

# Saint Matthew Parish School

*Developing Faith, Minds, and Character*

## Student and Family Handbook 2011-2012



A Ministry of the Parish of St. Matthew Catholic Church  
4100 East 56th Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46220  
(317) 251-3997 [www.saintmatt.org/school](http://www.saintmatt.org/school)



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Dear Current and Future Students and Parents of St. Matthew School,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2011-2012 school year. I am extremely excited to be joining the St. Matthew community as Principal of St. Matthew Parish School, and I look forward to meeting each one of you and working with our amazing staff to help you not only learn but also enjoy your time each and every school day.

St. Matthew Catholic School is committed to “developing faith, minds, and character” in all of our students. This can only happen if we all work together, students, teachers and staff, families, and parish. I am confident that we will have the cooperation of all because I know we all have the same purpose in mind: what is best for our kids.

Please review this Handbook together as a family to understand the high expectations we have for all Warriors. By following these guidelines, we can ensure a safe and orderly school for all that maximizes the educational environment.

If you have any questions, about this handbook or any time throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact us. I am a firm believer in timely communication, and I will try to help you any way I can.

I appreciate the welcome I have received, and I thank everyone in advance for all of the support, prayers, and patience I know I will have from everyone. Please know that all of our school and parish families will continue to be in my prayers, as well.

Sincerely,

David D. Smock  
Principal

## Mission Statement of St. Matthew Catholic School

**The community of St. Matthew Catholic School is dedicated to provide a faith-filled Catholic education that fosters the growth of the whole child. Through developmentally appropriate academics, we facilitate social growth in a safe environment and inspire self-discipline, personal responsibility, and a concern for others in the world.**

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## **Our Catholic Mission, Values, Identity, and Virtues**

It is the mission of the Roman Catholic Church from the very beginning until times yet to come that its people “be disciples of Christ and make disciples of others.”

The Roman Catholic school is an extension of Christ’s invitation to be disciples. Its purpose is to assist the Church and its families in their mission of making disciples through a Christ-centered education. A disciple is one who knows, love, and follows The Teacher, Jesus. Our school is Christ-centric in that Jesus is the focus of our faith. “Be it known to all those who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school.”

“If you live in me, and My words stay a part of you – you may ask what you will – it will be done for you. My Father has been glorified in your bearing much fruit and becoming My disciples.” (John 15: 7-8)

Our Roman Catholic school is a living, Christian community where students are encouraged and supported to reach the fullness of their potential spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, aesthetically, socially, and physically.

### **Our mission is realized through developing in students the following:**

- Basic Christian attitudes and values
- Reverence for themselves as well as for all people
- Academic skills necessary for contemporary society
- Inquiring minds
- Critical thinking
- Openness to progressive techniques
- Facility in adapting to change

### **Essential Elements of Catholic Values include:**

- Holy Scripture - - hearing the Good News
- The Sacraments - - worship and prayer life
- A Social Mission - - action for social justice
- Human Dignity - - having respect for all life, including the elderly and the unborn
- Respect for the Community - - accepting the diversity of all people
- Rights and Duties - - including socially, economically, and politically
- Option for the Poor - - provide help to widows, orphans, the poor, and the vulnerable
- The Dignity of Work - - to carry out our vocation and mission of life both secularly and non-secularly
- Care for Creation - - respect God’s great creation as good stewards of our natural resources

**Essential Elements of Catholic Identity include:**

- We are the Body of Christ
- We are the Church
- We believe in Holy Scripture as our rule and guide of faith.
- We believe that Jesus is our Redeemer and He died for our sins.
- We believe that we receive His true body and blood through the Holy Eucharist.
- We believe that we are cleansed of our sins through true repentance and acts of contrition.
- We believe that Mary is the virgin mother of our Savior.
- We believe in the power of prayer especially through the Holy Rosary as Mary asks us to pray for world peace.
- We believe in the communion of all the saints who have gone before us.
- We believe in the leadership of the Holy Father as the Vicar of Christ through apostolic succession.

**WELCOME!**

We, of St. Matthew Catholic School, feel that each child has the right to learn and meet with success. We realize each child matures and learns at a different rate and in different styles. We view individuality of both student and teacher as a contribution to each classroom rather than a detraction.

Grade school education is the basis of all academic learning. This basic learning process incorporates all educational skills. We strive not only to ‘teach’ our children but also to have our children ‘think’.

We recognize the school environment is not the only experience dealt with by our students. As the home and community influences our children’s lives, we seek to encourage and foster beneficial values. Our aim is to provide reasoning and necessary thinking skills that will allow further evaluation of values encountered in the future. Cooperation and support between home and school is sought within our educational system.

Simply stated, our school is based on the “R’s” - - Religion, Reverence, Respect, Responsibility, Resembling God, as well as the traditional Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic. From a Christian perspective, we will strive to emphasize peace and compassion for all. Thus we say that St. Matthew Parish School is a school community that “seeks knowledge, will model the love of Christ, and provide service to others.”

Community resources are an integral part of our educational process, as well. Study trips and outsourced contacts are utilized to enrich our children’s education.

We are seeking improvement from our students in the spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, and emotional realms. To meet this commitment, a variety of materials, motivational techniques, teaching methods, and resource personnel are utilized. Changes are made for the sake of improvement and not

merely change for the sake of change. We are constantly seeking methods and materials to meet a child's success potential. We recognize the need for continual assessment of our goals, methods, strategies, materials, and objectives. Our school community members (parish, school, staff, students, and parents) are all integral to our growth and development, and everyone's participation is needed, expected, and most importantly appreciated.

The basis for our teaching not only includes the academic side but more importantly begins with Holy Scripture and concludes with values and virtues expected of each person.

- Holy Scripture - - Old and New Testaments
- The Ten Commandments - - Exodus 20: 3-17
- The Golden Rule - - Matthew 7:12 ; Luke 6:31
- The Life-Long Guidelines for School Success
- The MegaSkills for Personal Success

### **SCHOOL GUIDE TO SUCCESS**

The Golden Rule is "Treat others as you would like to be treated."

Our Life-Long Guidelines include students being:

- Active listeners
- Respectful
- Truthful
- Trustworthy
- Giving their Personal Best

The basic MegaSkills that students are expected to attain include:

- Caring
- Effort
- Motivation
- Responsibility
- Common Sense
- Focus
- Perseverance
- Teamwork
- Compassion
- Confidence
- Initiative
- Problem-Solving
- Peace

In addition to the above spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral expectations, we encourage our students to be reverent, curious, courageous, patient, resourceful, friendly, flexible, cooperative, organized, have a sense of humor, have integrity, and have pride in their work, in their actions, and in all they do.

In educating the whole child, our school attempts to create an atmosphere for developing self-discipline within a child. If the school deems conduct as inappropriate, discipline measures will be taken.

Order is essential in the effective management of any school; therefore, procedures are a necessity. We trust the parents will cooperate with the school in enforcing these procedures so that each child may be successful at St. Matthew Parish School.

Respectful behavior to individuals and property is always expected. When corrected, a student is to follow directions given at that time. If a student wishes to discuss the matter, the student does so at an *appropriate* time for all (usually at recess, lunch, or before or after school).

Students must be appropriately dressed according to school standards.

St. Matthew Catholic School does not tolerate any form of violence to or from students. Any child who participates in any form of violence or other inappropriate actions may be sent home immediately. The principal deals with all situations on an individual basis. *Students who are suspended out-of-school will not be given credit for any of the work, tests, or quizzes missed.*

Cleanliness and good hygiene are expected so that the environment is conducive to learning for all students.

A good night's rest and proper nutrition are essential for optimum learning.

Although it sounds simple to say, students need to be in school to learn. Missing class time deprives the student of class discussions, activities, clarifications, and information that cannot truly be made up and thus can adversely affect learning and academic performance. A 2009 research study found "results that consistently indicate positive and statistically significant relationships between student attendance and academic achievement for both elementary and middle school students," including "GPA and standardized reading and math performance" (Gottfried).

## **ATTENDANCE**

In the interest of pupil progress, regular attendance, including punctuality, is imperative. **When a pupil is absent, parents should call the school at 251-3997, Extension 3910, and report their student's absence by 8:30 a.m.** If the student is absent for three consecutive school days or more, he/she must have a written doctor's excuse. Any absence following the 5<sup>th</sup> absence in any one semester, a doctor's written excuse must be presented or the student will be considered unexcused.

Under Indiana Code 20-33-2, the absence of a student is excused under Indiana law only in cases of verified illness or injury of the student, in cases of medical care of the student, or a death in the family. The only other permissible absences under Indiana law for grade school students are exempted absences when the student is in service as a page for or honoree of the Indiana General Assembly or is issued a subpoena to appear in court as a witness in a judicial

proceeding. The principal shall have the right to demand verification that an absence is for one of the excused or exempted circumstances. Failure to provide appropriate verification can result in the absence being counted as an unexcused absence. Any unusual reason for absence due to extenuating circumstances may be referred to the principal who may make an exception if appropriate in his/her judgment.

