

# *St. Helen Catholic School*

**Parent/Student Handbook  
2019-2020**



# Welcome

Welcome to St. Helen Catholic School! We are grateful you have chosen St. Helen for your educational needs and look forward to partnering with you in this regard. A hallmark of our school is that we educate the whole child – spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically.

Our success is due in part to the high standards held by our families and the school. This handbook outlines the standards of the school. It includes information about our academics and curriculum, behavior expectations and disciplinary procedures, student athletics and activities, and more.

It is a privilege to attend St. Helen Catholic School. Families choose Catholic education for a variety of reasons many of which are reflected in this handbook. Students and their families represent the school in the greater community. With these considerations in mind, we appreciate your respect of our standards.

Peace and blessings,

Lisa Bell  
Principal

## ***Disclaimer***

*The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide and source of information for parents, students, and teachers of the school.  
St. Helen Catholic School reserves the right to update the handbook as necessary.*

# **I**NTRODUCTION

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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

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# BUSINESS INFORMATION

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## SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Pastor	Fr. Kevin Nelson
Principal	Lisa Bell
School Secretary	Tracey Terpstra
Tech Coordinator	Jennifer Howard
Business Manager	Monica Williams
Development Director	Sandi Harpring
Resource Specialist	Gerry Mayes
Curriculum Leader	Maria Morgan
Resource Officer	Hector Hurtado

## ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

St. Helen Catholic School  
2025 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Tel: 772-567-5457  
Fax: 772-567-4823

Web: [www.StHelenSchoolVero.org](http://www.StHelenSchoolVero.org)  
Email: [SHFalcons@StHelenSchoolVero.org](mailto:SHFalcons@StHelenSchoolVero.org)

Email addresses for specific faculty and staff can be found on the website.

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

## SCHOOL HOURS

Doors Open	7:00 a.m.
Teacher Pick up	7:45 a.m.
Homeroom begins	7:50 a.m.
Tardy	8:01 a.m.
School Ends	3:00 p.m. *

\* First Fridays and Half Days

School Ends at 12:00 p.m.

No hot lunch available on these days

Extended Day Program 3:30 - 5:30 pm/ Half days 12:30-2:00pm  
Extended Day Phone 772-404-1058

# SCHOOL BACKGROUND

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Since 1940, St. Helen Catholic School has a strong tradition of providing an education in a Catholic Christian environment. St. Helen Catholic School (SHCS) is a ministry of St. Helen Catholic Church and a member of the Diocese of Palm Beach. Offering grades K through 8, SHCS serves the families of Indian River County. The student body is just over 280. The average class size is 26.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Helen Catholic School is to provide a quality Catholic education that incorporates faith, academics, service and leadership. Students are encouraged to be confident and productive learners who are “making good things happen”.

## VISION STATEMENT

Building on our core strengths – faith development, reading, writing, and mathematics, St. Helen Catholic School will forge a new and powerful model of education with an emphasis on creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration, and a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education. A St. Helen Catholic School student will be inspired to reach his or her highest potential.

## SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY

Vatican II reminded us of our baptismal call to become “people of God,” a people who share responsibility and mission in the name of Jesus Christ. The parochial school is both a process and an institution that responds to that baptismal call by educating and preparing young people to accept and share more fully the task of continuing the Church’s work.

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

St. Helen Catholic School is dedicated to the education of the whole child as a Catholic and global citizen. With the support of home, church, and community, St. Helen is committed to providing an exemplary education that is academically challenging and empowers students to reach their full potential spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially.

## PROFILE OF A ST. HELEN GRADUATE

Graduates of St. Helen Catholic School will strive to become models of their faith, excel academically, serve the community, and lead with exemplary character. In doing so, they will:

### **FAITH:**

- Model Catholic Christian values
- Share the teachings of Jesus Christ

### **ACADEMICS:**

- Be well-prepared for high school
- Think creatively and independently

**SERVICE:**

- Contribute to the well-being of others
- Place the needs of others before self

**LEADERSHIP:**

- Exhibit integrity, honesty, and confidence
- Lead by doing

**PATRON SAINT**

*St. Helen* – St. Helen is the mother of St. Constantine the Great. She is known for her selflessness and generosity and for her dedication to the Church. In particular, she is recognized for building many Catholic Churches throughout the Roman Empire and for her successful search of the actual cross upon which Jesus was crucified.

Her feast day is August 18.

**MASCOT**

Falcon – The Falcon is considered the fastest creature on the planet. It is also known for agility and acuity. Our athletic competition should be nervous!

**COLORS**

Blue and Gold – Blue symbolizes youth, spirituality, truth, peace, and inspiration. It represents the Virgin Mary. Gold symbolizes wisdom, prosperity, wealth, success and good health. What a combination!

**ACCREDITATION**

St. Helen Catholic School is fully accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference (FCC). The FCC is considered one of the finest accreditation organizations in the nation and is seen as a model for other such organizations. Representatives from the Florida Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools sit on the FCC Accreditation Committee.

**HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION**

St. Helen Catholic School is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of a person's protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status. All employees, faculty members and students are protected under this policy.

In addition, this policy applies to all conduct occurring on school grounds, at assignments outside the school, or at school-sponsored events. All students are responsible for helping to assure that any harassment or discrimination is reported. If a student witnesses or learns of any conduct that violates this policy, the student must immediately report the incident to his/her principal. If, however, the principal is the individual who is believed to have engaged in the inappropriate conduct, the student should notify the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Palm Beach. If an investigation reveals that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school will take corrective action based on the circumstances.

# CATHOLIC IDENTITY

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The Catholic Church identifies five essential marks of a Catholic School. A Catholic school should be: inspired by a supernatural vision, founded on Christian anthropology, animated by communion and community, imbued with a Catholic worldview throughout its curriculum, and sustained by gospel witness. St. Helen Catholic School embodies these characteristics. Catholicity permeates the life of the school and informs our conversations and decisions from the mundane to the substantial.

## PRAYER

Our school day begins and ends with prayer. Class prayer happens many times throughout the day, often at the beginning of a class. Students also say grace before lunch as a class.

## LITURGY

Our school community gathers every Wednesday to celebrate Mass. We celebrate Mass with the parish community on Holy Days of Obligation if school is in session. All students are required to attend Mass regardless of their own faith or convictions.

Parents are invited to attend our school Mass. If you do so, you are welcome to sit anywhere behind the entire student body. Students are required to stay with their class during Mass. Please remember as adults we are role models for proper behavior in church. Participation is encouraged!

There is a collection taken during Mass. Students are invited to bring a small sum to contribute to the basket. The collection of the day is given to various missions supported by the school. This is a great opportunity to teach your child about the stewardship of treasure!

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

The Sacraments are said to be the “fount of God’s Love.” In the Diocese of Palm Beach, children enjoy the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion during second grade. They are confirmed in ninth grade. St. Helen Catholic School, a ministry of St. Helen Catholic Church, partners with the Office of Religious Education to prepare our children for these sacred privileges. Preparation for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion takes place throughout the year during second grade. Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation begins at the start of eighth grade.

For Catholic children that attend St. Helen School and are not current with their holy sacraments, as per the standards of the Diocese of Palm Beach, contact the Religious Education Office of the Parish for special arrangements and sacramental preparation and fulfillment. For those interested in becoming Catholic, also contact the Religious Education Office to begin the process. The Director of Religious Education is Paige Fies. The Religious Education Office phone number is 772-562-5954.

## ALTAR SERVERS

The opportunity to become an altar server begins in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Altar servers support our 7:30 and 8:30 daily Masses, as well as funerals when needed. Deacon Charles conducts training during the school day in coordination with the school teachers.

## RELIGION CLASS

Religion instruction in the Christian faith, as lived out in the Catholic tradition, forms the basis for the total development of the child. Every grade has religion class as a part of their daily schedule. Every student, regardless of their personal religion or faith convictions, is required to take Religion class and is obligated to meet all requirements set forth by the teacher.

## RETREATS

Students participate in age appropriate retreats. These retreats are designed to enrich their spiritual experiences, their knowledge and understanding of God, and their practice of our Catholic Christian faith.

## ST. HELEN CATHOLIC PARISH MASS SCHEDULE, etc.

Daily Mass: 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday Mass: Saturday Vigil 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. (Spanish)  
Sunday 7:15 a.m., 8:45, 10:30, 12:15 p.m., 5:00 p.m.  
Confessions: Saturday 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 – 3:30 p.m. and  
by appointment 567-5129  
Adoration Every Monday in the Chapel beginning at 9:00 a.m.  
Benediction is at 6:00 p.m.

## PARENTS AS PARTNERS

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### PARENTAL SUPPORT AND COOPERATION

God entrusts parents as the primary care givers and educators of their children. Your selection of St. Helen Catholic School as partners in this regard is evidence of your commitment to our mission to develop the whole person – spirit, mind, and body.

The best teacher is a good example. Your personal relationship with God, your family values, the principles you hold high, and the way you carry yourself on a daily basis affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught at St. Helen cannot become well rooted in the child unless they are nurtured by a faith-based environment in the home as well.

*Parents/guardians will be held to the same standards of respect and behavior as students on school grounds and at school functions. We expect that your interactions with administrators, teachers, staff, coaches, other students, other teams, and the like, will reflect the Christian spirit. This pertains to social media sites as well when discussing matters pertaining to St. Helen Catholic School.*

As partners in your child’s education, St. Helen Catholic Schools asks parents to:

- Ensure that your child . . .
  - Gets a good night’s sleep on school nights
  - Arrives to school on time
  - Is picked up on time
  - Is dressed according to the school’s dress code
  - Completes class assignments on time
  - Has funds available for lunch if necessary

- Has all the needed materials and is prepared to learn
- Actively participate in school activities such as Parent Teacher Conferences, the Home and School Association, and fundraising activities
- Notify the School office if a child will be absent from school
- Maintain up-to-date contact information with the school office
- Meet all financial obligations to the school in a timely and responsible manner
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health
- Promptly complete and return to school any information requested by the office or a teacher
- Read school notes emailed, sent home, posted on the website, or posted on RenWeb
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school
- Treat teachers and staff with respect and courtesy when discussing student problems
- Treat other students and families with respect and courtesy

The partnership between parents and the school is critical to the success of the healthy development of your child spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically. It is also important for the atmosphere and spirit of the school community.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is a vital part of the educational process. Teachers share with parents/guardians the privilege and obligation of educating your children. Therefore, parents/guardians should make every effort to keep informed of the programs of the school. Faculty members are available to discuss your child's progress with you. Please contact the teacher to schedule a conference. Parents/guardians should not present themselves to a teacher before, during or after school without an appointment. Phone calls should not be made to a teacher's personal phone or home unless specifically requested by the teacher. If a problem should arise concerning your child in the classroom, please contact the individual teacher first via email.

