

SAINT CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL
13305 PROCTOR ROAD
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19116
(215) 673-5787
www.stchrisstrong.org

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

This handbook contains certain policies and procedures of Saint Christopher School. Saint Christopher School may change any of its policies and procedures and apply them as circumstances dictate. If you have a question about a particular policy or procedure, please contact the Principal.

**Students and parents must accept
and abide by Saint Christopher School
policies and procedures in order
for the student to attend the school.**

MISSION STATEMENT

***St. Christopher School Community is committed
to carrying Christ to others
through the modeling and teaching
of Catholic Christian morals and values,
while creating a caring,
respectful environment
which promotes Christian stewardship,
individual student achievement, academic excellence,
and fosters a love for life-long learning.***

The Commission on Elementary Schools accredited Saint Christopher School, preschool through grade eight, on May 1, 2008. Regional Accreditation is a landmark event in the history of any institution. Saint Christopher School is a full and official member in the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

ADMINISTRATION

PASTOR- MONSIGNOR REVEREND JOSEPH P. GARVIN

PRINCIPAL – MRS. MARY TREMPER

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

SCHOOL OFFICE – 215-673-5787

ABSENTEE – 215-671-8659

WEBSITE –

www.stchrisstrong.org

**St. Christopher School
13305 Proctor Road
Philadelphia, PA 19116
215-673-5787**

September, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for sending your child/children to St. Christopher School. We are ever aware of the implicit trust you place in us when you choose us to partner in the education of your children. This partnering in their spiritual, moral, and academic education requires that we always have open communication with one another.

One way we can realize that communication is by creating a handbook for your use. Dictionaries briefly describe *handbook* as a ready reference. Indeed, we intend that this handbook to provide you with a ready reference of the expectations and policies currently in place at school. Knowing how busy your lives are, it is our hope that having this information in a convenient, available form will be helpful to you. In addition, this handbook is easily accessible on our school website (www.stchrisstrong.org).

Just as you have expectations and policies in place at home for the sake of your children and your family, so also does St. Christopher. Having a school family of approximately 425? children makes it important to have our expectations and policies known fairly to all.

Working together, we will indeed be doing God's work with these children with whom we have been entrusted. We will prepare them to be responsible Catholic witnesses in the 21st century.

God bless you,

Father Joe and Mrs. Mary Tremper

PHILOSOPHY

The faculty of our school shares the mission of Jesus with the students placed in its care by helping them live as responsible, Catholic witnesses in the 21st century. This witness is actualized when everyone respects the dignity of each person, creates a spirit of hospitality, and strives to witness Catholic behavior in thoughts, words, and actions.

St. Christopher School, staffed by a lay faculty, serves the community by providing a safe and caring learning environment supported by a cooperative, supportive, Catholic family atmosphere at home so that all students can experience an enriching and value-based education. In fact, the faculty believes that to succeed in the classroom, the backing of homes where virtue is practiced, serious study is encouraged, and the authority of the school is supported is necessary.

We believe that:

- Catholic Schools exist to teach and live the Gospel message of Jesus Christ;
- Parents are the primary educators, and that the Catholic schools are partners with parents in the education of their children;
- Each child in a Catholic school will grow in self-esteem, and discover and develop talents, skills, and interests;
- Catholic schools will provide a safe, warm, and caring environment where children can learn regardless of their learning rate or style;
- All children in Catholic schools can learn the essential curriculum taught at each grade level; and
- All children in Catholic schools will learn the value of human dignity, and the concepts of peace and justice to enable them to be involved participants of global society.

OUR STUDENTS

St. Christopher welcomes students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration policies, scholarship, athletic, and other school-administered programs.

We feel it is important to reinforce positively our students. During the year, we positively reinforce them in these ways:

- **SAINT CHRISTOPHER AWARD**

The Saint Christopher Award is given annually to one boy and one girl in each homeroom who exhibit in an outstanding way Catholic behavior.

- **SAINT JOSEPH AWARD**

The St. Joseph Award is given in conjunction with report cards to those students whose effort in all areas is consistent and positive.

- **STUDENT OF THE MONTH- JEREMIAH AWARD**

Monthly, each homeroom recognizes a student whose behavior exemplifies the character trait/ virtue of the month.

RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION

The parish and school community fully expects that all of our families actively practice their Catholic faith and live according to the beliefs of the Church, including the obligation to attend Mass each Sunday. Likewise, since we are a faith-based community, parts of each school day are set aside for community prayer. The opportunity for school liturgies is also afforded the student throughout the year. As a community of faith, it is important that each student be an active participant in daily prayer and liturgies reflecting the family's stated commitment. In fact, Saint Christopher School believes that faith practice is so important it reserves the right to give preferred placement to those families who exhibit this faith commitment.

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents and guardians must weigh seriously their obligation to educate their children in an atmosphere of love and respect for God and others. Parents are the first teachers.

Active cooperation of parents and guardians is expected and required as follows:

- Sending their child to school healthy, clean, properly dressed and fed.
- Sending their child to school on time each day.
- Assisting their child's spiritual, academic, and moral development (i.e. through Church attendance, supervision of home study and behavior, cooperation with the school in matters of activities, recreation, academics, discipline, and careful attention to his/her report card.)
- Setting a good example by personally refraining from any activity that would violate school policy, Catholic teachings, or the law.
- Sending a written explanation each time their child is absent from school.
- Taking an active role in the Home and School Association
- Responding quickly to teachers/administrators when discipline issues arise.

The parent/guardian should take seriously his/her responsibilities in these areas.

I. ACADEMIC OVERVIEW

Saint Christopher School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. It has effectively demonstrated to evaluators of the Commission that it advances the quality of educational experiences it offers to students. Saint Christopher School meets its responsibilities to the public and the profession of education and complies with standards for accreditation that are established by the Commission.