After an excused absence, students will be given the same number of days as those that were missed to make up any missing work, unless other arrangements are made by the teacher. Homework that was due on the day the student was absent will be due the day he/she returns. Middle School students are also asked to check on missing homework while absent and complete as much as they can so as not to fall behind, but they also have the same number of days as those missed to make up the missing work.

If an absence is unexcused, the student may not be allowed to make up any work missed, including tests or quizzes. Students who accumulate an excessive number of absences, both excused and unexcused, during a school year will be monitored closely, and notifications may be sent to parents not as a threat but only as a means to make sure you are aware of the number of absences. Missing extensive time may make it difficult for the student to master the standards necessary before moving on to the next grade level.

**Vacations are not excused absences.** We discourage removing students from school for family vacations. Staff members are not required to prepare lengthy assignments nor accept work that was issued during the absence. If extenuating circumstances necessitate absence from school for a special trip, please contact the principal, who may turn it into a learning opportunity, as well.

Teaching students the habit of punctuality is an important life skill we want to impart so this habit is inculcated in our young leaders of tomorrow. Students are expected to be on time each day and to each class or activity. Excused tardies are traffic, road conditions, medical appointments, severe weather, etc., or as determined by the school administration. Students in Grades 5-8 must perform a detention assignment for every 10 unexcused tardies.

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day unless the child has parental permission in writing and the permission of office personnel. A child must be signed out by the parent or appropriate designee in the school office. If the child returns to school during the same day, he/she must be signed back into the school office by the parent or appropriate designee. **Every attempt should be made to schedule appointments for students outside of school hours.**

A student will only be considered as having **Perfect Attendance** for attending school every day **AND** having no more than two tardies.

All extra-curricular activities require attendance at school the day of the activity. The child must attend at least half of the school day or he/she will not be allowed to participate in sporting events, clubs, plays, programs, graduation, etc. or their practices that follow the school day.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAYS (WEATHER-RELATED)**

St. Matthew School recognizes the importance of being open to provide as much instructional time as possible for our students. However, the safety of our staff and students in traveling to and from school is of paramount importance, as is having enough students present to continue with meaningful instruction. Therefore, in some weather-related

situations, St. Matthew School may have a two-hour delay or even close. School staff will monitor the situation closely and consult with others before making these decisions.

A decision to delay or close will first be delivered to all major Indianapolis TV stations, so please tune to those for possible closing information. Whenever school is closed or delayed due to weather, that announcement will precede any other announcement by our phone system. Our parents will also be notified by our automated call system in case of closure, delay, or other important information.

If the school operates on a delay, the Extended Morning Care normally provided will begin at **9 a.m.**

### **ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, EXTENDED CARE**

The parish will assume ordinary responsibility for students between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Students who arrive before 7:30 a.m. or staying after 3:00 p.m. must report to the Extended Care program. Students are permitted access to their classrooms at 7:30 a.m. on school days. There is no fee associated with arrival before 7:30 a.m.

**Arrival:** All drivers who bring children to school in the morning are asked to enter the front parking lot by way of the drive near the football field and drive east to Carpool A. Drop the child at the “safety zone” and then proceed to Forest Manor. **PLEASE DO NOT LET CHILDREN OUT OF THE CAR BEFORE REACHING THE SAFETY ZONE.** Always pull forward to the traffic cones marking the end of the unloading zone. Children should not open car doors until the vehicle comes to a complete stop, and they should exit the car only from the passenger’s side. No student is to be dropped off at any other area. If the driver needs to come into the building, please do not park in the flow of traffic or in the safety zone.

**Dismissal:** All students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Any student riding or walking home with someone other than normal must have a signed written note by his/her parent or legal guardian. Anyone with a Pre K-2 student to pick up will be in the back parking lot in Carpool C. Siblings of Pre K-2 students in higher grades will be in the back with their ride.

**After-School Extended Care Pickup:** All students who participate in after school care and are picked up after 3:30 p.m. must be picked up from the Cafeteria by using the Carpool A doorway (Door #5) and ramp into the Cafeteria.

### **EXTENDED CARE**

St. Matthew provides the opportunity for Extended Care for those parents who cannot have their child picked up at 3 p.m. each day. The hours of operation for Extended Care are from 3:00-6:00 p.m. on all days St. Matthew is in session for a full school day (there will be no Extended Care on early dismissal days). Students who are not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be required to go to Extended Day at the parents’ expense.

Fees for using Extended Care for the 2011-2012 school year are unchanged from last year. There is a \$10 registration fee per family, and then there is a \$3 per hour fee for the first child and an additional \$2 per hour fee for the second and other children. Payments are pro-rated by the half-hour. Any child picked up after 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$1 per minute past 6:00. Extended Care payments are due on Friday or the following Monday for the previous week, and families delinquent in their payment of their accounts will be ineligible to use the program until the account is made current.

Students signed into Extended Care must be signed out at the table in the cafeteria by parents, guardians, authorized adults, or high school age siblings. Please have a valid picture ID available to show staff members when asked to do so. Students needing to go to an extracurricular event from the Extended Care program will need a note from a parent or guardian giving them permission to be signed out by an Extended Care staff member.

Further information about the Extended Care program is available in the Orientation Packet or from the school office.

## **ACADEMICS**

### ***HOMEROOM ASSIGNMENT POLICY***

Students are placed in homerooms based on many factors. The male-female ratio and the leadership, academic, and behavioral needs of each child and the composition of the entire classroom are included in determining class makeup. We do not accept parental requests for placement in specific classes. The sending teachers (previous school year's teacher) have responsibility for class lists for the following year. Parents may alert the teacher to specific needs of their child, but it is not appropriate to request a specific teacher for the child. You have trusted us with your children; please trust us with their class placement. We do not change class lists once determined with the exception of new or withdrawing students or in the cases of extenuating circumstances.

### ***GRADING SCALE/REPORT CARDS/CONFERENCES***

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and St. Matthew Catholic School have adopted the following grade scale for all levels:

A	95-100
B	86-94
C	76-85
D	70-75
F	69 and below

Parents and students are encouraged to use the on-line grading website frequently for an up-to-date grade report. Your personal user name and password will be issued during the first week of school. Teachers are expected to keep their on-line grade books current within a week's period.

Parents are encouraged to keep in close contact with their child's teachers concerning their child's academic and social progress. Progress reports will be e-mailed at mid-quarter. The first quarter report card will be distributed at student conferences. If you have any questions about the progress reports or report cards, please contact your child's teacher.

Parent-teacher conferences, progress reports, end of quarter dates, and report card issue dates are available on the school calendar.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is expected to be completed and turned in when assigned. If a teacher needs to keep a child after school, the parent will be contacted; however, the parent is responsible for transportation or Extended Care fees. Grades 5 through 8 have specifically outlined their homework policy below.

### **GRADES 5-8 HOMEWORK POLICY AND EXTRA CREDIT**

Our school expects all homework to be completed and turned in on time. "On time" is at the beginning of the class period where that assignment is needed.

In the case of absence, one day will be given for makeup work for each day absent. It is the student's responsibility to turn in late work when returning from an absence. Projects and long-term assignments are excluded from this policy. They (long-term assignments and projects) must be turned in on time for credit. If a student is late for a school day and he/she misses a class, then he/she is still responsible to turn in any and all assignments that were due that day. Middle School students are also asked to check on missing homework while absent and complete as much as they can so as not to fall further behind.

Students need to plan homework time so the work is spread out adequately. Homework includes not only completing classroom assignments, but also studying, reviewing, preparing for tests, preparing for class, and assembling classroom materials.

**Extra Credit-** Student grades are based on daily work, test scores, projects, etc. Extra credit does not support high academic standards. Therefore, no extra credit assignments will be given to boost a student's grade.

All Middle School (Grade 6-8) core classes will meet on a daily basis. Enrichment courses will be held once a week on a rotating basis and will include Flex Periods that may be used for many different purposes. Beginning in 2011-2012, Band will also be held DURING the school day, and General Music students will be in a Flex Period during this time, while Band students will be in a Flex Period during General Music class. This class schedule should allow students sufficient time to prepare for each core subject (Religion, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts, Health, and Physical Education).

