all students with a religious foundation, strong academic background, and an introduction to the arts.

### ACCREDITATION

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School meets all standards, policies and requirements and is fully accredited through the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED).

### Parent Compliance Requirement

*The parents or guardians of students enrolled at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School must demonstrate a willingness to comply with the school policies, particularly as they are described in this handbook and implemented by the school's administration. A deliberate or persistent disregard, whether stated or demonstrated, for school policies could be grounds for a family being required to withdraw their child(ren) from St. Vincent de Paul or have their registration for the following year denied. The administration will make the final decision in this regard.*

## HISTORY

In 1939, Bishop Byrne decided to alleviate the crowded conditions in St. Anne's Parish by splitting off its southern section to create St. Vincent de Paul Parish. A 1.9-acre site was chosen on Bellaire Blvd. The first pastor, Fr. Michael Leahy, dedicated the completed church and rectory on February 23, 1941. Because of ill health, Fr. Leahy retired at the end of the summer and was replaced by Fr. John Dennis Connolly.

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In September 1943, the first school was opened with four temporary classrooms (army barracks that would later be bricked), 165 students and four teachers from the Congregation of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters. The Mothers' Club was formed in order to obtain enough gas ration stamps for the cars and buses needed to transport students to and from school. By the end of 1943, the parish prided itself in completing the nucleus of the parish spiritually (constructed church), educationally (established school) and socially (Holy Name Society 1941, Girl Scouts 1942, Mothers' Club 1943, and Boy Scouts 1943).

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A 3.5-acre tract behind the church was acquired in 1944 and the school was expanded. In 1948, the two-story school building was constructed (presently the Intermediate Building). The years from 1950 – 1960 were a period of major construction. St. Vincent's acquired additional property along Buffalo Speedway. Once the land was obtained, a parish-wide effort to raise money for construction of a new church, rectory and additional school facilities began. The church was completed and dedicated in December 1953. The rectory was completed in 1956. The gymnasium, cafeteria, and adjoining primary school buildings were finished in 1958. The old rectory was moved from Bellaire to the patio (behind the former church) and renovated in order to house the sisters who taught in the school. The former church became a parish activity center.

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St. Vincent's first lay principal was appointed in 1973. Msgr. Dexter George became the Pastor of the Church in 1975. The school elected its first school board in 1981.

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The school continued its growth through the 1980's and 1990's. Monsignor James Jamail became the Pastor in 1985. Reminiscent of the parish effort in the 1950's to raise money in order to expand and build, the parish began a capital campaign in 1989 to build and renovate parish facilities. A new middle school/library, scout house, maintenance building and administration building were constructed and all parish buildings renovated by the close of 1992. The parish family center was added in 1996.

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During 1999, the parish began major construction on the Church. This plan included increased seating capacity, a new baptismal area, restrooms and a gathering space. This project was completed and dedicated on December 17, 2000.

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In 2002, under the direction of Fr. John Weyer, the parish undertook a process to determine future needs of the parish and school. A master plan was developed to include building of new facilities and renovation of specific areas within the physical plant. Fr. Weyer passed away before those plans could be brought to fruition. In 2009, Msgr. Bill Young became the pastor of St. Vincent de Paul parish and moved forward on the plans adopted by his predecessor. A capital campaign was initiated in 2011, which lead to the expansion and updating of the gymnasium and cafeteria, as well as strengthening technology throughout the parish and school. In 2012, due to structural problems, the foundation of the church was repaired and the interior renovated. By the spring of 2013, construction was completed along with improvements made to the athletic field.





## I. ADMISSIONS

### A. Nondiscrimination

The Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission, loan, athletic, or scholarship programs. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School adheres to the policies stipulated by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

### B. Policy

Admission to St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School is based on the availability of space and resources as well as the developmental, scholastic, and behavioral qualifications of the applicant. All applicants are required to participate in admissions screening/testing. Priority will be given to presently enrolled students receiving an invitation to re-enroll as a result of meeting the behavioral and academic standards of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School. Parents and guardians also must conform their conduct to reasonable standards of cooperation and support consistent with the school's mission.

### C. Documents and Tests

An original birth certificate, baptismal certificate, current immunization records, current report card, a current confidential teacher recommendation form, and health records must be provided **in addition to the following:**

#### **Applicants for:**

**PreK - K:** must take the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence IV test.

**1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>:** must take the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement (WJIV) test.

**5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>:** must take the Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE)

All required forms must be returned and all fee payments must be up-to-date at the time of registration *before placement is assured*. Students attending on a visa must present it at the time of enrollment.

### D. Age Requirements

The following age requirements are compulsory for Prekindergarten through Grade 1

1. Prekindergarten - students must be 4 years old on or before September 1
2. Kindergarten - students must be 5 years old on or before September 1
3. 1<sup>st</sup> Grade - students must be 6 years old on or before September 1

### E. Factors Considered

The factors considered in the admission of new students include:

1. whether the applicant is a child of a family registered in St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish for at least six months prior to the beginning of the application process.
2. whether the applicant is a sibling of students presently attending the school. Siblings must also meet the academic and behavioral requirements of the school.
3. whether the applicant is a child of a family who actively supports St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Parish with their time, talents and treasures.
4. whether the applicant meets the behavioral and academics standards of the school.

### F. Disclosure

Parents are expected to disclose with appropriate school personnel any significant confidential information that may affect their child's educational progress. Such sharing

includes, but is not limited to, any of the following: medical/psychiatric/educational evaluations or diagnoses, medications, allergies, or specific family situations. All students must be toilet trained before admission to the school and thereafter.

#### **G. Probation Period**

All new students are admitted on a probationary basis for the first year. The school reserves the right to rescind an offer for readmission to any student who no longer meets the behavioral or academic standards of the school.

## **II. AFTER SCHOOL CARE / PRIME TIME**

#### **A. Enrollment**

The school's after school care program, Prime Time, is open to all enrolled students. Registration paperwork is required. Monthly or semester enrollment is offered. Prime Time is NOT to be confused with a drop-in service. Texas Catholic Conference Education Department regulations state that only students enrolled in the school and registered in the Prime Time program are permitted.

#### **B. Hours of Operation**

The program follows the school calendar year. The program will be closed on school holidays, staff development days, and school conference days. The Texas Catholic Conference Education Department guidelines prohibit the operation of the program on days other than school days. The hours of operation are from the release of school until 6:00 p.m. Students who remain on campus after carpool (unless they are part of an organized activity sponsored by the school) will be checked into the Prime Time after school care program and parents/guardians will be charged appropriately. **After leaving campus, students may not return unless accompanied by an adult responsible for his/her supervision - this includes student spectators at athletic competitions and siblings of students who are involved in athletics; as well as recreation on the playground/field.**

#### **C. Personnel**

Prime time staff is directly supervised by the Prime Time director. Staff is VIRTUS trained and receives CPR, AED and first aid training. The program is an extension of the school curriculum and the school principal is responsible for the overall supervision and operation of the program through the Prime Time director.

#### **D. Emergency Attendance**

Students who remain on campus **more than 15 minutes after** carpool ends (unless they are part of an organized activity sponsored by the school) will be placed in Prime Time and parents/guardians will be charged accordingly. Parents/guardians who are not able to pick up their child immediately after school due to an emergency must notify the school office as soon as possible. Students attending on an emergency basis will be offered supervision, homework assistance, and a snack. These students join Prime Time at the end of carpool.

#### **E. Snacks**

Healthy snacks are provided each day. The snack menu is posted and/or available for review. Please contact the director if special dietary needs are required.

#### **F. Personal Property**

All personal property brought to Prime Time should be labeled. Children are discouraged from bringing popular or favorite toys or games. Prime Time is not responsible for the safety or loss of personal property.

### G. Arrival and Dismissal

A record of attendance is kept for every child. Children will not be released to persons not designated unless prior authorization is given either to the school office or directly to a Prime Time staff member. Proper identification is required to pick up children. It is important that parents/guardians notify both Prime Time and classroom teachers, preferably in writing, should a child's daily schedule change with regard to carpool, pick-up, or an off-campus appointment. Prime Time students are expected to leave their classroom with all necessary homework materials and personal belongings. Students will be checked out from the school office. Students and parents/guardians are not permitted to be in a classroom without a teacher or staff member present.

### H. Prime Time Fees

#### 1. **Payment Schedule**

# of Children	Monthly Rate	Semester Rate
1	\$195	\$975
2	\$340	\$1700
3	\$440	\$2200
4	\$495	\$2475

- Emergency Basis** - The rate for this service is **\$25** per hour, per student, with a minimum charge of **\$25**. Parents will be billed at the end of each month.
- Late Fees** - Prime Time closes at 6:00 p.m. After 6:00 p.m., there is a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. After three (3) late pick-ups, the late charge will be \$5.00 per minute per child. A phone call is appreciated if the person picking up the student will be late, but late fees will still apply.

### I. Behavior

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the school's philosophy as stated in this Handbook, Section IV Behavior. Students are expected to follow all school or classroom rules as stated in the classroom behavior management guides.

### J. Illness

Students who are injured or become ill during hours when the school nurse is no longer on campus will be administered first aid. The parent/guardian will be contacted. No child is to be left at school once he/she has become ill or injured. If parents, guardians, or caregivers are unable to pick up the child within 30 minutes, the next emergency contact will be called. In the event of a medical situation deemed to be an emergency, 911 will be called.

## III. ATTENDANCE

### A. School Hours

In compliance with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED), St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School follows compulsory attendance laws. School hours are as follows:

**Grades 2-8:** 8:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. (2:15 p.m. on early dismissal days).

**Grades PreK-1:** 8:00 a.m. – 3:05 p.m. (2:05 p.m. on early dismissal days).

Early dismissal days are usually the first and third Wednesdays of each month and certain days before holidays (please check the yearly school calendar).

To avoid interruption of classroom teaching time, children may only be checked out for appointments before 2:45 p.m. on regular days, and before 1:45 p.m. on early dismissal days. Office staff will not call a student from class after these times.

## B. Absence from School

Daily school attendance is the only effective way to assure continued academic progress.

1. **Notification of Absence** - Parents/guardians are asked to contact the school office by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence or in advance if known. If a student's absence is not confirmed by 9:00 a.m., the school office will attempt to contact the parent to verify the whereabouts of the student.
2. **Half-Day Absence** - Students arriving after 11:30 a.m. will be marked one half-day absent. Students leaving prior to 11:30 a.m. will be marked one full day absent. Students missing 4 hours during a full school day will be marked one half-day absent.
3. **Absence Due to Illness** - If a student is unable to come to school due to illness or a dental/doctor appointment, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the school office (preferably by email) or provide a note from a physician immediately upon return to school. The date(s) of absence(s), student name, homeroom teacher, and the reason for the absence should be indicated. All absences will be considered unexcused unless written notification is received by the school nurse by the second day following the student's return to school. **Students are responsible for make-up work and tests**, and will have one day for every day absent to turn in the missing work. **Students returning from illness are required to immediately request their missing assignments from each of their teachers.** Homework assignments will be available on online, **and may also be obtained from the teacher via email.**
4. **Absence Due to Family Emergency** - Absences due to a death in the immediate family and serious or prolonged illness are always handled on an individual basis. Special care and consideration for the student and his/her family will dictate the procedure that the school will follow in such circumstances.
5. **Absence for Other Reasons** - If it is absolutely necessary for parents/guardians to remove children from classes for reasons other than family emergencies, illness or other medical concerns, parents/guardians should consult with the principal and present a written reason for the absence. The school calendar provides multiple student holidays throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. **Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation.**
6. **Excessive Absences** - Excessive absence, defined as 10% of 180 days, or 18 days, or the equivalent of 18 days including tardies, could be considered a reason for retaining a child in their current grade.
7. **Tardiness** - Students who are not in the classroom at 8:00 a.m. are tardy and must report to the school office. Tardies are excused for medical appointments when the student presents a written note from the medical provider to that effect. Habitual tardiness seriously affects school performance. The student's conduct grade will also reflect unexcused tardiness as follows:
  - 4 unexcused tardies - conduct grade S
  - 8 unexcused tardies - conduct grade N
  - 9 unexcused tardies - conduct grade U
8. **Leaving School Early** - Leaving school early is discouraged in order to maximize instructional time. Frequent absence during the school day disrupts instruction and can seriously affect the student's performance. Parents should make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments before or after school hours. Parents must send a note, in writing or emailed, to the child's teacher stating the time they wish to pick up the child. The office will call students from the classroom when parents arrive for pick-up. A student returning to school is to report to the school office before being admitted to class. To avoid interruption of classroom teaching time, children may only be checked out for

appointments before 2:45 p.m. on regular days and before 1:45 p.m. on early dismissal days. Office staff cannot call a student from class after these times.

### C. **Supervision Before School Hours**

The school offers supervision for students from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. in designated areas. Student safety is a priority. Students may arrive to school as early as 7:00 a.m. Students on campus between 7:00-7:30 a.m. should enter on the Buffalo Speedway side for supervision. Students are not to be on the school grounds before 7:00 a.m. unless at a supervised activity such as tutoring, band, cheerleading, etc.

### D. **School Calendar**

The school establishes a calendar before the beginning of each school year. Parents/guardians are expected to honor the calendar. *A pull-out school calendar can be found in the back of this handbook.*

## IV. **BEHAVIOR**

### A. **General Behavior Policy**

Students are expected to conduct themselves, whether inside or outside school, or at sponsored activities, in a manner befitting the school's philosophy, expected behaviors and reputation of a Catholic school.

Unacceptable behavior subverts the mission of Catholic education and threatens the educational experience and the well-being of all affected persons.

Whether occurring within or outside the school, when behavior jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, or is contrary to Gospel values, the student is subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to, exclusion from school activities, detention, suspension, expulsion or referral to proper authorities for criminal prosecution.

General school rules and classroom rules will be explained to each class by the teacher during the first week of school. The teacher will explain consequences for failure to adhere to classroom or school rules. Students will receive feedback and/or consequences in accordance with behavior. Every effort is made to emphasize the positive qualities of each child. Only students who adhere to the discipline policy will be invited to re-enroll.