Saint Christopher School has met standards for:

- defining appropriate educational goals and providing educational programs to achieve them
- maintaining a qualified faculty and an effective school organization
- assessing outcomes of school experiences and controlling the quality of educational programs
- responding to concerns of parents and needs of the school community
- providing for the continuity of its programs and planning for their future
- describing with accuracy the content of its services and programs

Characteristics of an Accredited School:

- ***It is devoted to a mission.*** It cares enough about what it does to seek validation by a recognized accreditation authority.
- ***It knows itself.*** The school operates from an examined vision of service to students, family, and community.
- ***It keeps its promises.*** An accredited school promises only what it can deliver.
- ***It accepts objective evaluation.*** Outside evaluators who have no prior involvement with the school or its sponsoring authority provide periodic evaluation.
- ***It is recognized.*** Schools accredited by the Commission are listed as accredited schools in a registry available throughout the world.
- ***It is self-correcting.*** Accredited schools demonstrate a capacity to control their own quality.
- ***It is student-oriented.*** Its philosophy of education must express what it does for the whole student.
- ***It plans for its future.*** An accredited school continuously has plans that include strategies for anticipated events and goals toward even higher levels of quality.
- ***It examines outcomes.*** Accredited schools continuously obtain and analyze objective evidence on student achievement and growth.
- ***It participates in the responsibilities of the academic profession.*** Accredited schools participate in the self-renewing activity of evaluation and accreditation.

The curriculum adheres to diocesan and state guidelines. Academic endeavors are encouraged by faculty and Administration.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

1. Preparation for class

The student is responsible for completing all class assignments and homework on time. Failure to do so indicates a lack of serious preparation for class. Incomplete homework assignments will affect report card grades.

Daily performance of students is assessed by the teacher. Examination of copybooks and worksheets for neatness and completeness of work, as well as class participation, are part of the overall report card grade.

All students must be encouraged to use copybooks properly. Students should not tear pages from copybooks, skip pages, or use his/her copybook as a drawing or scribbling pad.

2. Class Participation

Students are expected to:

- Give attention and respect to the teacher at all times
- Show respect and concern for other students by a willingness to share and to take turns
- Actively participate in class by responding orally or in writing as circumstances dictate.

3. Homework

Homework refers to an assignment made by a teacher that will positively reinforce a concept presented in class, foster habits of independent work-study, and bring home and school together. Homework includes both written and study assignments, and should be done by the student independently. While this does not preclude parental help or interest, the assignments should not require undue parental assistance or supervision. Parents and students may access the teacher's web page for homework. Ample time should be allowed for the completion of out-of-class research assignments or projects.

The Archdiocesan Office of Education suggests the following time allotments for homework; this includes both written and study assignments:

Grades 1 and 2	30 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	60 minutes

Grades 5 and 6	90 minutes
Grades 7 and 8	120 minutes

The School realizes that teachers, students, and subjects vary. The objective is not time, but the extension of learning beyond class time.

In the event of absence or suspension, all homework and missed assignments are to be made up. A rule of thumb that the teachers have devised is that a student has as many days to make up assignments as he/she was out sick.

4. Progress Reports

Progress reports are able to be viewed by parents mid-trimester. A notice of unsatisfactory work may be issued later in the marking period if the student's academic performance or behavior changes dramatically. Learning not only cultivates intellectual skills, but also responsibility for one's actions. The progress report indicates the student is performing satisfactorily or needs improvement in any of the following areas:

- Written or study homework
- Working to ability
- Listening to and following directions
- Student responsibility

5. Academic Responsibilities

Each student is responsible for the satisfactory completion of projects, class work, and homework in a timely manner. Grades on tests and quizzes should be commensurate with the student's ability.

A student who does not fulfill his/her academic responsibilities in a trimester will be placed on probation, during which evaluation of a student's progress is monitored, as follows:

- a. The teachers will note the student who is experiencing difficulties in either assignments or test scores, and contact the parents/guardians to inform them of the possibility of probation.
- b. The progress report issued prior to the report card will include a written notification citing the possibility of probation.
 - a. Written verification that the child will be on probation will be forwarded to the parent/guardian.

Conditions and Consequences of Probation

The following are in effect for remedial, not punitive, purposes:

- a. The parents/guardians and student will confer with the administration and the classroom teacher. The teacher will outline the student's program for improvement.
- b. The teacher will inform the parents/guardians of the student's progress.

Students may be placed on probation at trimester progress reports and/or report cards.

- a. If a student is successful in meeting his/her academic and/or behavior responsibilities, the student will be removed from probation and the parent/guardian will be notified in writing.
- b. If the student is unsuccessful in meeting his/her academic and/or behavior responsibilities, the Administration will review the student's participation in activities including CYO/graduation and/or continued enrollment in the school.

6. Promotion or Retention

Student progress is monitored throughout the school year. At the first report card period, the parent/guardian is informed of the student's academic, social and emotional progress. At the second report card period, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian of a student who continues to experience difficulty to discuss the possibility of retention and support services. By the end of May, the teacher(s) will schedule a follow-up meeting with the parents/guardians. If retention is indicated, the parents/guardians will receive an official notification, which must be signed and returned to the School Administration. Saint Christopher School reserves the right to recommend the retention of any student who has not met the specific requirements of his/her grade, or who has demonstrated, through both objective evaluation and teacher judgment, not to be working to his/her potential. Parents/Guardians will be informed of concerns regarding non-promotion during the second trimester. After consultation between teachers and school administrators, a decision for retention may be made. **In the case where parents disagree with the joint decision of teacher and administrators, it is understood that the Principal makes the final decision.**

7. Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year to students in Grades K through 8. Grades are not merely a summation of test scores; they also include the student's daily work, homework, class participation, and project work. Grades for non-academic areas are rubric-based.

Each student is responsible for his/her own report card grade by satisfactorily fulfilling the following requirements:

- major testing
- quizzes
- oral and written reports
- independent classroom work
- active participation in classroom lessons and activities
- class/individual performance assessments

A modified curriculum policy following the strict guidelines of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia may be implemented when warranted.