#### **Middle School Time Schedule**

Homeroom	7:50-7:55
Period 1	7:57-8:42
Period 2	8:45-9:30
Period 3	9:33-10:18
Period 4	10:21-11:06
Period 5	11:09-11:54
Lunch	11:57-12:20
Period 6	12:23-1:08
Period 7	1:11-1:56
Period 8	1:59-2:44
Homeroom	2:47-3:00

### Middle School Class Schedule

	Mr. Barth	Ms. Kaster	Mrs. Marsh	Mr. Moyer	Mr. Strass	Mrs. Watt
<i>Homeroom</i>						
<i>Period 1</i>	<i>Enrichment 1</i>					
<i>Period 2</i>	6Red	7S	8W	7K	8M	6White
<i>Period 3</i>	<i>Enrichment 2</i>					
<i>Period 4</i>	6White	7L	8M	7S	8W	6Red
<i>Period 5</i>	7Red	8M	6M (LA)	8W	6B	7White
<i>Lunch</i>						
<i>Period 6</i>	7White	8W	6B (LA)	8M	6M	7Red
<i>Period 7</i>	8Red	6B (Rel)	7K	6M	7K	8White
<i>Period 8</i>	8White	6M (Rel)	7S	6B	7S	8Red
<i>Homeroom</i>						

### Middle School Enrichment Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<i>6Barth</i>	Fitness	Band/Flex	Flex	Band/Flex	Computer
	Music/Flex		Mass	Flex	Art
<i>6Marsh</i>	Music/Flex	Band/Flex	Flex	Band/Flex	Art
	Fitness	Flex	Mass	Flex	Computer
<i>7Kaster</i>	Flex	Band/Flex	Flex	Band/Flex	Fitness
	Computer	Music/Flex	Mass	Art	Flex
<i>7Strass</i>	Computer	Band/Flex	Flex	Band/Flex	Flex
	Flex	Art	Mass	Music/Flex	Fitness
<i>8Moyer</i>	Art	Band/Flex	Flex	Band/Flex	Music/Flex
	Flex	Fitness	Mass	Computer	Flex
<i>8Watt</i>	Flex	Band/Flex	Flex	Band/Flex	Music/Flex
	Art	Computer	Mass	Fitness	Flex

Lower School (Primary [K-3] and Elementary (4-5) Enrichment and Core Subject daily schedules are classroom specific and vary by grade level. The Special classes include Art, Music, and Physical Education. Library classes will be time-dependent upon the classroom's weekly schedule.

**K-5 Unified Arts Schedule - 2011-2012**

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<i>KS</i>	P.E. – 2:00	Art – 2:00	P.E. – 2:00	Comp – 12:00	Music – 2:00
	Music – 1:25			Art – 2:00	
<i>1C</i>	Music - 12:20	P.E. – 12:30	Art - 1:10	Music – 12:20	P.E. – 12:30
	Comp. – 1:05	Art – 1:10			
<i>1H</i>	Art - 12:20	Music – 12:20	P.E. – 1:05	Art – 12:20	Music – 12:20
	P.E. – 1:05	Comp. – 1:05			
<i>2K</i>	Art – 2:00	P.E. – 2:00	Music – 1:15	P.E. – 2:00	Music – 1:15
			Art – 2:00		
<i>3H</i>	P.E. – 11:15	Art - 10:30	P.E. – 11:15	Art - 10:30	Comp. – 11:15
		Music – 11:15		Music – 11:15	
<i>3N</i>	P.E. – 10:30	Music - 10:30	P.E. – 10:30	Music - 10:30	Comp. – 10:30
		Art – 11:15		Art – 11:15	
<i>4R</i>	Music – 10:30	Comp – 10:30	Art – 9:45	P.E. – 12:55	Art - 10:30
			Music – 10:30		P.E. – 11:15
<i>4W</i>	Art – 10:30	P.E. – 10:30	Music – 9:45	P.E. – 10:30	Music – 10:30
			Art – 10:30	Comp – 12:55	
<i>5H</i>	Art – 1:05	Music – 1:05	P.E. – 9:35	Music – 1:05	P.E. – 10:30
		Comp. – 2:00			Art – 1:05

**School Recess/Lunch Schedule**

	<b>K-1-2</b>	<b>3-4-5</b>	<b>6-7-8</b>
<i>Recess</i>	10:55-11:20	12:00-12:20	
<i>Lunch</i>	11:25-11:50	12:23-12:48	11:57-12:20

### ***STUDY HABITS/GUIDE CHECKLIST***

The following is a list of suggestions for effective study time and practices by the students at home. It is important that all parents implement positive study habits so all students can be successful learners.

1. Your child should have a consistent time and place to complete homework.
2. The study area should be quiet and well-lit.
3. Check assignment notebooks daily for homework and due dates. Students in Grades 2-8 are required to keep an assignment notebook daily throughout the school year. The school will provide these on the first day of school. If a replacement is needed during the school year, it is the responsibility of the student/parent to purchase an additional assignment book at \$5.00 per book.
4. Review and correct graded work with your child. Return the work to school if requested by the teacher.
5. Parents, **please** check completion of all assignments. This is the number one way to help ensure academic success by avoiding missing assignments and allowing students to avoid developing bad habits.
6. Place completed work in book bags, folders, or backpacks.
7. Check that your child brings some work home each day. Homework is not merely completing classroom assignments. It also should include reviewing notes, texts, and materials, reading, and studying for tests/quizzes long before the actual assessment date.
8. If your child does not record assignments in his/her assignment notebook, thus resulting in incomplete or missing assignments, establish consistent consequences at home. Check our Homework Hotline for assignments (251-3997).

Students should know and accept the academic consequences for incomplete, late, or unacceptable work. Grades 5-8 have other specific guidelines previously stated in dealing with late or missing homework.

A number of families have reported great success in setting a routine allotted time for studying, homework, or reading. If your child completes his/her written homework in less than expected time, remaining time should be spent studying, reviewing math facts, reading, or with other educational activities and goals in mind.

### ***MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC SUCCESS***

St. Matthew School is committed to strive for educational excellence. Students who attend St. Matthew School are expected to maintain continued academic success.

If a student receives a D or F in any subject at progress report or end-of-quarter report card, parents and teachers should be in communication to see what can be done to help the student improve. Core Subjects are defined as Math, Social Studies, Science, Language Arts, Religion, and Physical Education/Health. Grades in all Unified Arts courses will be monitored, as well. Percent equivalents for the D or F grades are as outlined in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis grading scale (percentage grades include a D being between 70-75 and an F being 69 and below).

This parent contact serves as impetus to the parent that intervention may be necessary in order for the student to maintain C average work at the very least. Either party may schedule a parent/teacher meeting to determine any additional course of action needed as deemed appropriate.

In the instance of an F, when the teacher contacts the parent, he/she will discuss the reason for the failure and document the conversation accordingly. Suggestions for positive intervention will be discussed. Going forward, the

progress of the student will continue to be documented based on teacher observation, electronic grading, progress report grades, and the end-of-quarter report cards. Both the teacher and parent share responsibility for this monitoring and the accuracy of the documentation and progress. The purpose of this documentation is on behalf of the student to ensure that positive interventions and subsequent plans and follow-up are in place.

In the event the student is still not successful, the student may not be promoted to the next grade level if he/she receives an F in any three Core Subjects for two or more quarters during the school year. Every effort will be made to avoid this consequence, but demonstration of mastery of appropriate grade-level and content standards is necessary for future student success, so this step would be taken for the benefit of the student if necessary.

### **LITURGY AND SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Students will attend Mass at St. Matthew Catholic Church once each week, normally on Wednesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. Parents are welcome to attend. At times, Mass may be held on another day due to Holy Days of Obligation or other schedule needs. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in all liturgies and services.

St. Matthew Catholic Church sponsors sacramental preparation. Children who are Catholic receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the fall of the second grade and Holy Eucharist/First Communion in the spring of second grade. Parents are required to attend a parent program offered by the parish, and the children will be required to attend some meetings or practices outside of school time, as well. The Parish Director of Religious Education is the coordinator for second grade sacramental programs.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will also be offered to older students during the school year. Each student is expected to participate.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The goal of the Discipline Policy of St. Matthew Catholic School is to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to learn to his or her potential in a safe, secure, orderly environment for himself or herself and others. As mentioned previously in the Welcome section, our Discipline Policy is founded on and attempts to instill in all students the Big R concept of Respect, Responsibility, and Resembling God.

## **ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS - GUIDELINE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ON RESPECTING PERSONS**

One of the benchmarks of authentic Catholic education is its commitment to the intrinsic dignity of each student as a child of God. In order to assist our Catholic schools in promoting this fundamental element of their identity, this guideline is required for incorporating into school handbooks.

