



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

## 2024-2025

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# St. Vincent de Paul Parish School Staff 2024-2025

## ADMINISTRATION

Pastor – Father Norm Douglas Principal – Mrs. Diane Salamon

## ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Administrative Assistant – Mrs. Laurie Belair

## TEACHERS

Preschool – Mrs. Joan Hall

Kindergarten – Mrs. Melanie Drouin

First Grade -Mrs.Alyssa DelMedico

Second Grade-Mrs. Monica Denowski

Third Grade – Mrs. Beth Carr

Fourth Grade – Mrs. Gina Giffels

Fifth Grade – Miss Brianna Wilson

Sixth Grade – Mrs. Ann Fallucco

Seventh Grade – Mrs. Mary Burch

Eighth Grade – Miss Sarah Mergenov

Art/Technology – Mr. Jake Simonson

Engineering – Mr. Jeff Koncz

Intervention Specialist – Mrs. Ashley Carson

Music/Librarian – Mrs. Chelsea Craine

Physical Education – Mr. David Graham

Spanish- (Viva Spanish)

## SUPPORT STAFF

Preschool Aide – Ms. Mercedes Mazey

Kindergarten Aide - Mrs. Mackenzie Schwarber

Aide – Ms. Sally Halsey

Aide – Ms. Emily Lucas

Aide – Mrs. Angela Huber

Aide - Mrs. Betsy Walton

6-8 Math Tutor – Mrs. Jennifer Burton

6-8 English/Reading Tutor- Mrs. Laura Siplivy

K-5 Tutor – Ms. Michele D'Alessio

Enrichment Tutors- Mrs. Burton and Ms. D'Alessio

Head Cook – Ms. Marimargaret Roberts

RN - Rebecca Ausel Elia

LPN – Mrs. Glenda Jordan

Counselor – Mrs. Heather Hutchison

Speech Therapist – Ms. Amanda Woletz

Title 1 Tutor – Ms. Antoinette Berghof

Aftercare-Mrs. Fallucco on M W; T, Th, F TBA

Head of Parish and School Maintenance – Mr. Charlie Steele

Parish and School Maintenance – Ms. Kim Fisher

Auxiliary Clerk – Ms. Rose McCafferty

**This Handbook is designed to provide a clear, uniform set of expectations for our school community. This handbook represents the policies, procedures, and regulations of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School. Please read this handbook carefully with your child(ren). All parents and students are expected to follow both the spirit and the letter of the rules and regulations listed herein. Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students and/or parents from the rules, policies, and procedures. Changes to this handbook may be made at any time at the discretion of the school and/or parish. Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as practical. Some changes may be made immediately.**

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, disability, age, sex, ethnic and national origin in administration of our educational and admission policies. Nor do we discriminate on the basis of sex in educational programs or employment as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. St. Vincent de Paul School embraces the racial and cultural diversity of the student and family population evident within the school.

## HISTORY

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School and St. Vincent de Paul Parish are the oldest Catholic church and school in Akron. The first St. Vincent de Paul Parish School came into existence in 1853, we are 168 years young! In 1856, a stone schoolhouse was built in the back of the church yard. The building soon became overcrowded, and a new one was built. In 1892, a red brick school was built behind the current church at 17 South Maple Street. The high school program was developed in 1907 and classes were held on the third floor of the current grade school. In 1956 the old school was torn down and within months a new one replaced it. Five religious'

communities have served St. Vincent de Paul School: Sisters of the Holy Cross, Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Saint Joseph from Baden, PA, Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters, and Sisters of Saint Dominic.

In 1974, Saint Vincent – Saint Mary High School separated from the grade school and moved across the street to its present location. A state-of-the-art Engineering Lab funded by many generous donors was built in 2015. Saint Vincent de Paul Parish School received the Ohio State STEM Designation in 2016. Saint Vincent de Paul is currently a STREAM school (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Art, and Math)

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School continues to thrive. Here children from all social, ethnic and economic diversity work together in a loving, supportive, Catholic environment. The dedicated staff continue to be enriched by the generous support of devoted parishioners and parents.

## THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH SCHOOL DIFFERENCE

At St. Vincent de Paul Parish School we **“Educate Hearts and Minds Since 1853”**. It is our priority to provide our students with an unsurpassed Catholic educational opportunity. Our dedicated faculty and staff provide innovative teaching techniques and advanced technology to foster student success. Each student is given the opportunity to develop to their full potential. At St. Vincent de Paul Parish School we focus on the following values: faith, charity, collaboration, problem-solving, respect, and creativity. We challenge students to think and embrace the process of learning. Students are engaged in the classroom and in their faith. Students think creatively, take the initiative to problem solve, respect diversity and are being prepared to make a difference in the world. The school is supported by the parish and community. Our culture embraces every child to help them identify and use their God given gifts and talents.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Vincent de Paul Parish School is a welcoming Catholic community called to live and share the love of God. We are dedicated to fostering a sense of creativity and unity while keeping Catholic tradition and prayer in mind, body, and heart.

## BELIEF STATEMENT

We believe our faculty and staff are to collaborate with parents to lead students to be faith filled, creative, generous, confident, compassionate, respectful and treat others in a Christian manner.

We believe that Catholic education begins with the family, our parents’ partner with the school to become a team of educators.

We believe the purpose of Catholic education is to teach the children the basic, fundamental truths and beliefs of our Catholic faith.

We believe that each child is a gift from God. It is our responsibility with the support of parents, as faculty and staff to be guided by the Holy Spirit to grow and nourish each child’s gifts from God.



We believe in providing a challenging and comprehensive educational program that allows each child to maximize their potential.

We believe Christian service is a valuable experience to our children. The school has a responsibility to provide opportunities for active community involvement.

We believe a strong Christian community is necessary to develop a commitment to God, church, one another, local and global communities.

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School has as its primary purpose the development of the spiritual life of its children. We believe the message of the Gospel to be of primary importance in arriving at truth in all the content areas and in providing a guide for a Christian way of life.

For this reason, it is hoped that all children of Saint Vincent Parish would have the opportunity, and use it, of being a part of our school community. St. Vincent de Paul School is a Catholic school within the Diocese of Cleveland School System. Our school was built and has been supported by the St. Vincent de Paul Parish since 1853. Children in the parish have the first right to this school. St Vincent de Paul Parish School spends annually about **\$8,200.00** per student to maintain its educational program. Parish funds are used to supplement the difference between the stipulated tuition and the actual cost. The parish is willing to continue supporting a limited number of non- parishioners. Acceptance will be based on ability to meet admission requirements and on enrollment in classrooms.

- Kindergarten screening is required before admission is granted, and placement made in kindergarten. Students for kindergarten must be five years old on or before August 15. Dial 4 Screening Test: administered before kindergarten; measures strengths and weaknesses in the various learning modalities (auditory, visual, kinesthetic)

After reviewing transcripts, testing and screening scores, it may be determined that an appropriate program for the student is not available at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School.

Students will be considered for admission to St. Vincent de Paul Parish School according to the following priorities:

1. Parishioners (children of families who are registered in, attend Liturgy, are involved in service ministry at the parish or school, and contribute to the support of St. Vincent de Paul Parish).
2. Catholics from parishes with or without an elementary school.
3. Non-Catholic families who are seeking a Catholic private school for their children.

## The following steps are taken for admission to St. Vincent de Paul Parish School:

A tour or open house visit is the first step to admission. A prospective family will learn about St. Vincent de Paul School's approach to teaching and learning. A tour can be scheduled on our website [www.stvincentelementary.com](http://www.stvincentelementary.com) or by calling our school at 330.762.5912.

If you feel your values and views align with St. Vincent de Paul Parish School, then parents must complete and submit an online application for each of their prospective students. The application must include a birth certificate, copy of Baptism (if baptized), copy of your child's most recent report card, copy of your child's recent standardized test scores, a letter of recommendation from current teacher or administrator, copy of ETR and IEP (if there is one) and parental custody agreement (if there is one).