## **TEXT MESSAGING/TELEPHONE CALLS**

The school may use text messages and automated telephone calls to alert parents/guardians of important information related to the school's mission, operations, and activities. Parents/guardians acknowledge and consent to the receipt of these messages when providing their telephone numbers.

## **PARENTAL COOPERATION**

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

## **CONDUCT**

Students and parents are expected to behave consistent with the mission, philosophy and spirit of the school and the moral teachings of the Catholic faith as determined by the Bishop of the Diocese of Palm Beach. Because the school cannot anticipate all conduct that violates this policy, it reserves the right to

take any form of (1) student disciplinary action, including expulsion, and/or (2) restrictions against any behavior that violates this policy, even if not specifically stated in this handbook.

## **P**ARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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### **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

The satisfaction of all financial obligations to the school, including tuition and all fees, constitutes a material condition for continued enrollment in the school. The school may disallow students from taking quarterly, semester or final examinations if the parents or legal guardians fail to meet any financial obligation to the school. In addition, the school may withhold the issuance of transcripts or any other student records and/or disallow participation in or access to school activities, and/or dis-enroll a student if any financial obligations are not met. Therefore, if a prior year's school balance remains unpaid, the student(s) may not be eligible for reenrollment.

### **VOLUNTEER HOURS (Family Service Plan)**

Each family of the school is asked to participate with a minimum of 20 hours of service to the school yearly. This is on an honor code basis. Please track your own hours on RenWeb. Consider giving at least three of those hours to the Harvest Festival. This event is a wonderful parish and school event that results in community building, and it is a significant fundraiser of the Church that helps the school. There are many other opportunities to give your time. Additionally, you may choose the opportunity to provide goods for an event in lieu of service hours. Generally, \$20.00 is equivalent to 1 hour of service. Stay abreast of school activities for other ideas. Also, consider becoming an active member of the Home and School Association.

### **FUNDRAISING**

In order to keep tuition costs at a minimum, we host various fundraising events throughout the school year. Our current, more significant fundraisers may include:

Hoedown	September
Harvest Festival	November
Wall of Envelopes	January (Catholic Schools Week)
Annual Gala	February – April
Golf Tournament	TBA

To follow are other fundraising programs that families can participate in:

- Book Fair
- Falcon Shop
- Amazon Smiles
- Box Tops

Students raise money for class, clubs, and sports' needs. These fundraisers include but are not limited to bake sales, nacho sales, candy-gram sales, and the like. We encourage parent participation as much as possible.

Certain fundraisers are mandatory for eighth grade students because all or part of the fundraising proceeds offset the eighth grade year-end activities. These fundraisers will be coordinated by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade room moms and class representatives.

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

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS, EMAIL, PHONE**

As partners in education, ongoing communication with parents/guardians is valuable. Please keep the School office current on all of your contact information including mailing addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

It is very important to keep the School office informed on any changes regarding emergency contact information and instructions. This is vital information needed so we can adequately care for your child in the case of an unexpected emergency, accident or illness.

### **REQUIREMENTS TO VOLUNTEER WITH STUDENT CONTACT**

Volunteers are greatly appreciated for giving your time and talent and for being a vital part of our school. The following guidelines have been established to give volunteers a clear understanding of what is required to volunteer at the school.

1. The Diocese of Palm Beach requires all volunteers working with children to be fingerprinted and to attend a "Protecting God's Children" workshop.
2. Volunteers must sign in at the School office and wear a name tag at all times while on school premises.
3. Volunteers are required to carry out tasks in a manner consistent with school expectations, including maintenance of a professional, cooperative and confidential working environment. Many opportunities exist for volunteers to observe student behaviors and educational abilities as well as interactions among students, staff and faculty. These observations and any information garnered while performing volunteer duties are confidential in nature and should not be shared with anyone other than the appropriate personnel in the school.
4. Volunteers must speak to students in a loving, Christian manner.
5. Volunteers must wear clothing appropriate to a Catholic learning environment.

### **VISITING THE SCHOOL**

Any parent visiting the school (lunchroom duties, meetings, etc.) is required to report directly to the school office immediately upon arrival. A name tag will be issued and must be on your person and visible at all times while at the school. Formal identification may be required for verification purposes. Upon leaving the school, parents and visitors are asked to return to the School office to sign out. This system allows the school to track our visitors and to know who is on campus and where in the case of a school emergency.

## MESSAGES FROM PARENTS

Only those messages of vital importance will be relayed to students during the school day. Urgent messages must be delivered through the School office. Parents/guardians should not relay messages to their children on electronic devices during school hours.

## SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS

The school does not sponsor, oversee, or in any way control parties or social functions at private residences. School-sanctioned events, including all field trips, excursions, or parties, are specifically identified in this Handbook or are identified in the school calendar and/or written notices generated and distributed by the school.

**Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Diocese of Palm Beach, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to attendance at parties or social functions at private residences or from participation/attendance at events not identified in the school calendar or in written notices from the school, including field trips, excursions, or parties.**

Students engaged in conduct that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the school may be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a school-sponsored function.

## REPLACEMENT OF SCHOOL OWNED TEXTBOOKS, ETC.

Property – textbooks and the like, which are the owned by the school but used by students, are subject to review by school authorities at any time. Any item damaged or lost will be replaced at cost by the student's parent/guardian.

## Student Health

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St. Helen Catholic School will follow guidelines regarding health records and immunization policies as set forth by the Florida Department of Health and related Florida Statutes. Before a student can attend St. Helen Catholic School, all health requirements must be met.

## ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

If a student has an accident or medical problem during school hours, the student should notify their classroom teacher or appropriate school personnel. The student will be sent to the School office. Office personnel will decide on a suitable course of action. If simple first aid is appropriate, as in the case of a scraped knee, it will be provided. If a child does not feel well or requires further medical attention, a parent/guardian will be notified. If a serious situation occurs that requires major medical attention, a staff member will call 911 and parents will be contacted immediately thereafter.

If a student has an accident or medical problem during a school activity or event after school hours, the student should immediately notify any school personnel present such as a coach or Extended Day Program supervisor. The school representative will decide on the appropriate course of action similar to the three scenarios discussed in the previous paragraph.

Whether the accident or illness occurs at school or at a school function, the student should not use a personal device to notify a parent of the situation. This is the responsibility of the school personnel present.

If it is necessary for a sick child to go home, it is expected that the parent/guardian will make immediate arrangements to pick the child up from school. This is for the health and safety of all of the children in the school's care.

### **MEDICATION GUIDELINE**

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

1. An authorization form must be completed and submitted by a parent or legal guardian of the student. The name of the medication and dosage should be indicated on the form.
2. Medications to be dispensed at school must be labeled with the child's name and the exact dosage. The name and telephone number of the physician should also be on the label.
3. While the school will monitor a student taking the medication, the school will not remind students to come and take their medication.

Exceptions to this policy may also be made for the use, supply and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection (EpiPen) or as otherwise authorized in writing by the school. In particular circumstances, the school may agree to administer medication or otherwise provide health care interventions that go beyond a minor adjustment for a particular student. In those cases, Parents hereby release the school, the Diocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of those health care interventions that are beyond minor adjustments.

### **ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS OFF SCHOOL PREMISES/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

As members of the St. Helen community, we all have a responsibility to protect all of the students of St. Helen to the extent possible. Parents of students with communicable or contagious diseases (such as chicken pox, measles, pink eye, impetigo, scabies, lice, etc.) have a responsibility to notify the School office immediately upon learning of the situation.

Students with contagious diseases are not allowed to come to school while they remain infectious. In some circumstances, the student will be required to provide a doctor's release in order to return to school.

## **EPIPENS**

St. Helen Catholic School maintains a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors for use in the event a student is having an anaphylactic reaction. Designated staff members have been trained to administer injections if a student is having an anaphylactic reaction.

## **HEAD LICE (Pediculosis)**

Head lice are a particular communicable disease that can be easily transmitted from one person to another. For the safety of all of the children placed in the school's care, please notify the School office immediately upon learning of the situation. After having learned of a single case of lice, all of the students in the class with a confirmed case will be checked for active lice and nits as soon as possible within 24 hours. Parents will be notified of the situation so precautions can be taken to prevent spreading of the lice.

Students with a confirmed case of lice must be checked for active lice and nits by designated school personnel before returning to school.

Fall is generally the season for head lice. It is the responsibility of the parents to continually check their children for lice during this peak season.

# **ADMISSION POLICIES**

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## **OPEN ADMISSION POLICY**

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

## **TUITION AND FEES**

St. Helen Catholic School current tuition and fee schedule is available on the school's website or by contacting the School office. Application fees are non-refundable and must accompany the registration form. Upon acceptance to the school, a registration and new student fee are applied to the tuition.

To qualify for the Catholic Parish discount tuition rate, Catholic families must be registered, active, practicing Catholics that support a local parish – St. Helen, John of the Cross, Holy Cross, or St. Sebastian. Each pastor is asked annually to verify a family's active parishioner status.

Additional information regarding registration, tuition, and possible tuition financial assistance is available through the School office (772-567-5457).

Payment options for tuition are as follows:

- Option 1 – Full payment of tuition, paid directly to the school by July 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year.
- Option 2 – Two payment plan, paid directly to the school, 50% due July 15<sup>th</sup>, and 50% due January 15<sup>th</sup>.

Option 3 – Choice A: 10 month payment plan (July – April), paid on the 5<sup>th</sup> **or** the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, or on the 5<sup>th</sup> **and** the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month; Choice B: 11 month payment plan (July – May), paid on the 5<sup>th</sup> **or** the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, or on the 5<sup>th</sup> **and** the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Late fees will be assessed and penalty charges will occur for all insufficient checks with insufficient funds. Tuition covers only a portion of the cost of education for each student. Additional school funds are generated from fundraising activities, parish tuition assistance and donations.

Other expenses and fees which parents can expect are as follows: uniform costs(varies) and P.E. uniforms- \$20/set. Other fees which may apply include, but are not limited to: athletic fees-\$75.00, club fees-\$20.00, Academic Game fees-\$20.00, HSA fees - \$20.00; graduation fee- \$100.00 and field trips-varies upon destination, snack fees, lost or damaged textbook fees, and library late or lost book fees.

## **AGE REQUIREMENTS**

St. Helen Catholic School follows state guidelines regarding the age of a child wishing to enter Kindergarten and Grade One. In the State of Florida, to apply to Kindergarten, a child must be five years old on or before September 1. Consequently, to apply to Grade One, a child must be six years old on or before September 1. The only exception to this requirement may be transfers from another state.

## **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

As part of the registration requirements, the following must be supplied for each applicant:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (if Catholic)
- DCP immunization forms (Florida State Law requires a child entering a school for the first time must present the school with these forms before they attend class.)
- Health examination forms
- Most recent report card
- National standardized test scores (preferably 2 years)
- Social security number
- Custody Papers (if applicable)

A candidate will not be considered for acceptance until all of the required documentation is in the file.