- *The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, staff member, and adult volunteer is vitally important. In order to protect students, employees, volunteers, and the school/archdiocese itself, each student is expected to treat the good name and reputation of other students, school employees, volunteers, and the school/archdiocese with dignity and respect and not engage in any activity or conduct, either on campus or off campus, that is in opposition to this policy and/or inconsistent with the Catholic Christian principles of the school as determined by the school in its discretion. Any derogatory, slanderous, hostile, or threatening remarks or actions toward any of the above by a student will be seen as a violation of this policy and will be viewed as an extremely serious matter, whether it is done physically, verbally, or electronically through the use of a home or school computer, phone, iPad, or other electronic media or by remote access during school time or after hours. Some examples include, but are not limited to, social media, text messages, blogging, images, pictures, etc. Any individual found to have made or participated with others in making, repeating, or forwarding any such remarks or actions will be subject to disciplinary action by the school, up to and including expulsion/dismissal.*

School officials may find it necessary to discipline students when their behavior interferes with school purposes or educational functions of the school. In accordance with the provisions of I.C. 20-8.1-5.1, administrators and staff members may take the following actions:

- **Removal from class or activity (Teacher)** - A teacher may remove a student from the teacher's class or activity for a period of one school day if the student is assigned regular or additional work to be completed in another school setting.
- **Suspension from school (Principal)** - A school principal (or designee) may deny a student the right to attend school or take part in any school function for a period of up to 10 school days.
- **Expulsion (Principal)** - A student may be expelled from school permanently.

### **GROUNDINGS FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION**

The grounds for suspension or expulsion apply when a student is:

- On school or parish grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; or
- Off school or parish grounds at a school activity, function, or event; or
- Traveling to or from school on a school activity, function, or event; or
- When the student's actions off school or parish grounds are deemed by the Faculty Climate Committee to endanger other students or community members or attempt to intimidate or bully others, or when these actions bring considerable disrepute to the name of St. Matthew or are contrary to the principles of the Catholic Church.

### **STUDENT MISCONDUCT AND/OR SUBSTANTIAL DISOBEDIENCE**

Teachers, staff members, and administrators have an expectation to maintain order in a fair and consistent manner. Thus, staff members have the need to investigate and act in matters involving student misconduct. The principal or

his/her designee has the right to search a student's locker, person, coat, book bag, and/or other personal belongings when deemed necessary.

Examples of student misconduct and/or substantial disobedience for which a student may receive consequences, such as detention, suspension, or expulsion, include but are not limited to:

- Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the type of conduct prohibited by this rule:
  - Occupying the school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
  - Blocking the entrance or exits of the school building, corridor, or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
  - Setting fire or damaging any school building or property.
  - Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or education function, or of any meeting or assembly on school or parish property.
  - Intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere with the ability of any teacher or any other person to conduct or participate in an education function.
  - Traveling to or occupying any room or areas deemed off-limits without proper supervision and/or permission.
- Engaging in any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another person or urging of other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to coercion, harassment, bullying, hazing, or other comparable conduct.
- Engaging in violence and/or threat of violence against any student, staff member, and/or other persons. Prohibited violent or threatening conduct includes threatening, planning, or conspiring with others to engage in a violent activity.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property belonging to others, or stealing or attempting to steal private property belonging to others.
- Causing or attempting to cause physical injury or behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person. Self-defense or reasonable action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect oneself or some other person is not a violation of this rule, but otherwise the traditional caution to "keep your hands to yourself" is the best policy.
- Threatening, intimidating, or cheating any person for any purpose, including obtaining money or anything of value.
- Threatening (whether specific or general in nature) damage or injury to persons or property, regardless of whether there is a present ability or intent to commit the act.
- Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
- Possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, is represented to be a weapon, or looks like a weapon.
- Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by any controlled substance, prescription drug (that is not the student's own or properly dispensed), narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, intoxicant, or depressant of any kind, or any paraphernalia used in connection with the listed

substances. Also prohibited is the consumption of any of the stated substances immediately before attending school or a school function or event.

- Exception to the above rule: A student with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer prescribed medication for the disease or condition if the student's parent has filed a written authorization with the main office. The written authorization must be filed annually, and it is also the responsibility of the parent to provide immediately any changes that occur to the order during the school year. The written authorization must be done by a physician and include the following information:

- That the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the physician has prescribed medication.
- The nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the prescribed medication.
- The student has been instructed in how to self-administer the prescribed medication.
- The student is authorized to possess and self-administer the prescribed medication.

- Possessing, using, transmitting, any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, intoxicant, or other controlled substance of any kind.
- Possessing, using, transmitting, or being affected by caffeine-based substances other than beverages, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), stimulants of any kind, or any other similar over-the-counter products.
- Possessing, using, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco products of any kind or in any form.
- Offering to sell or agreeing to purchase a controlled substance or alcoholic beverage.
- Failing to comply with the directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under the supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes of an educational function.
- Failing to respond completely and truthfully to questions from a staff member regarding school-related matters including potential violations of the student conduct rules or local, state, or federal laws.
- Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or of violating a school rule and/or local, state, or federal law.
- Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
- Aiding, assisting, or conspiring with another person to violate these student conduct rules and/or local, state, or federal laws.
- Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, copying answers, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores, or changing scores and grades.
- Talking or displaying pictures (digital or otherwise) without the consent of the student or staff member in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
- Engaging in pranks that could result in harm to another person.
- Use or possession of gunpowder, ammunition, or a flammable substance.
- Violating any rules that are reasonably necessary in carrying out school purposes or an educational function, including but not limited to:
  - Engaging in sexual behavior on school or parish property.
  - Engaging in sexual harassment of a student, staff member, or other person.
  - Disobedience of administrative authority.

- Willful absence or tardiness of students.
- Engaging in speech or conduct, including clothing, jewelry, or hair style, that is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, refers to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, sexual behavior, or illegal activity, or that is plainly offensive to others and/or disruptive to school purposes’
- Violation of the school’s Acceptable Use of Technology Policy or rules.
- Violation of the school’s Administration of Medication Policy or rules.
- Possessing or using a laser pointer or similar device.
- Possessing or using during school hours on school grounds any electronic device, cellular telephone, or any other telecommunication or mechanical device, in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
- Use of any cellular telephone, electronic device, or any other telecommunication or mechanical device during Extended Care time without the permission of Extended Care staff.
- Any student conduct rule the school building principal establishes and gives publication of to all students and parents in the school.
- Any activity that is unbecoming to the Christian Faith or behavior that violates the Gospel standards.

### ***BULLYING***

This rule applies when a student is:

- On school grounds immediately before, during, or after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group.
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.
- Traveling to or from school on a school activity, function, or event.
- Using property or equipment provided by the school.
- At any time when the results of the action (including but not limited to online postings) are meant to bully, intimidate, embarrass, harass, ridicule, humiliate, or cause harm to, physical or psychological, another student and whose effects can reasonably be expected to continue through the school day.

Bullying by a student or groups of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other student through overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted, and/or physical acts committed, or any other similar behavior is prohibited.

Parents of students who suspect that repeated acts of bullying are taking place should report the matter to the school principal or designee. School personnel will investigate all reports of bullying.

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate interventions, restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation.

Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying.

St. Matthew School encourages all parties to engage students, staff, and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through the PFA.

The aim of this anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learning in a supportive, caring, and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behavior and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to benefit fully from the educational opportunities available at St. Matthew.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behavior, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft, etc.)
- Verbal (Name calling, racist remarks, etc.)
- Indirect (Spreading rumors, excluding someone from social groups, etc.)

Students who are being bullied may show changes in behavior, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration, or truancy from school. Students will be encouraged and supported to report bullying to school to teachers, administrators, or other staff members as well as to their parents and/or responsible adults.

School staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this school policy. Indiana schools have a legal duty under Indiana law to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents, and students.

The following steps may be taken by the school when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of the staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be written and given to the office.
- The principal or his/her designee will interview all concerned and will write further to document the incident.
- Parents will be informed.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the pupil.
- Offering continuous support.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Students who have committed acts of bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the pupil became involved.
- Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken in acts of bullying:

- Official warnings to cease the offending actions.
- Detention

- Exclusion from certain school activities.
- Minor fixed-term exclusion
- Major fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent expulsion

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in a character-building program, assemblies, and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behavior.

### ***DETENTION POLICY K-8***

St. Matthew Catholic School does not simply assign detentions and/or other consequences to punish the student. The intent is to change the behavior and help the students make wise choices, instilling good habits and decision-making processes in them. According to a review of the research, consequences such as detentions and suspensions are effective tools. “These sanctions were generally perceived to reduce behavior problems” and also “reported positive impacts on self-control” as well as “student grades were perceived to improve” (Moles 33).

For this reason, detentions are school-wide throughout St. Matthew School. They may be assigned to any student by any teacher or staff member for not following school procedures. The history, problem being reported, and corrective action taken will be documented in the St. Matthew Discipline Report. This will then be signed by the teacher, student, and parent and kept in the student’s file. Signed Discipline Reports must be returned the day after the detention is received.