Students in Grades 4-8 with final grade failures in subjects must attend summer school. Parents will be informed in advance of the possibility of summer school. However, repeated test failures, unsatisfactory progress reports, and report card grades less than 70 are also positive indications of impending failure. In the event of summer school, the school is to be informed of the program the student will attend before school finishes in June. At the completion of summer school, a progress report must be sent to the principal from the program attended. If a child does not attend summer school, then he/she will lose the privilege of returning to St. Christopher School.

8. Standardized Testing

The Terra Nova test is administered each year to students in Grades 2-7. The results are communicated to parents and are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

9. Test Grades

In order for parents to be aware of the academic progress their child is making with regard to tests and assessments, test folders are to be reviewed and tests signed by parents and returned promptly. Student grades should be reviewed regularly on Option C.

10. Graduation

Eighth grade students who have completed the prescribed course of study and maintained a suitable discipline record are eligible for graduation if all financial obligations have been met. Procedures for graduation are determined by the Administration and the eighth grade teachers.

11. Closing Exercises

Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right. The school has the right to deny any student from participating in closing exercises if, in the view of the school, the student's conduct or academic or disciplinary record indicate that the privilege should not be extended

CODE OF CONDUCT

Discipline Code

We believe that discipline is fundamental to life. Discipline is a necessary reflection of the Philosophy of a Catholic School, which attempts to develop a fully committed Catholic – a Catholic committed to the observance of just rules and regulations which will assist the individual in responding to his/her responsibilities and obligations to him/herself and others.

Correct training in discipline means that a child learns to accept rules and regulations presented by lawful authority. Students are expected to act in such fashion that their behavior will reflect favorably on themselves and the school. They are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students and teachers, thus creating a harmonious atmosphere within the school. All students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations. Children who fail to comply with school policies and regulations must accept the consequences.

The discipline code applies to students and parents/guardians both in school and at school-sponsored events, as well as in the school/parish community and outside the school/parish community where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school.

Detention

The consequences for any unacceptable actions are in keeping with the severity of the infraction. Detention is one possible consequence. If a detention is warranted, parents will be responsible for providing transportation. Advance notification will be given so necessary plans may be made. Failure to attend a scheduled detention without a parent and teacher mutually rescheduling it in writing may result in suspension. Having to serve detention will affect the conduct grade on report cards. Some reasons for detention may include: defiance, incomplete homework, lateness, physical/verbal confrontation, disrespect for an individual or his/her property, violation of the dress code, chewing gum, wearing of make-up, etc. **In the case of lateness, students in Grades 4-8 will be given a detention to be served on Wednesdays at 7:00 A.M. All other detentions will be arranged by the individual teacher. All violation and/or detention slips must be signed and returned the following day of issue or an additional detention will be issued.**

Harassment

The school follows the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Policy prohibiting harassment, including sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual attention, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual Harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Any student or parent/guardian who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student. A complete copy of the policy is maintained by the Principal and is available upon request.

Violent/Threatening/Harassing and Inappropriate Conduct

It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility, and offensive and inappropriate behavior. Such improper conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct, verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, and behavior not otherwise conducive to the educational and religious mission of the school. Unacceptable conduct – either by a student or a parent/guardian – includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. disrespectful behavior of any kind toward or about any staff, student, volunteer, or parent
- b. insubordination
- c. fighting
- d. bomb scares or triggering other false alarms
- e. cheating or plagiarism
- f. use or possession of drugs or alcohol
- g. smoking
- h. stealing
- i. intimidation, harassment, or threats of any kind
- j. possession of any weapon
- k. abuse of Acceptable Use Policy

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The school will determine which behavior is inappropriate.

This policy applies both in and out of the classroom, in the school community generally, and outside the school community where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school.

Conduct by students or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to the immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment in any form, including oral, written, or electronic, by a student against any member of the school community, the student, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school.

Bullying

Since all our students have a right to feel safe, secure, and protected at school, we will take the appropriate measures to be sure that students are neither bullied nor behave as bullies themselves. **This includes the use of social media. Any form of cyber bullying will have serious consequences.** We are encouraging positive behavior through our Jeremiah program.

Suspension

Consistent disregard of school policy may warrant a suspension from school. The administration will determine whether the suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. Some examples of behaviors warranting immediate suspension may include: insubordination, truancy, fighting, verbal threats of violence, weapons brought to school, theft, vandalism, leaving school/school grounds without permission, and other serious violations determined as such by the Administration. All work, which has been missed, will be the responsibility of the student to complete. **A child who is suspended will be unable to participate in any activities sponsored by Saint Christopher School and Parish, including CYO activities, until improvement is noted by the teacher and administration.**

Just, appropriate disciplinary policies are essential educational processes, which include procedures which are more remedial than punitive, yet include the necessary provisions that protect the common good of the school community.

Suspension may lead to dismissal. The Principal will inform the parents/guardians of the seriousness of suspension and seek their immediate cooperation in a corrective program designed to resolve the student's problem, if possible.

Procedures for student suspensions:

- a. Infractions of a serious nature, as determined by the school.
- b. Parents/Guardians of the student will be informed in writing of the suspension as soon as practicable.
- c. Suspensions will be implemented [in-school or out-of-school] at the discretion of the Principal.

- d. Students removed from the school community will not be readmitted before a parental interview has been conducted and all other conditions for readmittance have been satisfied.
- e. Parents/Guardians and student are to sign a formal agreement in which they signify their understanding and agree to assume responsibility for future behavior.
- f. When necessary, a student will be referred to a counselor.
- g. Signed agreement of parents/guardians and a written report of the suspension will be kept on file.
- h. Suspension records are not a part of the student's permanent or cumulative record.

Expulsion

- a. In certain instances, an infraction may warrant immediate dismissal. The School reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time where the School considers the conduct of the student or parent/guardian to be inconsistent with School policy, the good of the School community or Catholic teachings.
- b. Parent/Guardians of the student will be informed in writing of the dismissal as soon as practicable.

II. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

Our school admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, its admission policy, or in any school-administered program.

The school endeavors to accommodate students with special needs as the School's resources and capabilities reasonably permit. The school reserves the right to decline admission or impose reasonable conditions of attendance where indicated under the circumstances.

Although active practice of the Catholic faith is generally considered a requirement for admission to Saint Christopher School, under some conditions non-Catholic children may be admitted if space is available.

Application Guidelines

Prior to applying, parishioners must be registered in Saint Christopher Parish. Consideration of admission for children of non-parishioners will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Fees to apply are due in total in the week indicated on the current year's calendar. When children new to our school apply, the family registration fee will be collected at that time. This fee is non-refundable. Any student entering Saint Christopher School will be evaluated prior to a grade assignment.

Application to enroll students for the following year begins in second trimester.
Age requirements:

- Pre-K program - 4 years old by September 1
- Kindergarten - 5 years old by September 1
- Grade 1 - 6 years old by September 1

The following forms are currently required for application:

- Baptismal certificate (unless baptized at St. Christopher)
- If sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation have been received outside of the parish, verification is necessary
- Certified birth certificate
- Social security card of the student
- Immunization card or documented doctor's certificate showing dates of immunizations is absolutely necessary
- Transfer slip from the previous school the student may have attended
- All applications require a current family parish envelope number
- Payment of registration fee

ACTIVITIES

Student participation in activities is highly encouraged as it creates a necessary balance in the educative process. In order to continue participation in any school or CYO activity, a student must be in good academic and disciplinary standing. If, during the first, second, or third trimesters a student should be unsatisfactory or fail in any area, **that student is liable for a one-month probation with respect to activities/sports. This decision will be made by the Administration.**

ASSEMBLIES

The primary purpose of school assemblies is educational. When reasonable and affordable, the school uses these opportunities to complement our curriculum in the course of the school year.

ATTENDANCE

Lateness and irregular attendance interfere greatly with a student's academic progress. Regular school attendance impacts positively on the child's academic development. The illness of a student, death in the immediate family, quarantines, or "exceptional urgent reasons" are reasons for legitimate absence. All parents of absent students are required to call the school office (215-671-8659) by 8:30 to report their children absent. Please give the child's name, grade, homeroom number, and reason for absence. This is an important aspect of our school procedure, and we urge your cooperation. If your child's name appears on an attendance

report from the homeroom teacher and you have not phoned in to let us know, please expect a call from the school to verify the absence or check on your child's whereabouts. Please help us in this endeavor by calling. Your child's safety and welfare are of great importance to us. **In addition, when an absence is necessary, a written excuse signed by a parent must be presented to the homeroom teacher upon returning to school.** A doctor's note is required for an absence exceeding three consecutive days. When an extended absence is expected because of illness or an accident, it is advisable to contact both the Administration and the teacher so that assignments may be procured or arrangements may be made with the public school district to obtain home tutoring services.

Absence without the parent's knowledge is a serious offense. Any child who leaves school without permission is liable to suspension. The offender is automatically suspended and will not be permitted to return to class until at least one of the parents is interviewed by the Administration.

Doctor and dental appointments should be scheduled for days or times when school is not in session. If this is not possible, a note must be written in advance to the teacher and the child must be picked up by an adult at the school office. The adult must sign the child out in the book provided. If a student returns in the course of the day, he/she must again report to the Main Office. **Lateness or early dismissal for any reason disqualifies a student from perfect attendance.** If a student misses an entire A.M. or P.M. session, he/she will be counted absent for that session. Our instructional day ends at 2:45 P.M. after which time the students prepare for 3:00 P.M. dismissal.

Supervision of students begins each day at 7:45 A.M. Bus students are supervised upon arrival. Before 7:45, students should report to Holy Family Hall. Any child coming after 8:00 A.M. is late and must stop at the Main Office to be signed in. **Three latenesses will warrant a before-school detention (Grades 4-8). Please be aware that consistent lateness will affect the student's personal development and behavior grade. Since chronic lateness affects not only the individual child but also the entire class, it will not be tolerated. It may be a cause for dismissal. Consistent unexcused lateness will be considered parental neglect and must be reported to the Philadelphia School District for further investigation.**

BOOKS and MATERIALS

The students are expected to treat all textbooks with proper care and respect. Every textbook and workbook must be covered at all times. Teachers will provide specific directions. These covers are to be kept neat and clean. Neither the covers nor the books themselves should be defaced in any way. Damaged or lost books, including library books, must be replaced at the student's expense. Books, copybooks, and materials are to be properly identified with the child's name, school, and room number. School bags are required for the protection of schoolbooks and must be kept graffiti-free.

Students are expected to take care of their personal belongings, their books, and their clothing. They are also asked to help care for the school buildings and the adjoining property.

Any malicious damage will necessitate compensation. Damage to neighborhood property on the way to and from school reflects on both home and school.

CARES (Children Are Receiving Extended Services)

St. Christopher School provides CARES beginning at 6:30 A.M. and from the end of school until 6:00 P.M. Information can be obtained from the office.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Please notify the homeroom teacher in writing of any change of address, phone number, or emergency information so that corrections can be made. It is vital to your child's well being that this information be correct and up to date.

COMMUNICATION/STUDENT RECORDS/RELEASE OF STUDENTS

a. Legal Custody Issues

Because the well being of your children is our foremost concern, the following policies have been implemented.

- If initial parent/guardian legal custody of children changes, appropriate legal documentation must be provided.
- Permission must be given in writing by the custodial parent to release a student to a non-custodial parent.
- Usually, the school will send newsletters, report cards and similar school information **ONLY** to one parent/guardian with legal custody.

Parents are asked to inform school personnel when legal custody of the child(ren) resides with one parent. It is important for the school to have a copy of the custody decree. This will help school personnel to make effective decisions when the need arises. Custodial parents are likewise asked to supply the school with copies of restraining orders if the need arises.