Once the application is complete and submitted, a half day of shadowing experience is required before acceptance into 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. **Shadow experiences are only scheduled Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8:00 am to 11:00 am.**

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School does not regularly accept transfer students into middle school. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the principal, especially for students moving into the area. In all cases the school retains the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether to select a student for admission. Previous schools may be contacted, and students and parents may be required to meet with the principal and/or pastor as part of the enrollment process. To ensure success for the student, St. Vincent de Paul School reserves the right not to admit any student who, in the discretion of the administration, will be unable to meet the school's standards for academics, behavior and attendance.

Once the admission decision has been made and acceptance has been granted, parents will receive a letter of acceptance. At that time, the following documentation and payments are needed to register your child: Payment of the education fee, a signed tuition contract, and payment of technology/facility fee.

If applicable, copies of testing data and special education plans must be provided prior to beginning the process of application for admission. Admission may be denied based upon a student's previous academic, behavioral or attendance record. Previous suspension or expulsion may be sole grounds for denial of admission.

Students applying for entry into kindergarten will be required to furnish at the time of application for admission a copy of the student's most recent preschool evaluation and must also complete St. Vincent de Paul School's kindergarten screening unless waived by the school.

Previous schools may be contacted, and students and parents may be required to meet with the principal and/or pastor as part of the enrollment process. To ensure success for the student, St. Vincent de Paul Parish School reserves the right not to admit any student who, in the discretion of the administration, will be unable to meet the school's standards for academics, behavior and attendance.

## State Scholarship Students

Parents who utilize the Ohio Educational Choice Grant Program will have their tuition charges billed to the Ohio Department of Education three times a year. Payments will be sent directly to St. Vincent de Paul School. The school and the parent/guardian's name will be on the check which means that both the school and the parent will be required to sign the check. You will be notified when the check comes in the office. Parents are responsible to pay the balance of tuition. Please note that the registration fee and other fees are not included in the grant and must be paid to the school separately.

***Jon Peterson Special Need Scholarship (JPSN) Autism Scholarship*** Parents who utilize the JPSN Scholarship or the Autism Scholarship; St. Vincent de Paul School will submit a report of services provided to Akron Public Schools. Your services and tuition charges will be billed to the Ohio Department of Education three times a year. Payments will be sent directly to St. Vincent de Paul School.

The school and the parent/guardian's name will be on the check which means that both the school and the parent will be required to sign the check. You will be notified when the check comes in the office. Registration fee and other fees are not included in the scholarship and must be paid to the school separately. \*Please note that services and costs vary and are based on wages, the needs of the individual student and services required by Individualized Educational Plan. Parents are responsible for the cost of services that exceeds funding.

## Transfer Requirement

Parents are expected to submit the application with all required documentation. This includes, but is not limited to academic, physical, medical, psychological, dietetic, behavioral concerns, diagnosis, evaluations, ETR's, and IEP's. If documentation is with-held, St Vincent de Paul Parish School reserves the right to withdraw the newly enrolled student.

## Returning Students

Every student must be registered each year he or she attends St. Vincent de Paul Parish School.

An annual signed tuition contract must be completed, and education fee must be paid before a child is officially registered.

## Withdraw Policy

The parent/guardian, legal custodian, or person who is responsible for the student may withdraw the student from school. Verification of the custodial status of the person making the withdrawal may be required. This person must meet with the principal. Official school records will be transmitted upon request only if the withdrawn student has paid all tuition and fees and has satisfied all other obligations to the school such as returned textbooks, iPad, Chromebook and charger, etc. Health records may be

released to the parent/guardian, legal custodian or person who is responsible for the student to expedite entry into the new school.

## TUITION

The actual cost to educate a child at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School is over \$8,200 per year. It is important that parents and guardians acknowledge the work and support of the parish and school administration to subsidize this actual cost to make tuition affordable. It is important for parents and guardians to keep financial obligations current and cooperate with administration and staff.

### Tuition and Fees:

Tuition and fees are listed on the 2024-2025 Tuition Payment Schedule Form and FACTS. Please choose the best schedule of payment for your family.