- A **Minor Offense** may be addressed with a warning and result in a detention after a second infraction. The minor offenses include but are not limited to:
  - Not following school procedures
  - Not in assigned location
  - Uniform infractions (not following the uniform procedures written in the handbook)
  - Other offenses under the discretion of the teacher or staff member
- A **Serious Offense** may result in a detention to be served the next assigned detention day and/or other consequences as deemed appropriate by the administration. Serious offenses include but are not limited to:
  - Fighting
  - Rough behavior
  - Cheating/Academic Dishonesty
  - Unacceptable language
  - Damage to property or facilities
  - Name calling
  - Threatening behavior
  - Disrespectful behavior to peers or adults
  - Other offenses under the discretion of the teacher or staff member

If a student receives a detention, he/she is required to complete a written report/project. The length and topic of this report will be assigned based on the grade level of the student and the specific category of the infraction (i.e. Tardy,

Uniform, or Behavior). Parents must sign a written notice of the detention that also has the requirements for that particular detention assignment.

All detention projects/reports are due the following Monday after the detention is received, regardless of the day received. If the project/report is not completed, not turned in on time, and/or not completed in an acceptable manner, an immediate in-school suspension will be enforced to complete the project/report and a zero will be received for that day on all school work.

As noted before, students will be given a detention assignment for every **10** unexcused tardies. Excluded tardies are traffic, road conditions, medical appointments, severe weather, etc. or as determined by the school administration.

The school administration and staff will review this policy as needed and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

The parish's policy on school admission is available upon request from the parish or school office.

### **ADMITTANCE AND USE OF BUILDING POLICY**

St. Matthew Catholic School provides childcare both before and after school hours. Students are permitted to travel to their homerooms at the beginning of the school day at 7:30 a.m. Any student arriving prior to that time should enter the building and immediately proceed to the cafeteria where morning Extended Care is offered. There is no fee for students who utilize this supervision program prior to 7:30 a.m. Carpool A (Door #5) doors open at 7:30 a.m.

On the playground and all other areas of the St. Matthew buildings and grounds, the students are expected to obey the people on duty. All school expectations and procedures are to be followed while on the playground before, during, and after school hours. Students may not leave the playground or re-enter the building during recess without permission of the adult on duty. There is to be no eating, gum chewing, or drinking while on the playground before, during, or after school hours. During the winter months when snow has been plowed and piled on the parking area, no student is permitted to play upon the snow piles.

Outdoor recess will be held unless the outdoor temperature (or equivalent wind chill factor) is 20 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Parents should plan to provide students with warm clothing in layers, hat, and gloves for outside recess during the winter.

Middle school students are not permitted to play upon the elementary/primary equipment with the exception of the swings.

St. Matthew Catholic School accepts no liability for use of buildings or grounds before or after school, when school is not in session, or when waiting for parish or non-school activities, athletic practices and events, social activities or any other activities outside of the school day.

## **BACKPACKS**

Students are not permitted to use backpacks to carry books between classes. This is a health and safety issue. Students too often put every book they have in the packs, which makes the packs too heavy. Doctors report that students often suffer back and neck pain for carrying large, heavy loads. Also, our halls are not wide enough for students to carry large backpacks or use roller packs. Students may use backpacks to and from school, but not between classes. It is good policy for parents to monitor their child's backpack regardless of grade.

## **COMMUNICATION**

If any concerns or questions arise throughout the year concerning your child and his/her performance in the classroom, the following steps should be followed:

1. Contact your child's teacher first to discuss the matter in a private phone conference or to schedule an in-person conference, as needed.
2. If after discussing the matter with the teacher, then set up a private meeting with the school principal **and** the teacher. Research and experience show that most matters can be resolved between the parents and the teacher, so please do not skip this important step. However, if after doing so you still have concerns, a meeting between all parties can help develop needed action steps by all involved.

It is important that these steps are followed for the welfare of each child and the professional educators in our parish school. Concerns and issues are handled on an individual basis. The Office of Catholic Education and the pastor and principal of St. Matthew Catholic School do not advocate nor hold group sessions to discuss concerns or situations due to privacy concerns and in order to protect the integrity of the students, parents, and educators.

School homework listings are available after 4:00 p.m. by dialing (317) 251-3997 and keying in the appropriate teacher's Homework Hotline number, unless another means is indicated by your teacher. At that point, you should be able to retrieve your child's homework listing for the week or hear special announcements from the teacher.

By dialing the teacher's telephone extension number, you are able to leave a message for the teacher at their number. You may also email your teacher at their address listed in the directory. The teacher will make every attempt to return your call or email within a 24-hour period except on weekends and holidays or vacations. However, as in any business, it may be difficult to have a complete telephone follow-up in a short time.

Through our phone system, you may also leave your message regarding your child's absence for any particular day. Please make us aware of your child's absence by 8:30 a.m. on the day he/she is absent; otherwise, you may receive a follow-up call that day.

Contact numbers and information for all staff members are included at the back of this Handbook.

## **DRESS CODE UNIFORM POLICY**

**Pants:** Navy blue or khaki pants of cotton, twill or corduroy material. No denim is allowed. The pants are to be plain, straight leg, and free of ornamentation. For example, no lower pockets, no five-pocket style (cargo), no front seams, and no brass/silver studs are permitted. Pant legs can have no cuts or flaring at the bottom. Elastic waistbands are acceptable if neat in appearance. Pants must be worn at the waist with a belt. They must be of proper fit in both size and length. Girls in Grades 4 through 8 may not wear pants on Mass days- SMS uniform skirts or “skorts” are expected to be worn except during January and February.

**Shorts:** Shorts may be worn from the beginning of school in August to October 15 of each year. Shorts may again be worn beginning with the school day following Spring Break. Shorts must be navy blue or khaki walking shorts. The shorts MUST be within two inches of the knee. The shorts must also be the correct size and not too tight or too baggy. Sagging of clothing is not appropriate, and neither is clothing that is too tight for the student. No lower pockets, no five-pocket style (cargo), no front seams, and no brass/silver studs are permitted. Elastic waistbands are acceptable if neat in appearance.

**Shirts:** Plain, red polo-type knit shirts with collars and no logos are expected. Students are expected to wear an SMS red logo shirt on Mass days or on study trips outside of the building unless otherwise indicated by the supervising study trip teacher. In recognition of the excellent leadership they provide, 8<sup>th</sup> grade leadership shirts are permissible for 8<sup>th</sup> graders in lieu of the required SMS logo shirt. The opportunity to wear these leadership shirts is a privilege, not a right, and behavior should exemplify the privilege as we know it will. No denim shirts are allowed. Red turtlenecks may be worn during cold weather. Shirrtails must be worn completely inside pants or shorts for both boys and girls. If an undershirt is worn under the uniform shirt, it must be plain white and short-sleeved with no ornamentation or designs. No emblems of any kind are allowed on uniform shirts except a St. Matthew emblem.

**Sweaters:** Navy blue or hunter green long sleeve pullovers, cardigans, or vests are permitted.

**Sweatshirts:** St. Matthew School crew-neck sweatshirts purchased through the PFA may be worn as part of the school uniform during cold weather. No hooded sweatshirts are allowed to be worn during the school day.

**Shoes:** All shoes must be closed-toe and closed-heel. No sandals, “heelies”, crocs, or clogs are allowed. Laces must be tied properly, and shoes are not permitted to be loose-fitted or flopping. No high-heeled or platform shoes are allowed at school.

**Socks:** Socks must be worn at all times. The color may be white, black, red, green or navy blue. Socks must be a solid color and be visible. Full crew or half-crew socks are most appropriate, but whatever style must be visible.

**Tights (Girls):** Tights are optional, but if worn the color may be white, red, green, or navy blue. The socks/tights must be a solid color.

**Skirts (Girls):** An SMS uniform skirt or SMS uniform “skort” is required for Grades 4 through 8. SMS uniform skirts or “skorts” are available at either Campus Outfitters or SchoolBelles. Skirts or “skorts” should be hemmed to touch the top of the knee. It is required that girls Grades 4 through 8 will dress in SMS uniform skirts or SMS uniform “skorts” on Mass days (except during January and February) as well as some study trips as announced by the supervising teacher in

charge of the study trip. SMS uniform skirts or SMS uniform “skorts” should be properly fitted to allow girls to tuck in shirtheads completely. Rolled shirts and untucked shirts may result in a non-uniform detention notice.

**Jumpers (Girls):** An SMS uniform jumper is required for girls in Grades Kindergarten through 3. SMS jumpers should be hemmed to touch the top of the knee. SMS jumpers are required to be worn on Mass days except during January and February.

