

St. Mark Catholic School

PARENT & STUDENT
HANDBOOK



ST. MARK
CATHOLIC
CHURCH & SCHOOL



2021-2022

1013 Eastwood Rd., Wilmington, NC | (910) 452-2800

www.smcsnc.org

St. Mark Catholic School

Parent & Student Handbook

2021-2022

St. Mark is a Catholic School committed to education the whole child academically, spiritually and physically. St. Mark Catholic School strives for academic excellence by instilling in each student Christian values, confidence and a desire to be effective leaders of tomorrow.



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Revised August 9, 2021

From the Principal's Desk

The entire staff joins me in welcoming you and your children to St. Mark Catholic School. St. Mark has made a commitment to provide its students with the highest quality education, both spiritually and academically. We look forward to working with school families to create an environment that promotes Catholic values and academic excellence.

This Handbook has been created to inform you of the policies of St. Mark Catholic School. Please keep it handy so that you can refer to it when necessary. If you need clarification, or have any questions regarding school policies, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tripp Burton

Principal

St. Mark Catholic School

Covid-19 Update

The 2021-2022 school year is almost here and the excitement is building! St. Mark Catholic School will be fully functional this year with some exceptions. As we continue to prepare for our students to come back to a healthy and safe environment, we write to share our plans for daily operation during COVID-19. We have continued our consultation with The Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools Office, The School Advisory Committee, local health professionals and other school leaders across the region.

Our goal is to offer a healthy and caring environment where all of our Lions can grow spiritually and academically. We seek your help as we are aware of changing guidance and conditions. May all of us have grace and empathy for each other as we manage our communities' expectations throughout this school year.

Outlined below are policies and protocols as we begin the 2021-2022 school year:

General Policies

1. We will continue to follow the health guidance located in Strong-SchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) and the Childcare StrongNC Public Health Toolkit Interim Guidance. [StrongSchoolsNC](#)
2. We will maintain a plan to transition to remote learning in the event of a classroom or school-wide quarantine.
3. Isolation protocols for symptomatic persons will remain the same.
4. We will contact the New Hanover County Health Department in the event of a COVID-19 exposure or positive case to participate in contact tracing and receive quarantine recommendations.
5. Cleaning and Hygiene Protocols will follow the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12).

Mass

Students will attend weekly school Mass beginning on Wednesday, August 25th. Middle school students will attend the first week in person; seated three feet apart. Elementary students will attend virtually the first week. Elementary students, except for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students, will attend in person on Wednesday, September 1st. Middle school students will attend Mass virtually this week. Middle school and elementary students will continue this rotational schedule until guidance has changed from The StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) in terms of seating students three feet apart.

Masks

1. All students, staff, guests, volunteers, etc. will be required to wear a mask while indoors on our campus. *This includes pre-kindergarten students as well. Masks are not required outside.*
2. The definition of close contact has been changed by the Strong-SchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12) so that indoors a student who is within six feet is not considered a close contact as long as both students are wearing masks. The wearing of masks prevents the need for quarantine and helps students stay in school.

3. We will continue to monitor conditions and make changes as needed to this policy. We are hopeful that as conditions improve that masks will no longer be needed.

Daily Campus Life

St. Mark Catholic School will return to normal as much as possible. We will offer a full array of academics and extracurricular programs. Athletic competition regulations will be announced with consultation with our leagues and communicated through our athletic department.

1. Attestation forms will not be required at drop-off. Symptoms and Self Screening: Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care. Staying home when sick is essential to keep infections out of school and prevent spread to others.

For students, staff, and teachers with chronic conditions, symptom presence should represent a change from their typical health status to warrant exclusion from school. Occurrence of any of the symptoms below while a student, teacher, or staff member is at school suggests the person may be referred for diagnostic COVID-19 testing or evaluation.

- Fever (temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)
 - Sore throat
 - Cough (for people with chronic cough due to allergies or asthma, a change in their cough from baseline)
 - Difficulty breathing (for people with asthma, a change from their baseline breathing)
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Diarrhea or vomiting
 - New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
2. Elementary and middle school students will move throughout the building. 5th through 8th grade students will have lockers and change classes throughout the day.
 3. Students' desks will be three feet apart. We will optimize the use of outdoor spaces for learning, eating and recess as much as possible. Lunch and snacks will be eaten in the cafeteria, classrooms and outside as possible. Students will be at least six feet away from each other during lunch and times when they are eating.

4. We are looking forward to having you back at our school. Opportunities for parents to volunteer include car line, lunch, recess, front desk volunteer in the lobby, and in the library. [Time, Treasure, Talent Form](#)
5. After School care will resume for our families. Please see this link for more information. [After school Program](#)

Thank you for sharing your children with us at St. Mark Catholic School. We are grateful for the opportunity to join together to share our Catholic faith, love of learning and the fun that school should be for students, parents and staff. We are extremely optimistic that 2021-2022 will be more “normal” than not. We look forward to seeing all of you at Open House on Monday, August 16th. We will continue to inform you of any changes to our plans. God bless all of you.

Statement of Non-Discriminatory Policy as to Students

As a Catholic school in the Diocese of Raleigh St. Mark Catholic School has a racially non-discriminatory policy for all students and admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students. Additionally, our school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of our educational and admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletics and other school-administered programs.

St. Mark Catholic School Parent & Student Handbook

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Mission, Vision and Objectives

St. Mark Catholic School Mission Statement

St. Mark Catholic School is committed to educating the whole child academically, spiritually, and physically. St. Mark Catholic School strives for academic excellence by instilling in each student Christian values, confidence, and a desire to be effective leaders of tomorrow.

St. Mark Catholic School Vision

"Children of today... Christian leaders of tomorrow"

St. Mark Catholic School Statement of Objectives

In order to prepare our children to become leaders of tomorrow, St. Mark Catholic School values the following:

High Expectations: St. Mark Catholic School performs to its highest potential by utilizing all of the learning resources that are provided by the Diocese of Raleigh, staff, parents and the students.

Active Learning Experiences: St. Mark Catholic School believes that active and relevant learning incorporating critical thinking skills, authentic experiences, discovery through problem solving, cooperative learning and peer/ cross-level tutoring will result in high academic achievement and positive self-esteem among all of our students.

Multicultural Diversity: St. Mark Catholic School strives to build on and incorporate into the learning process cultural and linguistic diversity.

Diverse Learning Styles: St. Mark Catholic School community believes that students bring diverse learning styles to school. We view diverse styles as strengths and work to utilize a variety of strategies, materials and educational resources to maximize our students' learning potential.

Community Involvement: St. Mark Catholic School believes in giving back to the community and expects that its students will be actively involved in their parish and community. Parish groups, community agencies, local businesses, parents and neighbors will be active partners in educating our children.

Empowerment: St. Mark Catholic School encourages and supports parents, students, faculty and staff to cooperatively participate in making school decisions.

Assessment: St. Mark Catholic School will assess the educational progress of its students through a variety of assessment measures, including portfolios, observational checklists and standardized tests. These tools will help to identify strengths, abilities and skills, and will facilitate targeting reasonable strategies for future growth and remediation where appropriate.

Continuous Improvement: St. Mark Catholic School seeks to continuously improve communication with, and services to, parents and students. Meetings, workshops, surveys and discussions generate new ideas and perspectives that improve outcomes for students and better relationships between home and school.

Unity of Purpose: St. Mark Catholic School stands united behind our mission, school vision and educational plan in order to ensure the educational success of our Catholic school students.

Parents as Partners

At St. Mark Catholic School, we consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children. We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. By choosing St. Mark Catholic School you have committed to helping your child recognize the importance of receiving a meaningful Catholic education in a rigorous academic environment.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. Mark, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years, your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural and physical potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to get caught between the student and the other partner will not have positive results. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Together, let us have a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

Communication

Communication between St. Mark families and St. Mark School is vital. We must work together to keep each other informed. To that end, St.

Mark School will work to communicate by:

- Distributing correspondence regarding school events. Correspondence will be sent home with the youngest or only child.
- Updating and distributing this Handbook to clarify St. Mark policies and procedures.
- Updating the school's web site, www.smcsnc.org.
- Providing classroom information through teacher websites. Providing teacher e-mail addresses.
- Hosting a curriculum night at the beginning of the school year.
- Having periodic School Development meetings.
- Scheduling annual parent/teacher conferences.
- Sending introductory letters describing classroom policies and expectations.
- Sending correspondence describing classroom trips, events and changes in routine.
- As appropriate, sending home progress reports mid-quarter identifying issues that will result in academic difficulty.
- Sending home supplies lists and reading recommendations for the class students will attend the following fall.