### B. **Harassment/Bullying/Cyber-bullying**

#### 1. **Definitions**

a. **Bullying** - any behavior that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive, adversely affecting a student's education or behavior that creates a hostile or abusive educational environment. This includes doing or saying things to have power over another student by calling names, saying or writing untrue things about another student, excluding another student from activities, not talking to, threatening, or making another student feel uncomfortable or scared, taking or damaging another student's things, hitting, kicking, or making them do things the other student does not want to do.

b. **Cyber-bullying** - use of the Internet, cell phone or other electronic device to send or post messages or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

- i. cruel or threatening computer messages, posts or e-mails,
- ii. mean, repeated cell phone text messages,

- iii. creating a website for the purpose of mocking certain students or school personnel,
  - iv. posting humiliating “photo shopped” or digitally modified images of students or school personnel,
  - v. forwarding “private” photos or videos to other students, or
  - vi. pretending to be someone else by using someone else’s online screen identity.
- c. **Harassment** - Harassment includes, but is not necessarily limited to:
- i. unwelcome and persistent behavior that makes a person feel threatened, humiliated, uncomfortable or unsafe,
  - ii. verbal conduct such as racial slurs, the use of vulgar or obscene language, derogatory jokes or comments, social ostracism, and/or personally damaging statements made about others,
  - iii. behavior that is sexual or lewd in nature, including sexual advances, physical contact, and other verbal, physical or visual conduct of a sexual nature.
  - iv. behavior that is intimidating, such as threatening gestures, assault, unwanted touching, and blocking of normal movement that interferes with another student’s work, study or play,
  - v. bullying or cyber-bullying,
  - vi. unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that creates an unpleasant or hostile educational environment.

2. **Violations** - Harassment and bullying are direct violations of the Christian behaviors and values upheld in the school. Harassment or bullying involving students, school and parish faculty, parents, or visitors will be investigated and necessary action taken immediately. Depending on the nature of the harassment or bullying, each incident will be reviewed independently, and action taken may range from a disciplinary report to expulsion from the school, and in some cases, legal action. Harassment or bullying that occurs off campus but adversely affects the educational environment at school is a violation subject to school discipline.

3. **Reporting** - Should anyone be a victim of, or witness to, harassment/bullying, the following steps should be taken:

- a. Immediately notify someone in authority, such as a parent, teacher, assistant principal, principal, counselor, or priest.
- b. After reporting the harassment/bullying, keep the information confidential.
- c. If necessary, write an account of what happened for future reference.

### C. **Etiquette and Conduct Standards**

Each student is expected to follow proper etiquette and rules governing polite behavior in general, and specifically those rules enumerated in Appendix C.

To summarize, each student is expected to:

1. act with honor, truth and integrity at all times;
2. demonstrate courtesy and respect for all students and teachers at all school functions on or off campus;
3. respect the property of others, the school, church and facilities;
4. assist the school staff in maintaining safety, order and discipline by reporting dangerous behaviors and/or situations to school personnel;
5. walk to and from classes;
6. keep hands, feet and objects to self;
7. listen and follow directions;
8. arrive on time for school and attend all classes regularly;
9. be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments;
10. be well-groomed and in proper uniform.

#### D. Academic Standards

Students of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School are expected to adhere to the highest standards of behavior with regard to academic honesty. The following policies apply to the school day, Prime Time and any school-sanctioned activities. Failure to comply with these standards will result in disciplinary action.

1. **Academic Misconduct** - Academic misconduct includes academically dishonest, deceitful, or inappropriate acts that are intentionally committed. Examples of such acts include, but are not limited to:
  - a. inappropriately providing or receiving information or academic work so as to gain unfair advantage over others,
  - b. planning with another to commit any act of academic dishonesty,
  - c. attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage for oneself or another by bribery or by any act of offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting anything of value to another for such purpose,
  - d. changing or altering grades or other official educational records,
  - e. obtaining or providing to another, a non-administered test or answers to a non-administered test,
  - f. breaking and entering into a building or office for the purpose of obtaining a quiz, test, or teacher's materials,
  - g. continuing work on an examination or assignment after the allocated time has elapsed,
  - h. submitting the same work for more than one class without disclosure and approval,
  - i. removing reference materials from the library that are not allowed to be checked out.
2. **Cheating** - Cheating is a form of dishonesty where a student attempts to give the appearance of a level of knowledge or skill that the student has not obtained. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - a. copying from another person's work during an examination or while completing an assignment,
  - b. allowing someone to copy from a student during an examination or while completing an assignment,
  - c. using unauthorized materials during an examination or while completing an assignment,
  - d. collaborating on an examination or assignment without authorization,
  - e. taking an examination or completing an assignment for another, or permitting another to take an examination or to complete an assignment,
  - f. Communicating with another student by any means (electronic, verbal or written), regarding the contents of a quiz or test before grades are posted.
3. **Fabrication or Falsification** - Fabrication or falsification is a form of dishonesty where a student invents or distorts the origin or content of information used as an authority. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - a. citing a source that does not exist,
  - b. attributing to a source ideas or information that is not included in the source,
  - c. citing a source for a proposition that it does not support,
  - d. citing a source in a bibliography when the source was neither consulted nor cited in the body of the paper,
  - e. intentionally distorting the meaning or applicability of data,
  - f. inventing data or statistical results to support conclusions.
4. **Plagiarism** - Plagiarism of any kind is contrary to established practices where students are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright laws.



Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished, as well as published, material. Acts of copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

- a. **Intentional Plagiarism** - the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote. Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the assistant principal, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by a teacher.
- b. **Inadvertent Plagiarism** - Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but unintentional, use of another's words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from a failure to follow established rules for documenting sources or from simply being insufficiently careful in research and writing. Inadvertent plagiarism, although not in violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable, and is considered academic misconduct for which a teacher can impose appropriate academic sanctions. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their teacher and obtain guidance.
- c. **Examples of plagiarism**
  - i. Direct Plagiarism - verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source
  - ii. Paraphrased Plagiarism - paraphrasing, without acknowledgment, the ideas of another that the reader might mistake for your own
  - iii. Plagiarism Mosaic - borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one's own without acknowledging the source
  - iv. Insufficient Acknowledgment - partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source

#### E. Honor Code (grades 6-8)

Trust between faculty and student is a vital part of the environment at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School. It is important for students to develop a strong sense of personal honor and integrity while in school that will follow them throughout life. To help create and maintain an atmosphere of honesty and integrity among students and faculty members alike, the school implements a Code of Honor. Every student is expected to understand the Honor Code and the behavior expected under the Honor Code.

1. **Students' Honor** - Every student is on his/her honor not to engage in lying, cheating, plagiarizing, and/or stealing, or any serious misconduct.
2. **Requirement to Report** - Every student is expected to report Honor Code infractions to the teacher or the principal. It is considered an Honor Code infraction NOT to report a known Honor Code infraction.
3. **Confidentiality** - Any student who observes an Honor Code offense shall not discuss the offense with other students. Consequences will be imposed for a violation of this rule.
4. **Pledge** - Every middle school student will be expected to sign an Honor Code pledge on tests, quizzes, papers, and projects that indicates the student has neither given nor received help. In addition, all students will also sign a pledge that they have not witnessed a violation of the Honor Code on the particular assignment being turned in:

**I have neither given nor received help on this exam, nor have I witnessed a violation of the Honor Code.**

5. **Parental Responsibility** - Parents are an important part of supporting the Honor Code. It is expected that parents talk regularly with students about the importance of the Honor Code. Any questions about the Honor Code from students or parents should be directed to the assistant principal or the principal as soon as they arise.
6. **Student Responsibility** - All students are reminded of their responsibility for doing all work on their own, both in class and outside of class, UNLESS the teacher gives different directions.
7. **Internet Usage** - The Honor Code also governs use of the Internet for school assignments. Copying documents or statements without properly citing sources shall be considered plagiarism and is a violation of the Honor Code. Students should not work together on homework through e-mail, Facetime, texting, apps, or other means.
8. **Shared Responsibility** - Students are responsible not only to adhere to the Honor Code requirement to be honest, but also to assist other students in fulfilling their commitment to be honest.

#### **G. Investigation/Disposition of Improper Behavior**

Each faculty member is responsible for establishing and communicating to students the expectations of behavior with respect to academic honesty and the students' conduct in each class. In the event of improper behavior, the responsible faculty member will investigate the incident and notify the assistant principal, who will determine and take appropriate action. School officials reserve the right to search cell phones, desks, lockers, and other student property or containers.

#### **H. Violations of Law**

**Any violation of public law should be reported immediately to the principal, who will inform the appropriate law enforcement agency.**

#### **I. Drugs and Alcohol**

A student is subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion and/or may be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for prosecution if he or she:

1. uses a chemical substance, possesses for consumption, sells or dispenses illegal drugs and narcotics such as, but not limited to, alcohol, inhalers, marijuana, e-cigarettes, or a controlled substance,
2. acts under the influence of an illegal drug, alcohol, narcotic, marijuana, or a controlled substance, or
3. misuses or overdoses on prescription or over-the-counter medication.

#### **J. Grievance Process**

If an affected student disagrees with the determination or action and is unable to resolve the matter to the mutual satisfaction of the student and the teacher, the student may have the matter reviewed through the established grievance process. Please see the "Grievance" section for details.

### **V. DISCIPLINE**

#### **A. Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook**

All teachers and staff are responsible for maintaining proper discipline on campus. Utilization of the Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook is necessary to ensure the entire faculty and staff is able to administer a consistent program.

## B. Classroom Rules

Classroom discipline is the responsibility of the teacher with the assistance of the principal, assistant principal and the parents/guardians when needed. Teachers observe and arrange the environment to minimize the possibility of potential issues. Class rules are posted in each classroom. Consequences for infractions will be communicated when rules are posted and reviewed. Teachers will address disciplinary issues within the classroom, and serious or habitual disciplinary issues should be referred to the assistant principal or the principal.

## C. Rewards

Rewards will be given on an individual basis and at the discretion of the teacher. Rewards may include, but are not limited to:

1. *Free dress day*
2. *Free library pass* (during class)
3. *Extra credit for a specific class*
4. *No homework for a specific class*
5. *Tiger Pride recognition*

## D. Effect on Conduct Grade

Class I, II, III, IV violations will have the following effects on conduct:

1. *0 Infractions* = Conduct grade E
2. *1-5 Infractions* = Conduct grade S
3. *6-8 Infractions* = Conduct grade N
4. *9 or more infractions* = Conduct grade U

E. **Infraction System** - The purpose of the infraction system is threefold:

1. To inform parents/guardians of behavior that interferes with the student's learning or the learning of others.
2. An attempt to protect the child from a subjective determination of the student's Conduct Grade, which impacts the ability to participate in school-sponsored activities.
3. To be proactive in changing behavior that could lead to stronger disciplinary action such as suspension or expulsion.

The infraction system will be used for grades 4 through 8. Situations of misconduct for prekindergarten through grade 3 will be handled by the teacher with the assistance of the assistant principal or the principal. Student behavior will be tracked by the teachers and administration.

Misconduct and disciplinary violations are broken down into H.A.M. (Homework Assignment Missing) and four other levels.

The levels provide a description of a broad range of behaviors considered to be student misconduct. The acts of misconduct listed in Classes I, II, III, and IV are not inclusive. Class IV infractions may constitute a reason for expulsion. The student who commits an infraction or act of misconduct will be subject to the disciplinary action assigned by the classroom teacher, assistant principal or principal. **The teacher determining the infraction decides the number of infractions given, within the recommended range as listed below.** The principal always has the final authority in determining the disciplinary assignment for a student's misconduct.

Every effort will be made to contact the parents/guardians for any misconduct. This contact can be made by email, telephone, or parent conference by either the teacher or administration. A copy of an infraction form will be sent home, usually by e-mail.

#### F. **Class I Infractions (1 infraction)**

Class I violations include violations of classroom management procedures or campus rules that disrupt the educational process. Teachers and other staff members will keep a written record of the violation. Class I violations include behaviors such as, but not limited to:

1. being tardy without an excuse to school or class (**On the fourth unexcused tardy, an infraction will be given for that tardy and each subsequent tardy, per nine weeks**),
2. eating or drinking in an undesignated area,
3. chewing gum anywhere on campus, or at school-sponsored activities off campus,
4. failure to deliver and/or return written communication between home and school,
5. not bringing required classroom materials,
6. possessing nuisance items,
7. lunchroom, restroom, or middle school break misconduct that causes a disturbance,
8. violating the school dress code and grooming guidelines,
9. running and/or making excessive noise in the halls, building, and/or classroom,
10. any act that impedes the orderly classroom procedures or interrupts the orderly operation of the classroom,
11. drawings, writings or tattoos on the body,
12. failure to attend H.A.M. (see section E, above)

#### G. **Class II Infractions (2-5 infractions)**

Class II violations include those infractions that are more serious in nature than those of Class I. The disciplinary actions taken will depend on the offense, previous actions, and the seriousness of the violation. Class II violations include such behaviors as, but not limited to:

1. engaging in inappropriate public display of affection,
2. leaving the classroom or building without permission,
3. **language (verbal or written) or actions unbecoming of a Christian student,**
4. refusing to participate in a classroom activity or not completing class assigned work,
5. repeatedly not following directions,
6. selling or soliciting for sale any merchandise on the school campus without the authorization of the principal,
7. unwanted touching of others,
8. using any nuisance item on campus or on any school-sponsored trip without prior teacher/administrator approval,
9. cell phone possession or use during unauthorized times or in unauthorized places,
10. any repeated violation cited in this or the previous level,
11. any other acts that interfere with the orderly educational process of the classroom and/or school,
12. failure to attend assigned detention.

#### H. **Class III Infractions (6-8 infractions)**

Class III violations include those infractions that substantially and seriously disrupt or materially interfere with another student or with the orderly process in the classroom or school, or with any school-related activity. Class III violations include such behaviors as, but not limited to:

1. acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior that is detrimental to the school, harmful to health and safety, or inhibits the rights of others,
2. possession of any medication, over-the-counter or prescription,
3. refusing to comply with reasonable requests of school personnel,
4. any repeated violations cited in the previous levels or chronic or repeated instances of misbehavior,
5. any other act that seriously disrupts the orderly process of the school,

6. lying to any faculty/staff or other adult, either verbally or written,
7. throwing an object that can cause bodily injury or damage to the property,
8. engaging in public display of affection (major),
9. leaving school grounds without permission,
10. making a threat, oral or written, to do bodily injury or harm to another or the property of another.