**Gym Attire:** All students in Grades 3 through 8 are required to purchase a gym uniform shirt. This uniform must be purchased through the PFA. Any red “basketball type” shorts are permitted. Self-labeled pants and shirts are required. Students should keep their gym uniforms in a small gym bag which can be taken back and forth from home and school for laundering. If a student is in need of deodorant for after-gym use or other times in the building, he/she will be permitted use of roll-on or stick deodorants only provided from home. Spray aerosols are not permitted.

**Miscellaneous Items/Hair/Jewelry/Etc.:** Boys must maintain a hair length above the collar. No student may wear disruptive hairstyles or designs in the hair. No coloring or dyeing of hair by boys or girls is allowed. The principal will decide if a hairstyle is disruptive to the school environment. Boys may not wear earrings, and girls may not wear dangling earrings. Earrings worn by girls must be worn on the lower lobe and only one earring for the girls in each ear lobe is permitted. Since St. Paul tells us that our bodies are a Temple of God, other body piercings and tattoos are unacceptable for all students. This includes students marking upon themselves with magic markers, pens, and other materials. Students may not wear flashy or disruptive jewelry. Elastic bands (bracelets) are not acceptable items to wear. This includes “silly bands”. Colored nail polish, lipstick, eye shadow, mascara, eyeliner, etc. are not permitted to be worn. Students will be sent to the office to remove such items.

**Non-Uniform Days/Spirit Days:** Special Non-Uniform and Spirit Days are held occasionally throughout the school year and are scheduled as approved by the principal. On these days the attire must be keeping in the spirit of the day and meet all announced requirements. Attire may include denim or jeans as announced but can have no holes, no tears, no tattered edges or bottoms, no fringes, and no decorations.

All uniform and non-uniform attire must be appropriate and keeping in the spirit of the day and the values of the school. No violent or un-Christian-like attire is permitted. Clothing must be properly fitted, as well. Neither loose-fitting clothing nor tight clothing is acceptable. All other uniform, jewelry, hair, makeup, etc. requirements must be met as stated in this handbook unless otherwise announced.

**If questionable uniform items are worn at any time throughout the school year, it is the discretion of the school to have final approval and/or to request a clothing change.**

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Personal technology items are discouraged at school unless being used for legitimate educational purposes as sanctioned by a staff member. Students are **NOT PERMITTED** to carry cell phones, pagers, or other portable communication devices. Expensive toys, Ipods, MP3 players, radios, CD or DVD players, etc. are not appropriate for school and should not be brought to school. Such items will be confiscated if found and may only be returned to a parent. St. Matthew School does not assume responsibility for loss or damage to electronic devices brought to school .

## **HEALTH**

An annual Student Emergency Form should be turned in at Orientation. It is imperative to update the status of your child's health throughout the year. For example, parents should notify the office if their child has a contagious disease or a newly diagnosed health disorder (i.e. bee sting reaction).

In case of serious accident or sudden illness, parents are notified immediately. It is imperative that parents keep the Emergency Information Sheet up-to-date with any changes in telephone numbers so the office can reach parents or other emergency contacts at any time. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the school informed on how to contact the family in any situation, including being out of town for a short or extended period of time.

When a student is injured, school personnel are permitted to wash a wound with soap and water but may not apply medication.

In cases of serious injury or other emergency, the student will be transported to the hospital of the parents' choice by ambulance.

As the State of Indiana and St. Matthew Catholic School's health policies have changed, please review our health policies as published on our website.

## **LUNCH**

Students may bring or purchase their lunch at school each day. St. Matthew Catholic School offers lunch and milk under the Federal Government Lunch Program. Cost for the hot lunch menu items or the cold salad bar is set at \$2.30 per student and includes milk. Milk may also be purchased individually for students who bring their lunches at 40 cents each. The cost of lunch for parents and visitors is \$3.00.

Parents may send in a check for each child on the first day of the week. Students who forget their tickets or lunch may borrow a lunch. However, the price of the borrowed lunch is \$2.50.

## ***WELLNESS POLICY***

St. Matthew School, in recognition that children need to be physically fit, eat properly, and maintain mental wellness, has instituted a Wellness Plan. Copies of the policy can be obtained by calling the school office.

## **MONEY**

Any money that is sent to the school with the students should be in an envelope marked with the child's name, homeroom, amount enclosed, and the purpose of the money. One check is acceptable provided the breakdown is itemized on the envelope. Please make checks payable to *St. Matthew School*.

## **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Junior Honor Society chapter of St. Matthew Catholic School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in five areas of evaluation: scholarship, service, leadership, citizenship, and character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of National Junior Honor Society and have been revised to meet our local chapter needs. Students are selected to be members by a five member Faculty Council, appointed by the principal, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the school each February/March. There may also be a fall induction for 8<sup>th</sup> grade only.

Students in grades seven or eight are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have, at a minimum, one of the following combinations of grades:

- two C's, two B's, and seven A's, OR
- one C, four B's, and six A's, OR
- no C's, six B's, and five A's

These grades include the four enrichment subjects of Art, Computer, Music, and Fitness, and seven core subjects of Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Religion, Health, and Physical Education for a total of eleven grades. For the service criterion, a student must have submitted timely his/her report on service hours required for Religion class, noting how the service hour minimum was obtained.

Those students who meet these criteria are invited to complete a Student Activity Form that provides the Faculty Council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and citizenship. A history of leadership, additional service, and citizenship experiences and participation in school, parish, or community is reported on the Student Activity Form. To evaluate a candidate's character, the Faculty Council review school disciplinary records and provide input on their own professional reflection on a candidate. A majority vote of the Faculty Council is necessary for selection.

Candidates are notified regarding selection or no selection via regular postal mail. For selected students, an induction ceremony is held at the school. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all five criteria that led to their selection.

Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations can contact the chapter adviser.

## **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT**

St. Matthew Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1975 with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court document to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child(ren). If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. The school asks all divorced parents to furnish the school with a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. This information is also necessary to help the school determine when, if ever, the child can be released to the non-custodial parent.

## **PARENT FACULTY ASSOCIATION (PFA)**

Membership in this Association is open to and encouraged for parents or legal guardians of children who attend St. Matthew Catholic School and who have paid their Association fee (\$35). Teachers and school staff are considered members of the PFA. The purpose of the PFA is:

- To provide a medium for parents and faculty to work together for the welfare of St. Matthew Catholic School.
- To provide a means of communication between parents and faculty. (This, however, does not include curriculum or instructional issues).
- To raise funds to augment the various programs of the school.
- To provide volunteers to assist teachers and staff.
- To provide a means for parent education.

## **RESOURCE AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

St. Matthew School is happy to provide a quality Student Support Program through our Resource Department. The Student Support Services staff provides the services of licensed teachers for students in need of remedial or other supportive-type services. A referral process determines student placement in the program. We are able to service a wide variety of needs, including approved Service Plans as well as other needs on an as-determined basis. We are happy to provide additional services to other students as we can. However, please be aware that our resources are limited, and we cannot offer specific services to everyone. If you have any concerns, please contact your student's teacher for more information about these services.

## **SCHOOL COMMISSION**

The St. Matthew School Commission is a commission that represents all parents and students. Membership on the Commission is comprised of representatives from St. Matthew Catholic School parents and parishioners. School Commission meetings are held once a month. Although meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend, individuals or delegations wishing to address the Commission should submit their request in writing to the School Administrator or Commission Chair at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Only those issues brought to this group in writing in advance will be on the agenda for that month's meeting.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Pictures of each student are taken each year. It is the parent's decision whether or not to purchase the pictures. If a parent chooses not to purchase the pictures, they must be returned to the school or the family will be charged for the pictures. Students are not required to wear school uniforms for these pictures, but dress must be modest and appropriate. Picture Day is scheduled in early fall and announced through various communication devices. Sports and group pictures are planned in the second semester, while spring individual pictures are scheduled for early March.

Pictures of students are taken throughout the school year at various events. Parents who do not wish individual pictures of their student published in various media need to indicate this on the Media Release Form at the beginning of each school year. This does not apply to group photos, only individual photos or photos where the student's name is noted.

## **SHADOW DAYS**

All of the local Catholic high schools hold Open Houses for students and families to visit their facilities and meet their staff. Some may also wish to have 8<sup>th</sup> grade students visit during a school's "Shadow Day." This is something that does not necessarily have to be done, but it is permitted by St. Matthew School with the following stipulations:

- The school office should be notified at least two days in advance.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are limited to two visit days for the year.
- The student is responsible for all work to be made up.
- Provided these provisions are met, this will be considered an excuse absence for the student.

## **SPORTS**

The St. Matthew Catholic Athletic Organization sponsors after-school sports to the students attending St. Matthew Catholic School and Parish. Other Catholic schools may participate in our programs, as well, provided their home Catholic parish school does not sponsor such a sport and that they meet the guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis Catholic Youth Organization.