## **UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS**

A Student's enrollment and/or graduation from school does not confer a legal status nor does it serve to regularize an undocumented student. Although the Diocese of Palm Beach may assist with the completion of an I-20 form, the school does not guarantee or confer any privileges or rights available to documented legal residents. Parents should consult with immigration legal counsel if they have any questions as to immigration status.

## **HEALTH EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS**

All schools in the State of Florida must require and maintain student health records in accordance with the Florida Department of Health and in compliance with Florida statutes. All directives issued annually by the Florida Department of Health concerning immunizations and other health matters must be implemented.

Prior to registration, each student must present a school entry Health Examination form (Form 3040) based upon an examination performed within one year prior to enrollment. New students are required to have a medical examination before entering the school.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

The Diocese of Palm Beach requires that, prior to attendance in school, each student present or have on file with the school a certificate of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health. A completed Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH 680) is required to document the administration of prescribed immunization doses. An exemption from immunization requirements is permissible only with a physician's certification as to the need for either a temporary or permanent medical exemption. An exemption from immunization requirements is not permissible for religious, philosophical, personal, or other reasons.

## **PROBATIONARY ACCEPTANCE**

All students will be accepted on a 90 day probationary basis. This is to ascertain a student's ability to adjust to the school's philosophy, disciplinary expectations, and academic programs.

## **TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS BETWEEN SCHOOLS**

When a student transfers from one school to another, a school official forwards the student's cumulative record to the receiving school upon request.

1. The records which may be transferred between schools are:
  - a. the Florida cumulative folder, including the student's health record
  - b. a copy of the transcript card
  - c. behavioral/psychological records with permission
  - d. disciplinary records with permission
  - e. Student Support Plan with permission
2. Parents requesting transfer of their child's school records are asked to put the request in writing and submit the request to the School office.
3. The school records of students transferring from St. Helen Catholic School will be mailed only to the new school where the child/children will be attending. No official school records will be given directly to the parents. No records will be sent out unless all financial accounts have been paid in full. Families with outstanding debts will have the records held until payment has been made.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

We hope in all cases where there appears to be a fit between the school and the student, families will keep their child with St. Helen Catholic School. However, in some cases, there is not a fit and a family desires to withdraw a child. In this circumstance, please complete the formal withdrawal form which can be picked up at the school office. Library books must be returned immediately. Textbooks, iPad, charger, etc. must be returned by the student's last day. Parents/guardians will be charged for unreturned items belonging to the school. All school accounts must be settled before a transfer will be issued. No records will be forwarded unless all accounts are current.

# ACADEMIC STANDARDS

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## GRADING SYSTEM

Teachers observe and evaluate student academic achievement, conduct, effort, and work habits daily. Teachers use this information to guide instruction and to address individual student needs. Evaluations are formally conducted on a quarterly basis with a report card issued at the end of each quarter. A quarter is approximately nine weeks in length.

Grades Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> use a word/numbers descriptors grading system as follows:

S Satisfactory	CONDUCT/EFFORT
U Unsatisfactory	1 Exceeds Expectations
E Excellent	2 Meets Expectations
P Progressing	3 Needs Improvement
N Needs Improvement	4 Unsatisfactory
X Not Yet Introduced	

In grades two through five students are given a letter grade. Students in grades 6 through 8 are given a number grade. The letter and equivalent number grades, and conduct/effort grades are as follows;

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	CONDUCT/EFFORT
A+ 98-100	1 Exceeds Expectations
A 92-97	2 Meets Expectations
A- 90-91	3 Needs Improvement
B+ 88-89	4 Unsatisfactory
B 82-87	
B- 80-81	
C+ 78-79	
C 72-77	
C- 70-71	
D+ 68-69	
D 62-67	
D- 60-61	
F 59-0	

## PROGRESS REPORTS

About five weeks into each quarter progress reports are issued for students performing at a lower than expected level or for students in danger of failing a class. It is possible for a student that did not receive a progress report to fail a class. Sometimes a student has an acceptable start to the quarter, but then decides

not to study or complete work as the quarter nears the end. However, ongoing communication between students, parents, and teachers should prevent unpleasant surprises regarding grades.

## **HONOR ROLL**

The purpose of Honor Roll is to recognize and honor students who have attained outstanding academic success and to inspire all students to perform at their highest level in all subjects. Honor Roll status is recognized in grades 4 through 8 at the end of each quarter. Students are recognized for performance at two levels: grades 6 through 8 – Principal’s List, First Honors and Honors, and grades 4 and 5 – First Honors and Second Honors. The criteria to achieve Honor Roll in each level is as follows:

### **Grades 6 – 8**

#### PRINCIPAL’S LIST

- Grade in every core subject and Spanish ranges from 94 – 100  
All Conduct and Effort marks are 1 and 2

#### FIRST HONORS

- Grade in every core subject and Spanish ranges from 90 – 100  
All Conduct and Effort marks are 1 or 2

#### HONORS

- Grade in every core subject and Spanish ranges from 82-100  
All Conduct and Effort marks are 1 or 2

### **Grades 4 – 5**

#### FIRST HONORS

- Grade in every core subject is a minimum of an A-  
All Conduct and Effort marks are 1 or 2

#### SECOND HONORS

- Grade in every core subject is at least a B, with at least two As (A- – A+)  
All Conduct and Effort marks are 1 or 2

The core subjects are: Religion, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies  
Honor Roll accomplishments will be celebrated and recognized with a Certificate.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Basic skills standardized testing is used as one of several means to assess appropriate student progression and to inform curriculum and instructional planning. St. Helen follows diocesan guidelines with regards to standardized testing. In accordance with diocesan standards, we use the Terra Nova Testing for standardized testing purposes.

St. Helen administers the Terra Nova Testing in early March for grades 2 through 8. Performance reports are expected sometime in May and will be shared with parents immediately thereafter. The results will be analyzed to continue to develop the academic excellence for which St. Helen strives.

## MAKE UP WORK

When a student is absent from school, it is the student's and/or parent's responsibility to make arrangements with their teachers regarding make up work. If a parent is going to pick up that day's assignments, the request should be made by 9:00 a.m. All work should be made up within three days unless otherwise arranged with the teacher. **Teachers are not required to prepare work in advance.** Teachers are not required to communicate with parents/guardians regarding class/homework during an unexcused extended leave. Students returning from an unexcused extended leave will have one week to make up all class/homework assignments, unless otherwise discussed with the teacher.

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to attend the scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences at the end of the first quarter. In addition, parents are welcome to request conferences throughout the year with the teachers of their child. Appointments should be requested in advance either by emailing the teacher or by sending a note to the teacher. Please do not try to have a conference with a teacher at school functions, as teachers have other assigned duties during these times and cannot devote to you the time necessary for a thorough, productive conference. If you have a concern regarding a teacher, please discuss the matter with the teacher first before scheduling a conference with the principal. Communication cures much.

## PRIVATE TUTORING, COACHING OR LESSONS

Except as specifically noted in this Handbook, the school does not sponsor, oversee, or otherwise provide private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services. Parents who engage school staff members for the provision of these services do so at their own risk and expense and are hereby advised that such services are outside the scope of the staff member's employment with the school.

**Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Diocese of Palm Beach, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services, regardless of where they may occur**

## SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS FOR STUDENTS

St. Helen Catholic School respects that all children have different learning needs. To the extent possible, we will make reasonable accommodations. The justification for accommodations must be in writing and in conjunction with a doctor or learning specialist.

## SECTION 504: POLICY STATEMENT

St. Helen Catholic School complies with the mandate of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in certain programs and activities. Pursuant to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, St. Helen Catholic School will make those minor adjustments that can accommodate students with disabilities to the school's educational programs and activities. The school's designated 504 Coordinator and contact information are as follows: John Clarke, (561)775-9532. Parents with questions regarding the school's disability accommodations or related items should contact the 504 Coordinator. Parents may file a grievance as to any decisions related to a disability

accommodation and request an internal hearing and review by sending a written notice addressed as follows:

Gary Gelo  
Diocese of Palm Beach  
Superintendent of Schools  
9995 North Military Trail  
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410

The internal hearing and review will seek the prompt and equitable resolution of disability discrimination complaints.

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY**

The faculty at St. Helen Catholic School anticipate that each child is capable of learning on grade level and is expected to be promoted to the next academic grade level. We do feel it is important to identify students who are struggling at an early age and/or early in the school year so that the learning challenges can be addressed.

At any time during the school year, when a student is identified as being unsuccessful in the core subject areas, the following steps will be taken to pursue academic success for that child:

1. A Student Study Team meeting will take place. The team will be composed of the Principal, Assistant to the Principal/Resource Teacher, the core classroom teacher(s), the parents, and the School Counselor (if applicable)
2. The team will gather pertinent information regarding the students' performance in the classroom and at home
3. The team will review all psycho-educational or other testing when appropriate
4. An Intervention Plan will be developed by the Team and implemented at school and at home as necessary
5. Student's progress will be monitored and revisited by the Team as needed.
6. All alternatives to grade-level retention will be explored

Promotion to the next grade level may be contingent upon a student completing required coursework through a summer remediation plan. Retention will be recommended and implemented only after careful consideration and evaluation by teachers and parents. The decision to retain a student rests with the school principal.

## **GRADUATION**

Graduation from elementary school is the completion of a formalized course of studies, where readiness for high school is assured. A diploma is granted to students who have successfully completed the course of studies.

Students cannot fail more than two core subjects to graduate. Students who fail one or two core subjects must complete and pass a summer program approved by the principal for those subjects before the student is awarded a diploma.

The elementary principal will advise the secondary principal any time a student, who has been provisionally accepted by the secondary school, does not earn a diploma or is not expected to be awarded a diploma until the end of the summer.

## RECORDS REVIEWED BY PARENTS

St. Helen Catholic School follows the regulations as stated in the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. If a parent wishes to review their child's official file, the request must be made in writing prior to the review. The school will honor all requests so long as proper procedures are followed.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

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### PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ATHLETICS OR ORGANIZATIONS

The school recognizes the following sports, activities and clubs:

- School Clubs:** Student Council, Yearbook, Academic Games, Art Club, Drama Club, Lego Club, and National Junior Honor Society for those that qualify
- Major School Activities:** Field Trips, Field Days, Christmas Pageant, Sports Banquets, Award Ceremonies, Variety/Talent Show
- Dances:** Generally 2-3 per year for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Athletics:** Soccer (Co-ed), Girls Volleyball, Boys Flag Football, Cross Country (Co-ed) Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Cheerleading, and Golf (Co-ed)

Parents acknowledge that participation in these sports, activities, or clubs may be inherently dangerous and, the school cannot ensure the safety of all students involved in its activities and programs.