**School Educational Fee:** This \$200 fee is used for field trips, class parties, weekly readers, consumable materials, and supplies needed by the student and for programs which cannot be met by any other monies, such as the religion and art programs. This fee is \$200.00 per student for all grades.

**School Technology and Facility Fee:** This \$200 fee is used for technology and school facilities. This fee is \$200.00 per student for all grades.

**Tuition Status - Parishioners:** A Saint Vincent de Paul Parish parishioner is recognized as one who has active membership in the parish. Parishioners are eligible for the Parish Life Scholarship.

The following guidelines are utilized to define a parishioner:

1. A parent or guardian who is living outside the St. Vincent de Paul Parish boundary and has been an active member of the parish. OR
2. A parent or guardian who is living within the St. Vincent de Paul Parish boundaries and has been an active member registered in the parish.
3. A parishioner who is unable to meet the payment requirements should contact either the pastor or the principal to make payment arrangements. If, by March 20, bills are outstanding, and no arrangements have been made, we will assume the student does not intend to continue at Saint Vincent de Paul Parish School. To maintain fiscal responsibilities, it is necessary that an effort to collect all tuition be made. No report cards or transcripts will be released until payment for services is received.

**Tuition Status - Non-Parishioners:** Saint Vincent de Paul Parish has scholarship opportunities to support a limited number of students who are non-parishioners. A non-parishioner is one who:

1. is a member of another Catholic parish. (Some parishes may be willing to subsidize the Catholic education of students. These arrangements are the responsibility of the individual parents and their pastor).
2. is not a member of the parish.
3. is not a member of a church.
4. is a non-Catholic.

**Tuition Return/Rebate:** In case of change of residence or withdrawal initiated by the school, prepaid tuition will be rebated on a prorated basis.

## Procedure for Collection of Monies

All tuition, education fees, technology/facility fee, cafeteria, milk, and after care monies are collected via the FACTS system. We do not handle cash at the school office.

## FINANCIAL AID

Our goal is to fill our classrooms with children whose families believe in our mission and want a Catholic education. Any family interested in seeking financial assistance from the parish or from FACTS **must submit** an application and all documents on FACTS. Once the document is complete a final decision is made by the FACTS board. The committee sends a letter to parents providing the families tuition amount and the contract requirements.

Applications are due March 1; families are notified of their award in July. The parish also provides these additional scholarships which require applications: Angel Fund Scholarship and the LaRose Scholarship.

## STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

FACTS is our school information system. It is important that both parents submit their contact information into the FACTS system. This is our prime way of communicating via email as well as our source of information for parent phone numbers. This system provides routine communication with parents/guardians, gives transparency to student data, allows accurate recording of grades, course work and attendance. This system allows parents to order student lunches, pay tuition, fees, lunch and aftercare. Our emergency closing information is also done through the FACTS system.

Google Classroom is utilized as a learning management system as well.

## SCHOOL HOURS

Office Hours	7:30 am – 3:30 pm
Tardy Bell	7:55 am
Lunch	11:00 am – 12:40 pm
School Dismissal	3:00 pm
After Care Hours	3:00 pm – 5:30 pm (fee charged)

# ARRIVAL

## Busing

Only school buses unload students at the main door on South Maple Street.

Only children eligible for bus services are permitted to ride the buses. Students are only permitted to ride the bus they are assigned to. They may not ride another bus; the school bus drivers do not accept parent notes.

Each district notifies parents of routes and schedules in August. You must work with the transportation department of the public school you reside in. The bus driver is in complete authority and will report bus violations to the principal. Anyone violating safety rules or creating a disturbance may be denied the privilege of school transportation for a specified amount of time and/or receive disciplinary consequences at school.

## Car-Riders

Drivers have to follow all school safety procedures to ensure the safety of all students. Drop off begins at 7:30 am. All car riders will be unloaded from cars in the back-parking lot of the school. Cars enter through the Walnut Street entrance and exit by way of South Maple Street. The Walnut Street gate closes at 7:55 a.m. Arrivals after 7:55 am must be walked by an adult to the main front door on South Maple Street. Safety and speed are not synonyms. No students are to exit private vehicles stopped/parked on South Maple Street. All late arrivals must be walked to the Maple Street door by an adult. The adult must wait until the student safely enters the building.