St. Matthew is happy to offer the following sports:

**Girls:** Cross Country, Kickball, Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer, Track, Softball and Cheerleading

**Boys:** Cross Country, Football, Basketball, Wrestling, Soccer, Track, Volleyball and Baseball

### ***SMS AND CYO ATHLETIC POLICIES***

Team members may remain on school grounds after 3:00 p.m. dismissal only if the coach or an adult is present to supervise. Team members must dress for practice in the gym locker rooms between 3:00-3:10 p.m. and be responsible for the orderliness of the locker rooms and surrounding areas. If a coach is late for practice after school, then those students must report to Extended Care until the coach arrives at St. Matthew. No student is allowed to roam the building or be unsupervised.

If practices are held outside, team members must use the outdoor restroom facility near the soccer/football field. Students are not permitted to re-enter the school building for restroom purposes. If practices are scheduled in the gym, team members must use the restrooms in the gym.

Team members should make arrangements before leaving their home in the morning as the office telephones generally not be allowed by students. All students who are not team members must leave the parish premises at dismissal time or go to the Extended Care program.

Any student who has been assigned an in-school or out-of-school suspension automatically forfeits his/her right to participate in any meeting, practice, or game on those same days.

If a student is absent for an entire school day, he/she is not eligible to participate in practices or games on the same day. However, if a student is in attendance for half of the school day of classes, he/she is able to participate.

## **STUDENT ACCIDENTAL INSURANCE**

St. Matthew Catholic School and the Archdiocese carry supplemental insurance that helps cover common accidental injury such as falling on the playground, etc. The insurance covers what your personal family insurance does not cover. We work hard to avoid situations where students get hurt, but accidents do happen. Parents will be notified of any serious injury that might require a visit to a doctor or other follow-up. Contact the school office for a simplified claim form to reimburse for deductible costs and co-pays. Please note that this insurance also covers injuries from CYO sports.

## **STUDY TRIPS**

Study trips or field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to attend any trip or activity. Therefore, students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. Parents also have the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in a study trip.

St. Matthew Catholic School uses a standard form for all study trips. A signed permission slip to attend a specific out-of-building trip must be on file. If a student forgets to return the proper permission form signed by the parents, he/she will not be allowed to participate in the study trip. Parents may, however, fax their signed permission form on the day of the event. Per Archdiocesan guidelines, verbal permission cannot be allowed in lieu of a signed document.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

St. Matthew Catholic School has available a computer lab and networked system with multimedia computers for student use. **All students must have a Technology Acceptable Use Agreement signed by their parents each year in order to use the technology at St. Matthew.**

All computers are able to use the latest software, and all students and staff have access to the network for use at all grade levels for legitimate educational purposes, including instruction, word processing, data management, and research. Respect of others' files and copyright laws are expected. Cheating or vandalism on the computer system will not be tolerated. Diskettes, thumb drives, memory sticks, etc. and software from outside the school are not permitted on our computers unless permitted by the computer lab supervisor.

Students do have access to the Internet at St. Matthew for school projects and activities. Student use of this tool is governed by the Acceptable Use Agreement. Inappropriate use of the school system will not be tolerated, permitted, nor allowed and may result in disciplinary action in violation of this clause.

## **TESTING**

Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+) tests are given to children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade during the testing windows established by the Indiana State Department of Education during February-March and April-May. The results of all tests will be available online through the Internet announced by the Indiana Department of Education. St. Matthew Catholic School strives to continue its "Exemplary" classification by the State of Indiana by maintaining high student achievement on the ISTEP+ and academically overall.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students taking Algebra will also be given the opportunity to take the End-of-Course Assessment (ECA) that is required for high school graduation. Results will be forwarded to the high school of the student's choice, and further opportunities to achieve a Pass rating are available in high school.

### **TUITION POLICY**

The school's tuition plan and policy are available from the office upon request.

### **VISITORS**

Parents are encouraged to visit the school. A parent who wishes to visit a particular classroom must send a request to the teacher ahead of time. A parent who wishes to meet with a teacher **MUST** schedule an appointment ahead of time, as well. In order to protect teachers' preparation time, please do not plan to drop in to see if a staff member is available. Parents are asked not to go to the classroom before, during, or after instructional time to converse with the teacher or child or to stand outside the classroom unless an appointment has been made and communicated to the office.

To keep our school safe and orderly, **all visitors must check in at the school office and receive a visitor's pass.**

### **PHYSICAL PLANT**

#### ***EMERGENCY SITUATIONS***

The safety and well-being of our students, staff, and visitors is of the utmost concern. St. Matthew School has an extensive emergency plan prepared in coordination with the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. All staff members are aware of this plan and prepared to act in many different cases of emergency in the school setting to help ensure the safety of all students and staff members, and these procedures will help ensure as smooth and orderly a process as possible. Details of this plan are reviewed yearly and kept confidential under the advice of experts for the purpose of safety.

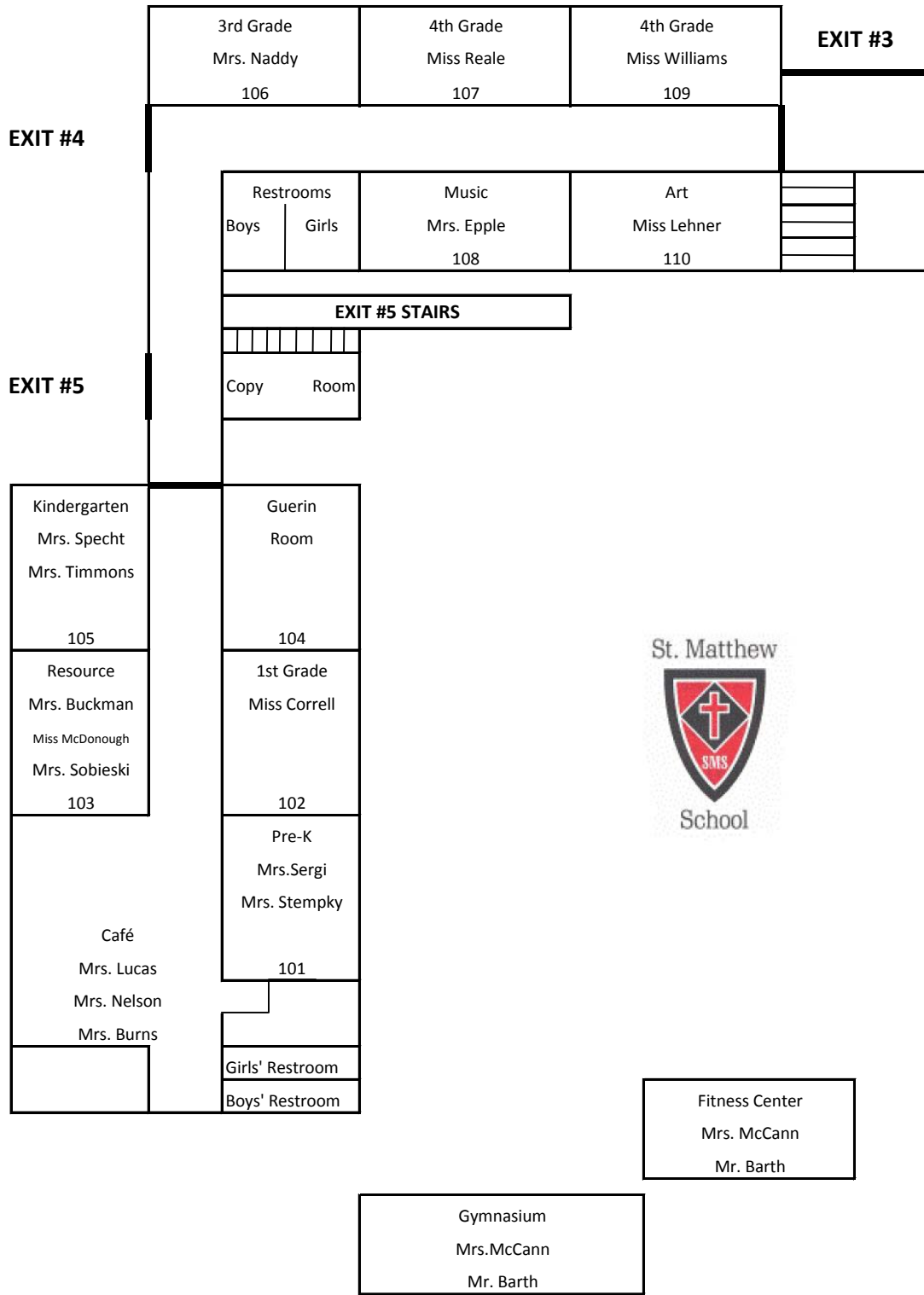
In the event of a necessary evacuation of St. Matthew Catholic School, all students will be moved to an off-site area. Parents, after being notified of such evacuation, will be instructed on the next steps and their ability to pick up their student at that site.