Prior to participation in any sport, each student must complete the Parent Consent and Release of Liability form and a physician's certificate to the effect that the student is physically fit for participation in the sport. Participation includes pre-season conditioning, open gym, tryouts and practice. **Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Diocese of Palm Beach, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to participation in any sports, leagues, clubs, activities or volunteer service- hour programs.**

The school is not responsible for student participation in any sports, leagues or clubs not identified above. Parents hereby acknowledge that students who participate in any such program or activity do so at their own risk. Parents further acknowledge that the school does not control or sanction any such program or activity and that it shall not be held liable for any injuries or damages sustained by students or others arising from participation in such program or activities.

### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips offer valuable, active, hands-on, learning opportunities for students. Our field trips will have defined objectives that enhance each child's educational experience. Instruction and preparation may precede or follow a field trip. Parents will be called upon to act as chaperones and drivers. Proper documentation and insurance for adult chaperones and drivers must be on file in the school office. Extensive field trips will only be taken in grades 2,4,6 and 8.

A permission slip explaining the particular field trip will be sent home to parents and must be signed and returned in order for a child to participate in the field trip. No child is permitted to go on a field trip without a signed permission slip. Parents do have the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip. In this case, the student is expected to be present for the regular school day. Upon arriving to school, the student should report to the school office. The teacher will provide a full day's work for students not participating in the field trip experience.

Students who exhibit a pattern of inappropriate behavior may be prohibited from participating in field trips. **Field trips are a privilege and only those students who meet the academic and behavioral requirements will be afforded the privilege. No student has an absolute right to go on a field trip.**

## CODE OF CONDUCT AND CONSEQUENCES

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### STUDENT CONDUCT

Self-discipline is a Christian ideal which all students are encouraged to achieve. *Students and Parents are expected to behave consistent with the mission, philosophy and spirit of the school and the moral teachings of the Catholic faith as determined by the Bishop of the Diocese of Palm Beach. Because the school cannot anticipate all conduct that violates this policy, it reserves the right to take any form of (1) student disciplinary action, including expulsion, and/or (2) restrictions against any behavior that violates this policy, even if not specifically stated in this handbook.*

The following infractions are considered violations of the code of conduct at St. Helen Catholic School: (This list is not exhaustive.)

1. Insubordination, lack of respect for authority
2. Academic dishonesty – cheating, plagiarism, copying another’s homework, and the like
3. Disruptive classroom behavior
4. Neglect of responsibility
5. Fighting
6. Stealing
7. Using profane or vulgar language or actions
8. Improper dress
9. Unreasonable talking, shouting or noise during class, at lunch or on school property
10. Damaging school property or the personal property of others
11. Chewing gum or eating outside lunch time without permission from a teacher
12. Use of cell phone during school day and afterschool activities unless granted permission
13. Misuse of technology
14. Conduct that detracts from St. Helen Catholic School
15. Lockers improperly locked (“dummy locked”)

The disciplinary policies and procedures set forth in this handbook provide guidelines that the school may, in its discretion, employ in regulating student conduct. They do not however limit the school’s right to freely and fully exercise any and all disciplinary measures, with or without prior notice or warning, including expulsion from school. The disciplinary action taken is at the sole discretion of the school administration. Students engaged in conduct that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of St. Helen Catholic School will be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a non-school sanctioned function or not.

### CONSEQUENCES

The intent of consequences to improper behavior is to instill a sense of moral responsibility within each of our students. It is the expectation of St. Helen Catholic School that each member of the community will assume responsibility for his/her own actions and develop intrinsic values of personal integrity. Students in elementary school need correction as they are growing and maturing. When they behave in an

unbecoming manner, children benefit and learn from discipline and consequences. Students who witness a violation of expected behavior are to report such violations to a teacher.

St. Helen Catholic School expects each person in the school to display the highest standards of integrity and character at all times. Stealing, lying, academic dishonesty, bullying, inappropriate use of technology, or any other activity that conflicts with high standards and undermines the integrity of the community cannot be tolerated. The consequences of inappropriate behavior may include the following:

**First Offense:** Depending on the severity of the incident, the student may receive a demerit or a detention as deemed appropriate by the teacher or principal. **If it is an instance of academic dishonesty, the student will receive a zero for the assignment or test.** Depending on the circumstances, the teacher or staff involved may send the details home on the demerit slip or will call if the matter was significant and a detention was assigned.

**Second Offense:** Depending on the severity of the incident, the student may receive a demerit or a detention as deemed appropriate by the teacher or principal. **If it is an instance of academic dishonesty, the student will receive a zero for the assignment or test.** The teacher or staff involved will call the parents of the student. Depending on the severity of the incident, a parent conference may be required.

Also, depending on the current incident and the incident of the first offense, academic suspension or in-school suspension of at least one full school day may be required. The personnel involved will call the parents of the student to discuss the incident.

**Third Offense:** The personnel involved will call the parents of the student for a mandatory meeting to include the teacher and the principal to discuss the situation. The potential consequences of a third offense may be suspension or dismissal from St. Helen Catholic School.

Offenses accumulate in the aggregate. For example: one cheating offense plus one lying offense plus one bullying offense means the last offense constitutes the third offense.

*Please keep the following in mind – Disapproval of the child’s actions is not the absence of love; it is the strengthening of love. School discipline can be undermined when parents criticize school authority. Therefore, parents should consult the teacher about all the facts before making any hasty decisions or commenting on a discipline problem in the presence of their children.*

## **DEMERITS/DETENTION**

Demerits will be given to a student for an infraction of the rules. A demerit slip will be sent home with the student. It must be signed by the parent and returned to the issuing teacher the next day. If not returned, the teacher will notify the parents. The first three demerits will not result in a penalty. For each demerit after the third one, a detention will be assigned. Serving a detention does not erase the demerits. Demerits accumulate during each semester. Each student will begin the second semester with no demerits. Detention will be served on a designated day with an assigned teacher. Detention will meet from 3:15 – 4:00 on Tuesdays. A student will be sent to the principal for conduct referral after serving a total of three detentions per semester. At 4:05pm, students not picked up will report to the Extended Day Program. There may be a fee for the Extended Day Program.

## **SUSPENSION**

Suspension from school is imposed for serious infractions or in the case of continual uncorrected behavior. The principal may determine that a student should be suspended from classes or school for a specified period of time. This is done when it is necessary to signal to the student and parent/guardian that the actions of the student, either for a single or repeated offense are very serious and will warrant dismissal from the school if steps are not taken to prevent a re-occurrence. The decision to suspend a student rests with the principal. At the principal's discretion, make-up work may or may not be permitted.

## **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is generally resorted to only when all other means of discipline have proven to be ineffectual and the student's conduct is a definite hindrance to the welfare and progress of the school community. The measures taken to implement the decision and notification of parents are the same as those for suspension. In certain cases, a student who has refused to conform to the standards of good moral and social conduct in a given school setting may, if the parents choose, and with local administrative approval, withdraw from the school. The parent or student may appeal this decision of expulsion to the Pastor whose decision will be the final decision. Before a student is expelled or asked to withdraw from St. Helen Catholic School, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools or his/her delegate will be consulted.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS ATTENDING ATHLETIC AND CO-CURRICULAR EVENTS**

St. Helen's athletic programs are intended to complement and support the mission of St. Helen Catholic School while promoting the growth of the student spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically. The school is committed through these programs to provide opportunities for personal growth, experience in teamwork, faith and leadership development, and good sportsmanship.

St. Helen School encourages a spirit of athletic competition that is guided by the highest standards of fair play and good sportsmanship set in a Catholic atmosphere. To this end, we expect parents/guardians (and their guests) and students attending athletic and co-curricular events to adhere the following:

- Be a positive role model through their own actions to make sure that the student participant has the best experience possible.
- Recognize and show appreciation for outstanding play by other teams or participants.
- Show respect for opposing players, coaches, and spectators.
- Demonstrate positive support for officials and be respectful of all officials' decisions.
- Support student participants in their efforts to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- Discourage any language or behavior that would incite violence or would endanger the health or well-being of student participants.
- Refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, student participant or parent such as booing and taunting, or using profane language or gestures.
- Refrain from ridiculing or yelling at a student participant for making a mistake or bad decision.
- Refrain from coaching student participants during the games, events, or practices unless you are one of the official coaches of the team.
- Respect the authority of the coach/moderator during games or events and refrain from questioning, challenging or confronting coaches/moderators at the game site. Take time to talk with the coaches/moderators in an appropriate manner, with an appointment and agreed upon

location. **Approaching a coach or moderator immediately after a game or event is not an appropriate time to discuss such matters.**

*Parents/Guardians (and their guests) or others who engage in behavior that violates the expected behavior at St. Helen Catholic School may be subject to sanctions or removal from competitions that involve student-athletes associated with St. Helen Catholic School.*

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

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

- (1) physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student;
- (2) damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- (3) placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm;
- (4) placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or the Catholic mission of the school.

### 1. Definition

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

### 2. Scope

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

### 3. Reporting Complaints

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

4. Disciplinary Action

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

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate remedial action which may include, but is not limited to, the assessment of costs incurred by the School in its investigation and review of any reports deemed to have been made in bad faith.

## COMPUTER USE POLICY

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

1. Respect and protect the privacy of others:
  - a. Use only assigned accounts and passwords;
  - b. Do not share assigned accounts or passwords with others;
  - c. Do not view, use or copy passwords, data or networks to which you are not authorized;
  - d. Do not share or distribute private information about yourself or others.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources:
  - a. Observe all network security practices;
  - b. Report security risks or violations to the school principal;
  - c. Do not vandalize, destroy or damage data, networks, hardware, computer systems or other resources;
  - d. Do not disrupt the operation of the network or create or place a virus on the network;
  - e. Conserve and protect these resources for other students and Internet users.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others:
  - a. Do not infringe on copyright laws including downloading or copying music, games or movies;
  - b. Do not install unlicensed or unapproved software;
  - c. Do not plagiarize.
4. Respect the principles of the Catholic school:
  - a. Use only in ways that are kind and respectful;
  - b. Report threatening or discomfoting materials to the school principal;
  - c. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that violate the school's code of conduct (such as indecent, threatening, rude, discriminatory or harassing materials or messages);
  - d. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that are illegal (such as obscene, stolen, or illegally copied materials or messages);
  - e. Do not use the resources to further any other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct;
  - f. Do not use the resources for non-educational purposes such as visiting chat rooms, social websites or networks;
  - g. Do not send spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings;

- h. Do not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business or political campaigning without prior written approval from the school’s principal.
- i. Do not engage in any form of cyberbullying.

### Supervision and Monitoring

The school and its authorized personnel may monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. The school reserves the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school’s information networks or on any technological devices used by students on campus in order to further any administrative concern. It may also use this information in disciplinary actions and may furnish evidence of a crime to law enforcement.

### Unacceptable Use of Outside Technology

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

### Consent

Many technological devices used at school have the capacity to generate audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, and other similar reproductions of images, likenesses, and/or sounds. The use of any such recordings and reproductions is governed by school policy. Parental/guardian execution of this Handbook constitutes an express consent and waiver as to any such recordings and reproductions incidental to the use of any technological devices on school property or at school events.