Those individuals who have legal custody of the student may attend school meetings, participate in educational decisions, and review educational records regarding that student. Persons who do not have legal custody (including those with visitation rights but not legal custody) have no such educational rights and may not participate in these matters.

The School requires parents/guardians to sign an agreement regarding the administration of parental participation issues and payment of tuition.

b. Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the first trimester report period for Grades K to 8.

Arrangements for parent-teacher conferences at other times can be made in writing to suit the convenience of both parties whenever deemed necessary for the benefit of the child. When requesting a conference, please state the nature of the concern so that the teacher can be better prepared to address it. Should a problem arise concerning any child, parents should feel free to discuss it with the proper school authority in the following progression -the teacher, the principal, or the pastor. The better the communication, the easier it is to direct your child in his/her educational endeavors.

Teachers may not be interrupted during the school day. Lunches, messages, forgotten books, etc. should be left on the table in the Main Lobby with the child's name and room number.

c. Family Communication

Effective communication is the single, most important factor that assures a positive relationship between the home and school. Several modes of communication exist at our school to help keep parents informed of policies, activities, upcoming events, and student progress. Regular forms of communication include the school website (tentative yearly calendar, application forms, handbook, etc.), teacher web pages, FACEBOOK, a monthly calendar of events, family communication envelopes which go home with the youngest in each family, parent-teacher conferences, Home and School meetings, Progress Reports, and Report Cards.

The communication envelope will be sent home on the first and third Wednesdays each month with the youngest/only child. Parents are asked to check book bags and folders regularly for such communication. The contents of this envelope should be reviewed promptly, and the *empty* envelope returned to school the following day. Any communications, forms, money, etc. that are brought to school are forwarded to the school office through the homeroom teacher. Students should not be instructed to deliver items directly to the office.

Student Records

Unless a court or custody agreement specifies otherwise, each parent/guardian with legal custody is entitled to access all school records of the child. Absent a subpoena or court order, school records of the child(ren) may be disclosed only upon written consent of the parent/guardian with legal custody.

Release of a child

A child will not be released to a parent/guardian that does not have physical custody without the written consent of the custodial parent/guardian. To determine the custodial parent/guardian, all separated or divorced parents of children enrolled in the parish school must provide the school with a copy of the court order or custodial agreement adjudicating that determination of custody. This Court Order/Custodial Agreement is placed in a confidential file.

COMPUTER PROGRAM

A Computer teacher works with grades Pre-K through 8. The Computer program follows the guidelines set by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. It provides basic computer skills for the various age groups and prepares the children for more advanced and special computer training for high school.

An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), which must be signed by both the student and the parent, will govern Computer and Internet use by the students before any student is allowed to have Computer/Internet access. Unauthorized and inappropriate use of the Internet in school is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Another area of concern is inappropriate Internet use at home. **If the student in some way associates his or her wrongful conduct with the school, students of the school, and teachers and staff, disciplinary action may be taken if it brings disrepute to the school.**

CONTRABAND

Although the term seems out of place in a school setting, it broadly defines any prohibited object not related to schoolwork. Obvious examples are weapons or objects that can be used as weapons. Cellular telephones, handheld electronic games, personal devices, and other items that, in the view of the school, may be distracting or disruptive to the learning environment are not permitted in the school. The Administration reserves the right to define and identify what is contraband.

DRESS CODE

In an effort to develop a sense of self-esteem in our students, we encourage them to be neat and well groomed. Parents are responsible for providing the required attire for their children. Students are expected to assume the responsibility of attending school in the complete uniform. Uniforms are currently purchased at Flynn & O'Hara.

a. Hair Styles/Grooming

Student's hair is to be neat, clean, and groomed conservatively. No coloring or extreme styles. Students are expected to come to school in a state of cleanliness.

b. Jewelry

Although jewelry is not a part of the school uniform, post earrings of a small and conservative style are permitted to be worn by the girls (one earring only in each ear.) Boys are not permitted to wear earrings. Bracelets (both ankle and wrist), pins, unofficial buttons, and necklaces are not a part of the school uniform. A religious medal or cross on a chain is permitted.

c. Uniform

Each student is expected to wear the designated warm weather or winter uniform in its entirety. **Unless a student is prepared to wear the full optional warm weather uniform, he/she should wear the winter uniform.** If, at any time during the year, an exception in uniform is necessary for that day, a note of explanation **must** be sent to the child's teacher who will forward it to the Principal.

UNIFORM REGULATIONS

GIRLS – GRADES 1 – 4	GIRLS – GRADES 5 - 8
Blackwatch Plaid Jumper	Blackwatch Skort
Option of: Peter Pan Blouse L/S or White Turtleneck	Option of: White, monogrammed knit shirt L/S or White Turtleneck
Navy Blue monogrammed Cardigan Sweater	Navy Blue monogrammed Overhead Sweater
Navy Blue Knee Socks or Tights	Navy Blue Knee Socks or Tights
Shoes: Buck or Navy Oxford	Shoes: Buck or Navy Oxford

***Option of Khaki Slacks is available for all girls – Grades 1 to 8**

BOYS – GRADES 1 – 8
Khaki Pants with Dress Belt
Option of: White, monogrammed knit shirt L/S
Navy Blue monogrammed “V” neck Sweater or Vest
Navy or White Crew Socks
Shoes: Buck or Black Oxford with non-skid soles

GYM UNIFORM

GIRLS AND BOYS – GRADES 1 – 8
Gold T-shirt
Green shorts and Green warm-up pants
Green warm-up sweatshirt
White Low-Cut Sneakers – (no ¾ or high tops)
White Crew socks (no footie type or ankle socks)

WARM WEATHER UNIFORM

GIRLS AND BOYS – GRADES 1 – 8
Khaki Walking Shorts with Dress Belt; Girls may wear Khaki Skorts
Short Sleeve White, monogrammed knit shirt
White Low Cut Sneakers – (no ¾ or high tops)
White Crew socks (no footie type or ankle socks)