Please instruct your child that once they exit the vehicle, they may not return to the vehicle for any reason. If an item was left in the vehicle, the child can go directly to the office to call the driver.

Cooperation with these procedures and with our staff members on duty is appreciated. The procedures in place have been implemented for the safety of your child.

# DEPARTURE

**Bus riders** are dismissed at 3:00 pm. Some buses do not pick up until 3:15 pm.

**Car riders** are dismissed at 3:00 pm. All cars entering the playground lot via Walnut Street before 3:00 pm park in the drive between the playground and school. This is one-way traffic, enter from Walnut Street and exit onto Maple Street as directed. These parents must exit their cars for their children to see and identify them. The South Maple Street gate remains closed until all cars have their student(s). We use two lanes of traffic for the initial departure of the parked cars. **All cars after initial dismissal will form a line in one lane. These parents remain in their cars.** Students do not approach these cars until the car has come to a complete stop.

Due to safety concerns, all car-riders will be dismissed via the car line through the Walnut Street entrance and South Maple St exit. No students will be crossed at the crosswalk. **For the safety of all, the crosswalk will not be used by any student or parent at dismissal.**

## REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Report cards, progress reports and parent teacher conferences provide parents/guardians with tangible evidence of student development and achievement, promote mutual understanding and facilitate communication between home and school.

One-way parents can monitor student progress is through FACTS, our student information system. Teachers in grades K-8 post student grades on this system on a regular basis. A username and password are sent home to parents at the beginning of the year.

Students on Individual Education Plans are given quarterly progress reports. Students who are failing a course mid quarter are given progress reports.

Report cards are issued four times throughout the school year.

Homework is given in all grades. Each grade has its own unique procedure and guidelines. This also includes procedures and guidelines for missing/late assignments. Homework is posted on FACTS.

## ACADEMICS

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School curriculum is the Diocese of Cleveland curriculum. This curriculum aligns with the state of Ohio curriculum and has additional enhancements in all subject areas. St. Vincent de Paul curriculum also includes Spanish and engineering for all student's pre-kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Our full curriculum includes Religion, English Language Arts, Reading, Math, Social Studies, Science, Health, Physical Education, Music, Art, Technology, Library, Spanish, and Engineering.

**Engineering:** St. Vincent de Paul Parish School is a STREAM school. All student's preschool through eighth grade participates in Engineering classes.

**Technology:** Technology and electronic informational literacy skills are integral components of education. Each kindergarten through eighth grade student is issued a school iPad or Chromebook. All student's preschool through eighth grade attend technology class. All student use of school technology is monitored.

## Care of Instructional Materials

Instructional material is expensive to purchase and maintain. Parents are urged to help their children be responsible for materials used. Books and electronic devices are to be handled and used in a manner that does not cause damage. Parents are financially responsible for the loss or damage of materials.

## STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

All K-8 students participate in the Diocesan of Cleveland standardized assessments called NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessments three times a year, fall, winter and spring. These assessments are shared with students, parents/guardians on a regular basis. St. Vincent de Paul submits these standardized scores to the state of Ohio if the student is on a state scholarship.

## SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS

Keeping parents informed of the progress of their child is a vital responsibility of each teacher. Report cards are issued quarterly for grades K-8. Interim progress reports are issued, if necessary, between report cards during the four quarters. Online viewing of grades is always available through FACTS for families with students in grades K-8. Formal parent-teacher conferences are in September and February. However, parents are urged to contact their child's teacher for a conference whenever a need arises. Teachers may be contacted by email.

## The Diocese of Cleveland Standard Based Report Card Scale is adhered to in grades K-3:

3 – **Mastered** – Student meets or exceeds the demonstration or knowledge of target content for grade-level learning with consistent success, accuracy, and independence.

2.5 -No major errors or omissions regarding 2.0 content and partial knowledge of the 3.0 content.