### Consequences for Violations

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

## **ELECTRONIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Periodically, the school may require that parents or guardians make electronic acknowledgments confirming the receipt and/or acceptance of various policies, procedures, notices, releases or updates. Any time a parent/guardian makes an electronic acknowledgment by clicking “submit” or “accept” on an electronic document, that individual is agreeing that he/she has read, understood, and agrees to be bound

by the contents of the electronic document. Electronic acknowledgments and signatures are valid and binding and may serve as consent to the contents of any electronic communication. Parents and guardians are responsible for reviewing the contents of any electronic document prior to making any electronic acknowledgments. In addition, **Parents/Guardians, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY AGREE** to receive and be bound by electronic acknowledgments.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES including CELL PHONES and SMARTWATCHES**

Students are permitted to use school-owned electronic devices on school premises. Students are also permitted to use e-readers, electronic books, or iPads for the sole purpose of reading a book when and only when the teacher permits. Cell phones are not to be used for the purpose of reading a book.

Students are prohibited from wearing smartwatches during the school day, which includes aftercare hours. Included is any watch that has the capability of syncing to a phone, computer, iPad, or any device with internet capabilities. Other personal electronics, which include, but are not limited to cell phones, iPods, video games, etc. are not permitted to be used on school premises or during after-school activities.

Students in K-5 are prohibited from bringing a cell phone to school. Middle school students are required to turn in their cell phone to their homeroom teacher. If a child fails to turn in a cell phone during homeroom, the parent/guardian will collect the phone from the principal at the end of the school day. The school is not responsible for any electronic device which may be lost, stolen, or broken while on school premises.

The following actions will be taken if a student is caught using an electronic device inappropriately or without permission during the school day or during an afterschool activity, practice or game:

- **First Offense:** The electronic device will be taken and given to the Principal. The student should reclaim the device from the Principal at the end of the day. The student will receive a demerit.
- **Second Offense:** The electronic device will be taken and given to the Principal. A parent/guardian will have to claim the device from the Principal. A conference with the parent/guardian, student, and Principal will be required. The student will serve a detention.
- **Third Offense:** The electronic device will be taken and sent to the Principal. A conference with the parent/guardian, student, and the Principal will be required. The student may be suspended and expulsion is a possibility. The device will be returned at the discretion of the Principal.

The school is not responsible for any electronic device which may be lost, stolen, or broken while on school premises.

*Parents/guardians should not relay messages to their children on electronic devices during school hours.*

### **iPad ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Technology resources at SHCS are provided for the purpose of supporting the educational mission of the school. Providing our students with an iPad will promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, research, creativity, communication, increased productivity and mobile learning. Use of these technologies is a privilege that carries responsibility and behavioral expectations consistent with all school rules and policies including, but not limited to, those stated in this Parent/Student Handbook.

It is understood that members of the SHCS community will use all types of computing devices and the school's network in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner at all times.

SHCS retains sole right of possession of the iPad and related equipment. The iPad will be issued to students according to the guidelines set forth in this document. SHCS retains the right to collect and/or inspect the iPad at any time; and to alter, add, or delete installed software, hardware or other content.

## **1. iPads (charger and case inclusive)**

### *1.1 Receiving the iPad*

iPads will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. Students will be issued iPads with predetermined applications (Apps) installed. Parents and students must sign and return the iPad Acceptable Use Policy and Pledge documents before the iPad will be issued to their child.

### *1.2 iPad Check-in*

iPads will be returned to SHCS during the final week of school. This includes case and charger. If a replacement charger is required, the parent/guardian must purchase an original Apple charger (not one from Target, Walmart...). Students who transfer, withdraw, or are expelled from SHCS during the school year must surrender the iPad upon termination of enrollment.

### *1.3 Check-in Fines*

If a student fails to return the iPad at the end of the school year or upon termination of enrollment at SHCS, that student may be subject to criminal prosecution or civil liability at the sole discretion of the Administration. The student and/or his or her Parent/Guardian will also pay the replacement cost of the iPad, or, if applicable, any insurance deductible. Furthermore, the student/parent will be responsible for any damage to the iPad consistent with the School's iPad Protection plan. The student/parent will be charged a fee for any needed repairs, not to exceed the replacement cost of the iPad.

## **2. iPad Care**

Students are responsible for the general care of the iPad they have been issued by the school. The cost for miscellaneous repairs such as a cracked or chipped screen will be \$300.00 and will be the responsibility of the parents. iPads that fail to work properly must be taken to the School office for an evaluation of the equipment. SHCS will be responsible for repairing iPads that malfunction.

### *2.1 General Precautions*

The iPad is school property and all users will follow this policy and the SHCS acceptable use policy for technology.

- Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the iPad to prevent damage
- iPads must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels
- iPads must never be left in an unlocked locker, unlocked car, school cubby, or any unsupervised area
- Students may not use "skins" to "personalize" their iPads

### *2.2 Carrying iPads*

The protective cases provided with the iPads are sufficient to protect the iPad from normal (reasonable) treatment and provide a suitable means for carrying the device within the school. The replacement cost per cover will be \$50.00. The guidelines below should be followed:

- iPads should always be within the protective iPad case at all times
- Avoid placing too much pressure and/or weight (such as folders and workbooks) on the iPad screen

### 2.3 Screen Care

The iPad screens can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure on the screen.

- Do not lean on the top of the iPad when it is closed
- Do not place anything near the iPad that could put pressure on the screen
- Do not place anything in the carrying case that will press against the cover. Clean the screen with a soft, dry cloth or anti-static cloth; **no cleaners of any type**
- Do not “bump” the iPad against lockers, walls, car doors, floors, etc. as that will eventually break the screen

## 3. iPad Use

iPads are intended for use at school each day. In addition to teacher expectations for iPad use, school messages, announcements, planners, calendars, and schedules may be accessed using the iPad. Students must be responsible for bringing their iPad fully charged, to all classes, unless specifically instructed not to do so by their teacher. Students who repeatedly fail to bring to iPad to school or fail to maintain a fully charged battery may lose points on missed assignments.

### 3.1 iPads Left at Home

If students leave their iPad at home, they are responsible for getting the course work completed as if they had their iPad present. Loaner iPads will not be available to students who forget to bring their iPad or fail to charge their iPad.

### 3.2 iPad Undergoing Repair

If available, loaner iPads will be issued to students when their assigned iPad has been sent for repair due to malfunction.

### 3.3 Charging Your iPad's Battery

iPads must be brought to school each day in a fully charged condition. Students need to charge their iPads each evening. Plug them into the charger before going to sleep at night. This should provide ample time for properly charging the iPad.

### 3.4 Screensavers/Background photos

A standard screensaver will be created by the student and may not be changed throughout the school year. This screensaver will help to identify the user of the iPad.

### 3.5 Photos

Photo/Image storage on the iPad will be for school projects only. Storage of personal photos or downloaded images are not allowed.

### 3.6 Sound, Music, Games or Programs

Students may not download music from iTunes or any other music sharing site. Music is only allowed on the iPad if provided by the teacher for educational use. Sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. Internet games are not allowed on the iPads. All software/Apps must be school approved.

## 4. Saving Work

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to mechanical failure or accidental deletion.

#### *4.1 Network Connectivity*

SHCS makes no guarantee that the school wireless network will be up and running 100% of the time.

### **5. iPad Software**

#### *5.1 Originally Installed software*

SHCS will synchronize the iPads to contain the necessary Apps for school work. Students will not synchronize iPads or add Apps through a home iTunes account. The software/Apps originally installed by SHCS must remain on the iPad in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. From time to time the school may add or modify software applications for use in a particular course. Periodic checks of iPads will be made to ensure that students have not removed required Apps and/or installed non-SHCS approved Apps.

#### *5.2 Additional Software/iTunes*

Students are not allowed to load extra software/Apps on their iPads, unless instructed to do so by a teacher or administrator. **Any app downloaded by the student without consent from a teacher or school authority will result in a \$25.00 fee per app.**

#### *5.3 Inspection*

Students may be selected at random at any time to provide their iPads for inspection.

#### *5.4 Procedure for re-loading software*

If technical difficulties occur or illegal software (non SHCS installed Apps) is discovered, the iPad will be restored from backup. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss of any software or documents deleted due to a re-format and re-image. In the event of illegal software, the student may lose the privilege of iPad use.

#### *5.5 Software upgrades*

Upgraded versions of licensed software/Apps are available from time to time. Students may be required to check in their iPads for periodic updates and syncing with the Technical Support department.

### **6. Acceptable Use**

The use of the SHCS technology resources is a privilege, not a right. The privilege of using the technology resources provided by the school is not transferable or extendible by students to people or groups outside the school, and terminates when a student is no longer enrolled in the school. This policy is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with efficient, ethical, and lawful use of technology resources. If a person violates any of the User Terms and Conditions named in this policy, privileges may be terminated, access to the school's technology resources may be denied, and appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied. The SHCS Code of Student Conduct shall be applied for student infractions. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension / expulsion. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

#### *6.1 Parent/Guardian Responsibilities*

Talk to your children about values and the standards that your children should follow on the use of the Internet, just as you do on the use of all media information sources such as television, telephones, movies, and radio.

#### *6.2 School Responsibilities are to:*

- Provide Internet access to the students

- Use reasonable efforts to block inappropriate content through the use of available industry standard firewalls and/or other technology. It is understood that SHCS's undertaking to attempt to block such content does not constitute a guarantee of results
- Provide the school faculty with technology training to enhance the learning process

*6.3 Student's/Parent's Responsibilities are to:*

- Use computers /iPads in a responsible and ethical manner
- Obey general school rules concerning behavior and communication that apply to iPad/computer use
- Use all technology resources in an appropriate manner so as to not damage school equipment.
- Help SHCS protect our computer system/device by contacting a teacher or administrator about any security problems that may be encountered
- Monitor all activity on students account(s)
- Turn off and secure their iPad after they are finished working to protect their work and information
- Print a copy of any email containing inappropriate or abusive language or questionable subject matter, and turn in to school administrators, guidance counselor or any teacher
- Return their iPad at the end of each school year. Students who transfer, withdraw, are expelled, or terminate enrollment at SHCS for any other reason must return their individual school iPad on the date of termination
- Students are responsible for the content on their iPad
- If a student loses the iPad on campus during that day, it must be reported **immediately** to school personnel. Efforts will be made to locate the iPad which may include a search of all student lockers and backpacks. **It is imperative that school personnel be notified as soon as the student is aware of loss.** If the iPad is not found, the student is responsible for replacement.