In return we ask the parents to:

- Read all information sent home by the school.
- Attend the School Development meetings.
- Check your student's assignment book/website/homework folder to make sure the work has been done.

- Update your Parents Web if any of the following apply: change of residence; change in name/guardian; change in phone numbers including work, e-mail addresses, emergency contact numbers; changes in physical condition/needs of child (including medication usage); changes in PE or recess activities (doctor's directives are to be forwarded to school); any environmental change that may affect the child's behavior/response; and changes in those persons authorized to pick up students at dismissal.
- Participate in school surveys to provide feedback for the school

Conflict Resolution

If a conflict arises with a faculty/staff member and your child the procedure to follow is:

- Contact the faculty/staff member promptly to discuss and resolve the problem. The faculty/staff member should work with you to resolve the concern in a timely manner.
- If the problem was not resolved, or you feel you cannot approach the faculty/staff member directly, contact the Principal to discuss and resolve the problem.
- If the problem cannot be resolved in this manner, contact the Pastor with the understanding that your name and concern will be shared with the Principal and the parties involved to resolve the concern in a timely manner.

If you have ideas or suggestions for the improvement of our school, please make an appointment with the Principal or another school administrator. The school values the input of its parents, and wants to receive their timely feedback.

As partners in the educational process at St. Mark Catholic School, we also ask parents to:

- Abide by the guidelines set in this school handbook.
- Promptly complete and return to school any requested information.
- Meet all financial obligations to the school.

- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.
- Treat teachers, administrators and staff with respect and courtesy in discussing school issues.
- Refrain from divisive behaviors and propagating rumors via social media or otherwise.
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school.

Academic Information

Accreditation

St. Mark Catholic School is accredited through Cognia.

Admissions Qualifications

All students must be academically capable of successfully meeting the standards set by the school. This will be determined by evaluation of previous school records or screening tests (e.g. individual educational evaluation tests), or demonstrated ability as measured by a standardized readiness test. All admissions are subject to the approval of the Principal.

School admission may be based on skill level and testing where appropriate. Placement will be determined by evaluating records and performance. State and local school district regulations require that Kindergarten students reach the age of five by August 31st of the year admitted. Birth, baptism, and immunization records must be brought to the school in order to register. Application forms must be completed and provided to the school during registration.

Curriculum

The curriculum of St. Mark Catholic School is based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the Diocese of Raleigh "Standards and Instruction." It includes instruction in religion/family life, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical education, technology, drama, and foreign language.

The standards will be presented through:

- Employing research-based instruction to ensure that children reach

their potential

- Differentiated instruction to meet individual need
- Whole class, small group, and individualized instruction
- Books, textbooks, and materials that support learning, and reinforce Diocesan curriculum guidelines

Teachers, in consultation with the principal, will develop some of their own requirements and procedures based on the grade level and subject being taught.

For a standards overview, please refer to the following Diocese of Raleigh website link: [Click here.](#)

Pupil-Teacher Ratio

St. Mark Catholic School strives for a class size of 25 students per class. Part-time teaching assistants are assigned to Pre K through Grade 2 while Grades 3 and 4 each share one part-time assistant.

Homework Policy

Teachers will assign appropriate home study to reinforce and supplement the lessons presented in class. All written work is to be neat and accurate, as well as complete and turned in on time. Homework is the responsibility of each student. We ask that parents check homework and provide assistance while allowing the child to accept responsibility for the task.

The "10 minute rule" is a good gauge of the time to be spent on written homework. Multiply the grade level of the student by 10; that should be the approximate time (in minutes) spent on homework assignments each night. Recognize that students work at different rates and can be using different learning styles and strategies.

Homework deadlines are strictly observed. Consequences for incomplete and/or late assignments will be handled according to policies set forth by individual teachers.

Report Cards & Progress Reports

Students in grades 1 - 8 will receive four report cards each year. Students in Pre-K and Kindergarten will receive three report cards per year. The first report card will be distributed to parents prior to Parent Teacher Conferences. The dates parents will receive these reports are included

on the school calendar.

If a student is on St. Mark's Honor Roll, this will be documented on their final report card. Students with a truncated overall average in their core subjects (math, science, social studies; language arts, and religion) of 98 – 100 receive High Honors (M – Magna Cum Laude). Students with a truncated overall average of 93 – 97 receive Second Honors (C – Cum Laude).

St. Mark Grading Scale:

93-100= A

85 - 92 = B

77 - 84 = C

70 - 76 = D

Below 70 = F

Progress reports will be sent home as needed between grading periods. A child may receive up to four progress reports during the year via email.

Progress reports and report cards are designed to reflect the progress in academic progress and responsibility shown by each student. Different grade levels require different methods of reporting to parents. Your child's teacher will give you grade-specific information.

Prior to the report card day, parents should check work regularly, sign test results when asked, and if there is a problem, contact the subject teacher as soon as possible.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Developing a good relationship between parents and the school enables both parties to have a better understanding of each student. The school's goal is to have at least one face-to-face conference with each parent.

There will be formally scheduled parent-teacher conferences once each school year, after the first report cards (for Kindergarten students, after first progress report). A second parent-teacher conference may be scheduled at the request of the parent or the teacher.

Parents are encouraged to keep in touch with the child's teacher as often as is necessary. Contact the teacher by written note or email.

Appointments must be made in advance in order to meet with any teachers or the Principal. Parents may not go to the classroom without an appointment to speak with a teacher during the school day, or during arrival / dismissal periods. Teachers should not be contacted at home regarding school matters unless they have given parents' permission to do so. Please respect our faculty/staff as the professionals they are.

Retention of Students

The Retention Policy is as follows:

- Grades K-4: Retention will be determined by reading level, teacher recommendation, school attendance, and consultation with the principal.
- Grades 5-8: If a student fails two or more academic subject (Language Arts, Science, Math, or Social Studies), that student will be retained for the year.
- Non-compliance with compulsory attendance requirements is grounds for retention.

Standardized Tests

- The Iowa Test of Basic Skills will be administered in grades 3– 8 every fall.
- The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) will be administered in grades 2 and 5.
- Eligible 7th and 8th grade students may also take the North Carolina End of Course (EOC) Math 1 test

Test results are returned to the school. Parents will receive a copy that explains the meaning of the tests and the results. These results are used to evaluate programs and provide for the instructional needs of the students.

Student Records

Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the U.S. Mail.

No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school. A record transfer request signed by the parent/guardian needs to be sent

to St. Mark School from the requesting school.

No student records will be sent to transferring schools until all financial commitments have been satisfied at St. Mark Catholic School.

After School Program

Student after-school care is available until 6:00pm. Activities and homework time are scheduled into the program along with a snack. Information on the after-school program, including rates and sign-up forms, are available at the St. Mark School office and through St. Mark's website. Should parents need to reach the after-school program staff after the office is closed, they should call 910-398-6529.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

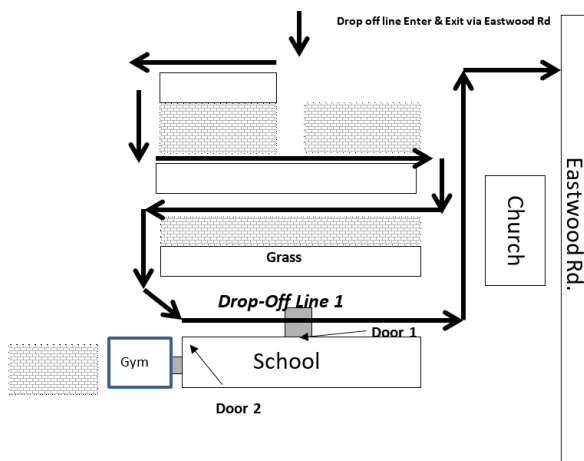
For everyone's safety, please follow all traffic rules (including speed limits and stop signs) while driving through St. Mark, and through all neighborhoods adjoining St. Mark.

The use of cell phones while driving on St. Mark property is prohibited.

If you need to come into the school office for any reason, please park in the far parking area nearest the church and walk to the front door to be let in by the secretary.