KINDERGARTEN – WINTER	KINDERGARTEN – WARM WEATHER
Green warm-up pants and sweatshirt	Green gym shorts
Gold T-shirt school logo	Gold T-shirt with school logo
White Low Cut Sneakers (no ¾ or high tops)	White Low Cut Sneakers (no ¾ or high tops)
White Crew socks (no footie type or ankle socks)	White Crew socks (no footie type or ankle socks)

EARLY DISMISSAL AND REGULAR DISMISSAL

Early dismissal begins at 12:00. Regular dismissal begins at 3:00 P.M. Notification of any change in the regular school hours will be sent to parents prior to the change. Students are directed to report to the proper lines as they are called. To ensure a safe and orderly dismissal, SILENCE is necessary at this time.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

In case of snow or for some other unforeseen reason Saint Christopher School may be closed, please listen to KYW or local TV news stations, which will announce that **ALL ARCHDIOCESAN PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS WILL BE CLOSED OR WILL CLOSE AT A CERTAIN TIME. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL, OR PARISH OFFICE AS WE RECEIVE THE SAME KYW INFORMATION WHEN YOU DO. You will also be notified via Option C (email and text). In the event that there is an early dismissal, please make sure that your child knows where to go if you are not home.**

The School requires the parent/guardian of each student to complete an emergency contact form provided by the school. It is imperative that your child is aware of your emergency plan. Be sure that the emergency information is accurate and updated on Option C so that the school can contact the parent/guardian in the event of an emergency. If there were an emergency closing specific only to Saint Christopher School, information would be sent out via Option C.

FACULTY MEETINGS

Faculty meetings are noted on the tentative calendar. Children will not report to school on these days. Please consult your monthly calendar for these dates.

FAMILIES IN FRIENDSHIP

The Home and School sponsors this program to acquaint new families with the traditions of our school. New families will be contacted by a family already in school and phone numbers will be exchanged so that questions may be addressed.

FIELD TRIPS

The purpose of every class trip is to broaden the intellectual, cultural, and social experiences of each child. There will be no overnight field trips or activities that the School deems to be high risk.

An archdiocesan permission form must be completed. For insurance purposes and the safety of all, chaperones are not permitted to bring other children. Chaperones must have all of the required criminal clearances. Parents should consult the school nurse regarding dispensing of medication during the field trip.

FLOOR PLAN

A floor plan of our school may be obtained in the school office if requested.

HEALTH SERVICES

A certified school nurse is assigned from the Philadelphia School District according to the school's enrollment, on days selected by the public school district.

The Nurse is responsible for checking the height, weight, hearing, and vision of every child and for making referrals to parents when problems are found. The nurse maintains all health records. Care given in the school is limited to first aid in accidents or illness until the parents can be reached to take the child home, to the doctor, or to the hospital. In an emergency, the nurse will arrange to have the student transported to the hospital.

All students are screened yearly under the State-mandated program. Student physical examinations are required within three months of entry into the school and the sixth grade. Student dental examinations are required within three months of entry into school and in the third and seventh grades. The sixth and seventh grade students are also screened for scoliosis.

Parents should contact the nurse regarding any medical problems and medication concerning their children. **Students may not take medication on their own. All medication requires a note from a physician. Medication must be in the original container and delivered at the beginning of the school day to the school nurse or school office.**

If your child has a specific medical problem, please notify the homeroom teacher and the nurse of the problem. Medic-Alert bracelets are strongly recommended for any child with a medical problem. Emergency cards are kept on file for each student. Please be sure that we have an up-to-date emergency number on file in case of an emergency during the school day involving your child.

Parents are encouraged to keep children home if they are sick. However, if a child becomes ill during the day, the school will notify the parent. Any student going home must present the slip to the homeroom teacher, and the adult must sign the book in the main office.

LIBRARY

The Library is an important part of our school curriculum designed to encourage a love of reading and an opportunity for research. Classes will have the opportunity to visit the Library on a cyclical basis. Students are responsible for the books that they use or borrow. When a book needs repair, the student will inform the librarian. Overdue books have a fine attached. A replacement charge will be assessed for lost or damaged books. Appropriate conduct is expected at all times in the Library. An annual Book Fair is held to benefit the Library.

LOST AND FOUND

All students' articles should be tagged/marked with name, grade, etc. This is especially needed for sweaters and gym uniforms. A Lost and Found box is kept in the Main Lobby. Lost and Found articles can be reclaimed at any time. School cannot be held accountable for lost articles. Items remaining at the end of the school year will be disposed of or donated to charity.

LUNCH

Free Breakfast and Lunch are provided by the Nutritional Development Service. If children bring lunch boxes or bags, they must be identified with the students' name, grade, and room number. The students usually eat their lunch in Holy Family Hall. Each child's area is to be covered at lunchtime with a napkin, placemat, or towel. Students are expected to clean their places after eating, pick up papers, and dispose of them in the trash containers. Respect and courtesy are to be shown to the parents who supervise and assist during this time. Milk and juice may be purchased at lunch. Please consider how healthy your child's lunch is. No child is permitted to have lunches from any of the fast food restaurants (McDonald's, Burger King, etc.)

Pizza lunches are provided from the Home and School Association on designated Mondays.

MONEY

All monies sent to school are to be in a sealed envelope marked with name, grade/room, date, amount, and purpose. Checks made payable to Saint Christopher School are preferred.

NOTES

Written messages are required for:

A. Absence – please note the days and dates of absences and reason for absence. This note is to be signed by a parent or guardian and presented to the homeroom teacher upon the child's return to school.

B. Early dismissal or lateness – due to **emergency** appointments.

C. Any child who is unable to participate in Gym class is to bring a note from the physician indicating the reason for their non-participation and when they may resume.

PARTIES

Permission must be given by the Principal for any party to be held in school. Money may never be collected unless this has been discussed with the Administration.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

In order for a child to receive a perfect attendance award at the end of the school year, he/she must be present for the full day and on time every day.