*6.4 Student Activities Strictly Prohibited:*

- Illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted materials
- Taking pictures, video or audio recordings on school grounds without the consent of school personnel
- Posting of pictures, video or audio recordings to any social media site
- Any action that violates existing SHCS policy or public law
- Sending, accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing offensive, profane, threatening, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials
- Use of inappropriate chat rooms or sites selling term papers, book reports, and other forms of student work
- Use of outside data disks or external attachments without prior approval from the administration
- Changing of iPad settings established by school
- Downloading Apps – specifically, but not limited to, any App that results in the “Jailbreak” of your iPad. **Any app downloaded by student without consent of teacher or school authority will result in a \$25.00 fee per app.**
- Spamming – Sending mass or inappropriate emails
- Gaining access to other student's accounts, files, and/or data
- Use of the school's internet/Email accounts for financial or commercial gain or for any illegal activity
- Use of anonymous and/or false communications such as, but not limited to, MSN, Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, email, etc.
- Students are not allowed to give out personal information, for any reason, over the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, setting up internet accounts, including those necessary for chat rooms, EBay, email, etc.
- Participation in credit card fraud, electronic forgery, or other forms of illegal behavior

- Vandalism (any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware, software, or data, including, but not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses or computer programs that can infiltrate computer systems and/or damage software components) of school equipment will not be allowed
- Transmission or accessing materials that are obscene, offensive, threatening, or otherwise intended to harass or demean recipients
- Bypassing the SHCS web filter through a web proxy
- Students are not allowed to use another student's iPad
- Personal email accounts are prohibited

#### *6.5 iPad Care*

- Students will be held responsible for maintaining their individual iPads and keeping them in good working order
- iPad batteries must be charged and ready for school each day
- iPad cases furnished by the school must be returned with only normal wear and no alterations to avoid paying a replacement fee
- iPads that are damaged should be taken to the School office. iPads that have been damaged from student misuse, neglect, or accidental damage will be repaired at a cost of \$300.00. This cost will be paid by the student or family. Students will be responsible for the entire cost of repairs to iPads that are damaged intentionally
- iPads that are stolen must be reported immediately to the School office

#### *6.6 Legal Propriety*

Students must comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. Ignorance of the law is not immunity. If you are unsure, ask a teacher or parent. Plagiarism is a violation of the SHCS Rule of Conduct. Give credit to all sources used, whether quoted or summarized. This includes all forms of media on the Internet such as graphics, movies, music, and text. Use or possession of hacking software is strictly prohibited, and violators will be subject to the stated policies SHCS Student/Parent Handbook.

#### *6.7 Student Discipline*

In circumstances involving a violation of the SHCS Acceptable Use Policy, teachers and administrators of SHCS reserve the right to implement any and all disciplinary measures provided for in the Parent/Student Handbook. Students are expected to follow classroom rules and expectations for appropriate iPad usage. Any students who do not follow the rules and expectations may lose the privilege of using an iPad.

### **7. iPad Protection, Storage and Identification**

#### *7.1 iPad Identification*

Students' iPads will be identified in the following ways:

- Serial number
- Student created screen saver

#### *7.2 Storing your iPad*

When students are not using their iPads, (grades 6-8) they should be kept in their locker. Nothing should be placed on top of the iPad when placed on desks. Students are encouraged to take their iPads home every day after school (grades 6 – 8), regardless of whether or not they are needed. iPads should not be stored in a vehicle.

#### *7.3 iPads Left in Unsupervised Areas*

Under no circumstances should iPads be left in unsupervised areas. Unsupervised areas include the school grounds and campus, the lunchroom, computer lab, unlocked classrooms, and hallways. If an iPad is found in an unsupervised area, it will be taken to the school office.

### **8. Cost of Repairs**

Students/Parents will be responsible for any damage to their iPads including, but not limited to: broken screens, cracked plastic pieces, inoperability due to damage, etc. The cost of most minor repairs is \$300.00. Should the cost to repair exceed the cost of purchasing a new device, the student will pay for full replacement. Lost items such as cases and cables will be charged the actual replacement cost.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

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

The school is committed to a drug-free environment. This commitment may, under some circumstances, prompt a need for testing of students for evidence of substance abuse. It may also involve the use of drug dogs and other methods in the discretion of the school administration which seek to deter the use and/or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol.

If a student exhibits the symptoms, or is suspected of substance abuse, the school may require that the student undergo substance abuse testing at the parents' expense. If the results of the test suggest abuse (and the substance was not used on or brought to campus or a school-related activity), the school will normally use this information to help the student seek assistance. Refusal to participate in such a test may result in expulsion from the school.

At times, the school may choose to conduct random drug testing of the student body at the parents' expense.

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

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

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

## **WEAPONS**

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

## THREATS OF VIOLENCE

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

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

## PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

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

## BRINGING TOYS TO SCHOOL

Students are not permitted to bring toys of any kind, including trading cards, to school unless they are bringing something in with permission from their teacher for a class activity such as "Show and Tell". This rule also extends to Extended Day Care. The school supplies balls and more for play time at recess and Extended Day Care. Bringing in your own supplies for these times is not allowed.

## USE OF PHOTOS

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school or Diocesan publication including but not limited to print publications, videos, or websites including Facebook, Twitter and other social media websites. Any parent who does not want his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year.

**By executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, Parents HEREBY CONSENT, authorize and grant permission to the school, the Diocese of Palm Beach, and their agents, employees or duly authorized representatives to photograph or videotape students and parents and CONSENT to their publication for any purpose deemed proper by the school, including but not limited to, use on the internet.**

**Additionally, Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Diocese of Palm Beach, and their corporate members, officers,**

**employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student or parent photos.**

### **SEXTING**

The electronic transmission or receipt from one minor to another of any photograph or video that depicts nudity may constitute illegal sexting. Students engaged in sexting will be subject to serious disciplinary consequences which may include expulsion from school. In addition, the school administration may report instances of sexting to the Florida Department of Children and Families or local law enforcement for appropriate investigation as to violations of law.

### **SMOKING/VAPING**

It is a violation of Florida law for any minor to knowingly possess any tobacco product, nicotine product, or nicotine dispensing device. In addition, the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and vaping carry known health risks that can be very serious. The use of any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and/or vaping in any form is prohibited on school property and at any school events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences which may include expulsion from school.

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

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A student's attendance not only impacts his/her own learning experience, but also the learning experience of their classmates. Additionally, the teacher's instructional plans may be negatively affected as a result of student attendance. Punctuality is important to teach a child as we desire for them the development of good personal habits.

At St. Helen Catholic School, the school day begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m.

### **TARDY POLICY**

A student is considered tardy after 8:00 a.m. If a student arrives after 8:00 a.m. they must report to the School office to receive a late pass for admission to class. All tardies are unexcused and a demerit will be issued unless a doctor's note is presented at the time the student arrives after having visited the doctor. If a student leaves school for the day before 11:00am, he/she is absent a full day. If a student leaves for the day after 11:00am, he/she will be given credit for a full day, no child is to be released to a parent at the classroom. All children are to be released through the school office.

It is the parent's obligation to have students at school on time each day. Tardiness remains a part of your child's permanent record. Four demerits in the same semester will result in an after school detention. Six demerits per quarter will result in a parent conference with the Principal as the commitment to the educational program offered to all students may not be fully respected. If the behavior is not corrected, the situation may result in the student being asked to withdraw from St. Helen Catholic School.

### **MORNING DROP OFF/END OF DAY PICK UP**

For security purposes, **parents/guests are not permitted in the Parish Center.**

Please note: Dismissal is at 3:00pm. Unless academic/athletic events warrant, students will not be dismissed after 2:30pm. Please schedule appointments accordingly.

## DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Students are dismissed from school at 3:00 p.m. Pick up time is from 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Parents are asked to please be prompt. Any student remaining after 3:30 p.m. will join the Extended Day Program. A fee may be charged for this service.

Please refrain from bringing pets onto school grounds at arrival or dismissal.

If your child is going home with someone other than those listed in RenWeb, written permission is required.

## PARKING LOT/TRAFFIC PATTERN

For the safety of our students, families, and staff, we have drop off and pick up procedures in place. These procedures were created in cooperation with the City of Vero Beach and the Vero Beach Police Department. They are intended to create a drop-off and pick up process that is safe for everyone and does not significantly impact the road travel of the surrounding neighborhood.

Drop of and pick up procedures are not voluntary. They are required as part of your Parent Cooperation to create a safe, organized environment. These procedures were not designed for the convenience of parents, but to ensure a safe and orderly environment that benefits all and can be well managed by school personnel. Please review the following traffic pattern for drop off and pick up of students.

- Dismissal begins at 3 p.m. **DO NOT enter the pick-up line before 2:30 p.m. (or 11:30 a.m. on noon dismissal days).** Please be advised that the School Resource Officer will be enforcing this policy and early arrivals will be asked to move and/or be ticketed.
- **NO WALK UPS.** Parents may not walk up to drop off or pick up students from Parish Center.
- **NO CELL PHONE USE.** Drivers are not to be on a cell phone in any parking lot at school.
- Enter the main parking lot from Tallahassee Ave. to Vero Beach Ave. **ONLY.** **DO NOT** enter Vero Beach Ave. from Route 60 or Victory Blvd.
- Exit the main parking lot on the north side with a **RIGHT TURN ONLY** onto Vero Beach Ave. and preferably a right turn onto Victory Blvd.
- Cars in the drop off/pick up area should put the car in “park” so as not to accidentally move forward and hit a child, staff member or another car.
- Children should be dropped off and picked up in the marked zone only.
- If you have older children, please consider pulling up in front of the building in the left lane. The older children have more experience in crossing the street and will hopefully be more watchful when crossing the inside lane.
- **DO NOT** park on Tallahassee Ave, Vero Beach Ave. or Victory Blvd. to walk your children into the school building or to pick your children up.
- **DO NOT** drop your children off on Vero Beach Ave, Tallahassee Ave. or Victory Blvd. to avoid the line. Children must be dropped off directly in front of the school building.
- Do not park in or pass through the Parish Office parking lot.
- Do not drop off in the back parking lot. Families/students will not be “buzzed” in from the back parking lot.
- Please be patient as children get in and out of cars, and parents buckle children into car seats.

## LATE ARRIVAL AND SIGN IN PROCEDURE

Students that arrive late to school, after 8:00 a.m., must be accompanied to the school office by a parent to be signed in. Students cannot be “dropped off” at the gate to sign themselves in.

## **TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

Parents hereby acknowledge and agree that the school does not provide or arrange for student transportation to or from school, except as specifically set forth in writing by the school. Student transportation to and from school each day is a parental responsibility. The school does not authorize or endorse any private transportation arrangements. In limited and documented circumstances, a parent may engage a commercial transportation company to transport a student from school; however, any such engagement requires the written authorization of the school and the execution of school documents allowing for such an arrangement.

## **ABSENTEE POLICY**

A parent/guardian must call the school office by 9:00 a.m. each day their child is absent. It is expected that a child will only be absent in the case of a personal illness, death in the family, court appearance, or family emergency. In these cases, the child's file will reflect an excused absence. All other circumstances will reflect an unexcused absence.