Drop Off Procedures for the Front of School

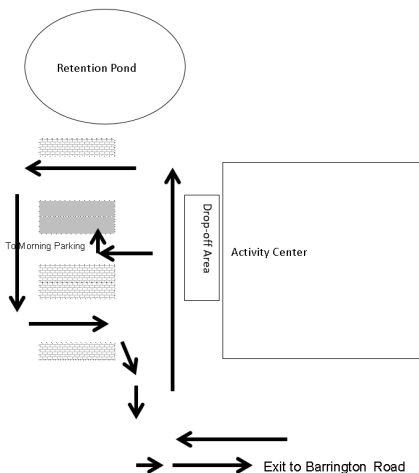
- Students may not be dropped off before 7:30am.
- You may use either the front Entrance of the Back Parking Lot to Drop off your child.
- Please drive slowly and DO NOT use your cell phone.
- In order to keep the Drop Off line moving please do not exit at the gym door. You may drop your child off anywhere between the Front Door (Door 1 on the map) or the Door between the gym and Main Building (Door 2 on the map)
- There will be staff members and/or student helpers to help your child out of the car.
- When the vehicle in front of you begins to move forward, please make sure it is safe to proceed with caution.



Morning Drop-Off Procedures in the Rear Parking Lot

Please follow the arrows when entering and exiting in the morning.

- Use the Morning Parking Area if you plan to walk your child into school. Walk your child in after the Parent Volunteer has stopped the oncoming traffic.
- When exiting the designated parking area please pull straight out onto the normal traffic flow.
- Please drive to the ends of each parking area to eliminate cars "cutting traffic." This will enable smoother exiting at the tight curve at the end of the parking lot and onto Barrington Road.



Normal Daily Dismissal for All Grades Using Car Rider Pro

- We begin the Dismissal Process for Line 1 at 2:55 p.m. and the Dismissal Process for Line 2 at 3 p.m.
- Each family will be assigned to either Dismissal Line 1 or Dismissal Line 2, and issued a Hang Tag from the Car Rider Pro Dismissal System.

- Please place the Hang Tag on the car's rearview mirror. **The Hang Tag must be displayed as soon as you enter the traffic circle. Otherwise your family's name will not be entered into the Dismissal Que and picking up your child will be delayed.**
- In order to pick up your child all cars must enter off Eastwood Road and proceed around the traffic circle.
- If your oldest child is in Grade 4 or below then you will enter Line 1 as indicated by the solid lines. If all your children are in Grades 5-8 then you will enter Line 2 as indicated by the dotted line. Please form a double car line in all areas except the pickup area directly in front of school
- **Cars in Line 1** will proceed along the route indicated by the solid arrow to the drive in front of the school. At Door 1 and Door 2, a teacher or parent volunteer will open the vehicle door(s) on the curbside of the vehicle and assist all students inside the car. When the vehicle in front of you begins to move forward, please make sure it is safe to proceed with caution. If it is safe then you may pass to the left.
- If the car has the Hang Tag issued to the family then the school will not need further identification. If the car does not have a Hang Tag displayed then photo identification will be necessary if a person who is not known to the teacher or school staff attempts to pick up a child. Authorization for someone other than the parent to pick up a child must be made in writing (email is sufficient) to the child's teacher and Mrs. Russel at secretary@smcsnc.org
- Cars without Hang Tags will be delayed in picking up their child. The delay will involve both calling the child separately in their classroom and/or ensuring the person picking up the child is authorized to do so.
- All student s MUST be picked up by 3:25pm
- Your cooperation with these procedures is vital in order for arrivals and dismissals to occur as quickly as possible, and especially to provide for the safety of your child(ren). Any other pick-up process is not allowed.

Normal Afternoon Pickup for Line 2

We will continue our dismissal procedures for Line 2 that we started last April. The purpose of the change is to keep cars off Eastwood Road; therefore, to keep our drivers safe.

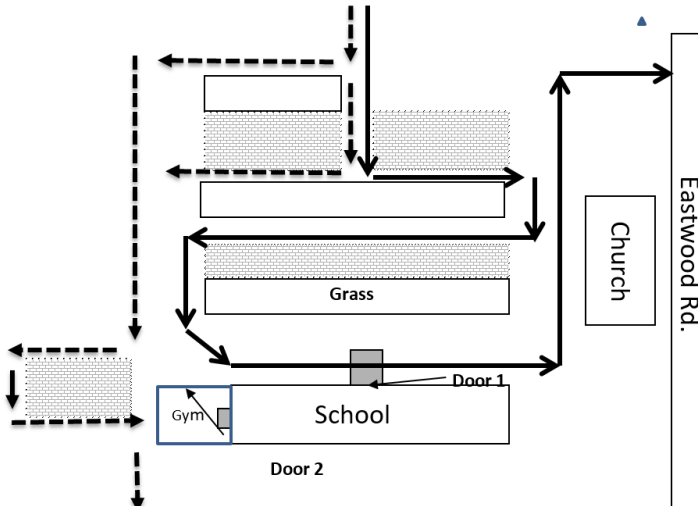
Ways to Help Us Keep Cars off Eastwood Road

- Arrive later in the afternoon such as 3:05. We are usually completed with dismissal in Line 2 by 3:15.
- Once you enter in the back parking lot drive all the way to the back of the lot. Your student will walk to your car and get in on the INSIDE of the lines of cars, please. This keeps traffic moving instead of the entire line waiting for one car to load near the gym lobby. Once your child has loaded then drive on the outside around all the cars. That is why it is safer for students to enter only from the inside of the line.
- When you arrive fill up the road nearest the woods. When that line is filled start filling up the middle drive. If your car sticks out the end of the drive then Line 1 cars can't get around you. We will have staff members to help. Please form double lines when on the road nearest the woods and the middle driveway.

Normal Afternoon Pickup for All Students

Line 1, Youngest child is in Grade 4 or below, you will exit to Eastwood Road →

Line 2, Youngest child is in Grades 5-8 only, you will exit to Barrington Road →

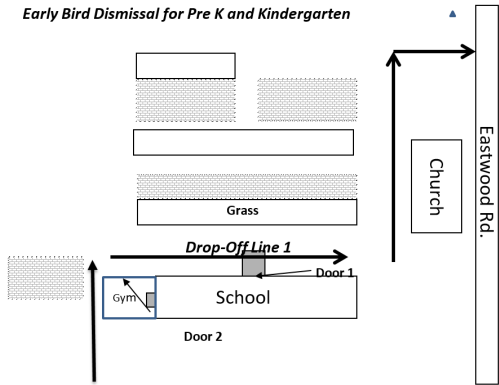


Early Bird Dismissal at 2:45

Pre-K and Kindergarten students with no siblings will be dismissed at 2:45pm, through The Early Bird Dismissal Process. See the map below. Pre-K and Kindergarten students with siblings will follow the regular dis-

Dismissal process

- You must enter from Barrington Road and arrive by 2:45.
- Please wait in line and advance when the car in front of you advances.
- Staff members will be at the middle door to walk your child to your car. You should not get out of your car.
- Once your child is in your car you may exit onto Eastwood Road.
- If you arrive after 2:50 you will need to come to the Line 1 Dismissal line and pick up your child in front of the school.



Attendance Policy

Absences

Please note the following guidelines:

- Students are expected to attend school unless they are not well enough to do so.
- Parents should call the school office to report their child's absence by 9:00 a.m. each day their child is absent. If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted as required by school policy.
- Upon return to school, a written note or doctor's note must be provided for the absence to be excused. Written notes must be signed by a parent or guardian and explain the reason for the absence. In general, absences due to illness or family emergencies will be considered excused absences.
- If a child is going to be absent for an extended period of time (3+ days) due to illness or family emergency, parents should use the virtual option to enable their child to continue his or her school work. Families are encouraged to check their teacher websites to stay current with posted homework as desired.
- Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three

school days to complete the missed work.

Vacation trips during the school year are discouraged. However, if they are taken, a written note is to be given to the Principal. Should a student be absent, it is his or her responsibility to access the virtual learning opportunities offered by each teacher.

In order to qualify for perfect attendance, a student must be present in school all day, every day.

Attendance at school concerts is mandatory as it is part of the school's curriculum.

Make-up Work

Tests missed are to be made up the day after the student returns to school if the student's first day of absence is the day of the test. All tests which are not made up will be graded as zeros.

All make-up work and tests for absences exceeding three consecutive days must be completed within one week plus the number of days absent, otherwise the student will receive a zero for that work and/or tests. The time and nature of the make-up work may be designated by the teacher.