2.0 – **Developing** – Student illustrates base knowledge of prerequisites content, knowledge, or skills necessary for mastery of target content.

1.5 – Partial knowledge of 2.0 content, but major errors or omissions regarding 3.0 content.

1.0 – Beginning – Assistance needed to demonstrate partial understanding of a score of 2.0 or 3.0.

**Blank** – Was not assessed in the grading period. + On track. Below track.



## The Diocese of Cleveland Grading Scale is adhered to in grades 4-8:

A+.....98-100	C.....79-81
A.....95-97	C-.....77-78
A-.....93-94	D+.....75-76
B+..... 90-92	D.....72-74
B.....87-89	D-.....70-71
B-.....85-86	F.....69-0
C+.....82-84	

### Religious Education Program

“In order that the Catholic school and the Catholic teachers may truly make their irreplaceable contribution to the Church and to the world, the goal of Catholic education itself must be crystal clear. Beloved sons and daughters of the Catholic Church, brothers and sisters in the faith: Catholic education is above all a question of communicating Christ, of helping to form Christ in the lives of others.” Pope John Paul II.

This is our aim which we strive to fulfill in the following ways:

Daily religious instruction by certified religion teachers on staff.

Preparation of and by the students for participation in liturgies and para-liturgical services held throughout the school year.

Daily morning and afternoon prayer

Weekly school masses

Prayer services

Stations of the Cross

Rosary

Classroom retreats

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Participation in Advent and Holy Week services

Sacramental preparation programs for Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and

Confirmation

Opportunities for service to our community

Missions – home and foreign

Remembrances for the sick and elderly

Service Projects

Altar Servers

School Mass Choir

**Parents role in faith formation:** Religious formation goes far beyond the formal instruction of the Catholic doctrine and traditions. It involves leading our young people to a life centered on Christ. Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. They are the first to communicate faith to their children through examples and instruction.

**Non-Catholic students** are welcome at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School. The non-Catholic student is expected to understand and agree that St. Vincent de Paul Parish School exists to teach Catholic values. Non-Catholic students must participate in religion classes and liturgical services.

Homework is meant to extend the learning begun at school, promote independent study, encourage individual initiative, and provide for the extra practice needed to perfect fundamental skills, make use of resources outside the school, and enrich learning. The length of homework assignments depends on the initiative and ability of the students and on the type of assignment given. Long range assignments are often given to upper grade students to develop a sense of responsibility. Some types of homework should be done daily. Check your child's comprehension by listening to him or her read, then asking questions pertaining to the material read. When a written assignment is given, check to see if it is neat, correct, and complete. A definite time and place are advisable for home study. Assignment notebooks are provided by the school and should be utilized daily by all students in grades 1 through 5. Daily assignments for all grades are posted on FACTS. Students in grades 6-8 will have their assignments on their Chromebooks. The consequences for consistent missing assignments will be determined at each grade level.

## STUDENT SERVICES

### **Students Identified as Needing Supportive Instruction**

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School is a Diocese of Cleveland Better Together School. We are also a Jon Peterson and Autism State Scholarship provider. Individual and small group instruction is provided for special academic needs in grades K-8. Instruction takes place both inside and outside the classroom setting. The educational needs of students are assessed, periodic evaluations are made, and close contact with teachers and parents is maintained. The Intervention Assistance Team meets frequently, and its members serve as grade level liaisons. They meet with teachers to track the progress of students on their grade level, and they recommend any adjustments that might be needed. Parents of students on Individual Education Plans receive progress reports on a quarterly basis.

### **Enrichment Program**

Students identified through standardized testing that score 95% or above in math and reading are identified as gifted. These students will receive enrichment in critical thinking skills. They will meet in small groups weekly with a gifted tutor.

## Guidance Counseling

Guidance counseling services are available. To initiate service please consult your child's homeroom teacher. Guidance counseling services are available at the request of the student, parent, teacher, or administrator. Parents are to give a written consent if counseling services will be used on a continuing basis.