If a student has had at least three unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, the student's primary teacher shall report to the school principal or his or her designee that the student may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. The principal shall, unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, refer the case to the administrative team to discuss the early patterns of truancy are developing. If the administrative team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies, and the principal shall notify the Palm Beach Diocese superintendent.

If a child is absent three or more days in a row, a doctor's note is required for readmission to school. All absences become a part of your child's permanent record.

## **TRIPS, VACATIONS, AND APPOINTMENTS**

Trips, vacations, and the like, taken outside of regularly scheduled school holidays, a school suspension, "take your child to work day", and absences for which the school received no note are all considered unexcused absences. In these cases, the child's file will reflect an unexcused absence.

Parents should notify the teacher and school office in advance if a student is going to be absent for a reason other than a personal illness, a family death, or a family emergency. Please keep in mind that extended absences due to travel and vacation create an undue burden on teachers. Teachers will not be required to provide assignments in advance and are not required to maintain communication with parents/guardians regarding class/homework during an unexcused extended leave.

## **PICKING UP A CHILD FOR AN APPOINTMENT**

When picking up a child for appointments, parents are to report directly to the school office not the classroom. After signing the student out, the child will be called from class. No student is to leave the school grounds without permission from the office. If the child returns after an appointment, the parent must sign the child back in at the school office.

## TRUANCY

Truancy is when a student is absent from school without permission. Immediate suspension will take place for the first infraction. A second infraction may result in a student being asked to withdraw from the school.

## EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

If any student is absent more than nine (9) days in one quarter, or more than 30 days per school year, the school reserves the right to non-promotion if the work is not made up or the student shows a lack of ability for the next grade.

## ABSENCES AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

To participate in afterschool activities (practice, games, clubs, dances, and the like), a student must be present at school that given day for a minimum of three hours, unless otherwise approved in advance by principal.

## ABSENCES AND EXAMINATIONS (Grades 6-8)

**Mid-term and final exams will not be administered earlier than scheduled.** Report cards cannot be issued without these grades, so please plan your trips and vacations according to the school calendar.

## PERFECT ATTENDANCE AWARDS

Each student that has been in attendance every day for the entire school year and has no more than two tardies for the entire school year will be honored with a “Perfect Attendance Award” at the end of the school year. Perfect attendance is encouraged!

## UNIFORM POLICY

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St. Helen Catholic School, like most Catholic schools, requires students to wear a school uniform as a part of our school policy. Uniforms are attractive and beneficial for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to:

- Uniforms increase unity, a sense of belonging, and school pride
- Uniforms allow students to focus on academics rather than dress
- Uniforms help to eliminate pressure to buy expensive or fad clothing
- Uniforms make getting ready for school in the morning easier for students
- Uniforms encourage discipline, structure, and respect for personal appearance

The St. Helen Catholic School code, in its entirety, reflects Christian modesty and values, and encourages neatness and appropriateness.

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

Students are expected to come to school in the proper uniform of their grade level every day unless otherwise specified. Students are expected to remain in proper uniform throughout the day. All clothing

is expected to be clean, properly fitted, and properly worn. **It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child comes to school in the correct uniform.**

Official school shorts may be worn throughout the school year for all grades except on liturgy days, (with the exception of Kindergarten, who can wear shorts on liturgy days). Skirts, skorts, shorts, and jumpers lengths are to be no shorter than one inch below the child's fingertips and no longer than mid-knee. Shirts must be tucked in and belts worn at all times.

Official School uniforms are available through our suppliers:

School Uniforms Apparel of Vero Beach, LLC  
1094-12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
Store- 772-563-0777  
Cell- 516-852-8979  
Email: [sales@uniformapparel.com](mailto:sales@uniformapparel.com)  
Website: [www.uniformapparel.com](http://www.uniformapparel.com)  
Owner/Contact: Nancy Dahl

Dave's Sporting Goods  
1135 US Hwy 1  
Vero Beach, FL 32962  
Store- 772-567-3634

The dress code policy according to grade level is as follows:

**Girls K – 5**

Plaid jumper or skort, khaki skort or shorts, *all from designated uniform supplier*

Length of uniform should be no shorter than three inches above the knee

Shirts White or navy polo with monogram, *from designated uniform supplier*

White or navy blue turtleneck (cold weather days only)

Khaki pants,(from designated uniform supplier), may be worn when the temperature is 50 degrees or below

**Girls 6 – 8**

Plaid skirt or skort, khaki skort or shorts, *all from designated uniform supplier*

Length of uniform should be no shorter than three inches above the knee

Shirts White or navy polo with monogram, *from designated uniform supplier*

Long or short sleeved light blue or blue striped button down oxford shirt  
(new oxfords should have monogram)

White or navy turtleneck (cold weather days only)

Khaki pants,(from designated uniform supplier), may be worn when the temperature is 50 degrees or below

\*8<sup>th</sup> grade only – maroon polo shirt with monogram, *from uniform supplier*

The following applies to all girls:

Socks White, black, navy or tan solid socks (no stripes) that by design cover the ankle and go with shoe choice, Examples - bobby socks, anklets, mini crew  
*No show or low cut socks that are stretched to cover the ankle are not regulation*  
Navy or white solid knee high socks

- Navy or white solid tights
- Navy leggings when temperature is 50 degrees or below
  - Leggings must be worn with socks
- Hair
  - Hair should be neatly groomed at all times
  - Hair and bangs should not cover the eyes
  - Hair must be natural color, no dyes or highlights
  - No unconventional haircuts
  - School uniform hair accessories are preferred
  - Head bands should not exceed 1 ½ inches
  - No bandanas, no kerchief headbands
- Misc.
  - No nail polish or artificial nails
  - No make up

**Boys K - 5**

- Khaki shorts or pants, *all from designated uniform supplier*
- Shirts White or navy polo with monogram, *from designated uniform supplier*
  - Long or short sleeved light blue or blue striped button down oxford shirt with monogram, *from designated uniform supplier*
  - White or navy blue turtleneck (cold weather days only)

**Boys 6 – 8**

- Khaki shorts or pants, *all from designated uniform supplier*
- Shirts White or navy polo with monogram, *from designated uniform supplier*
  - Long or short sleeved light blue or blue striped button down oxford shirt with monogram, *from designated uniform supplier*
  - White or navy blue turtleneck (cold weather days only)
- \*8<sup>th</sup> grade only – maroon polo shirt with monogram, *from uniform supplier*

The following applies to all boys:

- Socks White, black, navy or tan solid socks (no stripes) that are by design cover the ankle and go with shoe choice, Examples – mini crews, crew height
  - No show or low cut socks that are stretched to cover the ankle are not regulation*
- Hair
  - Hair should be neatly groomed at all times
  - Length should be above the eyes, above the ears and above the collar
  - Hair must be natural color, no dyes or highlights
  - No unconventional haircuts

The following applies to all students:

- Shoes Options from three categories: sneakers, boat shoes, and dress shoes
  - Sneakers- Simple in design
    - Tennis or ¾ high only- NO high-tops
    - Color must be black, gray, navy or white
    - No light-ups, high tops or bright base color
    - No sneaker with a neon base color, no neon shoe laces
    - Neon is acceptable in a simple logo or design as an accent
    - No excessively multicolored sneaker
  - Boat Shoes – Black, brown, navy tan
    - Solid color only
    - Examples – Sperry top-siders, loafers
  - Dress Shoes – Black, brown, navy, tan

Solid color only  
Must be closed toe, preferably leather  
No heels, boot or sandals

When selecting a dress shoe, keep in mind that students will be engaging in more movement as we increase our recess time and become an “active school”. Safety and good walking shoes should be significant considerations.

**Polos** Shirts that are *significantly* faded due to age and washing are not in accordance with the school uniform. Uniform shirts must be well maintained and clean. If a shirt does not meet the school’s minimum standard, the school will request that the shirt no longer be worn to school as a part of the school uniform.

**Undershirts** No matter the color of the polo, only a solid white undershirt can be worn

**Tucked or Untucked** Traditional polo and oxford shirts must be tucked in  
Banded polo shirts do not have to be tucked in

**Belts** Black, brown, navy, tan or white, must be solid color only  
Can be canvas, leather or similar  
If pants or shorts have a belt loop, a belt must be worn  
Size of belt and buckle cannot exceed belt loops

**Jewelry** Simple religious necklaces or small personal necklaces can be worn underneath the school uniform  
Earing must be posts only, no larger than the size of a dime  
Earrings cannot be worn in more than one hole in one ear

Boys cannot wear earrings  
Bracelets of soft material only that do not make noise can be worn

## **P.E. DRESS CODE**

### **Girls K – 4**

- Sneakers must be worn
- Girls may wear jumpers or leave them in classroom and wear navy blue school shorts
- Tops will not be changed for gym class

### **Boys K – 4**

- Sneakers must be worn
- Boys do not change for gym – school uniform is worn during gym class

### **Girls and Boys 5 – 8**

- Official P.E. uniform shirt(gray only) and shorts
- Socks and sneakers

## MASS DAY DRESS CODE (generally on Wednesdays, with exceptions)

On days in which the students go to Mass, boys must wear long pants, unless their class has PE on that day then in that event boys in grades K-4<sup>th</sup> may wear shorts. Boys in grades 5-8<sup>th</sup> must wear long pants. Girls in grades 5-8 must wear mass skirt. Pants (from designated uniform store) may be worn when the temperature is 50 degrees or below. Girls in grades K-4 may wear jumper or skirt.

## TAG DAY DRESS CODE (FREE DRESS DAY ATTIRE)

Occasionally students are permitted to “dress down” or “dress up” to raise funds or supplies for local charities. Colors and/or themes will be announced. A rule of thumb for appropriate attire on free dress days is that clothing be clean, neat and modest. Clothes must not be excessively tight or oversized. Pants, jeans, and capris are allowed. Bermuda shorts and dresses may not be shorter than 2” above the top of the knee and must be free of tears and holes. Girls/boys may not wear leggings. Girls may not wear shoes with heels higher than 2 inches. No boots. All students must wear socks. Halter, midriff, spaghetti strap, sleeveless or muscle shirts of any kind are not permitted. Any shirts with inappropriate pictures or sayings are also unacceptable. Unless approved, hats may not be worn at St. Helen School. **Parents will be called and students may lose the opportunity to participate in future dress down days if guidelines are not adhered.**

## SWEATERS, SWEATSHIRTS and HOODIES

Students may wear a solid white or navy sweater (no trim colors, no logos) or the official St. Helen Catholic School sweatshirt, hoodie or school jacket as an outer garment during the school day. **No other outerwear is permitted.** In the event of extremely cold weather, students may wear long sleeved, solid white undershirts under their uniform shirt. No other options are permitted while in the classroom. Blankets may not be used to keep warm during the school day. If temperatures fall BELOW 40 degrees Fahrenheit, additional outerwear may be permitted over St. Helen approved outerwear. St. Helen outerwear can be purchased at School Uniforms of Vero Beach and Dave’s Sporting Goods.