Tardy/Absence during the School Day

Tardiness and early school departures should be avoided. They cause the student to miss valuable instruction and disrupt the learning of the entire class. The following guidelines apply to absences during the day:

- Students arriving after 8:00am The parents must go to the office with the child's Attestation Form, to sign in the child. The student will present the late slip to the homeroom teacher.
- Appointments with doctors, dentists, orthodontists, etc., should be made after school hours. If an appointment must be scheduled during the day, please send a note to the child's teacher indicating when the child will be picked up. A doctor's note is required upon return to school. Notes should be given to the school nurse.
- Parents are required to sign the child out at the school office, and include a reason for the child's departure from school. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office.
- Students who are away from school for an appointment for 3.5

hours or more will be counted as absent for a half day.

- Students leaving early must be signed out at the office.
- Students absent during the school day are not permitted to participate in school events that day. This includes games, dances, concerts, and other competitions
- Student athletes competing on behalf of St. Mark may be signed out early without incurring an attendance penalty.

Parents should be aware that tardiness and early departures are recorded on the student's attendance portion of the permanent record card.

Excessive Absenteeism

Excessive absences and tardies ultimately affect a child's academic performance. Consequences related to excessive tardiness and excessive absences are as follows:

- After 10 absences or tardies a note will be sent home requesting the family comply with the school attendance policy.
- After 15 absences, tardies or early departures a second infraction will be issued. A second note will be sent home requesting a conference between the parent/guardian and the principal.

St. Mark Catholic School is bound by the NC Compulsory Attendance laws. The school's attendance records are audited by the NC Division of Non-Public Education for compliance with compulsory school attendance laws.

The accumulation of lost time caused by absences, tardiness and early departure will be tabulated by the school office. In the event that chronic absenteeism creates a condition in which insufficient school learning hours are accumulated, the student will be retained in the current grade.

School Conduct & Discipline

In accordance with the state philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students, school faculty and staff, and school visitors are expected to cooperate with the spirit, policies, and Code of Conduct of the school while at school and at home while participating in distance learning.

The school Code of Conduct is as follows:

At St. Mark Catholic School, we are expected to:

1. Respect other people's feelings.
2. Respect fellow students' conversation.
3. Respect school property and the personal property of fellow students and staff.
4. Respect all teachers, administrators and staff.
5. Listen and follow the instructions of all teachers, administrators and staff.
6. Tell the truth.
7. Use appropriate language.
8. Be on time.
9. Adhere to the school uniform code (see uniform policy).
10. Participate in classroom activities and complete all assignments.
11. Refrain from fighting and from horse-play which may lead to fighting.
12. Refrain from bringing any contraband articles to school (knives or other weapons, alcohol or drugs).
13. Refrain from bringing illicit or inappropriate music, books, articles, etc., including access of such material on the Internet.
14. Refrain from bringing items of value to the school (expensive jewelry, electronics, sports/game trading cards, etc.)
15. Practice social distancing and wearing a cloth face mask as mandat-

ed by the North Carolina Department of Health and local health guidelines.

The Student Code of Conduct will be reviewed by all school families. An acknowledgement (Parent Commitment Form) will be signed by parents, and returned to school during the student's first week of school.

School Discipline

A student at St. Mark School who behaves in a manner which is deemed to be inappropriate may be subject to the consequences outlined below. In addition, the administration of St. Mark Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior which impacts the school family and is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day.

St. Mark School's teachers have selected age-appropriate methods to manage class behavior. Each teacher will provide details on the classroom management method utilized in their homeroom. The middle school has a common behavior management policy in place.

Disciplinary consequences, including those consequences used as part of class behavior management, will be based upon a careful assessment of circumstances. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Verbal warning
2. Loss of privileges such as recess, attendance at field trips, etc.
3. Discussion between school administrator and student
4. Written Student Behavior Referrals
5. After School Detention
6. In-School Suspension (ISS)
7. Out-of-school suspension (OSS) Serious offenses could result in expulsion

Some offenses are subject to skipping steps and/or additional consequences. Examples include: Repair/replacing of damaged property; performing off-hour service to school; psychological evaluations and/or family meeting with Pastor/Principal/student.

Unlawful activities will result in involvement of appropriate law enforcement.

Student Behavior Referrals

Depending upon the severity of the student offense the teacher may choose to either record the offense in Ren Web or notify the appropriate administrator. If the teacher records the offense in Ren Web, he/she will write a brief description of the offense and the appropriate consequences. He/she will send an email to the parents and appropriate administrator. If the teacher chooses to send a written Discipline Referral to the appropriate administrator, the appropriate administrator will investigate all available accounts of the situation (or a representative sample of the accounts). Once the appropriate administrator has determined the consequence then he/she will record a brief description of the incident along with the appropriate consequences in Ren Web. The parent will be contacted either by email or a phone call.

Referrals may be given for the following (list is not all-inclusive)

- Arriving tardy to class without justified cause.
- Blatantly disobeying a teacher's or supervising adult's request.
- Being rude or discourteous to others
- Disrupting class/activity.
- Excessive talking after warning has been issued.
- Using inappropriate language/gestures.
- Being in a non-designated area of school without permission.
- Behaving in a disorderly fashion.

Location of Misconduct

All rules governing student discipline shall apply to any incident that is

- On St. Mark School and Church property at any time
- Off St. Mark School and Church property at a school activity, function or event
- Anywhere off St. Mark School property if the student's conduct has or is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly operation and safety of the St. Mark School environment.

Detentions

The Principal or designee, at her/his discretion, may assign an After-school Detention for a serious offense or continued misbehavior. Detentions are from dismissal to 5:00 P.M., on Tuesdays. Students will be engaged in service to the school during that time. A detention will include parental contact and teacher/staff discussion with student.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

During an in-school suspension, the student will receive assignments for the day and are expected to return those assignments the day he/she returns to school. Late assignments will be assessed penalties according to each teacher's policy. Students will be expected to take quizzes or tests immediately upon return from the suspension. ISS includes a Parent/Teacher/Principal/Student Conference.

The Principal may assign an immediate suspension for the following infractions (list is not all-inclusive):

- Leaving the school ground without permission or cutting classes
- Continued disruptions of school classes or activities
- Disrespectful behavior in church or at an assembly
- Demonstrated disrespect toward teachers or other adults

- Bullying behavior (see additional notes on bullying below)
- Bias/harassment (see additional notes on harassment below)
- Striking another student
- Destroying property
- Stealing
- Cheating or assisting others in cheating
- Forging signatures
- Jeopardizing the safety of others
- Talking, laughing or causing disruption during a fire drill
- Buying/selling suspicious items
- Internet abuse (see Internet policy)

Out of School Suspension (OSS) and In-School Suspensions (ISS)

A Parent/guardian will be informed immediately by phone when one of the unacceptable behaviors outlined below occurs. If warranted, a conference will be held the same day. The student must remain home during his/her out-of-school suspension (immediate action to remove the student from the building is at the Principal's discretion).

The student will receive assignments and tests during the time of his/her suspension, and should return those assignments on the day he/she returns from suspension. Late assignments will be assessed penalties according to each teacher's policy. Students will be expected to take quizzes or tests immediately upon return from the suspension. Parents and student must meet with the Principal and appropriate personnel before the student can be readmitted to school. Certain behaviors may warrant the school to request withdrawal or cooperation with remedial services (including psychologist evaluations) to return/remain. The pastor and

the Diocese of Raleigh will be notified when policy dictates.

The Principal may assign an immediate OSS suspension for the following infractions (list is not all-inclusive):

- Fighting or threats to harm or to do harm
- Possessing and/or using tobacco or vape products
- Possessing illegal substances or dangerous devices
- Truancy with disruptive effects on school routine

Expulsion

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from St. Mark Catholic School.

The Principal may assign a suspension or expulsion for the following infractions (list is not all-inclusive):

- Striking a teacher or school employee
- Bringing a weapon to school
- Possession of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Sexual offense or sexual harassment
- Calling in bomb threat or other reckless endangerment
- Making any form of a death threat to another student or school staff member
- Inappropriate behavior following two (2) in-school suspensions or out-of-school suspensions

If a student is expelled from school they are, under no circumstances,

permitted on campus.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

Plagiarism (per DePaul University definition) includes, but is not limited to:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio discs, video programs, or musical scores, whether published, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that is someone else's.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report, or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency, used in whole or part.

Examples include but are not limited to the following: the paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement, copying another's papers, work, or answers, or copying and pasting from internet sources.

Plagiarism Policy

A teacher has the responsibility to gauge whether plagiarism has occurred and what awareness of plagiarism the student understands. If the instance of plagiarism is flagrant, the logical repercussion is a zero on that part of the work and In-School Suspension. If the instance is due to lack of awareness, the student may be allowed to redo that part of the project with no penalty or with points deducted for lateness at the teacher's discretion. A student has the right to appeal a teacher's decision to an administrator who will review the case with the student, parent(s), and teacher.