#### I. **Class IV Infractions (9 Infractions)**

Class IV violations include those acts of misconduct, serious misbehavior and/or illegal acts that threaten other students or impair the educational efficiency of the school, and/or those that most seriously disrupt the orderly educational process in the classroom and/or school. Infractions at this level, or an accumulation of infractions equal to 9 within the nine-week grading period will automatically be referred to the principal for disposition. Class IV violations include such behaviors as, but not limited to:

1. participation in disruptive activities in a group such as a gang,
2. possession, use or delivery of narcotics, dangerous drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol on school campus or at school-sponsored activities,
3. smoking or use of any tobacco or nicotine product, including e-cigarettes, on school property or at school-related activities,
4. possession, use or concealment of a weapon on school property or at a school-related activity, or any item construed to be, or has the appearance of, a weapon on school property or at a school-related activity (a weapon is any instrument that may produce bodily harm),
5. fighting (this may include, but is not limited to, hitting, punching, slapping, kicking, pinching, pushing),
6. causing harm or humiliation to a teacher or student,
7. vandalism of school property or the property of others,
8. **possession of any electronic device, including watches, disruptive to instruction,**
9. engaging in chronic misbehavior that disrupts the learning environment,
10. leaving school grounds during the school day, and/or organized school activity including Prime Time that is contiguous with the school day, without permission,
11. altering school records or data files, or signing another person's name on school documents,
12. cheating and/or copying (plagiarism) the work of others from any source (Internet, library resources, other students, etc.),
13. possession of a device, object or substance that would cause harm to property or persons, including, but not limited to: laser pens, pocket knives, firecrackers, razors, chains, mace, or flammable liquid,
14. accessing, distributing, or possessing obscene or pornographic material,
15. stealing, burglary, robbery, extortion, gambling or possession of stolen property: misuse of school technology, including but not limited to the Internet, the network, or any school-owned equipment or software,
16. verbally or physically harassing, taunting or bullying other students or school personnel, including but not limited to using profane, obscene, indecent remarks, or racially or ethnically offensive language and/or gestures,
17. making death threats by any means,
18. misrepresenting the school, faculty, staff, or students through written, verbal or electronic means,
19. failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences,
20. assaulting another person.

## J. Consequences

### 1. *Missing Work*

- a. **Grades 4-5** - A student who is missing a homework assignment in grades 4-5 and present at school will be given the opportunity to complete the missing assignment. This assignment will be completed during the time designated by the teacher. Additional points will be deducted from the final grade of each completed missing assignment.
- b. **Grades 6-8** - A student who is missing a homework assignment will be required to attend a lunchtime session to make up the assignment. A teacher will monitor the session. The student will be allowed to eat his/her lunch while completing the assignment. A student who does not bring his/her lunch to school that day will be provided a sack lunch by the cafeteria at the parents'/guardians' expense. All work must be turned in at the end of the H.A.M. session. It is at the teacher's discretion which assignments are eligible for H.A.M. Classes that meet after lunch may use H.A.M. on the following day. A student may attend H.A.M. for an after-lunch class on the same day the assignment is due but the point deduction still applies. The following rules also apply:
  1. 30 points will be deducted from the final grade given on each missing assignment completed in H.A.M.
  2. Incomplete assignments turned in at the end of the H.A.M. session will be graded with missing answers being counted against the final grade.
  3. If the work is not turned in at all, a zero will be given.
  4. Students assigned to H.A.M. who do not attend the assigned session will receive a zero on the assignment(s) and a Class I infraction.
  5. Completed assignments that are forgotten at home are subject to the same H.A.M. guidelines.

### 2. *Infraction Consequences*

#### a. **Class I Infraction Consequences**

- i. teacher/student conference
- ii. parent/guardian contact via phone call, note or email
- iii. confiscation of a prohibited nuisance item
- iv. in-class disciplinary action
- v. restoration and/or restitution, as applicable
- vi. exclusion from extracurricular activities (accumulation of 6 or more infractions)
- vii. detention (repetitive Class I violations)
- viii. behavior contract (repetitive Class I violations); and/or,
- ix. supervised campus or community service while serving detention (repetitive Class I violations)

#### b. **Class II Infraction Consequences**

- i. any consequence for a Class I infraction, as well as one or more of the following
- ii. removal of student from class or activity
- iii. loss of recess or recreational time
- iv. confiscation of any unauthorized merchandise offered for sale

#### c. **Class III Infraction Consequences**

- i. any consequence from Classes I and II, as well as one or more of the following
- ii. administrator, teacher, student, parent/guardian conference
- iii. behavior contract
- iv. in-school suspension
- v. out of school suspension

- vi. withdrawal of various student privileges

**d. Class IV Infraction Consequences**

- i. any consequence from Classes I, II and III, as well as one or more of the following
- ii. involvement of law enforcement
- iii. suspension (already listed above)
- iv. expulsion
- v. other appropriate disciplinary options as deemed necessary by the assistant principal in conjunction with the principal

3. **Disciplinary Probation** - A student's continuous misbehavior may result in being placed on disciplinary probation by the principal. The principal will determine the length of the probation and notify the student and parents/guardians of the reasons for the terms of the probation. During the probation and at the end of the probation, the parents/guardians will be informed of the student's progress. At the conclusion of the probation, the principal, in consultation with the assistant principal, will determine whether sufficient improvement in behavior has occurred. The principal may consider other actions, if insufficient progress is noted.

4. **Suspension**

a. **In-school Suspension** - The student will be assigned to a supervised area where he/she will complete all assignments. The student will not attend his/her regular schedule.

b. **Out-of-school Suspension** - *This is more severe than In-school Suspension, as it represents a concern for the safety and well being of students and/or faculty and staff.*

A student who has been suspended must make up all work that is missed. All work will be graded and appropriate credit given. In addition, the student will not participate in any school or extracurricular activities for four weeks, beginning with the suspension and continuing until the next progress report or report card period, or at the discretion of the principal. Further, a student who has received a suspension will not be allowed to hold membership or be involved in Beta Club for the remainder of the school year. The student will meet with the principal or designated authority before returning to class following the suspension.

- 5. **Home Study** - A student who is accused of serious wrongdoing can be placed in a home-study program, pending adjudication or an investigation.
- 6. **Expulsion** - Major offenses and continual disregard of school rules may result in a student's expulsion. Engaging in bullying, any type of harassment, or chronic or repeated misbehavior that disrupts the learning environment may result in a student's expulsion.
- 7. **Extension of Discipline** - Depending on whether sufficient improvement in behavior has occurred, certain situations may warrant an extension of a disciplinary action into a new school term.
- 8. **Waiver** - The principal always has the final recourse in every disciplinary situation and may waive any disciplinary rules for just cause.

## VI. DRESS CODE

### A. Uniform Policy

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School students wear uniforms in grades prekindergarten–8. Students should arrive at school properly dressed (in compliance with the uniform policy) for the day, remain properly dressed for the entire school day, be neat in appearance and

reflect pride in themselves and in the school. Uniforms must be in good repair (no rips, tears or holes) and fit properly.

1. **Uniform Purchase** - All uniform items, except for the P.E. uniform, must be purchased through Parker School Uniforms or other vendors as authorized by the school. Parents/guardians are to mark their students' clothing with permanent marking ink (on the label only), labels, or monograms.
2. **Proper Wear**
  - a. Shirts must be tucked in and remain tucked in.
  - b. Shoes must be properly secured (tied, buckled, etc.).
  - c. Waistbands and shirtsleeves may not be rolled.
  - d. Pants/skirts must be worn at the natural waistline.
  - e. All girls must wear the modesty shorts under skirts. Middle School girls must wear either modesty shorts or regular P.E.-approved shorts under skirts.
3. **Grooming and Accessories**
  - a. **Hair Color** - Excessively dyed or highlighted hair is not allowed. Students will be sent home until the distracting appearance is remedied.
  - b. **Hair Length** - Boys' hair must be cut above the collar and may not be below mid-ear. Hair must be neat in appearance and out of the eyes.
  - c. **Facial Hair** - Facial hair is not permitted.
  - d. **Piercings and Tattoos** - No visible tattoos are permitted. No body piercing is permitted other than ears - please see letter "f" Jewelry.
  - e. **Length of Uniform Jumper, Skirt, Shorts and Skort** - The length of the uniform jumper, skirt, shorts and skort for girls must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee in the front and the back when standing or 4 inches from the floor when kneeling.
  - f. **Jewelry** - Jewelry and other accessory items are not part of the school uniform. Only small pierced earrings (girls only), a wristwatch, and/or religious necklaces are allowed. The school will not be responsible for the loss, breakage, or theft of jewelry and/or personal items.
  - g. **Makeup/polish** - Middle school girls are allowed to wear makeup with parental consent and in moderation. Students will be asked to remove excessive makeup/fingernail polish. Artificial fingernails are not permitted.
  - h. **Hats/caps** - Hats and/or caps are not to be worn in the classroom.
  - i. **Headbands and Bows** - **Headbands and bows must be of reasonable size (no larger than the head) or SVdP-approved.**
4. **Shoes**
  - a. No sandals, open-back shoes or boots (no UGGs).
  - b. Dress shoes are optional. Students are encouraged to wear all white, black or navy sneakers on dress uniform days.
  - c. Gym shoes must be worn for P.E.
  - d. Students who perform a task on the altar must wear dress shoes.
  - e. No shoes that make sound effects or that light up.
5. **Socks**

Socks must be white or black and visible above the shoe. Small logos are permitted. Girls are encouraged to wear knee socks.

### **Uniform Policy Noncompliance**

Noncompliance with the Uniform Policy will be reflected in conduct grades. Students out of uniform or inappropriately dressed will call their parents/guardians to bring the appropriate garments. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, an attempt to provide the student with the appropriate garments will be made through lost and found and/or used uniform supply. Final judgments about what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable dress lies with the teachers or the school administration.



## **B. Dress Uniform**

Students will wear the dress uniform on days they attend Mass or prayer service, field trips, and on special occasions as determined by the principal. The dress uniform may be worn any other school day as well.

### **1. Prekindergarten-Grade 1**

Girls: plaid jumper with navy modesty shorts, and a white collared SVdP blouse.

Boys: navy long slacks, and a long or short sleeved blue oxford SVdP shirt.

### **2. Grades 2-5**

Girls: plaid skort or skirt with navy modesty shorts, a long or short sleeved blue oxford SVdP shirt, and navy SVdP vest.

Boys: navy long slacks, a long or short sleeved blue oxford SVdP shirt, the SVdP tie (after 1<sup>st</sup> Communion for 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders), and a solid brown, black or navy belt.

### **3. Grades 6-8**

Girls: khaki skirt with navy modesty shorts or P.E.-approved shorts, a long or short sleeved blue oxford SVdP shirt, and the navy SVdP vest.

Boys: khaki long slacks, a long or short sleeved blue oxford SVdP shirt, the SVdP tie, and a solid brown, black or navy belt.

## **C. Other Uniform Items**

Students may wear the following items on days the dress uniform is not required.

### **1. Prekindergarten-Grade 1**

Girls and boys: red knit SVdP polo shirt (short or long-sleeved), navy walking shorts or navy twill slacks. Girls: plaid skort.

### **2. Grades 2-5**

Girls and boys: red knit SVdP polo shirt (short or long-sleeved), and navy walking shorts or navy twill slacks, **and a solid dark brown, black or navy belt.** Girls: plaid skort.

### **3. Grades 6-8**

Girls and boys: navy knit SVdP polo shirt (short or long-sleeved), and khaki walking shorts or khaki twill slacks **and a solid dark brown, black or navy belt.** **Girls: khaki skirt and modesty shorts or P.E.-approved shorts. Plain white t-shirts or P.E. uniform shirts may be worn under the uniform shirt. Sleeves must not hang below the uniform shirtsleeves.**

### **4. Tights or Leggings**

Girls may wear white, navy, or black tights or leggings under the skort/skirt. Ankle length leggings may be worn with socks.

### **5. Sweatshirts**

Only the SVdP sweatshirt sold by the P.T.O. may be worn. No hoodies are allowed. Sweatshirts may not be altered in any fashion, except for an embroidered monogram.

### **6. Coats/Jackets**

Non-uniform coats/jackets may be worn to and from school and during recess; otherwise, they must be kept in lockers. Only uniform-approved outerwear may be worn in the classroom. **Coats/jackets are to be taken off during Mass.**

### **7. Modesty shorts**

**All girls will wear the navy Parker School Uniforms modesty shorts or P.E.-approved shorts to P.E. class.**

## **D. P.E. Uniform**

Students in grades PreK - 5 will wear the official school uniform, including navy modesty shorts purchased from Parker School Uniforms, during P.E. classes. Middle school students are required to wear the official P.E. uniform during P.E. classes. Middle school girls are

permitted to wear P.E.-approved shorts sold through the PTO with the official P.E. shirt. P.E. Uniforms may be purchased at Back to School day or during the school year from the P.E. teachers or from the online SVdP Store.

#### **E. Free Dress Days**

1. **Free Dress** - During the school year, the principal may designate special days as Free Dress days. Other than Free Dress Days, Free Dress Passes must be used for attire other than uniforms.
  - a. Free Dress Passes may be used on Mondays. Only official passes will be accepted.
  - b. All clothing must be modest and appropriate for a Catholic school setting.
  - c. **Proper attire for these days must follow the same guidelines as the school uniform (length of skirts and dresses for girls, shorts for boys, style of clothes, shoes must have backs, etc.). Please refer to p.14, Sect. VI for the Uniform Policy that still must be followed.**
  - d. Collarless shirts may be worn if they are void of any advertisements.
  - e. Jeans may be worn unless the principal determines otherwise. Appropriate jeans are those that fit the body, do not have holes, are not cut off, and are not faded to the point of being see-through.
  - f. Final judgments about what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable dress lies with the teachers or the school administration.
2. **Scout Uniforms** - Scouts may wear the official scout uniform on meeting days.
3. **Costumes** - Halloween costumes are not permitted.
4. **Dances/Special Occasions** - Dress guidelines for school sponsored dances and special occasions can be found in Sec. IX (N) of this handbook.
4. **Spirit Apparel** - Spirit Apparel includes all SVdP organizations/teams that have special uniform/apparel approved by SVdP administration. Spirit apparel, like free dress, is generally restricted to Mondays and Tiger Pride days. The administration has the right to make exceptions.

### **VII. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Extracurricular activity – For purposes of this section, “extracurricular activity” includes all school athletic teams and academic teams including Math Team, Prep Bowl, Destination ImagiNation, spelling bee, Choir, Band competitions, Spring Musical, video production, Beta Club, Cheer & Pep Squad, and field trips. When referring to the School Day – any day in which school is in session for 4 or more hours.