In the event of a Red Alert, the Governor has the authority to close schools. SMS will only close school in such situations in response to a directive from the Governor's Office or the Archdiocese of Indianapolis' Office of Catholic Education (OCE). Please be aware that an alert announced on a media will **NOT** trigger this procedure. Only an announcement from the Governor's Office or OCE will begin the process, and parents will be notified. Please be aware that it is also possible that a nationwide or statewide Red Alert may be in force, but the Governor or OCE may choose to close schools only in specific parts of the state in response to a specific credible threat. In that case, SMS will operate on a normal schedule.

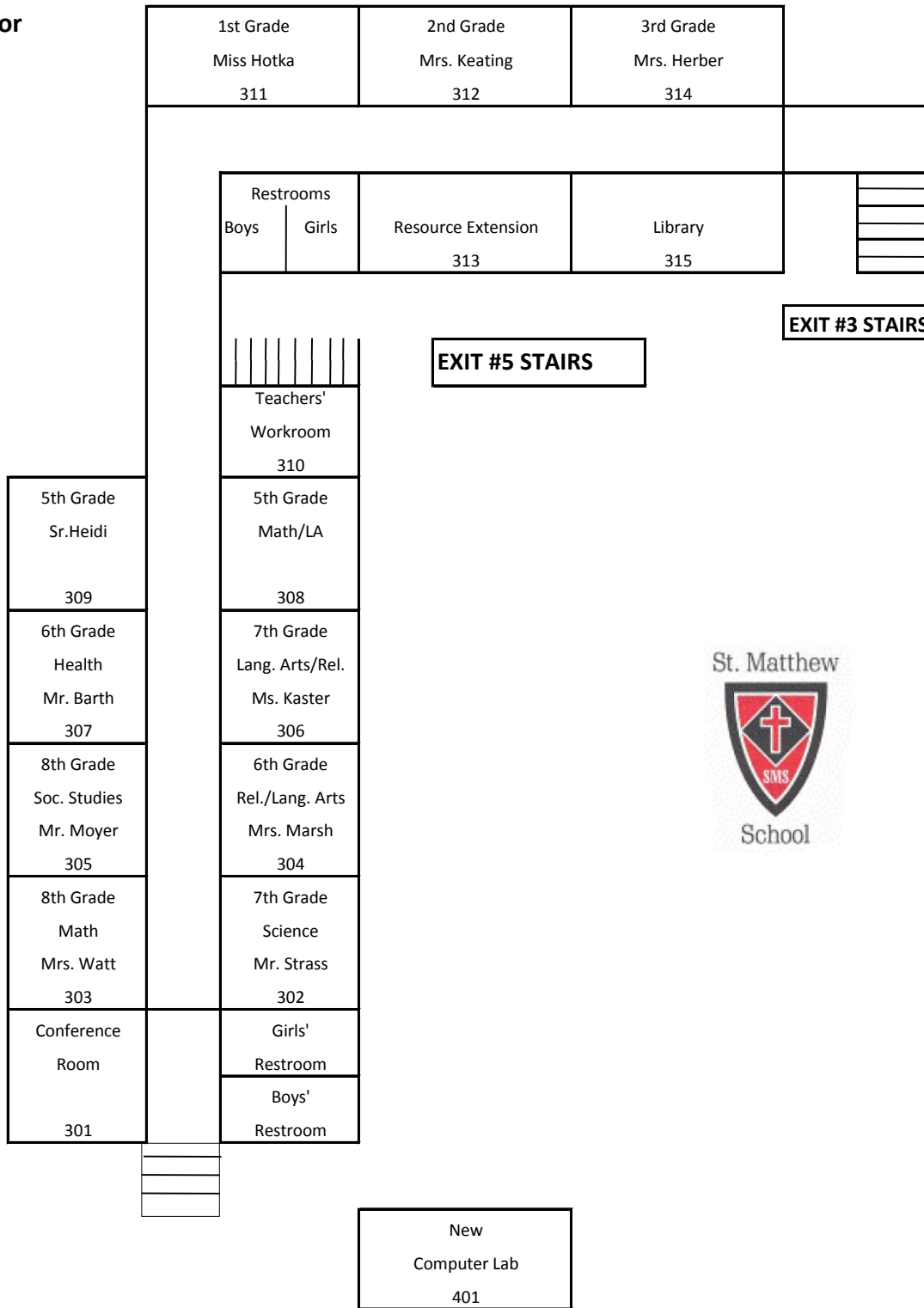
This closing will be handled in the same fashion as a weather-related closing unless otherwise necessary. All field trips will be called back to school and then students will be sent home.

As in any closing, parents will be able to report to school, identify themselves, and then remove their children. No child will be released from school unless with his/her parent, legal guardian, or an adult listed on the Emergency Card with parent acknowledgment.

**First Floor**



**Second Floor**





## Saint Matthew Catholic School Contact Information

Following is a listing of our school staff and personnel, their email addresses, and their extension number to reach their voicemail at school by dialing 251-3997. Please be aware that teachers and staff may not check voicemail or email during weekends, vacations or summer break, so please allow time for a response or contact the Main Office for time-sensitive matters. Also listed is the teachers' Homework Hotline Access numbers. Call the school line at 251-3997 to access this information, as well.

	Voicemail Number	Homework Hotline	E-mail address
Absentee Reporting	3910		
School Closing	3999		
School Receptionist	3905		
School Admin. Asst./Treasurer	3904		
Parish Receptionist	1001		

Principal	Mr. David Smock	3901		dsmock@saintmatt.org
Admin. Asst./Treasurer	Mrs. Kathy Gray	3904		kgray@saintmatt.org
Admin. Asst./Enrollment	Mrs. Robin Sobolewski	3905		rsobolewski@saintmatt.org
Pre-Kindergarten	Mrs. Anita Sergi	3106		asergi@saintmatt.org
Pre-Kindergarten Aide	Mrs. Margaret Stempky	3106		mstempky@saintmatt.org
Kindergarten	Mrs. Debbie Specht	3401		dspecht@saintmatt.org
Kindergarten Aide	Mrs. Ann Timmons	3108		atimmons@saintmatt.org
1st Grade	Miss Brittany Correll	3107	3109	bcorrell@saintmatt.org
1st Grade	Miss Leighanna Hotka	3201	3202	lhotka@saintmatt.org
2nd Grade	Mrs. Jo Keating	3205	3203	jkeating@saintmatt.org
3rd Grade	Mrs. Dolly Naddy	3710	3303	dnaddy@saintmatt.org
3rd Grade	Mrs. Janelle Herber	3301	3302	jherber@saintmatt.org
4th Grade	Miss Jeanna Reale	3101	3102	jreale@saintmatt.org
4th Grade	Miss Megan Williams	3105	3103	mwilliams@saintmatt.org
5th Grade	Sr. Heidi Marie Krack	3501	3502	sheidi@saintmatt.org
MS Language Arts/Religion	Ms. Gayle Kaster	3601	3610	gkaster@saintmatt.org
MS Religion/Language Arts	Mrs. Mary Marsh	3602	3611	mmarsh@saintmatt.org
MS Mathematics	Mrs. Nancy Watt	3603	3612	nwatt@saintmatt.org
MS PE/Health	Mr. Adam Barth	3604	3613	abarth@saintmatt.org
MS Social Studies	Mr. Brian Moyer	3605	3614	bmoyer@saintmatt.org
MS Science	Mr. Ian Strass	3606	3615	istrass@saintmatt.org
Art	Miss Lindsey Lehner	3701		llehner@saintmatt.org
Music	Mrs. Michele Epple	3702	3915	mepple@saintmatt.org
Music Aide	Mrs. Sylvia Matheny	3702		smatheny@saintmatt.org
Physical Education	Mrs. Sheryl McCann	3703		smccann@saintmatt.org
Computer	Mrs. Shelley Castaneda	3917		scastaneda@saintmatt.org
Library		3926		
Student Support	Mrs. Terry Buckman	3709		tbuckman@saintmatt.org
Student Support	Miss Colleen McDonough	3912		cmcdonough@saintmatt.org
Student Support	Mrs. Susan Sobieski	3706	3403	ssobieski@saintmatt.org
Social Worker	Mrs. Elizabeth Baratz	3920		ebaratz@saintmatt.org
Cafeteria	Mrs. Mary Lucas	3907		mlucas817@att.net
Technology Admin.	Mr. Loral Tansy	1015		ltansy@saintmatt.org
Business Manager	Mrs. Marie Carson	1003		mcarson@saintmatt.org
Pastor	Fr. Paul Shikany	2100		pshikany@saintmatt.org

■ Extended Care Phone can be contacted after 3 p.m. at Extension 3907