PRETZELS

Soft pretzels are distributed in school at the morning recess if a child has purchased them. A prepaid order is taken for Sept-Jan and then for Jan- June. Money cannot be refunded due to absence.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Generally, students in Grade 2 will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist; students in Grade 7 will study for the Sacrament of Confirmation. While you, the parents are the primary religious educators of your children, we realize we share with you in their spiritual development. Parents are required to attend meetings prior to each of these Sacraments as well as participate in the various activities which are part of the program.

SAFETY

a. Fire Drill

Fire drills are signaled by a loud alarm, which sounds until the building is clear. Children leave the classroom as quickly as possible following the directions posted in every classroom. WALK FAST! DON'T RUN! BE SILENT! are the basic fire drill rules.

b. Shelter-in-Place Drill

Every drill should be considered an actual emergency. Absolute silence is always maintained during this time. Failure to cooperate is considered a serious matter. The school will provide water and appropriate snacks. Students will be taken to designated areas.

c. Lock-Down Drill

Teachers and students are notified via the PA to go into lock-down. This would occur if a stranger or intruder were in the building. All doors are locked and students have designated hiding places within the rooms and school. No outsiders/visitors would be allowed entry during this time.

d. Regulations

The following regulations have been established to insure the safety of our students and must be adhered to by each student:

- Running is not permitted at any time within the school building or in moving from one place to another on the school premises.
- Entry is not permitted into the school building before school in the morning, at recess or lunch, or after dismissal at any time, unless a member of the school staff gives explicit permission to do so at the main entrance.
- No student may leave the school premises at any time without permission. A violation of this regulation will result in automatic suspension. Every student must stay within the established boundaries when outdoors for morning and lunch recess.

All school doors are kept locked. Closed-circuit TV monitors all visitors at the main lobby door. Security cameras are located throughout the school and grounds. All visitors are required to sign in at the main office and get Visitor badges.

SCHEDULE

In order that instruction is consistent for all classes, we operate on a five-day lettered schedule despite a break in the schedule due to meetings, holidays, or weather conditions. The school calendar will indicate this.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual and class pictures are taken each year by School Pictures, Inc. c/o Charles Tipping. Notification will be sent home.

SMOKING

The school premises are a smoke-free environment. This includes cigarettes and e-cigarettes and any form of vaping. No smoking is allowed in the school building or on the school grounds. Violations will result in suspension from school and school-related activities until a conference can be arranged with the parents and the principal.

SNACKS

If your child brings his/her recess snack from home, please make sure it is a healthy one. **Morning recess snacks must be peanut-free. It is recommended that all snacks are ones listed on the Safe-Snacks web site list (snacksafely.com/safe-snack-guide).**

STATIONERY

Lists are sent home with the children listing the required needs for the following year. Supplies need to be brought into school on the first day. Some grades may require an additional art/stationery fee.

Students are expected to have the necessary supplies on hand at all times. Please consult your child's stationery list. Binders, spiral copybooks, and correction fluids of any kind are unacceptable.

TELEPHONE CALLS

The telephone in the school office is for business only. A student may use the phone only in the case of an emergency with proper permission. Permission will not be given to a student to call home for forgotten supplies or to communicate social plans. Please do not request that a child phone home during or after school for any reason. Cell phones may be brought to school, but must be handed in to the teacher for the duration of the school day.

If a child is detained at school for any reason without prior notification, permission will be granted to use the phone. **Urgent** messages for students will be relayed to them from the school office. During class time, neither student nor teacher may be called to the phone. Messages can be given to the school secretary when necessary, and they will be given to the appropriate teacher.

The school number is 215-673-5787. The absentee number is 215-671-8659. Note that you may leave messages day or night whether or not school is in session.

TESTING

Any student entering St. Christopher School may be evaluated prior to a grade assignment. Standardized testing will be done according to the Archdiocesan requirements.

TRADITIONS

There are many traditions specific to Saint Christopher School such as Spirit Day, Mother's Day Plant Sale, Sweets Day, the Christmas Bazaar, and etc. Feel free to call the Home and School representative or your Homeroom Parent for information.

TRANSFERS

Please notify the school at least one week in advance of the date of transfer to another school. Parents must sign a release form to have all records forwarded to a new school. Records are not forwarded to another school until this form has been signed by a parent and, in the discretion of the school, the parents/guardians have made suitable arrangements to pay any amounts due the school or parish. The student will be given a transfer slip on his/her last day of school. School records will be forwarded to the child's new school upon request from that school.

The following information is necessary:

- Name and grade of student
- Student's date of birth
- Reason for transfer
- Name and address of school child will be attending
- Last date child will be attending St. Christopher School

TRANSPORTATION

Buses – On the condition that students, who are registered to ride a bus, abide by bus regulations, Philadelphia and the surrounding townships provide busing to and from school for those in grades 1-8 who live a mile from school and/or to those who live across routes declared hazardous. Kindergarten children are not bussed by Philadelphia. However, surrounding townships do provide bus transportation for Kindergarten children. Children who ride the school bus are expected to behave in a safe and orderly manner at all times. Failure to do so will result in their being denied the privilege of riding the bus. Children must ride the same bus both morning and afternoon as assigned to them by the school district. **Bus riders are NOT permitted to walk home unless the parents send a note to the homeroom teacher and the Principal asking permission for this exception. NO STUDENT MAY RIDE A BUS UNLESS REGISTERED TO DO SO.**

Cars – Parents bringing their children to school by car are asked to use Proctor Road, entering the South driveway and exiting through the North driveway. **PLEASE STAY IN A SINGLE LINE** as you enter the schoolyard and stay close behind the car in front of you. Physical goodbyes and instructions should have taken place at home so that the children are ready to exit immediately. Children need to exit on the passenger side of the car for their own safety. Drivers are to remain in the car so an easy flow of traffic can take place. **Children should not be dropped off by car on Lindsay Street for safety reasons (or picked up at the end of the day).**

Parents picking their children up by car at the end of the day are asked to use Proctor Road and enter the school yard using the driveway closest to the convent (North driveway) The line of cars is to begin in the area closest to our building outside the first half of the one story building. The teacher on duty will monitor the flow of traffic in a manner fair to all. **For safety reasons, no student should enter a car except in Car Line.**

Walkers – Students walking to and from school should do so along the safest routes, observing proper safety rules for pedestrians. Students should walk on sidewalks at all times coming or going to school. Bike riding is not allowed. Crossing guards are provided by the local public school district. They are not employees or under the direction of our school. The school is not responsible for the conduct of crossing guards or for insuring that crossing guards are posted as scheduled. There are three Walker lines: Lindsay and Lindenhurst, Byberry, and Proctor Road. Faculty supervises all dismissal lines.