#### **A. Participation**

Participation in the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School extracurricular program is a privilege, not a right. Only students enrolled at SVdP may participate. The school, in cooperation with the student and parents/guardians, will make a reasonable effort to hold participating students to personal, academic, and discipline standards. Students, athletes, spectators, coaches, and instructors represent the school, and they are expected to be worthy representatives. It is the goal of the school to provide interested students with opportunities to participate in school-sponsored and sanctioned extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities will be consistent with church and school policy with emphasis on teaching Christian principles.

The enrollment of a child or children at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School in extracurricular activities is considered to be an agreement on the part of the student and parents or guardians that they will comply with all school procedures, regulations and policies including, but not limited to, such procedures, regulations, and policies stated herein. Administration

and staff will exercise professional judgment and discretion to address each situation fairly and consistently.

## **B. Tryouts**

The school may hold tryouts for certain activities as needed. There are also activities that have limited capacity and therefore accept participants on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **C. Archdiocesan Policy**

The school operates in accordance with the Archdiocesan Board of Education policy and follows the regulations set forth by the Catholic Schools Office. All students are guaranteed the rights, privileges, programs, and activities that are made available to the general student body. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, or national origin.

## **D. TCCED/GHCAA**

The school adheres to the guidelines established by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and maintains full accreditation status. Our athletic association is governed under the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA) guidelines. School teams will participate in the GHCAA, unless otherwise authorized through the principal's office.

## **E. Eligibility Requirements**

1. **Enrollment** - Participants must attend St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School.
2. **Attendance:**
  - a. *Event Day* - Students who attend school for half of the school day (arriving before 11:30 a.m.) are eligible to participate in that day's extracurricular events.
  - b. *Illness* - Students who leave school during the school day due to illness may not participate in that day's extracurricular events.
3. **Grade/Conduct Requirements:**
  - a. Academic
    - i. one D (70-77) subject average will be allowed
    - ii. no F (below 70) subject average will be allowed
  - b. Conduct
    - i. no N will be allowed
    - ii. no U will be allowed
  - c. Grade Checks will occur on Tuesdays.
4. **Academic Ineligibility Following Weekly Grade Check**

Students not meeting academic grade requirements are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

  - a. Period of Ineligibility:
    - i. begins the day of grade checks
    - ii. continues for a period of one week
    - iii. Student may return to participation in the activity, provided he/she meets eligibility requirements.
    - iv. Ineligibility continues until the student meets eligibility requirements.
5. **Conduct Ineligibility**

Students receiving an "N" or "U" in conduct are ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities.

  - a. **Period of ineligibility for "N"**
    - i. begins immediately upon student receiving an "N"
    - ii. continues for a period of 15 consecutive, infraction-free school days

- iii. extends for a period of 15 days from the receipt of any additional infraction during the period of ineligibility, beginning on the day of the infraction

**b. Period of ineligibility for “U”**

- i. begins immediately upon student receiving a “U”
- ii. continues for the remainder of the current season or 30 consecutive, infraction-free school days, whichever is longer

**6. Consequences of Ineligibility**

- a. No participation in any manner, either at the event or in preparation of the event, including games, practice, practice games, rehearsals, tournaments, competitions, or performances
- b. no travel to away games, tournaments, competitions, or performances on school-provided transportation
- c. no sitting with the group during events
- d. any behavior causing repeated ineligibility is unacceptable and could result in permanent ineligibility from all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year

**7. Effect of Suspension** - Suspension from school will result in probation from all practices, games, meetings, rehearsals, performances or competitions. Additionally, the student is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, sit on the bench during games or wear jerseys, or associate with the team or club during the suspension period. Violation of these rules could result in further ineligibility pending review by school administration.

**8. Expectations** - Students are expected to follow the guidelines set by the coach or instructor. These include: proper behavior, enthusiasm, promptness, grooming, dress, attendance at practice, warm-ups, uniforms, etc.

**F. Transportation**

- 1. Transportation will not be provided to certain schools. The principal will determine when a bus will be made available by the school.
- 2. Teachers and coaches are not allowed to transport students.

**G. Practice** - Students are expected to attend all practices, games, and meetings called by the coach, instructor or sponsor. If a student misses a practice, game, or meeting, the coach, instructor or sponsor must be notified immediately. Students who miss practices, games, or meetings may lose playing time in future games or jeopardize future participation in the activity.

**H. Pick-up** - Students are expected to be picked up immediately after practices, games, and other activities.

Only parents/guardians will be allowed to pick up their child from “away” competitions. A parent/guardian may designate, by completing the School Transportation Waiver, another adult driver to transport their child to/from an activity. This form is available online.

Students must be signed out by the parent or authorized adult. In the event of weekend competitions/tournaments or events that are scheduled after 5:00 p.m. on a school day, parents/guardians are responsible for arranging transportation.

## I. **Athletic Programs**

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School strives to provide fitness and athletic activities that cater to the talents and development of SVdP students. The SVdP coaching philosophy is focused on excellence and virtues, strengthened and informed with Gospel values. A wide variety of sporting opportunities are offered. The school is affiliated with the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA).

1. **Sanctioned Sports**
  - a. Grade 2 - track
  - b. Grade 3 - track
  - c. Grade 4 - track
  - d. Grade 5 - cross country, track
  - e. Grade 6 - basketball, cheerleading, cross country, football, pep squad, soccer, softball, track, volleyball
  - f. Grade 7 - baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country, football, pep squad, soccer, softball, track, volleyball
  - g. Grade 8 - baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country, football, pep squad, soccer, softball, track, volleyball
2. **Physical Requirements** - All students must have a physical examination to participate in the athletic program. The medical history form and the physical examination form must be returned to the school nurse before the first day of sports participation.
3. **Registration**
  - a. Students/parents/guardians must complete and submit prior to participation the appropriate registration form, Parent/Guardian Consent Form, and medical forms when required.
  - b. Parents/guardians must pay an extracurricular fee for each sport or activity in which their child participates by a specified date. Extracurricular fees are non-refundable.
  - c. Families must be current with all school fees and tuition.
  - d. Coaches will hold preseason parent meetings. Attendance of at least one parent/guardian is mandatory. Parents/guardians will be provided with information relevant to the upcoming season including practice schedules and fee requirements.
4. **Athletic Teams**
  - a. The school will field a varsity, junior varsity and C team for all sports when participation demands and practice time and space allow.
  - b. Athletic teams will be composed of students in grades 6, 7, and 8. All students participating in extracurricular activities must be enrolled in St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School.
  - c. Team rosters will be determined by its coaches.
  - d. Coaches will endeavor to play all athletes on each team, but not necessarily in every game.
  - e. The coaches, when practical, will coordinate practice and game schedules to allow students to participate in two St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School sports with overlapping seasons.
5. **Uniforms and Equipment**
  - a. School-issued uniforms and equipment are to be used for all school games, competitions, practices, and special activities. Care must be taken to keep uniforms and equipment in good condition.
  - b. At the end of each sports season or club session, all school-issued uniforms and equipment must be returned to the school in clean and good condition. Uniforms must be returned after an activity is finished at the time/date designated by the

coaches and/or uniform volunteer. Failure to do so will result in an assessment of a fee equal to the cost of the uniform.

- c. Students may not compete in another sport or activity until uniform matters are resolved.

J. **Spectators** - Spectators (including parents/guardians and invited guests) are expected to conduct themselves with behavior consistent with Christian principles. Rude, abusive language and conduct may result in expulsion from the venue and future events as well as other discipline deemed appropriate.

## VIII. GRADE POLICY AND REPORT CARDS

### A. Grading Policy

1. Grades are based upon class performance, tests, projects, homework and class work. Numerical and letter grade explanations are printed on the report cards.
2. It is the student's responsibility to make up work when absent.
3. Work that is not made up may be penalized at the teacher's discretion.

### B. Progress Reports

Progress between report cards will be posted online. The date of report card distribution is marked on the school's calendar.

### C. Report Cards (labeled "Transcripts" on the online report)

#### 1. **Distribution of Grades**

- a. Grades PreK - K: Students in prekindergarten and kindergarten are issued written summaries beginning with the second quarter. Progress for the first quarter will be discussed verbally at the fall conference. PreK receives monthly Progress Reports.
- b. Grades 1 - 8: Report cards are issued to students in grades 2-8 four times each academic year. For Grade 1, three report cards are issued. The date of report card distribution is marked on the school's calendar for parent notification. Report cards will be posted online. Only the last report card will be mailed to the parent/guardian. Please note: online access may be blocked by the school if the family has overdue library books or is not current financially.

#### 2. **Major Subjects** - The major subjects are:

- a. Grades 1 - 3: Religion, Reading, English/Spelling, Mathematics
- b. Grades 4 & 5: Religion, Reading, English/Spelling, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies
- c. Grades 6 - 8: Religion, Literature, English, Mathematics, Science, History

#### 3. **Academic Evaluation System for Grades PreK – K**

##### a. Academic Areas

S - Satisfactory: Goal achieved

T - Transition: Child in process of learning

NA - Need Attention: Child unable to complete goal

##### b. Conduct Key

E - Excellent

S - Satisfactory

N - Needs Improvement

U - Unsatisfactory

#### 4. **Academic Evaluation System for Grades 1-8**

##### a. Major Subjects

- i. Outstanding

- A+: 99-100
- A: 95-98
- A-: 93-94
- ii. Above Average
  - B+: 91-92
  - B: 88-90
  - B-: 86-87
- iii. Average
  - C+: 84-85
  - C: 80-83
  - C-: 78-79
- iv. Below Average
  - D+: 76-77
  - D: 72-75
  - D-: 70-71
- v. Failure
  - F: below 70

b. **Other Subjects**

- i. Excellent
  - E: 90-100
- ii. Satisfactory
  - S: 80-89
- iii. Needs Improvement
  - N: 70-79
- iv. Unsatisfactory
  - U: Below 70

4. **Grade Changes** - Any request for the consideration of a grade change must be made in writing to the principal within five days after the report card is posted.
5. **Failure** - Promotion to subsequent grade levels is determined by final course averages. If a student receives a final average below 70, the student fails the subject. If two major subjects are failed, the child is recommended for retention. **Re-enrollment of students who have failed a grade is left to the discretion of the administration. The decision is based on whether the educational needs of the students can be met at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, and/or whether the student is motivated to meet the requirements.**

D. **Conduct Grades** - Students may earn E, S, N, and U conduct grades.

E. **Valedictorian/Salutatorian** - The valedictorian and salutatorian for the graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade class will be determined by averaging the major subjects (Religion, Literature, English, Mathematics, History and Science) grades for grades 6, 7 and 8.

F. **Academic Honor Roll** - The Academic Honor Roll includes those students in grades 6 - 8 who have earned grades **88 - 93** or above in all subjects with no ancillary class grade lower than S (or, lower than 80) or conduct grade lower than an S.

G. **Principal's Honor Roll** - The Principal's honor roll includes those students in grades 6 - 8 who have earned grades **94** or above in all subjects with no ancillary class grade lower than E (or, lower than 90) or conduct grade lower than an S.

## H. Mid-Term and Final Exams

1. Middle school students will take Mid-Term and Final Exams.
2. The Mid-Term Exam and Final Exam each count 10% toward the subject year-end (cumulative) average. The cumulative average for each major subject (Religion, English, Literature, Math, History, Science) and Spanish are computed as follows:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> 9-weeks average: 20%
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> 9-weeks average: 20%
  - Mid-Term Exam: 10%
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> 9-weeks average: 20%
  - 4<sup>th</sup> 9-weeks average: 20%
  - Final Exam: 10%

## I. Eighth Grade Final Exam Exemption

Eighth grade students may be exempt from taking final exams in certain subjects if the requirements below are met.

### 1. **Requirements**

- a. Second semester average of **93** or above
  - b. No more than five absences, excused or unexcused, for the second semester of eighth grade
  - c. E or S in conduct for each of the first three quarters of the school year
  - d. Maintenance of satisfactory conduct during the fourth quarter
  - e. No suspension or continual disregard for school rules
2. **Notification** - Students will be informed of their exemption status one week prior to the beginning of exams.
  3. **Loss of Privilege** - Students are expected to adhere to the above requirements after notification of exemption status or the exemption will be forfeited.

J. **Mandatory After School Study Hall / Peer Tutoring** - Held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays of each week, 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. On early dismissal days, the time will be 2:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Students who qualify due to grades are **REQUIRED** to attend all three days per week, and thus will not be charged for Prime Time on those days. Qualifications are as follows:

1. At least two (2) D's (subject averages between 70 and 77 inclusive), and/or
2. At least one (1) F (subject average below 70).

Students will remain in the program until they no longer qualify. *Students will no longer have to attend when they no longer meet the above qualifications.* Grade checks are performed each week. Study Hall sessions are supervised by a teacher/staff member, peer tutoring may be provided by Beta Club and Honor Roll students.

3. Students may be required to attend at the discretion of the administration.

K. **Standardized Testing** - The Archdiocese of Galveston/Houston requires that all students be administered the IOWA Assessments. The CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) is also required of students in grades 2, 4, and 6, in addition to the IOWA Assessments. This testing is not optional.

## IX. OTHER SCHOOL RULES, REGULATIONS AND SAFETY

### A. **Animals**

No dogs or other animals are allowed on campus, **nor are they allowed in the carpool line**, unless written permission is obtained from the principal.



## B. Asbestos

The Environmental Protection Agency requires that all school buildings be inspected to determine if any asbestos-containing materials are present. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School has complied with this regulation and the buildings have been inspected by an EPA certified inspector. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School has additionally complied with the directives of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston by adopting and maintaining an AHERA (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act) Plan.

## C. Beta Club

The National Junior Beta Club is comprised of eighth grade students who have a strong desire to serve and lead the student body. The Beta Club upholds the school motto of "Faith, Knowledge and Spirit," and thrives on excellence and service to our community. Students must meet the criteria as stated by the National Junior Beta Club. Beta Club is an extracurricular activity and follows the guidelines for academic and conduct eligibility as stated in this *Handbook*. Upon becoming ineligible, Beta Club members will be relieved of their duties for the remainder of the school year immediately upon issuance of the progress or report card. Students suspended or placed on disciplinary probation automatically forfeit their position for the remainder of the school year.

## D. Bicycle Safety

Students must walk their bicycles on the school grounds. Bicycles must be kept on the bicycle racks behind the library. For the safety of all, bicycle riders will be dismissed before carpool begins.