## Speech and Language Therapy

A speech and language therapist identifies children who may have communication disorders. All students are screened in areas of speech, language, voice, fluency, and hearing. Teachers, administration, and parents may also refer children at any grade level for evaluation in these areas. Additional diagnostic evaluations are administered to each child who is identified from the screenings as having a problem. The nature of the problem and the plans for remediation are discussed with parents prior to initiating therapy.

Therapy begins in the fall and continues until late in the school year. Parents are involved in helping the child use the new speech and language behaviors in the home environment.

## RETENTION OF A STUDENT

Assessment of a child's ability to learn concepts and educational material needed to have success at the next grade level is a serious responsibility of the professional staff. Staff

members base their decisions about student advancement and ability to learn, in the student's best interest.

Teachers will meet with parents within the first six to nine weeks of school to assess student progress and advise parents/guardians. Early intervention to assist students is our goal. Parents are encouraged to consult with their child's teacher on a regular basis. A child who is not progressing will be considered for a referral to be evaluated. Success in core subject areas (Reading, English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Religion) is critical for academic success throughout all school years. Retention could be considered for the following reasons: failure, for the year, in three or more major subjects or failure to master fundamental skills of Reading in the Primary Grades. A child will be retained at a given grade level only if it is presumed that he or she will profit from the experience. Retention must have the prior approval of the principal and be accepted in writing by the parents. If parents refuse to have a child retained, a refusal to retain contract, signed by parent(s), will become a part of the child's permanent record. The principal will then decide if the school can continue to meet the educational needs of the child, or if another educational setting is necessary.

Each case of retention is treated individually and thoroughly discussed by the teacher, principal, and parents. Parents will be notified in the spring.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

The school day begins at 7:55 am for all students. When a student is not in the homeroom and in their seat, they are marked tardy. Children are permitted to be dropped off at school beginning at 7:30 am. Students will report directly to their homeroom upon arrival.

Dismissal occurs at 3:00 pm for all students. Car-rider students who are not picked up by 3:15 pm will be sent to the office to make a phone call home. If they are not picked up quickly, they will be sent to after-care and will be charged for the day.

If a student is picked-up before our 3:00 pm dismissal, the student will be marked as an afternoon tardy.

As a guideline, students who miss more than nine days of school a year are considered to be excessively absent (an average of one day per school month).

On regular days of full attendance, students who arrive after 9:15 am. will be marked absent for a half day. Students leaving before 1:15 pm. will be marked absent for a half day. Consistent attendance and punctuality are keys to academic success. The basic responsibility for regular attendance and punctuality of the student lies with the student and parents/guardians.

## ILLNESS:

The St. Vincent de Paul Parish School Clinic is staffed by a licensed practical nurse five days each week. Our online FACTS enrollment forms include the emergency authorization form. It is essential that all parents complete and submit this form.

## MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

In compliance with the current State recommendation, a request form, available in the clinic, to administer over-the-counter medications as well as prescriptions, must be completed by the student's physician and parent. If medication must be administered, we are hopeful that parents will have the form

completed before the school year begins. New forms must be completed for each school year. Each family must provide the medication that is to be used in its original container and labeled with the student's name. All medications must be brought to the clinic by an adult. Likewise, all medications that are unused need to be given to an adult when the medication is no longer needed. All medications not picked up will be disposed of at the end of the school year or within 30 days of the medication being discontinued. The first dose of a new medication may not be administered at school.

**Daily Health Check at Home.** Prior to coming to school each day, parents shall conduct a health check of their child to assess whether the child is experiencing symptoms. The daily health check shall consist of the following: Through discussion with the child and personal observation of the parent, assess if the child is experiencing one or more of the following symptoms: Fever of over 100 °F

- Chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If the child has a fever of greater than 100°F or is experiencing any other symptom listed above (or as updated from time to time by the school), the child must stay home from school and the parent must notify the school.

**Students who become Sick at School.** A student who, while at school, develops a fever of greater than 100°F or exhibits any one or more of the above symptoms, (not including anything that the school administration reasonably believes to be unrelated to illness, such as seasonal allergies, or isolated incidents of coughing or sneezing) may not remain at school and must be picked up and taken home at the earliest opportunity. Such students will be immediately directed to a designated spot to be isolated from others except for the staff designated to monitor and care for such students until they go home. Any student who has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 may not return to school until such student meets the CDC's criteria for returning to school.