TUITION

The financial support of the school is shared by the entire parish community; however, this financial responsibility is primarily the obligation of parents who enroll their children in Saint Christopher School. In conjunction with your presence at church, we ask all parishioners to contribute each week to the Sunday Offertory collection. Contributions of parishioners will be

monitored regularly to determine eligibility for the discounted rate, reception of report cards, and transfer of records.

- **Family and Student Tuition Information Cards** will be mailed to all school families during the month of July. Completed card should accompany initial tuition payment. We encourage you to mail payment or drop payment in slot at parish office. For your protection, we cannot accept cash.
- **A SCRIP CREDIT VOUCHER** must be issued to use scrip to pay tuition. Special scrip redemption times will be designated for this purpose. Please check with Scrip program coordinators. Note: Families on monthly payment schedule can use scrip toward August and January payments only.
- **Financially, admission to school** is dependent upon tuition payment.
- **Receipt of report cards, progress reports, and continued enrollment in school are determined by the following conditions:**
 - **1st Trimester report card:**
 - Monthly tuition payments are current through November
 - Offertory contributions are at required level
 - **Continued enrollment after February 1:**
 - Monthly tuition payments are current through January
 - Other payment plans – tuition paid in full
 - **2nd Trimester report card:**
 - Monthly tuition payments are current through November
 - Offertory contributions are at required level
 - **End of year report card:**
 - **Grades 1 – 7:**
 - Tuition paid in full
 - Offertory contributions are at required level
 - **End of year report card, participation in 8th grade activities and graduation, certification for diocesan report card**
 - **Grade 8:**
 - Tuition paid in full
 - Offertory paid in full

There is limited assistance available for families with serious financial difficulty. These families may apply for financial consideration. All applications should be in writing to our tuition review committee no later than May 1. Parents seeking assistance will be sent an application form which must be completed before a meeting is scheduled for them with the committee. Please be assured that these families will be treated with dignity, respect, and confidentiality. Please keep in mind that this applies only to families in grades 1 – 8. Full tuition must be paid for Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten. Families receiving assistance are expected to use the Scrip Program to reduce their tuition.

Tuition Refund: If a family withdraws from school before the beginning of the school year, 90% of the minimum required payment will be returned; during the first

week, 75% will be returned; at the end of the first month, 50% will be returned. After that time, no tuition will be refunded.

With your cooperation, we hope that it will be unnecessary to charge the following fees:

- \$20 Request or receipt of Application for Monthly Payment Plan after June 30
- \$25 Late charge if payment is not received by tuition nights
- \$10 Monthly payment received after 10 day grace period (after 10th of month)
- \$25 Check returned by bank

Please keep us informed of any unusual circumstances. Tuition rates for the present year can be found on our website.

VACATION POLICY

Although the decision to take a family vacation while school is in session is left to parental discretion, these vacations are discouraged. Children who are absent because of vacation miss valuable classroom instruction, which cannot be replaced. The procedures regarding vacations during the school time are:

- A note stating the reason and the travel date must be sent to the student's homeroom teacher at least one week prior to the vacation.
- Specific advance assignments **will not be given** to any student prior to the vacation.
- All make-up work will be due within a reasonable amount of time, to be determined by the teacher. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that the child has completed all missed assignments.
- Students will be given notification by the teacher as to make-up dates for quizzes or tests missed during vacation. These may need to take place before or after school.

VISITORS

Visitors are most welcome by appointment. To arrange for a visit, visitors should contact the school office.

Parents coming to school to bring forgotten articles or to relay messages should come to the school office. Classes may not be disturbed for these reasons. Parents may not confer with a teacher or visit a classroom between the hours of 7:45 A.M. and 3:15 P.M. unless the Principal gives permission for such a visit.

All visitors must report to the school office and sign in the Visitor's Log when entering the building. An atmosphere of quiet respect for the learning rights of others should prevail throughout the school building.

WEBSITE

Please check www.stchrisstrong.org for the school calendar, activities, teacher and homework links, and handbook, etc.

AUXILIARY SERVICES

ACT 89 SERVICES

The following services are available to our children:

- CORA – math remediation, guidance counseling, psychological testing, and speech therapy
- Elwyn – vision and hearing testing
- Title I - Reading; Family Connections

A request for services may be initiated by a parent or a teacher. The Administration will coordinate these requests with the agency.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Home and School Association provides the basic support for the vital link between the school and the parents. With guidance from the faculty, the Association contributes to the school by helping to provide those things the children need to improve and enhance their learning environment. For parents, the Association provides a forum where they can become an active part of their children's school. The association is open to all parents and invites them to attend meetings held during the year, as well as participate in sponsored activities. Volunteers are always welcome in both big and small capacities. Please feel free to call the name and number at the bottom of each Home and School flyer for more information.

CYO

MARKET DAY

SCRIP

BOARD OF LIMITED JURISDICTION

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an invaluable part of our school. Parents, grandparents, and parishioners are invited to assist as a classroom aide, computer aide, gym aide, homeroom parent, library aide, milk aide, pretzel aide, and in a variety of other ways. Forms will be sent home the first week of school. Every student is expected to show courtesy and respect to all volunteers. Required criminal clearances are necessary.