## E. Books, Workbooks

1. **Students' Responsibility** - Students are responsible for the care of the books, consumable workbooks and materials issued to them. All school-owned texts are to be COVERED at all times to provide protection and to minimize wear and tear. At the end of the school year, the rented books are returned to the school.
2. **Extra Books** - Students who wish to keep an extra book at home may order one at the parents'/guardians' expense. Ordering information will be provided online for the parents/guardians. ISBN #'s will be listed. Contact the school for information.
3. **Damaged Books** - Students will be fined for books that are damaged. Fines will be assessed according to the amount of damage during the given school year.
4. **Lost Books** - If a student loses a book or consumable workbook, he/she is responsible for notifying the teacher. The student will be charged the full amount of purchase so that the item can be replaced. If a workbook is lost, the student is responsible for replacing the workbook. Ordering information will be provided for parents/guardians.
5. **Collection of Consumables** - At the end of the school year, the teacher will collect all consumable workbooks.

## F. Cafeteria

1. **Meals** - Breakfast and lunch are available daily in the school cafeteria. Students who do not wish to buy their lunch may bring a sack lunch. **St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School promotes healthy lunches and snacks, and asks that parents/guardians adhere to this policy by not having their student(s) bring unhealthy lunches and snacks.** Microwave ovens are available for use to warm food, but it is unrealistic to expect that foods can be cooked during lunch periods. Foods that are packed for lunches should be in containers that allow students to be self-sufficient. Age levels and capabilities should be considered when sending lunches to school.

2. **Visitors** - Parents/guardians and grandparents are welcome to eat lunch with their child or children as space allows. All visitors must sign in at the school reception desk before going to the cafeteria.
3. **Forgotten Lunches** - If a student forgets his/her lunch, a parent may deliver the lunch to the cafeteria after checking in at the front office.

#### G. Carpool

1. **Procedures** - Students and parents/guardians **must** follow the established carpool procedures during arrival and afternoon dismissal. Carpool procedures and carpool numbers will be distributed to families before the first day of school and are outlined in Appendix B.
2. **Cell Phone** - For safety purposes, cell phone use by parents/guardians during carpool is prohibited.
3. **After Carpool** - Any student who has not been picked up by the end of carpool will be checked into the Prime Time program and fees will be incurred.
4. **Walkers / Bikers** - For the safety of all, students who walk or ride their bikes will be dismissed before carpool begins.

#### H. Cell Phones

1. **Possession and Use** - Students may have a cell phone on campus; however, it must be turned into the homeroom teacher at the start of the school day. Homeroom teachers will store the phones until afternoon homeroom and return the phones to their students at the end of the school day. Cell phones may only be used on campus before school begins or after dismissal, generally 3:15 p.m. (or 2:15 p.m. on early dismissal days) with teacher/staff permission. During Prime Time, cell phones may be used on a limited basis with permission. The principal/assistant principal may revoke the student's privilege to have a cell phone on campus.
2. **Unauthorized Use** - Unauthorized cell phone possession will result in confiscation of the phone and it will only be returned to the student's parent/guardian by the principal or assistant principal. Unauthorized cell phone use is subject to a \$25.00 fine per incident. It is also a Class II infraction.
3. **Lost Phones** - The school is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged cell phones.

#### I. Change of Information

Parents or guardians should keep the school informed during the school year of changes in telephone numbers, mailing addresses, and/or persons to contact in case of an emergency. It is absolutely necessary to have current telephone numbers to reach parents/guardians and/or persons authorized to pick up the student from school. Parents/guardians and students are responsible for keeping their e-mail address updated on their online accounts.

#### J. Communication

Parents/guardians and students may contact the school staff by e-mail. **A reply should be expected within a reasonable amount of time. Parents/guardians are asked to show the same courtesy.** The school also has electronic means to communicate with parents/guardians and students. The school will also use IRIS (Immediate Response Information System) in emergency and special situations.

#### K. Conferences

Communication between students, parents/guardians, and teachers is essential to a strong educational program. Two formal parent/student/teacher conferences are scheduled during the year. Students are required to attend the conferences; failure to do so will result in the student being counted absent for the day. **As a courtesy to parents/guardians, Thursday evening conferences are offered, though attending the Thursday conference and not the**

conference during the school day Friday will count as an absence on Friday for the student. This absence will NOT count against 8<sup>th</sup> graders for exemption from Final Exams. Additional conferences may be arranged at any time by contacting the student's teachers.

#### L. Counseling Services

1. **General** - The school counselor works with students through a program of diverse services, each of which is designed to help students learn and develop to their highest potential. Typically, the counselor works with students individually, in small groups and in the classroom to address their educational, personal, and emotional needs. Some of the issues addressed in school counseling are problem solving, conflict resolution, social skills development, anger management, and stress management.
2. **Referrals** - Counseling is available to all students at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School. A student may be referred to the counselor for individual counseling in several ways. Teachers, as well as parents/guardians, may request that the counselor see a student. Parents/guardians may make referrals over the phone, by e-mail or by appointment. A student may also make the request by filling out a student referral form.
3. **Assessment** - Once a referral is made, a student will be seen for an initial assessment. After the assessment, parents/guardians may be contacted if the child needs additional counseling. At times, the counselor may suggest that parents/guardians seek therapy outside of the school for their child. In this case, referrals for counseling agencies and therapists will be given. Parents/guardians of children in ongoing counseling are encouraged to communicate with the school counselor through conferences and phone calls. The counselor will make every effort to maintain communication with parents/guardians of any child using counseling services.

#### M. Curriculum

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School's curriculum follows the curriculum guides set by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. The implementation and pace of the curriculum is determined by the school administration.

#### N. Dances/Special Occasions

1. **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Requirements**
  - a. A parent/guardian must walk the student into the dance and sign him/her in.
  - b. A parent/guardian must walk into the school to pick the student up and sign him/her out.
2. **Dress Guidelines** - The school strives to enact its Mission Statement in all of its activities, before and after school. Pursuant to this goal, we have dress guidelines for school dances, class trips and special occasions. The following dress is unacceptable at school functions and will result in the student being sent home.
  - a. Halter tops or dresses
  - b. Spaghetti straps - straps must be at least one inch wide at their narrowest
  - c. Inappropriate skirt or short length (no more than two inches above the knee)
  - d. Visible undergarments
  - e. Bare midriffs
  - f. Strapless tops or dresses
  - g. Too tight, suggestive or excessively baggy or loosely fitting clothing
  - h. Shoes must be worn
3. **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation**
  - a. Boys: dark suit or dark blazer, khaki or dark pants, tie, and dress shoes.

- b. Girls: a solid white, ecru, beige or cream colored dress. Shoulders must be covered during Mass.

**O. Electronics/Nuisance Policy**

1. Toys, trading cards, card games, electronic games, ebooks, iPods, iTouches, iPads, portable stereos, etc., or similar distractions may not be brought to school. Students in classes that take naps during the day may be allowed to bring a special item for naptime. An exception is made for cell phones. Refer to "Cell Phones" Sec. IX(H) for details.
2. Excessive keychains, pens, jewelry or other items may not be attached to backpacks.
3. Inline skates, skateboards, roller skates, and heelys are banned at all times on school property, unless included as a part of the school curriculum.
4. The school is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged items.

**P. Emergency School Closing**

If it becomes necessary to close school at any time because of inclement weather or any other emergency, the school generally follows the decision of Houston Independent School District. School-closing information will be posted with local radio and television stations (Channels 11 & 13), on the SVdP School online site; and, if circumstances allow, parents will be notified via IRIS (Immediate Response Information System). St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School may use its own discretion to close school, based on the utmost concern for students' safety.

**Q. Field Trips**

1. **Enrichment** - Field trips supplement the instructional program by utilizing the educational resources of the community. In keeping with the instructional objectives of the class, teachers plan the number and place of field trips.
2. **Participation** - Participation in field trips is a privilege and can be denied to students who fail to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements.
3. **Permission Slips** - Parents/guardians are required to sign a permission and liability release form in order for the student to participate in a field trip. According to state law, children are not allowed to attend a field trip without this written permission from their parents or guardians. Permission slips may **not** be altered. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**
4. **Chaperones**
  - a. Teachers verify and set the number of parents needed to chaperone during field trips. Parents must confirm chaperone status with the sponsoring teacher before attending a field trip.
  - b. Chaperones must be VIRTUS trained and verified.
  - c. Parent chaperones are to take an active role in supervising designated students, knowing that the students are ultimately under the jurisdiction of a teacher.
  - d. Teachers will assign students to the buses.
  - e. Chaperones will provide their own transportation.
  - f. Siblings of students participating in class field trips may not attend the outing.
  - g. Unless prior approval is obtained from the administration, chaperones may not purchase toys, snacks, or other items for students while on field trips.
5. **Dress** - Unless specifically stated otherwise on the permission slip, dress uniforms are required for all school-sponsored field trips for all grades.

**R. Forgotten Articles/Lost & Found**

1. Parents should leave forgotten items in the school office. It is the student's responsibility to check with the receptionist for such items. Classes will not be interrupted to deliver such items.

2. All uniforms and school supplies must be labeled with the student's name to prevent loss.
3. **The Lost and Found is kept in the cabinets in the hallway outside of the computer lab.** Articles that are unclaimed for an extended length of time will be made available to other school families or disposed of. Small lost items such as jewelry will be held in the school office.

S. **Fundraising** - All funds solicited for and collected on behalf of the school must be used for the sole purpose of supporting the school by defraying the costs and expenses associated with school functions and activities. Funds collected for school functions and activities may never be distributed to any individual(s) for any reason. As a parochial school, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School is recognized as a non-profit organization and distribution of any surplus or excess school funds to any person jeopardizes the school's tax-exempt status.

T. **Gifts to Faculty/Staff and Extracurricular Activity Coaches/Instructors/Sponsors**

Voluntary gifts made to faculty/staff and to extracurricular activity coaches/instructors/sponsors will be made through a designated representative approved by the principal or assistant principal. A list will be made and presented to the principal of those voluntary donations.

To make sure every family has the opportunity to participate in this voluntary activity, an e-mail will be sent near the end of the activity(s) to the families of all participants informing them of the opportunity to make this VOLUNTARY donation. One reminder will be sent. All donations MUST be made in the form of a check or money order made out to the school.

U. **Grievance Procedure**

Although the Archdiocese endeavors to establish a harmonious Christian atmosphere within its schools, it recognizes that misunderstandings or differences of opinion sometimes occur. Ideally, such matters can be resolved informally by a parent or guardian meeting with the immediate authoritative person to discuss the matter.

For example, when a parent wishes to seek redress for any matter relating to a student, the parent should first attempt to resolve the issue through communication with the teacher. If, however, the matter is not then settled to the parent or guardian's satisfaction, the parent or guardian should then make an appointment with the principal. If a parent or guardian's concerns are not satisfactorily addressed, the parent may institute a formal grievance. A formal grievance must be in writing and must be received by the principal within five working days following the occurrence of the event on which the grievance is based. The principal will provide the grieving party with a copy of the Archdiocese's current appeals process/grievance procedure for further details.

V. **Gum & Food**

St. Vincent de Paul School is a gum-free campus. Consumption of food and drink by students is restricted to the cafeteria and other designated areas of the campus.

W. **Health/Clinic**

1. **Emergency Contact Information** - When a child is sent to the nurse's clinic for care, the parent will be notified if the child must be sent home. No child is to be left at school once he/she has become ill or injured. The clinic is a place for an ill or injured student to wait as comfortably as possible until a parent/guardian can come for him/her. It is imperative that parents give the school accurate telephone numbers where they or their designee can be reached during school hours. This information is critical and must be updated as it changes. Parents who are going to be out of town

- while school is in session must furnish the school with the name(s) and telephone number(s) of the person taking care of the child during the parents' absence.
2. **Medical Emergencies** - Each student must have a completed Student Emergency Information Card on file at the school. It must have the name of the child's physician, dentist, and a signature that gives the school the right to seek emergency medical care. The school will first attempt to contact the parents/guardians in an emergency; however, the school reserves the right to call an ambulance to transport the child to seek appropriate medical care, should it become necessary.
  3. **Student Illness** - For the protection of all students, the following guidelines will be used. A child will be sent home with:
    - a. Fever of 100° or higher
    - b. Suspected contagious/communicable disease (e.g., impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, vomiting, diarrhea)
    - c. General malaise (is too ill to remain at school)If the student has any of the above symptoms in the morning before coming to school, he/she should remain at home. If a child remains at home because of a communicable/contagious disease, a parent should call the school to determine when the child may return to school. In the case of fever, the student must be **fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school, and in the case of** diarrhea or vomiting, a student must not return to school before 24 hours following the last occurrence.
  4. **Health Screening** - In compliance with the Texas Department of Health, Bureau of Children's Health, the school nurse will perform the following screenings.
    - a. Hearing and Vision - Grades prekindergarten, kindergarten, 1, 3, 5, 7 and all new students
    - b. Acanthosis Nigricans - Grades 1, 3, 5 and 7
    - c. Spinal - Grades 5 and 8.
  5. **Immunizations**
    - a. Students in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Catholic Schools must be in compliance with the immunization requirements of the Texas Department of Health, Immunization Division.
    - b. Registration requirements for first-time students include a current immunization record of all required immunizations.
    - c. All immunizations should be completed by the first day of attendance at the school. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required immunization or subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule. Upon notification by the school of noncompliance, students must provide acceptable evidence of vaccination within 14 days to remain enrolled.
    - d. Exemptions - Exemptions from immunizations due to medical reasons are allowed with a letter signed by a medical doctor stating that the vaccination is injurious to the health and well-being of a student or family member and must state a period of time for the exemption. The school does not permit exemptions for reasons of conscience.
  6. **Medication** - The daily routine of the clinic includes the management of medications. The schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston adhere to the Texas Education Code 22.052 regarding the administering of medications to students by school employees.
    - a. Medication (prescription and non-prescription) may be administered to students only upon written request by the parent/guardian and physician. This includes, but is not limited to: topical antibiotics, Hydrocortisone ointment and mosquito sprays. The request must state the following: student's name, name of medication, prescribed dosage of medication, time(s) of administration of



medication, route, exact date medication is to be given, liability release, and signatures of the parent/guardian and physician. Forms are available online.