School Safety / Harassment or Bullying

St. Mark strives to implement the Catholic principle of respecting the rights of each person. When conflict occurs students are encouraged to deal with the situation themselves, or if they feel they need additional help to report the incident to an adult on campus. Certain acts, such as harassment and bullying are not tolerated and St. Mark will do everything it can to eliminate this type of behavior to ensure a safe environment for each student.

Harassment is the act of threatening bodily harm or tormenting another person based on victim's gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, cultural difference, or disability. Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, repetitious, and that involves an imbalance of power or strength.

Harassing/bullying behavior includes (but is not limited to) verbal (teasing, name-calling), emotional (excluding or ignoring others in a mean way, spreading rumors), physical (shoving, kicking, taking money or other belongings), written, electronic or on-line activities (sending mean emails, text messages, pictures or notes). This may extend to behavior occurring outside the school, if its effects extend back to the school environment. Students are encouraged to report conflicts with other students and incidents where they feel they are being harassed or bullied by another student or students. Reports may be made to their teachers, the counselor, or an administrator. The Principal or Assistant Principal investigates all complaints of harassment/bullying. After the investigation the administrator will determine the extent of the harassment/bullying and deal with the situation in an appropriate manner. Consequences will be based upon the severity of the bullying, the age of the child, and the number of times the action was committed. Repetitive actions will necessitate harsher consequences. The administration reserves the right to administer any of the following consequences.

Consequences include but are not limited to the following:

- Conference with the student and his/her parent/guardian
- Conference involving the victim and the perpetrator if requested by the victim. The conference will be monitored by an administrator or counselor and no parents will be allowed in this conference.
- Lunch detention or after school detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension

- Expulsion

Any retaliation against a student for reporting any harassment/bullying behavior will not be tolerated.

Drug Use/Abuse

We are a zero tolerance campus. Using, consuming, possessing/and or distributing alcohol and/or any controlled substance, narcotics, stimulant drugs, and related paraphernalia on campus or at/near a school-sponsored function is STRICTLY PROHIBITED AND UNLAWFUL. Violators will be expelled. If predicated, the student will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. *Note: If a student has been prescribed a controlled substance by a physician, the parent/guardian must notify the school nurse.*

Contraband Items & Threatening Activity

Inappropriate items that are brought to school will be confiscated. This includes, but is not limited to: any weapons such as knives, guns, explosives, etc.; drugs, alcohol, or poisons. Bringing any contraband item to school or communicating threats to the school students or faculty is considered a serious violation that will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Dress Code

School Uniforms

- Uniform clothing is supplied through either Custom Logoware and School Outfitters or Flynn O'Hara Uniforms.
- School tops may have either the Crest from Custom Logoware or embroidery of St. Mark Catholic School.
- Parents should not be purchasing new items from other vendors, such as, Land's End, Old Navy, Target, etc.
- St. Mark School has a uniform program called 'The Uniform Spot'. Parents donate their children's gently used uniforms to St. Mark School. Uniforms can be dropped off at the school office during office hours, anytime during the year. The Uniform Spot is open during school main events. Uniforms are available for purchase. There is a minimal charge for all items purchased at the Uniform Spot. All money raised through the Uniform Spot goes back to St.

Mark School.

- Uniform shoes may be purchased through various suppliers, as long as they conform to the guidelines below.
- The principal may approve any deviation from this policy. The following is a list of the basic uniform for St. Mark School.

PreK- 2nd Girls	PreK- 2nd Boys
White or evergreen knit polo shirt, short or long-sleeved with St. Mark Catholic School logo	White or evergreen knit polo shirt, short or long-sleeved with St. Mark Catholic School logo
Navy blue pants or skirt (elastic waistband, no belt, no cargo style), plaid or navy jumper or skirt. Navy or Evergreen dress	Navy blue shorts or pants (elastic waistband, no cargo style) 2 nd grade only must wear belt
Navy blue or evergreen cardigan, sweatshirt, hooded jacket, or fleece with St. Mark Catholic School logo	Navy blue or evergreen sweatshirt, hooded jacket, or fleece with St. Mark Catholic School logo
Elementary 3rd - 5th Girls	Elementary 3rd - 5th Boys
White or evergreen knit polo shirt, short or long-sleeved with St. Mark Catholic School logo	White or evergreen knit polo shirt, short or long-sleeved with St. Mark Catholic School logo
Navy blue pants or skirt (belt required with pants/capris no cargo style). Plaid skirt	Navy blue shorts or pants (belt required, no cargo style)
Navy blue or evergreen cardigan, athletic sweatshirt, hooded jacket, or fleece with St. Mark Catholic School logo	Navy blue or evergreen sweatshirt, hooded jacket, athletic sweatshirt or fleece with St. Mark Catholic School logo
Middle School 6th-8th Girls	Middle School 6th-8th Boys
Evergreen or navy polo shirt, short or long-sleeved with St. Mark Catholic School logo	Evergreen or navy polo shirt, short or long-sleeved with St. Mark Catholic School logo
Navy blue or khaki pants (belt required) Navy blue, khaki, or plaid skirt	Navy blue or khaki pants or shorts (belt required)

PE Uniforms:

Grades K-4: No uniform required. Students are to wear the basic school uniform with athletic shoes. Girls must wear shorts under jumpers.

Grades 5-8: Gray St. Mark P.E. t-shirt or St. Mark Spirit shirt, navy blue St. Mark P.E. shorts or navy blue sweatpants, and athletic shoes.

Socks for all:

Solid white or black socks with no lace or trim. Socks must cover the ankle. Logos are permissible as long as they do not exceed 1 inch in diameter (no combination of black and white i.e. Nike elites, etc..)

Girls may wear white or navy tights or knee-high socks with skirts, jumpers, or dresses

Footgear for all:

All shoes must be predominantly black or predominantly white. (e.g., black shoe with white logo or a white shoe with a black logo). No grey footwear. No additional ornamentation or color is permitted. Shoes must be free of designs (no camouflage, leopard print, checks, etc.) No high top sneakers or boots.

Outerwear:

Navy blue or evergreen sweatshirt, cardigan, or fleece zip-ups with St. Mark Catholic School or St. Mark Middle School logo

Evergreen hooded sweatshirt with St. Mark on front

Winter coats (Columbia, North Face, etc.) without a St. Mark logo are permitted outside only. Winter coats without a St. Mark logo may not be worn inside the building during class.

Basic attire guidelines include the following:

- Uniforms must be in good repair, must not be faded or stained, and must fit correctly
- If pants/shorts have belt loops, a black belt is required for both boys and girls (a belt is not required for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade students)
- Skirt, dresses and shorts must come to the top of knee
- Shirts must remain tucked in at all times
- A solid undershirt may be worn under the uniform shirt. It must be the same color as the uniform shirt worn or white and must not extend beyond the uniform sleeves or bottom hem.

- Hoodies are not permitted in St. Mark Church

No article of clothing other than what is specified in the dress code is permitted during school hours.

Accessories:

- Visible body piercing (except the ear lobe) and visible tattoos are prohibited
- Students are limited to one bracelet not to exceed ½ inch
- Girls may wear one ring and one stud-like earring or dime size hoop per ear
- Boys and girls are allowed to wear a non-alarm watch. No watches with internet capabilities should be worn.
- One necklace not to exceed ½ inch in width to be kept inside their shirt.
- Girls' hair accessories must be conservative in nature and coordinate with the St. Mark uniform colors.

Hair and Appearance:

- All students are expected to be neat and clean in appearance.
- Students must maintain their natural hair color during the school months.
- Hair must be kept out of face to avoid distraction during school.
- Boys' hair length must be maintained above shirt collar.
- No facial hair
- Girls may wear natural looking make-up.
- Girls may wear any conservative colored nail polish.

Non-compliance with uniform policy:

Any student in non-compliance of the uniform policy will be issued a discipline referral. For each referral for uniform Infractions the infraction is recorded in Ren Web and a letter will be sent home indicating the specific infraction and must be returned the next day. Actions/steps are as follows:

- First Infraction: The parent will be notified via email.

- Second Infraction: The student will be issued a Lunch Detention

- Third Infraction: The student will forfeit his/her privilege of dress down passes or being allowed the privilege of wearing their athletic team uniform for game days for the rest of the trimester.
 - Fourth Infraction: The student will be immediately referred to administration and the parent/child must rectify the situation before the child is allowed back in class. Time served out of class is considered an In-School-Suspension and the previously mentioned policy for classwork and homework will be followed.)

