



Dear Parents,

Attached are the SJS behavior policies and guidelines. As a result of the Anti-Bullying law put in place this past spring every school in Massachusetts is required to send home their policies for parents and students to review. Parents and children in grades 6-8 are to sign the last page and return it to the school office.

The primary goal of Saint John School is to help its students grow spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially in a safe, nurturing, Christian environment. Consideration for the rights and well-being of others, cooperation with all members of the school community (*which includes staff, students and parents*) and respect for oneself and others are the basic principles guiding student behavior.

Standards of behavior go beyond the school day and school grounds and these standards apply while on field trips, on the playground, at extra-curricular activities and while travelling to and from school. An atmosphere that is conducive to appropriate educational, emotional, personal, and spiritual growth requires mutual respect and cooperation on the part of the entire school community. A responsible, self-disciplined child has the freedom to make decisions and then accepts the benefit and/or consequences of those decisions. These expectations will vary depending on the age and developmental maturity of the child.

By reviewing and signing this contract, a parent accepts and supports the foregoing disciplinary philosophy and the school's expectations of each student and thereby agrees to foster behavior in his/her child(ren) conforming with this philosophy.

Sincerely,

Claire Cassidy  
Principal

## **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

Disobedience and misconduct in school, during school activities, or any serious infraction occurring outside of school that filters into school will be cause for disciplinary actions ranging from individual conversations, parental conference, detention, and loss of school privileges, assignment to an in school or out of school suspension to expulsion.

### **PROCEDURE**

Because of a wide range of possible infractions and the individual seriousness therein, we have outlined three stages of procedural response. The administration reserves the right to determine the most appropriate response.

#### **Disciplinary Action Steps:**

##### Stage One

Infractions of classroom rules will be initially responded to by the teacher. Understanding that the classroom teachers have the best “pulse” on student behavior and social issues/ conflicts, each teacher will clearly define his/her behavior expectations guidelines (and consequences), based on the age appropriate, developmental maturity of their students.

Initial consequences will be established by the teacher and may include:

- *Temporary separation from the class (students cannot be placed in public view if being separated from the class i.e. hallways, outside the office, a private office inside the classroom is permitted.)*
- *temporary loss of recess privilege*
- *written apology*
- *use of behavior chart*
- *after school “in-class” detention*

Simply stated, our general style of discipline focuses on (1) identifying the conflict (2) talking it through with the child(ren) involved (3) helping the children make better future decisions. For the most part, this model is effective and conflicts can be resolved in a timely and effective manner, with intervention of the teacher.

At times, more significant accountability or consequence is necessary. In these cases, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian and the principal to inform them of the situation.

##### Stage Two – More Serious Infractions

In the case of a more serious infraction, the incident will immediately be brought to the attention of the principal. (*listed below, but not limited to the \* marked infractions*)

At the determination of the principal, a student may receive an **After-School Detention**.

A Detention Slip must be signed by the student's parent or guardian and returned to the office. Failure to serve detention on the assigned date will result in a double detention (the following two weeks)

At Stage Two, we will issue a yellow *Student Discipline Card* for the student, which will remain in his/her file through their years at Saint Paul School. The purpose of this record keeping documentation, is to track student misbehavior, to promote accurate communication between home and school, and ultimately to help the student gauge his/her own behavior in light of our schools expectations.

### Stage Three – Bullying Behaviors

Bullying is a widespread problem in schools and communities. The behavior encompasses repeated physical aggression, threats, teasing, harassment and exclusion. Saint John School **will not tolerate** bullying behavior.

**A bully is someone who repeatedly and intentionally directs physical, verbal or psychological aggression or harassment toward others.** We expect all students to assist in our efforts to identify and eliminate bullying behavior from our classrooms, playground, lunchroom, bathrooms and hallways by reporting incidences to teachers and/or administrators. Through activities students will be taught ways in which they can help create an anti-bullying climate in our school.

Some examples of bullying include but are not limited to: name calling, spreading rumors, unwanted touch, ridiculing, mocking, threatening (serious or in jest), intimidating, teasing, excluding, and the use of degrading language.

In the event of a **Stage Three** situation, the teacher must work closely with the principal, parents and students to best resolve the situation. Formal consequences will be determined by the principal.

Once the administration has determined that a bullying situation exists, the following steps will be taken:

**A Blue Discipline card will be added to the file of the offender.** This card will serve as formal documentation of the bullying incident. The card will remain in the student's file throughout his/her years at St. John School.

The school administration will meet separately with the child being accused of bullying, the child being bullied, and anyone else involved. The administration will educate the students on proper behavior and establish positive steps toward resolution.

The administration will notify parents and discuss the incident.

Consequences based on the severity of the incident may range from individual conversations, parental conference, detention, loss of school privileges, assignment to an in school or out of school suspension, or expulsion.

The administration reserves the right to implement the appropriate consequence. Most incidences will be handled according to the following guidelines:

**Incident #1-** In house supervised detention

**Incident #2-** In house supervised detention and an individual behavioral contract will be drafted and signed by student and parents

**Incident #3-** One Day In House suspension

Pastor will be notified of the situation

**Incident #4-** Two Day Out of school suspension

Catholic School Office will be notified

The student may be excluded from the school in the event of a very serious disciplinary incident or if all attempts to change negative behaviors have failed. During the process, the principal will meet with the student and parents, also the Area Superintendent of Schools and if necessary local authorities will be contacted.

## DEFINITIONS

Detention is held after school on Mondays from 2:10-2:40pm and is supervised by a teacher.

Suspension is defined as the temporary dismissal of a student from school for up to 10 days. It will be used only after the school personnel have made reasonable efforts to assist students to adjust to the social and academic requirements of the school environment.

### There are two types of suspension:

**One day in house suspension-**a student who receives a one day in house suspension shall come to school for the day and remain in the principal's office for the day. The student will be allowed to complete his/her assigned class work for the day.

**Two (or more) Day Out of School suspension-**a student who receives a two day out of school suspension will not be allowed in the school during his/her suspension. During this time, the student will not be allowed to make up any work and will receive a "0" for missed assignments.

*As it is impossible to anticipate every possible occurrence, this list serves as a guideline of infractions that would warrant disciplinary action. The school administration reserves the right to initiate the appropriate level of discipline response, depending on the nature and severity of the infraction*

Academic Dishonesty \*

Inappropriate language/actions \*

Fighting \*

Continued failure to obey dress code

Disruptive behavior (passing notes, interrupting)

Lack of adherence to classroom rules

Loitering in the bathrooms, hallways

Bullying behaviors\*

Disrespectful attitude or conduct

Harassment of student\*

Misuse of school or personal property

Stealing\*

Vandalism of any kind\*

Tampering with school computers\*

Forgery of parent/guardian\*

Threats of any kind-written, verbal, drawn, inferred will be responded to immediately

## **Definition of Bullying - Massachusetts Anti-Bullying Statute**

“Bullying”, the REPEATED use of one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to the victim’s property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at the school for the victim; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school. For the purposes of this policy, bullying shall include cyber bullying.

“Cyber bullying”, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a webpage or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to the school grounds, at a school sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or electronic device owned, leased by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity function or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.