- b. All medication, prescription or non-prescription, must be in its original container and be properly labeled in English. A properly labeled prescription medication is one with a pharmacy label stating the student's name, the name of the medication, and prescription date. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container indicating directions for use and labeled with the student's name.
  - c. The school nurse or principal designee has the responsibility to question a medication order, discrepancies in an order, or incompleteness of an order. The parent/guardian will be notified of the issue. The parent must take appropriate steps to correct the problem. The school may refuse to give medications if a discrepancy is determined.
  - d. It is the student's responsibility to report to the designated area to take his/her medication. Appropriate measures may be taken to insure the medication is given.
  - e. The parent/guardian or designated adult must bring the medication to the clinic. All medication (prescription or non-prescription) must remain in the school clinic.  
*Exception: It may be possible to develop an individualized health care plan allowing students with asthma to possess and self-administer prescription asthma medicine while on campus or at a school-related event or activity. Parents/Guardians should contact the school nurse to implement this plan and complete necessary forms.*
  - f. Parents/guardians must pick up unused medicine by the last day of the school year. The nurse will dispose of any medication left in the clinic.
7. **Life Threatening Allergies** - It is the responsibility of the anaphylactic or potentially anaphylactic child's parents to inform the school principal of their child's allergy. Anaphylactic or potentially anaphylactic children who have been issued a prescription for an EpiPen® shall deliver at least two (2) to the school nurse for use in case of an emergency. Children who are no longer allergic or no longer require an EpiPen® must present a letter of explanation from their allergist or pediatrician. An individual treatment protocol needs to be established by the child's allergist. The school cannot assume responsibility for treatment in the absence of such a protocol. A copy of this should be delivered to the school nurse. Forms may be found online. The forms and medicine must be delivered to the school nurse before the start of the school year. Parents must also schedule a meeting with the school nurse before the school year begins to review the plan of care for student with life threatening allergies.
8. **Ongoing Monitoring** - Parents must inform the principal and nurse if ongoing monitoring is required for their child. Prior to the first day of attendance, parents will meet with the school nurse to develop an individualized health care plan that will include instruction for observation, care and treatment, medication orders and special instructions. Failure to disclose pertinent medical information in a timely fashion can be cause for dismissal.
9. **Required Medical Physical** - Every student in grade 6 must provide a current medical physical evaluation to the school nurse, whether or not the student participates in school athletics, prior to the first day of school in August.

## X. Homework

Homework allows for the practice at home of academic skills, thus furthering retention of academic content. In addition, homework helps prepare SVdP students to continue their education in high school by fostering time management skills, individual responsibility and independence. Teachers will determine the appropriate length of all homework assignments in compliance with the Archdiocesan guidelines. Certain assignments may require more time

than others to complete. Homework is to be completed by the student and turned in **at the time specified by the teacher**. Teachers will not accept assignments left in the office or delivered by the parents for full credit.

General guidelines that teachers aim for when assigning homework:

Grades 1-2	30 minutes
Grades 3-4	45 minutes
Grades 5-6	60 minutes
Grades 7-8	90 minutes

#### Y. Insurance

The school provides a secondary insurance plan for student accident coverage for all enrolled students. This program will include coverage for students while attending or participating in school-sponsored and supervised activities on or off the premises. The insurance is in excess of any other valid coverage, but becomes primary if no other insurance is available. Further information may be obtained by contacting the school office.

#### Z. Library - Saint Vincent de Paul School Library Policy

1. **Book Care** - Students are expected to take proper care of library books such that the books are returned to the library in good condition.
2. **Book Check-out Limits** - In order to allow for greater circulation of books, the following check-out requirements have been implemented. No additional books will be checked out to a student until the student has returned his/her books.
  - a. K - 2<sup>nd</sup>: 1 book at a time for one week
  - b. 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>: 2 books at a time for one week
  - c. 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>: 3 books at a time for two weeks
  - d. Parents: 10 books at a time for two weeks
3. **Damaged/Lost Book** - Accidents happen. Parents/guardians should report the damage/loss and should not attempt to repair at home. The library has special book tapes and glues and will repair at school. Parents/guardians will be billed for books that require replacement. A refund for a lost item that is found will only be given if the item lost has a value of \$25 or more and is returned within the school year it was lost.
4. **Unreturned books at the end of a nine-week grading period** - Near the end of the nine-week period, students will be asked to turn in all of their materials and no new materials will be checked out. There is a two weeks' grace period, after which tuition accounts will be charged; books may be returned but money will not be refunded.
5. **Fines** - There are no scheduled fines for regular overdue books. However, a book that is not returned or is damaged beyond use must be paid for at replacement cost. No other books may be checked out until the account is clear.
6. **Magazine Check Out** - Magazines will be available for check-out to students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. Magazines will be given in a protective plastic envelope and they must be returned in this envelope. Magazines returned in poor condition will be charged \$5.00. Students who return the magazine without the protective plastic envelope will also be charged \$5.00 to replace the envelope.

#### AA. Lockers

Lockers are the property of the school and may be inspected at any time. Locker use is a privilege extended to the students; this privilege may be withdrawn at any time. Lockers should be kept neat and clean at all times. No one may put stickers, pictures or inappropriate items in/on the lockers; or write on or decorate them. If the locker is damaged, a fee will be assessed. Special decorations may be approved by the principal.



## **BB. Facilities, Non-school Sponsored Teams**

All facilities are managed and scheduled by the Parish Facilities Manager. Non-school teams calling themselves a St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School team and using school facilities must coordinate and receive sanction through the principal's office and offer open and advertised tryouts.

## **CC. Parents/Guardians**

1. **Bound by Handbook** - Parents/guardians are expected to adhere to behaviors that are consistent with good moral principles and do not interfere with the operation of, or reflect adversely on, the school. Disruptive, threatening or illegal behavior of a parent may result in the expulsion of a student.

2. **Parent Involvement in School Activities** - Parent involvement is integral to the mission of the school. Parents have a number of opportunities to become involved in the school. Primary among these is the Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.). The primary objective of parent involvement is to develop the unified efforts between parents and staff that will secure the highest advantages in spiritual, academic, physical and social education for every child.

a. VIRTUS Training - All persons who have ongoing and continuing contact with students must be VIRTUS trained and verified. The VIRTUS website is [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). For VIRTUS status questions, contact the Parish Office.

b. Parent volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- i. Help with special class programs or projects
- ii. Read orally to the class
- iii. Lecture and speak as guests in the classrooms
- iv. Attend lunch with the children and help the teacher supervise
- v. Assist in the library
- vi. Assist in the computer lab
- vii. Serve as chaperones on field trips
- viii. Help supervise students during weekly Mass
- ix. Support extra-curricular activities
- x. Assist with field day

### **3. Parental Supervision of Students**

a. After School Hours - When visiting the school after regular school hours, it is the responsibility of the parent to supervise their children everywhere on campus, including the playground and in the gym. This includes Tiger Soccer, athletic events, conference days, etc.

b. Release of Student to Parent - No child will be released to a parent, guardian, or parent designee if the school personnel believes the person to be impaired (such as inebriated) and therefore unable to care for the child. Another person from the student's emergency contact list will be called.

### **4. P.T.O.**

a. The P.T.O. serves as part of a joint effort between parents and staff to give our students the best spiritual, academic, physical and social education possible. All families of the school are eligible to become members **by paying annual dues**. The pastor, the parish priests, the principal, and all faculty members are automatically members **without the payment of dues**.

b. The P.T.O. does not control policies of the school or direct the administrative activities. This organization does provide services and events for the benefit of

the school. All service, events, and fund-raising must be approved by the pastor and the principal.

- c. The P.T.O. Board, made up of the President, Past President, Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Vice President and numerous director positions, meets monthly in the MJFC. Meeting dates are posted online. All are welcome to attend.

#### **DD. Parties**

Recognition of students' birthdays is done monthly at the all-school Mass. **Food**, drinks, hats, balloons, favors, etc. should be reserved for home parties. Party invitations for any celebration outside of school are not to be distributed at school under any circumstances.

#### **EE. Permission to Arrive and Leave Campus Unaccompanied**

Parents/guardians must sign a permission form for students to walk or ride their bikes to or from school when unaccompanied by an adult. After leaving campus, students may not return unless accompanied by an adult responsible for his/her supervision.

#### **FF. Publication of Student Work/Images**

From time to time, the school or the local media may want to publish articles about SVdP, photographs, video or audio media of SVdP students. This is done to publicize and feature student activities, achievements or special events.

1. **Consent to Publish** - By enrolling your child in the school, parents/guardians give their consent and grant permission to the school to publish their child's image or work in the following:

- a. The school newsletter (Tiger's Mouth);
- b. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church bulletin;
- c. School-managed websites;
- d. Local newspapers including but not limited to *The Village News*, *West U Examiner* and *The Houston Chronicle*. It is understood and agreed that SVdP has no control over the news media once a child's photograph/work has been released;
- e. Marketing or public relations materials.

2. **Revocation of Consent** - Consent to publish is valid for the entire time the student is enrolled in SVdP unless revoked by written notification to the school principal. Even with a signed Revocation of Consent, it is understood that it may not be possible for SVdP staff (or parents assisting staff) to always be able to identify students in the background of photographs. Accordingly, the school reserves the right to publish photographs where students are not featured but appear in the background, such as a photograph of a crowd at a school athletic event (without identifying each child). It is also understood that the school has no control over non-employees or non-agents submitting their own photographs or videos to the media or local newspapers that may identify or depict children that have Revocation of Consent forms on file. It is understood that the Revocation of Consent policy applies **ONLY** to school-sponsored publications, school-sponsored websites and/or images submitted by the school to the local media. The Revocation of Consent Form is available upon request from the school front desk or directly from the principal.

3. **School Directory** - SVdP will never publish addresses or phone numbers of its students or families in any school publication except the school phone directory.

4. **Yearbook** - Parents may not opt out-of the publication of pictures in the school yearbook, *The Tiger's Roar*.

5. **Group photographs** - Parents may not revoke consent to the publication of group photographs such as those with athletic teams, extracurricular clubs, homerooms, First Communion, etc. that are published in school-sponsored bulletins, newspaper, and/or school-sponsored websites.

***Parents/guardians agree to hold SVdP and its agents harmless against any and all claims, liability, loss, or damage, caused or in any way arising out of the school's publication of a student's name, photograph, video or original work.***

#### **GG. Student Records**

1. Parents may view student records upon submission of a written request allowing at least twenty-four hours notice.
2. The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with the respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order and/or copy of the custody section of the divorce decree.

#### **HH. School Board**

The School Board is advisory to the pastor and principal. Board responsibilities include:

1. setting goals and objectives for the school
2. developing policy for the school
3. approving the school budget
4. sponsoring or participating in activities that pursue the school's goals and objectives
5. reviewing the principal's service and implementation of policies and projects
6. evaluating its own performance, including the effectiveness of its policies and projects

#### **II. Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited in all parish and school facilities.

#### **KK. Telephone**

Except for emergencies, neither teachers nor students are to be contacted via telephone during school hours. Important messages may be emailed. The office telephone is not intended for general use by the parents or students.

#### **LL. Tutoring**

Outside tutors are allowed when a student has current diagnostic testing indicating an educational need on file. Students may receive tutoring during ancillary classes only as assigned by the academic dean with permission of the principal.

#### **MM. Visitors**

1. Before entering the school campus or joining the students in the cafeteria, **all** visitors are required to check into the office and receive a visitor's badge. Visitors must return to the office and sign out before leaving the campus. Lunch time visitors must go to and from the lunchroom **only with no other destinations or stopping points.**
2. The MJFC and vestment hallway doors are **not** to be used as campus entry points. **The school office front door is the only campus entry point.**
3. The school is dedicated to providing maximum classroom instruction time to our students. All requests for classroom visits must be arranged with the school office. Visits are restricted to 30 minutes, with the exception of invited guests. Siblings and younger students are not permitted in the classrooms during visits.

4. Parents/guardians may not interfere with the teacher's performance of his or her duties. Parents/guardians are welcome to have lunch with their children. However, lunchtime is not an appropriate time to conference with the teacher. Please schedule a conference with the teacher if needed.
5. Archdiocesan policy stipulates that all persons who have ongoing and continuing contact with children must be VIRTUS trained and verified.
6. Participation in field trips is contingent on the permission of the principal and sponsoring teacher.

#### **NN. Weapons**

Weapons are not allowed on school property or at any school-related activity. A weapon is any instrument which may produce bodily harm or death, or an item construed to be, or has the appearance of, a weapon.

#### **OO. Web Site**

The school public web site address is: [www.saintvincentschool.org](http://www.saintvincentschool.org). Edline or RenWeb is the official intranet/portal for official school information **and is password-protected**. The Edline or RenWeb site includes various forms, calendars, information pertaining to sports and special occasions. It is updated daily to reflect current information.

#### **PP. Principal's Right to Amend Handbook**

The principal retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

#### **QQ. Procedures in Case of Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Children and Minors Responsibility to Report Suspected Child Abuse**

Texas state law requires anyone suspecting the abuse or neglect of a child to report the suspected abuse or neglect, preferably to the Child Protective Services (CPS) Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400, or at their website, [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)

State law requires that the person suspecting the abuse should be the reporter. Reporting may not be delegated to another person. You cannot rely on someone else to make the report. The law requires reports of suspected abuse, not an inquiry or investigation whether abuse occurred. In fact, the mental health professionals ultimately responsible for assessing a child, and the prosecutors responsible for proving abuse, ask that the reporter not attempt to validate the abuse. **REPORT...DO NOT INVESTIGATE!**

**Important Phone Numbers:** CPS Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400 Catholic Schools Office 713-741-8704 Archdiocesan Legal Department 713-652-5461

## Appendix A – CARPOOL PROCEDURES

*PreK, K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students with a middle school sibling will use the green carpool line. Students in grades 2-5 who have a primary school sibling will be picked up in the blue carpool line. All other students will use the green carpool line.*

### MORNING DROP OFF

#### **Buffalo Speedway lot:**

1. Enter the north Buffalo Speedway entrance (by the rectory).
2. Circle the parking area in front of the MJFC.
3. Drop students in areas designated by faculty and student patrol.
4. Children will enter through the Vestment Hallway double glass doors. (Student patrol will escort the younger children.)
5. Drivers will then exit south by the Fine Arts Building.
6. PreK, K, and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students will stay in the MJFC until their teacher comes to walk them to the classroom.
7. Siblings in grades 2-5 will proceed through the Vestment Hallway to the gym and wait in the gym with staff until their teacher comes to walk them to the classroom.
8. Siblings in grades 6-8 will proceed through the Vestment Hallway to the cafeteria until 7:50 a.m., then go to their homeroom classroom.
9. Students arriving after 7:50 a.m. should go directly to their homeroom classroom.
10. Tardy students (arriving after 8:00 a.m.) should report directly to the school office to obtain a tardy slip before going to class.
11. Students should NOT be dropped off if no faculty member is present.