 - Fifth infraction: The student will be immediately referred to administration and the parent/child must rectify the situation before the child is allowed back in class. Time served out of class is considered an In-School-Suspension and the previously mentioned policy for classwork and homework will be followed.) They will also be assigned an After School Detention.

Dress Down Pass

Students who are awarded a Dress Down Pass are permitted to wear casual clothes in good repair with no offensive or inappropriate logos or pictures.

- Sturdy, flat-heeled shoes with enclosed toes and backs must be worn (no flip flops or crocs can be worn at any time).

- No tank tops, spaghetti straps, pajama pants, etc. Shorts may be worn if they come to the knee.

- Leggings or tights can only be worn if covered by a top that comes to the knee.

- Inappropriate dress, including clothes that are too short, too low on the hips, excessively baggy or tight fitting, will result in students either calling home for other clothes or wearing used uniforms available in the office.
- Students may not dress down on Mass days or the last 2 weeks of school.

The principal has final discretion on what is considered appropriate clothes for school on dress down days. Students who violate the rules for a Dress Down Pass may lose the privilege of a Dress Down Pass for 30 days.

Emergency Plan, Emergency Drills

Fire drills

Fire drills are held regularly in order to maintain a state of readiness in the unlikely event of a real emergency. Students are expected to know the fire exits from every area of the building. All students are expected to follow these rules:

- They must observe strict silence.
- They must walk briskly to the assigned place, in single file. Horseplay is not tolerated.
- They must face the building in the place assigned to their class.
- They must obey verbal instructions given by teachers or the Principal immediately.

Tornado drills

Tornado drills are held in order to maintain a state of readiness in the unlikely event of a real emergency. Students are expected to follow these rules:

- Rise in silence when the tornado alarm signal is given.
- Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file. Horseplay is not tolerated.
- Kneel, face the wall, and keep head down.
- Obey verbal instructions given by teachers or the Principal immediately.

Lock Down Drills

Lock Down Drills are held throughout the school year to help prepare students and staff in case of an emergency.

Crisis Plan

St. Mark Catholic School has implemented a crisis plan in case of a lock-down emergency, weather emergency, etc. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow in these cases.

Emergency Closing

If St. Mark School needs to be evacuated during the school day due to an on-campus emergency, students will be taken to Windermere Presbyterian Church, which is immediately adjacent and to the west of St. Mark School. Should the students need to be dismissed from this location, the same communication methods used for inclement weather will be utilized.

Inclement Weather Emergency

On days when the weather is bad (hurricane, snow, ice, etc.), St. Mark will communicate school closings or delayed openings through as many of the following methods as possible under the circumstances:

1. St. Mark’s AlertNow system will phone, text, and/or email school families. **Parents should not call the school. Our phone lines must remain open.**
2. Announcements on the radio and television. The following stations will be contacted: WWAY TV 3 and WECT TV 6. Parents should tune in to these television stations on such days.
3. St. Mark’s school website: <http://www.smcsc.org>

St. Mark will typically follow the decision of New Hanover County Schools regarding school delays and closings.

Days needing to be made up due to inclement weather may be added on to the scheduled end of the school year. You are encouraged not to make vacation plans during the first week after school closes for this reason.

Extracurricular Activities

Students may participate in multiple extracurricular activities. Students must be on good academic standing to participate in extracurricular activities. If a student is absent they may not participate in activities that day (this includes but is not limited to sports and school dances).

Service Projects:

Classes participate in numerous projects throughout the year. Teachers communicate with families at the time of participation. The school coordinates most service projects with St. Mark Parish efforts.

Competitive Sports:

Prior to participating in tryouts or athletic activities, students must complete the following:

- An Athletic Participation Screening Physical (Valid for one calendar year)
- A Permission and Medical Release Form, and
- A completed Concussion Form

Students must abide by the Athletic Handbook. [Click here](#) for more information about athletics and all three forms

Field Trips

Teachers are encouraged to plan educational field trips to enhance the classroom experience. Parents will be notified about trips, including planned activities, and will be required to sign a permission slip allowing their child to participate. Verbal permission cannot be accepted. Students can be denied the right to participate due to inappropriate behavior; or as a part of the school discipline policy.

- A one-time Field Trip fee will be charged to all students K-8. This fee does not include the 4th grade trip to Raleigh, 2nd grade trip to Topsail, the 8th grade end of year trip or any other trip requiring a Charter bus.
- Uniforms are required to be worn on trips, unless families are otherwise notified.
- Buses will be hired to provide transportation. No student will be allowed to ride in a privately-owned vehicle on any field trip. Requests due to extenuating circumstances should be in written form to the Principal prior to any field trip.
- Parent volunteers may be used as chaperones. Chaperones may not bring pre-school or non-student children with them.
- Teachers are the ultimate decision-makers in a field trip. Chaperones and students are asked to follow teacher instructions during the trip.

Health Services

The primary purpose of St. Mark Catholic School's health services program is to maintain, promote and protect student health in order to assure a safe and healthy environment conducive to learning.

Our staff recognizes that there are multiple components required from school personnel, parents and community to promote maximum physical, social, emotional and educational growth of our students.

School Nurse

A registered nurse coordinates health promotion such as care of sick or injured children, immunization review, yearly screenings and instructional programs.

Please be mindful of some of the NC guidelines and laws:

Administration of Medication in School

If your child needs to receive medication of any type during school hours, including over-the-counter drugs, you have the following choices:

- You may come to school and administer the medication to your

child at the appropriate time.

- You may obtain a medication form from the school nurse or on our website and have your child's doctor complete the form. This form must be signed by the doctor, as well as the parent/guardian, for any prescription and over-the-counter medication to be administered. Medications must be brought to school in a pharmacy-labeled bottle and over-the-counter medications must be received in the original container. All medications will be kept locked in the nurse's office and must be delivered to the office by a parent/guardian. Students are not allowed to have medications in their possession on school grounds. School personnel will not administer any medication to students unless this guideline is followed.
- You may discuss with your doctor an alternative schedule for administering medications.

Illness in Children

- If your child's temperature is 100 or higher, he/she must remain home until he/she has been fever free without the benefit of fever reducing medication for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Many illnesses requiring antibiotics (ex. strep throat, conjunctivitis), as well as other contagious illnesses involving vomiting/diarrhea also follow the 24-hour rule.
- Please inform the school nurse if your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness such as strep throat, flu, chicken pox or head lice.

Student Illness/Injury during School Hours, Emergency Contacts

If your child becomes ill during the day or has an injury that may need medical attention, a faculty/staff member will notify parents. Parents are asked to always keep their emergency contact phone numbers current. A responsible adult's name and current phone number (emergency contact person who should be called if parents are unavailable) must be provided to the school via Parents Web. Students must be signed-out through the school office if they leave early due to illness. Students should not call their parents on their own. Students who are ill will be referred to the nurse who will notify the parents.

Obviously, in cases of serious illness/injury, school faculty will not hesitate to seek emergency medical attention for your child. If a parent is not present at school, a staff member will accompany your child during treatment, or with an ambulance transport, and will remain with your child until you

arrive.

Family Crisis

Please notify the Principal and your child's teacher when there is a death in the family, or any occurrence that might cause your child emotional trauma. We would like to be able to support you and your child during difficult times.

Immunization Records

Each child is required to have on file a copy of his/her immunization record signed by a doctor, or health care designee. This document record will become part of a student's permanent health file. The record must be submitted to the school office during the first month of school. Failure to comply will make it necessary to exclude the child from school until the records are received. Your child's doctor, or other health provider, can inform you as to the specific immunizations that are required for entrance into North Carolina Schools.

Chronic, Life-Threatening Medical Conditions

St. Mark School recognizes that life threatening medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes and food allergies affect a number of school children. The school nurse will communicate with classroom teachers regarding the nature of life threatening conditions faced by students.

In the school lunch room, a "nut-free" table will be maintained as an option for students with peanut allergies.

During field trips, emergency medications including inhalers, EpiPens, etc. must accompany the student. The adult carrying the emergency medication will be identified and introduced to the student. A cell phone or other communication device will be available on the trip for emergency calls.

No Aerosol Policy

The academic success of a student can be directly linked to his or her health. For this reason, it is imperative that SMCS ensures the well-being and safety of all its students to support a positive learning environment for students as well as a safer work environment for staff.