## HAIRCUTS

Hair should be neat and combed at all times. In accordance with Diocesan regulations, the following apply to boys and girls:

- No extreme hairstyles of any kind
- No coloring, highlighting, or bleaching
- No lines, numbers, or designs of any kind may be cut into the hair

Boys: Hair should be above the eyes, above the ears, and above the collar

Girls: Hair must be off the face (Certainly bangs are permitted, but they should not be so long as to hinder seeing the child’s eyes)

Hats and head scarfs are not permitted. Hair accessories should be small and simple. Final determination as to what is acceptable rests with the principal.

## JEWELRY

A small religious necklace or simple pendant necklace and a small watch can be worn by girls and boys. The necklace must be worn inside the shirt. One rubber or cloth bracelet is permitted.

Girls may wear one earring in each ear. Earrings must be simple posts. For safety reasons, hoops and dangling earrings are not permitted. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.

#### **OTHER**

By sixth grade, deodorant should be worn by all students. If the parent/guardian sees fit, a child may begin wearing deodorant at an earlier age.

Boys must be clean shaven. If significant facial hair develops at an early age, male students are expected to begin shaving and come to school with a clean shaven face.

Permanent or temporary tattoos are not permitted to be visible during the school day or school functions unless permission is granted by the principal. Students are not permitted to write on self or others while at school. Students will be required to immediately remove visible tattoos or writings.

*The principal reserves the right to final recourse in determining if something is or is not acceptable under the school's dress code policy. If something is determined unacceptable, the student may be kept from class until a correction is made or may be sent home for the rest of the day. Demerits, detentions, and suspensions will be assigned at the discretion of the principal.*

#### **DRESS CODE FOR FIELD DAYS**

Grades K – 4 may wear tee shirts and shorts. Unless otherwise approved by the principal, students in grades 5 – 8 must wear their PE uniform (or current year athletic tee).

#### **UNIFORM/DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

Students are responsible for observing the school uniform policy and parents are responsible for enforcing it. The school's responsibility is to reinforce the parent's choice of Catholic school by maintaining our high standards. Parents should always check what their child is wearing before they leave the house to determine if it is appropriate uniform attire.

Uniforms are a hallmark of Catholic education. It is your choice to send your children to St. Helen Catholic School. We anticipate your cooperation in ensuring your children come to school dressed in accordance with the school's uniform policy.

## **GENERAL**

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#### **SCHOOL COUNSELOR**

Mrs. Lisa Moses is St. Helen Catholic School's counselor. Mrs. Moses works three days per week, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Her responsibilities as school counselor include but are not limited to the following:

- Individual and group counseling for students
- Resource for teachers, staff and parents, including conferences
- Testing and evaluation of students
- Crisis consultation if need arises

As a diocesan school we also have the services of a school psychologist for a specified number of hours per year. These hours are used for resource purposes to school staff and for additional assistance to our families.

To request an appointment with Mrs. Moses, please contact the School office.

### **LUNCH PROGRAM**

St. Helen Catholic School offers a lunch program that involves partnerships with local restaurants. Students have the option to purchase lunch on any given day or to bring in their own lunch. Every morning each class teacher collects the lunch orders for that day.

In addition, St. Helen has a Snack Program that offers many different items and drinks. Please see our website for a detailed list of the Snack Program menu.

In the event a child forgets their lunch and the parent/guardian plans to bring it to school, it must be brought to the School office. The Office will ensure that the lunch gets to your child. Please label the lunch with your child's name and grade. Lunches and birthday treats must be sent to the office by 10:45am.

As our school community grows and lunch seating is limited, parents are not permitted to attend lunch with their child unless it is his/her birthday.

### **WATER BOTTLES/ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER**

This policy does NOT apply to lunch box containers or drinks that are kept in a student's lunch box and consumed during a student's lunch period.

Outside of a student's lunch, they have access to drinking water at drinking fountains throughout the campus. Retail plastic bottled water is prohibited. However, students may bring water to school in an approved official St. Helen water bottle or personal water container. Containers should be marked clearly with the student's name and must be clear and must contain only water. Soda, sparkling water, juice, coffee, or other beverages are not permitted.

Students in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade must store their bottled water inside backpacks or lunch boxes. Students in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade may keep their bottled water in their lockers. At no time should water be brought inside the classrooms. Any student found in violation of this policy will receive a demerit or a detention as deemed appropriate by the teacher or principal.

### **LOCKERS**

Each student in grades 6 through 8 is issued a locker with combination lock. Students are required to maintain these in an orderly fashion. For safety reasons, they **MUST** be locked at all time. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. At year end, school issued locks will be collected. Replacement for lost locks is \$20.00. Students may not purchase replacement locks.

### **FIRST FRIDAYS OF THE MONTH**

Noon dismissal is scheduled for the First Friday of each month. Faculty meetings are scheduled immediately following dismissal. Parents are asked to be prompt when picking up their children. No Hot Lunch is available on these days. Children remaining after 12:15p.m. will be sent to the Extended Day Program.

## SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

RenWeb is the student information system used by St. Helen School. This comprehensive systems allows parents to maintain personal information, access student grades and class assignments, communicate with teachers, and more.

Announcements and general information will be forwarded via RenWeb's Parent Alert text messaging and email modules, Facebook, or a hard copy will sent home with your child. Please read these notices carefully and, when requested, sign and return them to school promptly.

## SUPERVISION: BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

St. Helen Catholic School provides supervision of students from 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. No student is allowed to play on school property before or after school unless they are participating in a school supervised activity or attending the Extended Day Program. Coaches and activity moderators are only responsible for those students officially enrolled in their activity. Parents are responsible if an accident occurs and this policy has not been heeded.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ELECTIVE EXCUSED NON-PARTICIPATION

If a child is not permitted to take physical education or elective classes for a day, or for an extended period of time, the child should have a written excuse from his/her parent and/or doctor. It should state the reason and length of time he/she will be required to refrain from physical activity. This note must be given to the physical education or elective teacher.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency drills for fire, severe weather conditions, and possible intruders on the property will be held periodically throughout the year and in accordance with Federal and State law and guidelines. These drills are to ensure safety during real emergencies.

Students are to remain silent throughout these drills. Parents that are on the property are to follow the instructions of the nearest school staff member. ***Everyone must evacuate the building during a fire drill and any other drill that requires the student body and staff to leave the building. Under no circumstances can anyone remain in the building for a drill that requires evacuation.***

## HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS

St. Helen Catholic School follows the action of the Indian River County public schools in regard to closing during hazardous weather conditions such as hurricanes, flooding, etc. Please listen to the local radio station on the reopening of St. Helen Catholic School as this may differ from the public school.

## ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

In accordance with Federal Guidelines, a Management Plan for asbestos containing building materials has been filed with the appropriate Governmental Agencies. Under Federal Guidelines, we are required to notify you that a copy of this Management Plan is on file in the principal's office. Should you so desire, the asbestos Management Plan is available for your review during normal school hours.

## **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM**

To help families in need of after school care, St. Helen School offers an Extended Day Program. The supervised care goes from 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. On First Fridays and noon dismissals, care is provided from 12:30p.m. – 2:00p.m. Please see the website for more details regarding requirements, rules, and rates.

## **HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The Home School Association works in partnership with the school and others to enhance the life and success of the school community. The Home School Association is dedicated to promoting healthy development and growth of the whole child and every child. Through strong parent, family, school, church, and community involvement, the HSA strives to enrich all children’s educational experience at SHCS.

The primary functions of the Home School Association are:

- To organize events that brings members of the St. Helen Catholic School family together
- To assist with special classroom activities
- To facilitate parent/guardian participation
- To raise funds
- To keep lines of communication open between our families and our school on school related issues

The HSA is comprised of an executive committee and volunteers. Every parent/guardian, faculty, and staff member at St. Helen Catholic School is a member of the Home School Association. Meetings are held monthly. All parents/guardians, faculty, and staff are invited and encouraged to attend. Specific dates and locations of the meetings will be posted on the school calendar which can be found on the school website. Participation in the HSA is an excellent avenue through which someone can share their time, talent, and treasure with the school.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found items are maintained by the School office. If an article is found, please either return the article to the owner or bring it to the lost and found in the School office. Lost articles in good condition, which are not claimed within two weeks, are given away to the Neighborhood Apostolate or similar organization. All other items are disposed of.

Please label all student articles with a complete name so if found, the articles can be returned to their owner. Lunch boxes seem to be the most common item that a student leaves behind. Please check the School office immediately upon noticing the lunch box has not come home.

## **GUM**

Gum is not to be chewed on the grounds of or in any of the buildings of St. Helen Catholic School. The consequence for this offense is an after-school detention. Although this rule may be stringent, it is enforced to provide a hygienic environment for our school family.

## ACCIDENTS AND SCHOOL INSURANCE

All St. Helen Catholic School students are automatically enrolled in a school accident insurance program provided by the Diocese. It must be noted that this is EXCESS insurance. This means that payment of all bills incurred is made only in EXCESS of all other family or employer group insurance, and these plans must contribute their maximum before the school coverage has any liability. This is a program of supplemental coverage designated to pick up any shortage, or if no other insurance plan exists, to pay the medical bills in full to the limit stated by the insurance company.

Every Student is covered during the regular school day, and when traveling **directly and uninterruptedly** to and from the student's home premises and school for regular school sessions. When away from the school premises, coverage is in effect while a student is participating in an activity solely sponsored and supervised by the school authorities. **All accidents are to be reported promptly to the office. An Accident report is completed on all accidents reported to the office.**

## NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should complete the Request for Release of Student Records and submit it to the School principal (or appropriate school official) identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his

or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

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

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

### **CUSTODY ISSUES/RIGHTS**

In the case of divorced parents, it is with the parent who has legal custody of the child that the school will interact. The school ordinarily will deal with the parent having legal custody in matters of absence, lateness, truancy, early dismissal, disciplinary issues, school records, etc. In accordance with Florida Statue 61.13(3), the school will make school records and in-person conferences available to both parents unless a court order specifically revokes this right, in which case it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the court order to the school. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the addresses where the student's records should be sent.

### **CHILD PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATIONS**

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

Child protective investigations by DCF or local law enforcement agencies sometimes include interviews of students at school and may occur without advance notice. When it is reasonably possible, the school will seek to notify the parents that their child has been asked to participate in a child protective investigation. The school may also request the presence of a school staff member during investigative interviews on school property. However, please note that, under Florida law, DCF and local law enforcement have the discretion to conduct unannounced interviews and to disallow school staff member's presence during these interviews.

### **TESTIFYING IN DIVORCE OR CUSTODY PROCEEDINGS**

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

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