#### **West Holcombe lot:**

1. Enter the parking lot from Holcombe Blvd., turn right, proceed directly back to the library wall. **Do NOT enter from Bradford/Westchester.**
2. Pull forward as directed by Faculty/Student Patrol.
3. Drop students at the sidewalk.
4. Students will proceed to their designated waiting areas as described above.

### AFTER SCHOOL PICK UP – ALL STUDENTS DIMISSED ON HOLCOMBE SIDE

#### **Blue Carpool Line - starts at 3:05 p.m.**

1. Enter the Holcombe Blvd. parking lot from Holcombe Blvd., go straight and follow the signs to the church entrance.
2. Pull forward toward the church front entrance as directed by the staff.
3. Primary students will be escorted to the church entrance where they will wait until their number is called. Staff will assist students into cars.
4. Follow the direction of school staff to the proper exit lane. Do not exit the parking lot at the curb closest to the bell tower. Turn left.
5. *No cars should attempt to go straight across Holcombe Blvd. to Rutgers St. when leaving the parking lot. All cars must turn left (to the west) or right (to the east) at the direction of the police officer.*
6. When the blue carpool line has ended (there are no cars left in line), remaining students will be sent to the primary school hallway to wait for their rides. Blue carpool drivers who arrive after the blue line has ended should enter the green carpool line, and pick up their children there.

#### **Green Carpool Line - starts at 3:15 p.m.**

1. Enter the carpool line by turning onto Westchester Street off of Holcombe Blvd. Turn left at Bradford Street and proceed straight onto the Holcombe Blvd. parking lot. DO NOT BLOCK DRIVEWAYS, INTERSECTIONS, OR ONCOMING TRAFFIC. Do **NOT** enter from Bradford Street. Prior to 3:15 p.m., the line should be on Westchester Street beginning at the intersection of Bradford and Westchester. Cars awaiting the commencement of carpool should NOT enter the lot until directed by staff.

2. Pull forward to the sidewalk in front of the school office as directed by the staff.
3. Students will be dismissed from their homerooms once their number has been called beginning at 3:15 p.m. and will proceed to the sidewalk in front of the school. School staff will assist in loading students safely in cars.  
Primary grades will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m. Primary students in the green carpool will wait in the primary hallway with a teacher until the green carpool starts.
4. *No cars should attempt to go straight across Holcombe Blvd. to Rutgers St. when leaving the parking lot. All cars must turn left (to the west) or right (to the east) at the direction of the police officer.*

*Color-coded carpool numbers are distributed by the school office for parents/guardians. Drivers must hang their carpool tag from their rear view mirror so that the traffic control officers and carpool staff can see it.*

<b>GENERAL RULES</b>
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In an effort to run a safe and efficient carpool, the carpool procedure will be carefully followed.

1. If a student's name is called without prompt response, the driver **will follow staff directions and wait at the location designated by staff.**
2. No student will be called to meet an individual not in a vehicle until all cars have been loaded.
3. Drivers **MUST NOT USE CELL PHONES** at any time while in the carpool line.
4. Drivers **MUST OBEY** the direction of traffic officers and SVdP staff at all times while in carpool line.
5. Students who remain on campus **more than 15 minutes after** carpool ends, (unless they are part of an organized activity sponsored by the school) will be placed in Prime Time and parents/guardians will be charged accordingly.

<b>WALKERS AND BIKERS</b>
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**MORNING ARRIVAL:**

The bike rack is located to the west of the library. Do not ride bikes in the parking lot.

**AFTERNOON DISMISSAL:**

Walkers will be dismissed from homeroom at 3:05 p.m.

Walkers to the west (Bradford St.):

Students walking to the west will follow all directions of the staff member accompanying them. Students will leave through the courtyard gate closest to the office, cross the parking lot west of the library and proceed onto Bradford Street. They will walk down Bradford Street and turn left onto Sewanee Street and cross the walkway bridge to Gramercy Street where parents/guardians will be waiting in their cars. Parents/Guardian will **NOT** wait for their students on Bradford Street. The pick-up area is Gramercy Street. If a student's parents/guardians are not present on Gramercy Street, the student will return to school with staff to await pickup from school.

Walkers to the north and east:

Students walking to the north and east should exit the courtyard at the gate closest to the school office, walk down the sidewalk past the church to Holcombe Blvd., turn left and walk on the sidewalk to the police officer at Rutgers, crossing at the direction of the officer.

Walkers to the south (Buffalo Speedway):

Students walking to the south should exit the courtyard at the gate closest to the school office, walk down the sidewalk past the church to Holcombe Blvd., turn right and walk on the sidewalk to the traffic signal.

Families with walkers should have an alternate routine for inclement weather. The school office will maintain records of students allowed to leave campus unaccompanied. Parents must notify the school office of their intention to allow their children to leave campus unaccompanied prior to dismissal.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What if I need to schedule an appointment for my child during school hours?**

The school administration strongly encourages all outside appointments to be scheduled before or after school, especially on early dismissal days. Parents must send a written note or e-mail message to the student's teacher stating the time they wish to pick the student up for an appointment. The office will call the student(s) from the classroom when the parent arrives for pick up.

Parents picking up students for a pre-arranged appointment must park in the Holcombe parking lot and register in the school office before taking the child. To avoid interruption of classroom teaching time, children may only be checked out for appointments before 2:45 p.m. on regular days and before 1:45 p.m. on early dismissal days. Office staff cannot call a student from class after 2:45 p.m..

### **What procedures will I follow to let my child go home with another child?**

If a parent decides to allow his/her child to go home with another family, a notification stating this must be **communicated to the appropriate staff/faculty member as soon as possible**. Please do not rely on e-mail messages **late in the school day**, as teachers are not always able to check their e-mail messages.

### **How do I get homework for my child who missed school due to illness?**

Homework assignments will be posted online. A one-day grace period is given for every day the student is absent.

## **Appendix B - Computer & Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy**

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software, and Internet licensed to the school. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The school provides strong security and filtering of Internet materials and information. By accepting admission to St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, parents give permission for the use of school's hardware, software, and use of the Internet.

### **Internet**

Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information from across the nation and around the world. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages.

### **Rules of Appropriate Use**

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of electronic communication jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, or is contrary to Gospel values, the student will be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including expulsion.

This policy applies to communications or depictions through e-mail, text messages, blogs, tweets, or web site postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment of connectivity resources or through private communication.

Students will not post personal contact information about themselves. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, etc. The information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including web sites that solicit personal information.

Accessing social networking websites, blogs, video sites (e.g. MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Friendster, tagged, etc., except those used for educational purposes) are off-limits. The use of circumventors to get around school network security is prohibited.

Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks, nor should students copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. The download/upload of any material in violation of any U.S., State, Board, Archdiocesan, or school policy is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, threatening, violent, or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

As per normal school policy, the use of profanity and abusive or impolite language is prohibited. In addition, online materials that are not in line with the rules of school behavior should not be accessed. Use of technology resources for gambling, chain letter communication, unauthorized e-mail chat or instant message, blogs, and discussion forums is also prohibited. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately. Use of cell phones to transmit unacceptable language and/or photos that are harmful to self, other students, and/or to other people is prohibited.

**Guidelines for Students** - To prevent the loss of technology privileges at school:

1. Use technology for educational purposes only, and in an appropriate manner.
2. Treat technology and equipment respectfully.
3. Use only SVdP-approved applications and software.
4. Follow all copyright laws.
5. Keep your passwords safe and private.
6. Respect other's network folders, work and files.
7. Notify an adult immediately if you encounter materials that violate the Rules of Appropriate Use.
8. BE PREPARED to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.



## **APPENDIX C - St. Vincent de Paul School Chromebook Pledge (For Middle School Students Only)**

### **Student Pledge for Chromebook Use**

- I will take care of my Chromebook.
- I will never leave my Chromebook unattended.
- I will never loan my Chromebook to other individuals.
- I will know where my Chromebook is at all times.
- I will charge my Chromebook's battery daily.
- I will keep food and beverages away from my Chromebook since they may cause damage to the device.
- I will not disassemble any part of my Chromebook or attempt any repairs.
- I will protect my Chromebook by only carrying it in the case provided.
- I will use my Chromebook only in ways that are educational and meet St. Vincent de Paul expectations.
- I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on my Chromebook.
- I will not deface the serial number Chromebook sticker on my Chromebook.
- I understand that my Chromebook is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School.
- I will follow the policies outlined in the Chromebook Handbook and the Acceptable Use Policy (**found in the Parent/Student Handbook**) while at school, as well as outside the school day.
- I will file a police report in case of theft, vandalism, and other acts deemed necessary for insurance purposes.
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse.
- I agree to return the Chromebook, case, and power cords in good working condition.
- I will be a proactive digital citizen when using my Chromebook.

### **Student/Parent Pledge for Chromebook Use**

- I/we understand that Chromebooks are intended solely for educational use and students are not permitted to download any applications not authorized by their teachers or approved by SVdP technology department.
- I/we understand my/our responsibilities with respect to the care and maintenance of the Chromebook.
- I/we understand the terms and conditions of the insurance coverage for the Chromebook that was purchased by St. Vincent de Paul School.
- I/we understand that students may take Chromebooks home in the evenings for school related use, however I/we understand that students must have Chromebooks in school every day.
- I/we understand that students must return Chromebooks at the end of the school year in the condition it was received.
- I/we understand that I must report any problems or damage to my homeroom teacher and the technology department.
- I/we understand that St. Vincent de Paul reserves the right to conduct unannounced inspections of student Chromebooks.
- I/we understand that the use of Chromebooks will be governed by all terms and conditions of the St. Vincent de Paul policies and regulations, including but not limited to the St. Vincent de Paul Acceptable Use policy.

## Appendix D - FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### REGISTRATION

All new families must pay a nonrefundable registration fee of \$500.00 per family at the time registration. All returning families must pay a nonrefundable registration fee of \$175.00 per family at the time of re-enrollment.

### FULL YEAR OBLIGATION

**The responsible party will pay the full amount required by the signed tuition/fee agreement for the entire school year, without rebate for the student's withdrawing; provided that a pro rata tuition/fee rebate will be granted by St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School if withdrawal from the school is the result of extended illness or the school's request that the student withdraw. A pro rata tuition reimbursement may be granted at the sole discretion of the school principal.**

### TUITION/FEE POLICY

The tuition account includes, in addition to tuition, fees, and other charges mentioned in this handbook, expenses incurred by the school and its employees, either as a result of requests by parents or otherwise as required by law, in regard to a particular student. Such expense include, without limitation, paying substitute teachers when school employees must participate in court or other legal proceeding involving a student, including reasonable attorney's fees incurred in providing legal representation to the employees and school in such proceedings.

Tuition, as set out in the 2016-2017 Tuition Schedule below, is due and payable as follows:

Grade Level	Student Fees (\$500/Student)	Monthly Pay Total Tuition	Monthly Pymt (x10)	Annual Pay Total Tuition
PK, per student	\$ 500	\$ 9,480	\$ 948	\$ 9,240
K-8, one student	\$ 500	\$ 8,140	\$ 814	\$ 7,940
K-8, two students	\$ 1,000	\$ 14,980	\$ 1,498	\$ 14,610
K-8, three students	\$ 1,500	\$ 21,490	\$ 2,149	\$ 20,950
K-8, four students	\$ 2,000	\$ 27,350	\$ 2,735	\$ 26,670
K-8, five students	\$ 2,500	\$ 32,560	\$ 3,256	\$ 31,750

The responsible party must pay any and all school fees incurred during the school term as a result of the student's participation in the school's after care program, Prime Time, other school activities, the Washington D.C. field trip, or because of loss or damage to school equipment, books, or fixtures, including school library fines caused or incurred by the student. Further, the responsible party must enroll with FACTS Tuition Management Co. and pay the required enrollment fees as stipulated by the school's contract with FACTS. The responsible party must pay student tuition and fees and any other school fees, fines or assessments that become due and payable during the school term through the FACTS account.

The annual tuition payment is due on August 1, before the first day of the school term. All monthly payments are due **ON OR BEFORE THE 1<sup>ST</sup>** of the month, and considered late if not received by the last business day on or preceding the **TENTH** day of the month. Until a specific charge, monthly tuition or a fee, has been paid within 10 days of its due date, a late fee of \$25 will be added in each successive month to each such unpaid charge. Amounts received will be applied first to the oldest tuition, fees, and late charges. Tuition accounts over 30 days delinquent are referred for review and collection. Any returned check is subject to a \$25 charge. Additional fees are charged for extracurricular activities and Prime Time.

**DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS:** Timely payment of tuition in accordance with the signed agreement and of other school fees, including the return of library books and text books, is important to the operating budget of the school.

1. The school will retain all records, including records of student performance (e.g. report cards, progress reports, etc.) and will not certify the student for advancement or transfer until the delinquent account is paid in full. Moreover, family access to student records online will be denied until the delinquent account is paid in full.
2. The school reserves the right not to allow students to take final exams if tuition or other school fees are delinquent.
3. No student will be allowed to enter classes for the second semester of the school year unless and until the delinquent account is paid in full.
4. If it is necessary to retain the services of an attorney to enforce the terms of this agreement or to collect any amounts due pursuant to the terms of this agreement, the responsible party agrees to pay and shall be responsible for the payment of all attorneys' fees and costs of court incurred by St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School to enforce this agreement and/or to collect any payments to which St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School is due.

## Appendix E - ADOPT-A-STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### TUITION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance for parish families is available for students in grades kindergarten through eight and prekindergarten students with older siblings enrolled in St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School. Assistance is granted on the basis of need and is contingent and based on the following guidelines:

- Families who have been active, sustaining, registered members of St. Vincent de Paul Church for a period of at least one year are eligible to apply for assistance.
- Any past due tuition balances must be satisfied before tuition assistance will be granted.
- Tuition assistance is awarded on the basis of need, and is granted on a yearly basis, conditioned upon meeting the requirements of the school. It is available for renewal each year upon submission and approval of a new application.
- Tuition assistance covers the cost of tuition only. It does not cover academic fees, sports fees, or Prime Time fees. These fees are the financial responsibility of the student's family and payable when incurred.
- To be considered for, or continue receiving, financial assistance, students must maintain an academic grade average of "C" or above in all major subjects and a conduct grade of "E" or "S" in all subjects.
- The school needs volunteers to participate in various activities throughout the school year (PTO events, auction, library help, aid to teachers, etc.) and families receiving financial assistance will be asked to volunteer.