SMCS intends to protect the indoor and outdoor air quality of its campus. Strong scents and fragrances can contribute to poor indoor air quality that can be unhealthy to all students and school staff even triggering severe reactions in people with allergies and asthma. Therefore, SMCS prohibits aerosol sprays of any kind on campus or field trips. This includes but is not limited to

perfumes, deodorants, hairsprays & cleaning products. Please direct any questions regarding this policy to the school nurse

Liturgy/Sacramental Program

Students will participate in a weekly Mass. This will normally be Wednesday morning, but may vary with designated Holy Days. Students will help to plan and participate in the liturgy. Appointments should not be scheduled in lieu of mass. This year until further notice weekly mass will be live streamed to the classrooms each Wednesday beginning at 8:10 a.m.

Sacramental preparation/instruction is a parish responsibility. The parish Religious Education program provides for these needs. Classroom teachers help reinforce instruction/preparation.

Lost and Found

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school receptionist to be placed in the Lost and Found basket. Any items not claimed will be donated to charity once a month.

Children often misplace items such as sweaters, hats, gloves, lunch boxes, etc. Be sure to place a label on them or have some means of identification so we can return these items. If your child loses any item, ask him/her to inquire at the office before you consider it lost.

Please label EVERYTHING

Phone Calls / Cell Phones

The office telephone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of emergency or extenuating circumstances. Students may not call home for forgotten books, lunches, gym clothes, or after school activities. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

St. Mark Catholic School students may not use electronics, including cell phones and handheld electronics during the school day. Any child found using a cell phone or hand-held electronics in school will have the item confiscated, and be subject to disciplinary action. A release for e-readers must be on file. The school day is defined as from the arrival of the student on campus until 3:30 p.m.

Playground and Recess Rules

During recess, students must stay within the designated playground areas. They must be in view of the playground monitors. **Students may not leave school property at any time unless they are in the company of an adult who has performed the appropriate signing-out process at the school office.**

Playground Rules

1. Children may not climb up the slides or walk directly in front of them. They may only slide down one at a time.
2. Children may not go down headfirst on the slides.
3. Children may not walk in front of, or behind swings.
4. Children may not stand on or jump off of swings.
5. Children are to leave personal space between themselves when waiting for any of the areas. Keep personal space
6. No child is allowed near the retention pond near the field.
7. All playground equipment must be used for its intended purpose.
8. Physically aggressive games are prohibited

Recess Cold Weather Guidelines

Time spent outdoors is an integral part of the school day. Children need fresh air and exercise and time spent outside affords students a break from the structure of the classroom. However, there are times when it is not safe for children to be outdoors.

School-aged children, when properly clothed, can participate in safe, vigorous play outdoors in most weather conditions. Increased caution is necessary during temperatures less than 32 degrees F. Temperature plus wind velocity, or wind chill, is a prominent factor in determining cold weather safety.

Generally, if the wind chill or “feels like” temperature is 32 degrees or higher, then recess will be outside.

School Counselor

St. Mark School has a full-time counselor on staff. A faculty member may refer a student to the counselor, or the student him/herself may request an appointment with the counselor as needed. Due to confidentiality guidelines, parents may not be notified that the student has visited the school counselor.

School Hours

- Normal School Hours: 8:00am – 2:55pm
- School Office Hours: 7:45am – 4:00pm

Classroom supervision begins at 7:30am. ***St. Mark Catholic School is not responsible for students dropped off prior to 7:30am.***

School Lunches / Snacks

- Saint Mark School offers a hot lunch program daily. Meals may be ordered through the My Hot Lunchbox program. Meals delivered by the My Hot Lunchbox program will be individually packaged.
- Students may choose to bring a bag lunch to school each day. Students should not bring glass bottles, soft drinks or excessive amounts of candy.
- **Parents may not bring lunches or drinks from carry-out restaurants. St. Mark Catholic School does not allow food from other vendors. Parents are not permitted to bring their child(ren) lunch. This policy will be strictly enforced by the office.**
- If a student does not have lunch, the school will provide one. The parent will be charged for the cost of the lunch. Students may NOT call home for lunch
- Students are encouraged to bring a nutritious snack to school every day.
- Chewing gum is not allowed on school premises at any time.

Parents and Lunch: At the present time parent volunteers will not be allowed to come serve Lunch or Recess duty. Lunch/Recess is an important time in a student's day. Students are encouraged to spend this time with their peers. While volunteers are needed to help supervise, open containers, etc. Please note this should not be a time to visit with your child. Please make arrangements for relatives to visit with students once the school day is over. Exceptions to the policy should be requested in writing and sent to the school office and student's homeroom teacher.

School Property, Lockers

The parents of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement.

Families are responsible to replace any borrowed media center book that is lost or badly damaged before any other materials may be checked out.

Students are issued St. Mark School textbooks as needed for their coursework. All textbooks must be covered with a fabric book cover. Students are responsible for replacement of lost or damaged books.

Students who have lost or damaged school property, musical instruments, and books will not receive report cards until their account is cleared.

Lockers

At the present time students will not be able to use the school lockers. Each student is assigned a locker (middle school) or cubby (elementary school) in which to store clothing and textbooks. Students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specific times during the school day. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. If you choose to place a lock on your child's lock, then parents must provide an access code for the lock to administration

School Visitors, Security Policy

Security & Student Release Policies

Because of precautions to limit the spread of Covid-19 visitors will not be allowed to volunteer in the classroom with students at St. Mark until further notice. Parents may volunteer for the following:

- Morning Drop Off
- Lunch/Recess Duty
- Media Center
- Work at the Volunteer Front Desk
- Afterschool Sports

See the guidelines below if we are able to begin allowing visitors and volunteers.

For security reasons the school doors will be locked at all times other than the normal arrival/dismissal periods. Children will only be released to a parent or guardian, unless written permission is provided. The

school reserves the right to require identification from anyone picking up a student. **Children must be signed out at the school office prior to departing.**

School Visitors, School Volunteers

The staff of St. Mark Catholic School welcomes the help and the support of volunteers and visitors. The staff also feels that it is our primary responsibility to guarantee the safety of each student. As such, all school parents and visitors must follow these policies:

- Please enter the school only through the front lobby. Visitors must ring the doorbell to the right of the front doors to be buzzed into the school. All entrances to the school will be locked. Please do not request that staff or students let you in through an alternate entrance. They are under strict instructions not to do so.
- When entering the school sign in on the parent/visitor's computer in the school office. **Drivers' License will be required.**
- The receptionist will direct you as appropriate. For example, if you have been called because your child is ill, you may be directed to go to the nurse's office. If you are taking your child out of school for an appointment, the child's classroom teacher will be contacted and the child will meet you in the reception area.
- All visitors who leave the office area to volunteer, etc. must have a badge to identify them.
- All visitors must comply with the school's Code of Conduct.
- All visitors must make an appointment to meet with a teacher

The Principal has legal authority over all persons in the school building and on school grounds.

School Volunteer Programs, School Volunteer Organizations

The staff of St. Mark Catholic School welcomes the help and the support of parents as an integral part of St. Mark Catholic School culture. At least 30 hours of parent involvement as school volunteers is required, unless a family has chosen to 'buy-out' their volunteer hours.

- There are multiple opportunities for parents to volunteer, either during school hours or in school or church activities outside school

hours.

- All parents volunteering during school hours in activities involving children must participate in the Safe Environment Training and have a background check. This guideline is provided by the Diocese of Raleigh and is focused on protecting the safety and security of St. Mark School Children. [Click here](#) to register for Safe Environment Trainings.
- If you are volunteering your time at the school, please remember to [log hours in your Family Portal](#) so you can receive credit for your volunteerism.
- As you volunteer, please remember to follow school guidelines and the school's Code of Conduct.

Home & School Association (HSA)

This year will be the first year of the newly formed Home and School Association. The objective of this Association shall be to coordinate the spiritual and educational interactions of the home and school, in a program of Catholic learning. This Association offers thorough and well-planned programs based on various and particular interests to parents and faculty. Ultimately, this Association works toward fostering and cultivating an appreciation and understanding of Catholic education.

Everyone at our school is automatically a member of this association. Any parent, guardian, or teacher of the students at St. Mark Catholic School may be an active member. Other persons interested in Catholic youth may become honorary members with no voting rights and shall not be eligible to hold office.

School Advisory Committee (SAC)

In accordance with the provisions of Canon Law, the SAC is established to assist and advise the Principal, who in turn is accountable to the Pastor. SAC assists in developing school policies and long range plans, and provides an ongoing assessment of the school's educational programs to ensure a quality Catholic education. Members are appointed by the Pastor. The Pastor, Principal, and selected faculty members are ex-officio members of the committee. [Click here](#) for more information and to see the members of the School Advisory Committee.

School Development

Our School Development program combines our social events, faith in action initiatives and fundraising efforts into one program. Its purposes are:

- To promote mutual cooperation between the faculty, staff, and parents in order to best achieve the mission of the school.
- To raise funds for teacher support, tuition assistance and various school initiatives.
- To provide a volunteer database that can be used school wide

[Click here](#) for more information.

*Note: Students will not be involved in door-to-door sales of fundraising items.

Special Services

Parents who have a child with suspected disabilities should notify their child's' teacher and grade level administrator. Once the parents have initiated the process an administrator or the SSP Head will notify the parent about the process. St. Mark does not typically have the staff necessary to service students who qualify for an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) in the public schools. We generally are able to supply accommodations for students with a Student Support Plan, commonly known as a 504 Plan. Contact Ellen McCaul for more information

The Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools acknowledge that there are students who require special services to meet their full human potential. St. Mark Catholic School is committed to all students succeeding to the best of their abilities. In the event that a student has a diagnosed special need (documented by licensed medical personnel) accommodations may be offered that can be reasonably made within the normal general education classes and when the school has the resources (academic/staff) available to accommodate the student's needs. However, modifications to academic requirements or alterations in general course of studies will not be made. The Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools are exempt from the mandate of providing services for IEP's and 504 Plans. If a student cannot be accommodated within the school program, every effort is made to assist with placement in another school program beyond St.

Mark.

Parent Information Sheet for Student Support Plans

1. A Student Support Plan (SSP) cannot be written without appropriate documentation.
2. Appropriate documentation means a current evaluation, signed and dated by a licensed psychologist that includes diagnosis and recommendations.
3. The evaluation needs to be updated prior to entering 3rd grade and entering 6th grade. The evaluation must be completed within one year prior to entering grade 3 and grade 6. All other evaluations must be completed within two years.
4. The SSP Team will create the SSP based on the recommendations using accommodations that can be reasonably made within the normal operation of the school and when the school has the resources needed to accommodate the student's needs.
5. It is highly recommended that the evaluation is updated during the spring of 8th grade so accommodations may be in place for high school.

Technology

Chromebooks/Computers

Students in Grades 5-8 are issued a Chromebook for use in their classrooms. They are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook they have been issued by the school. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be reported to the homeroom teacher and brought to Mr. Benson as soon as possible so that they can be repaired or replaced promptly.

Repairs will be charged to the student's account and are required to be paid. Keyboard replacements are \$70. Screen Replacements are \$35.00 for the first 2 screens then \$135.00 for each screen after that per school year. Liquid damage to the unit will result in being charged for a replacement device. Currently new Chromebooks are \$250.00 per unit. More information about Chromebook usage is covered in a separate policy issued when the Chromebook is issued to the student.

Students in elementary school also have access to Chromebooks in their individual classroom. Students are responsible for these electronic devices that have been entrusted to their care during classroom usage.

Educational Technology Statement of Policy

The Church views emerging technologies as gifts of the Spirit to this age and challenges "God's faithful people to make creative use of the new discoveries and technologies." (*Aetatis Novae, #2*). *Developments in communications technology present new possibilities and challenges for the mission of the Church and Catholic Education.*

St. Mark Catholic School (SMCS) recognizes that changes in telecommunications and other new technologies that alter the ways information is accessed, processed, communicated and transferred by and among members of society, may also alter instruction and student learning. SMCS supports access by students to rich information resources and the development by staff of appropriate skills to analyze and evaluate such resources.

In addition, educational technologies must be used, both by Catholic educators and students, in a manner that is educationally appropriate, in accord with the religious goals of the schools, and consistent with standards of electronic ethics and copyright laws.

Code of Ethics Regarding Copyright

It is the policy of SMCS that all employees, volunteers, and students will abide by the Federal copyright laws. Employees, volunteers, and students may copy print or non-print materials as authorized by a specific license or other contractual agreement or as permitted by the Fair Use guidelines of the Copyright Law.

Employees, volunteers, and students who willfully disregard copyright laws are in violation of the policy of SMCS, do so at their own risk, and assume all liability for such acts.

Internet Acceptable Use

It is the policy of St. Mark Catholic School (SMCS) to require the ethical use of the Internet and related technologies by all employees, volunteers, and students. The Internet and related technologies must be used in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives and religious goals school. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules that apply to such networks, including the following:

1. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal, state, or local regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to violating the Copyright Law, sending or receiving material that is threatening, vio-

lent or obscene, or material that is protected by trade secret.

2. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement, political activities, game playing, unauthorized "chat," or chain letter communication is also prohibited. Examples of unacceptable information include, but are not limited to, pornography, information on bombs, inappropriate language and communications, flame letters, etc.
3. Acts of vandalism are prohibited. Vandalism is defined as any intentional effort to harm or destroy data of another user or to damage hardware or software. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading and/or creation of computer viruses.
4. Unauthorized use of another's computer, access accounts, and/or files is prohibited.

Nature of Privilege

Access to the Internet and the use of related technologies via the SMCS's computers and equipment are a privilege and not a right, *and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges. Users of the SMCS computer network are responsible for their own behavior and shall comply with all appropriate standards of conduct. Access privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken for any violations that are unethical and/or may constitute a criminal offense. Before anyone is provided access to Internet and related technologies, they will participate in a discussion with assigned staff person(s) concerning the proper use of the network. The faculty, staff, or parent/guardian may request the administrator or designee to deny, revoke, or suspend a specific user's access to the Internet and related technologies due to unacceptable use.*

No Expectation of Privacy

SMCS reserves the right to access all files and to monitor all uses of its computer technology equipment at its own discretion so as to establish and maintain an assurance that such equipment is not being used inappropriately. Subject to the restrictions of applicable law, SMCS reserves the right to disclose content from a computer that utilizes the Catholic Schools' computer network. Thus, users of the SMCS's computer equipment shall have no expectation of privacy with respect to such use.

No Warranties

SMCS makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, with respect to the Internet and related technology service it is providing and will not be responsible for any damages that a user may suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, nondeliveres, misdeliveries, or service interruptions via the Internet and related technologies. SMCS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. Employees, volunteers, students or parents/guardians will be responsible for any financial obligation incurred through the use of Internet and related technologies.

Internet Access Agreement

An Agreement for Internet Access by students, based on the Technology Statement of Policy provided above, will be reviewed and signed by both the student and parent, and returned to school no later than the student’s first week of school.

COVID-19 ADDENDUM FOR PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

As the parent/ legal guardian of the enrolling student, _____, at St. Mark Catholic School, I recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated changes in the manner in which instruction may be delivered during the Academic Year.

Learning Environment

I acknowledge and agree that changing circumstances occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate changes in the School’s delivery of instruction and other programming. These changes may include, but are not limited to, the substantial reduction or elimination of on-site instruction; the provision of distance/remote instruction to some or all students; the reduction, modification or elimination of athletics and other extracurricular activities; and the modification of the Academic Year calendar, including the dates, length and sequence of academic breaks. By signing this Addendum, I acknowledge and agree that:

- a. School retains the right to implement any such changes, whether prior to and/or during the Academic Year, in its sole discretion
- b. No adjustments can be made with regard to the student attending virtual/in-person outside of the School’s policies; and
- c. No adjustment will be made to the current school year’s tuition

charges in response to such changes.

Health and Safety Protocols

I understand and agree that if my child returns to campus, he/she will be required to comply with School's health and safety protocols as described in the School's policies, protocols, and procedures to limit the spread of COVID-19 and that failure to comply with such protocols may result in the immediate removal of my child from campus.

Risk Acknowledgement

I acknowledge and agree that School cannot guarantee a COVID-19 free environment, and that, while School will continue to follow the guidance of NC DHHS to mitigate the likelihood of transmission, there is a risk that my child may contract COVID-19 if and when my child returns to the physical campus or at any time during my child's presence on campus. By consenting to my child's presence on the St. Mark Catholic School campus, I acknowledge and accept the risk on behalf of my child.

This information will also be sent home via documents that you need to sign during the first week of school.

This handbook and the policies stated in it are meant to be a guide to student activities and discipline. Since it is impossible to foresee all situations that may arise, the administration reserves the right to set and/or revise policy as needed throughout the 2021-2022 school year. New policy and revisions will be communicated to parents in writing. Parents and students are bound by the policies contained in this handbook and the procedures set forth by teachers.