Request for tuition assistance begins with the application to Private School Aid Service (PSAS). Families may request a paper application from the school office or apply via the website: [www.chooseseatholicchools.org](http://www.chooseseatholicchools.org). After logging on to the website, click on the "Tuition Assistance" tab. There you will find the application form, which can either be printed out and completed or completed online. Please make sure to read and follow the instructions and attach all necessary documentation as requested. The school code is 4718. The deadline for submission of the application is the end of January. There is an application fee of \$20. (PSAS may accept applications after January but assistance may not be as available.)

After processing your application, PSAS will inform families and SVdP School if assistance will be provided. At this point, families may request tuition assistance from Adopt-A-Student funds at SVdP School by contacting the SVdP School Principal. Tuition assistance is awarded on the basis of need and is granted to qualifying families on an annual basis. Adopt-A-Student funds will only be awarded to families after they have applied to PSAS.

The principal should be informed immediately if the need for assistance ceases.

## Appendix F – SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS

### SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS AND REFERRALS

#### *Introductory Statement*

Consistent with the contents of the Church document, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, *Persons with Disabilities*, the Archdiocese seeks to include students with special needs in our schools to the extent that the need of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and resources offered. The Catholic Schools Office is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special need students. However, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School and the other Catholic Schools are cognizant of the fact that admission of special needs students must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

#### *Legal References to Special Services*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability (for St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, the local district is Houston ISD). This “Child Find” process must be conducted in consultation with private schools representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as “parentally placed private school children with disabilities,” and the benefits available to them differ from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section (frequently call “Section 504), provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators strive to recognize and address the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within our resources, St. Vincent and other Catholic schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustment to accommodate eligible students.

#### *Records for Special Needs Learners*

All psychological and educational evaluations/reports regarding special needs testing of students received from local public schools, persons, or agencies are forwarded to St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, upon request. These records are kept on file at the school for a period of seven (7) years after the exit of the student. These records are kept in a secure file and area accessible only to the principal, the Academic Dean, the Counselor, and any other appropriate staff member working with the student. Parents may view their child’s record at any time. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency.

#### *Criteria for Acceptance of Students with Special Needs*

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular student, the school will review the child’s ability to meet the school’s academic, behavioral, and physical qualifications. Each Catholic school determines its ability to meet the need of the student applicant. Consideration will be given to the following:

- Student’s demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements;
- Record of student’s ability to follow school rules and regulations; and
- Students’ ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance.

#### *St. Vincent de Paul’s Services for Special Needs Learners*

*New Students* – When the Admission Office or the principal is notified that an incoming student may have special learning needs, the principals and other appropriate school staff review current academic, social, medical, and psychological evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his/her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the principal and Academic Dean will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student’s needs. If an admission is determined the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a *Catholic Accommodation Plan*.

*Currently Enrolled Students* – If a teacher (or parent) is concerned about a child’s academic, behavioral, or emotional progress and feels that testing may be needed, he/she will discuss concerns with the parent/family

and the principal, and then meet the Academic Dean as soon as possible. We work as a team to do what is best for the child and will discuss:

- The student's current educational status, including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
- Previous educational efforts and strategies provided for the students and the results;
- Documentation of recent vision and hearing screenings;
- Updated general health history inventory; and
- Other information provided by the parents or teachers.

Parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist us in educating the student. The principal and staff are responsible for recommending educational alternatives and/or referral to the local school district and/or private agency of the parent's choice for further evaluation. In some cases, the campus may not have the resources necessary to help the child be successful. The principal or Academic Dean will then assist the family to locate an appropriate educational program for the child.

Documentation for all referrals must be kept on file in the Academic Dean's office. If an evaluation determines the student requires minor accommodations the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a *Catholic Accommodation Plan*.

#### *Student Success Expectations for Special Needs Learners*

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. School success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) that would be of specific educational value in programming adequately for their children. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or if parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

#### *Accommodations for Special Needs Learners*

The purpose of an accommodation of any type is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his/her schoolwork. In many instances, accommodations (changed in methods of instruction) can be made in the classroom for students with special needs or for struggling students. Students who are diagnosed with a learning difference or who are diagnosed with a special need through the public school system, private doctors, or through special agencies may be referred for special assistance with the Academic Dean after the administration has verification of the student's recommended accommodations. (Curricular modifications are not provided because modifications require alterations of curricular objectives.) The number of intervention sessions per week, length of sessions, and goals will be determined by the Academic Dean, tutor, principal, and classroom teacher after all available information has been reviewed.

#### *Standardized Assessment for Students with Special Needs*

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in the Archdiocese standardized assessment program. Students with disabilities identified through IDEA may require assessment accommodations. These accommodations should be provided on a weekly basis through the classroom teacher. These testing arrangements must be planned for in advance through a meeting with the Academic Dean. Any adjustment made on the standardized assessment must be requested from the Catholic Schools Office via special request on the appropriate form.

## HANDBOOK APPENDIX

### - A -

Academic Misconduct	7, 8
Academic Standards	1, 2, 7
adopt	ii, 23, g
Adopt-A-Student	g
After School Care	2
After School Hours	4, 32
After School Study Hall	23
Age Requirements	1
Alcohol	9,12
Animals	23
Arrival	3, 24, b
Asbestos	23
Assignment	4,6-10,13,14, 30, c
Asthma	30
Athletic Program	19, 20
Athletic Teams	17, 20, 33
Attendance	2, 3, 18- 20, 29-30

### - B -

Behavior	5-14, 19, 20, 27, 32, d
Beta Club	14, 17, 23, 24
Bicycle	24
Bikers	25, b
Books	21, 24, 26, 31, e, f
Books, Library	21, 31, f
Bullying	5, 6, 12, 14

### - C -

Cafeteria	ii, 13, 24, 28, 34, a
Calendar	2-5, 21, 35
Carpool	2, 3, 23-25, a, b
Cell Phone	5, 9, 11, 25, 26, b, d
Change of Information	25
Chaperones	27, 32
Cheating	7, 8, 12
Chromebooks	E
Citing	7, 9, 11
Class I Infractions	11
Class II Infractions	11
Class III Infractions	11
Class IV Infractions	10, 12
Classroom Rules	3, 5, 10
Clinic	28, 30
Coats	16
Computers, Acceptable Use	d, e
Conduct Grades	15, 22
Conduct Standards	6
Conferences	25-26
Confidentiality	8
Consequences	5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 19, d
Copying	7-9, 12
Costumes	17
Counseling	25-26
Curriculum	2, 26, 34
Cyber-bullying	5-6

### - D -

Dances	17, 26
Delinquent Accounts	f
Detention	5, 11, 13
Directory	33
Disciplinary Probation	14, 24
Discipline	5, 6, 9, 10, 14, 17, 21
Disclosure	1, 7
Dismissal	3, 24, 30, b
Documents	1, 9, 12
Dress Code	11, 14
Dress Uniform	15, 16, 27
Drinks	33
Drugs	9, 12

### - E -

Early Dismissal	3, 4, 23, 25, c
Effect of Suspension	19
Electronics	26
Eligibility	18-19, 24
Emergency Attendance	2
Emergency Contact Information	28
Emergency School Closing	27
Etiquette	6
Examination	7
Exemption	23, 25, 29
Expulsion	5, 6, 9, 10, 14, 21, 32, d
Extracurricular Activities	13, 14, 17-20, 28, f

### - F -

Fabrication or Falsification	7
Facial Hair	15
Factors Considered (for Admission)	1
Failure	5, 7, 11, 12, 20-22, 25, 30
Family Emergency	4
Fee	1, 3, 5, 20, 25, 31, f, g
Field Trips	16, 17, 27, 32, 35, f
Fight	12
Final Exam	22, 23, 25, f
Financial Assistance	g
Financial Information	f
Food	24, 28, 33, e
Forgotten Articles	27
Forgotten Lunches	24
Free Dress	10, 17
Fundraising	27

### - G -

GHCAA	18, 28
Gifts	28
Grade Changes	22
Grade Policy	21
Graduation	26
Grievance Procedure	28
Grievance Process	9
Grooming & Accessories	11, 15, 19
Guardians	1-5, 9, 10, 13-15, 20, 21, 24-33
Gum	11, 28

<b>- H -</b>	
H.A.M. at Lunch ( <i>Homework Assignment Missing</i> )	10, 11, 13
Hair Color / Length	15
Half-Day Absence	4, 18
Harassment	5, 6, 14
Hats	15, 33
Headbands and Bows	15
Health	1, 11, 28-30, 35
History	ii, 20-22
Home Study	14
Homework	2-4, 9, 10, 13, 21, 30, c
Honor Code	8, 9
Honor Roll	22-23
Hours of Operation	2

<b>- I -</b>	
Illness	3, 4, 18, 28, d, f
Immunization	1, 29
Ineligibility	18-19
Infractions	8, 10-14, 18, 19, 25
Insurance	30, 31, e
Integrity	6, 8
Internet	5, 9, 12, d
IOWA Assessments	23
IRIS ( <i>Immediate Response Information System</i> )	25, 27

<b>- J/K -</b>	
Jackets	16
Jewelry	15, 26, 27

<b>- L -</b>	
Law Enforcement	9, 14
Law	3, 7, 9, 14, 27, 35, d, f
Leave Campus Unaccompanied	33, b
Leaving School Early	4
Leggings	16
Length of Clothing	15, 17, 26
Library	7, 10, 12, 21, 24, 31-32, a-b, f-g
Library Books	21, 31, f
Lockers	9, 16, 31
Lost and Found	15, 27, 31

<b>- M -</b>	
Major Subjects	21, 22, g
Make-up Tests/Work	4, 13, 14, 21
Makeup/Polish	15
Media Publication	33
Medical Emergencies	3, 28
Medical Physical	20, 30
Medications	2, 29
Missed Assignments	4, c
Missing Work	4, 10, 12, 13
Mission	i, 1, 5, 26, 32
Modesty Shorts	15-16

<b>- N -</b>	
Noncompliance	15, 29
Non-Custodial Parent	34

Nondiscrimination	1
Non-School Sponsored Teams	31
Non-Uniform	16, 24
Notification of Absence	4
Nuisance	11, 13, 26

<b>- O/P -</b>	
Parental Responsibility	9, 32, 34
Parents	i, 1-6, 9-10, 13-15, 17, 19-20, 24-28, 30-35, b-d, f
Participation	12, 17-20, 27, 35, f
Parties	32-33
P.E.	15-17
Peer Tutoring	23
Permission Slips	27
Personal Property	2
Photographs	33
Physical Requirements	20
Pick-Up	3-4, 19, 25-26, 30, a, b, c
Piercing and Tattoos	15
Plagiarism	7-9, 12
Pledge	8, e
Practice	19-20, 30
Prime Time	2-3, 7, 12, 19, 23, 25, b, f, g
Principals Right to Amend Handbook	35
Probation Period	2
Probation	14, 19, 24
Progress Reports	21, f
Proper Wear	14-15, 17
P.T.O.	16, 32
Publication of Student Work	33
Publication of Student Image	33

<b>- Q -</b>	
Quiz	7-8

<b>- R -</b>	
Report Cards	21, f
Reporting	6, 35
Reporting Harassment/Bullying	6
Rewards	10

<b>- S -</b>	
Sanctioned Sports	20
School Board	34, d, f
School Hours	3-5, 17, 28, 32, 34, c
School Uniforms	14-17, 20, 27
Scout Uniforms	17
Search	9
Shoes	15, 17, 26
Sibling(s)	1-2, 27, 34, a, g
Smoking	12, 34
Snacks	24, 27
Snacks – Primetime	2
Socks	15-16
Special Needs	34, h, i
Special Occasions	16-17, 26, 35
Spectators	2, 17, 20
Standardized Testing	23
Student Records	7, 12, 34, b, f

Supervision 2, 5, 32-33  
Suspension 5, 9, 10, 13-14, 19, 23  
Sweatshirts 16

**- T -**

Tardiness 4, 11, 13, a  
TCCED i, 3, 18  
Teams 17-20, 31-33  
Telephone 10, 25, 28, 34  
Test 1, 4, 7, 8, 21, 23, 34  
Tiger Pride 10, 17  
Tights 16  
Time, Talents & Treasures 1  
Toys 2, 26, 27  
Transportation 19, 27  
Tryouts 18, 31  
Tuition 20, f, g

**- U -**

Uniform Policy 14, 15, 17

Uniform Purchase 15  
Uniforms & Equip (Extracurricular) 20

**- V -**

Violations 6, 7-13  
VIRTUS 2, 27, 32, 35  
Visitors 6, 24, 34

**- W/X -**

Walkers 25, b  
Weapons 12, 35  
Website 5, 32, 33, 35, d, g  
Workbooks 24

**- Y/Z -**

Yearbook 33





Please print your family name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents MUST Sign Here	<p>I have read the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook. I have discussed the content of the handbook with my child/children. As a parent of a student(s) at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, I agree to abide by the guidelines of this and all governing administrative policies and regulations of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School in effect at the time of admission, and as amended, for the duration of the enrollment of my child/children.</p>	
	_____ Signature	_____ Date
	_____ Signature	_____ Date
	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Parents MUST Indicate Preference & Sign Here	<p>I give my permission for my child/children listed below to walk or ride his/her bicycle to or from St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School unaccompanied by an adult. I release and hold harmless from any liability and waive any claims against St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School and any and all of its employees for any and all harm to my child/children listed below that arises as a result of arriving at or leaving campus unsupervised.</p>	
	_____ _____ _____ Signature	_____ _____ _____ Date
	_____ Signature	_____ Date
	<p>I do not give my permission for my child/children listed below to walk or ride his/her bicycle to or from St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School unaccompanied by an adult.</p>	
_____ _____ _____ Signature	_____ _____ _____ Date	
_____ Signature	_____ Date	

Parents MUST Indicate Preference & Sign Here	<p>As a parent or guardian of a student(s) at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, I have read Appendix D of the Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook, the policy about the appropriate use of computers at the school, and I agree to abide by its terms and conditions. I am aware that my child/children will use and have access to the Internet while at school.</p>	
	_____ Printed Name	
	_____ Signature	_____ Date
	_____ Printed Name	
_____ Signature	_____ Date	