CHILDREN MUST HAVE A NOTE FROM THEIR DOCTOR IF THEY ARE TO REMAIN INDOORS DURING GYM OR RECESS.

**Please call-in student absences by 8:30 am to 330.762.5912.** When you call, please be prepared to give the following information:

- Student's name
- Name of the person calling and the relationship to the student
- Reason for the absence
- Whether someone will pick up the homework at 2:30 pm

If a parent does not notify the school office, school staff will call the home or work numbers to verify the absence. When a student is absent from school, he/she is not to participate in any after- school activities that day or evening.

- A note signed by the parent or guardian is required upon returning to school. This note should include the cause of absence from school.
- If absence is due to a communicable disease, or if a student has been absent three consecutive days, a doctor's release is necessary.
- Cases of excessive absence and/or patterns of unverifiable absences/tardiness will be handled by school officials on an individual basis. In extreme cases, where a substantial percentage of school instruction has been missed as a result of absences or tardiness, it may be necessary to recommend a remediation plan for the student which could include the repetition of a grade.
- Truancy is absence from school without permission. Such absence is serious and will be treated as such.
- If it is necessary for your child to be excused from school for medical/dental appointments or other emergencies a note must be sent to the school prior to the time of appointment.
- If you need to speak with a teacher, please do so following dismissal. It is advisable to call and set up an appointment.
- In the event of an emergency, the child must be picked up at the school office by the parent or legal guardian. A parent or legal guardian must also sign the student early dismissal log documenting the time and reason the child is dismissed from school.

**School Work Missed During an Absence:** In all cases, students who are absent from school are responsible for all the schoolwork missed. A student will not be penalized for an absence, whether excused or unexcused, and will be allowed one day per day of school missed to make up missing schoolwork (to a maximum of five school days).

## TARDINESS

Punctuality is an important life skill. Being on time teaches students the importance of responsibility, respect, and the value of their education. At St. Vincent de Paul Parish School, we work in partnership with parents to provide an academically and socially challenging curriculum. We want to make every minute count so that students can reach their fullest potential. On time arrivals give students the chance to hear important announcements, organize their belongings, and confer with teachers one-on-one before the day gets started.

When students are late, it doesn't just cause them to feel a step behind, it disrupts all classroom instruction and causes the teacher to have to repeat their instructions. This instruction will most likely be rushed.

Habitual tardiness is not acceptable, families should adjust their bedtime and morning routines to arrive on time. Late students will not be admitted to class without a tardy slip. Tardiness will be marked in two categories:

**Excused tardy:** Medical/Dental appointments, religious holidays, funeral, appearance in court, school sponsored activity (will only be marked excused with appropriate documentation).

**Unexcused tardy:** Traffic, weather, waking up late, lost keys/shoes/backpacks/etc.

Students who arrive more than 20 minutes late without a valid reason will have their record marked as “Unexcused Excessively Tardy” (“UET”).

## ABSENCE and TARDINESS LIMITS

In the case of an excessive number of absences (15 or more days / 105 or more hours / 6,300 or more minutes), parents will be notified by the school office and a conference will be set up. Parents will also receive attendance and tardiness notification through our FACTS system. This notification serves as a reminder that the child may be considered for non-promotion due to the extreme number of absences/tardies. For a quality learning experience to take place, the child needs to be present in school. Students who are absent from school should not attend after-school activities. A student who is absent for consecutive days due to illness or after 15 days (105 hours or 6,300 minutes) is required to submit a note from the child’s doctor for all non-Covid sickness-related absences. There are 385 instructional minutes in a school day. Any time missed from the total minutes, including half days, tardies, etc., is included in the total absences. Please see the table below for more information on excessive absences, tardiness and habitual truancy.

Days/Hours/Minutes Absent	Parent Notification
10 days/56 hours/2,975 minutes	Letter to parents
10 days/70 hours/ 4,200 minutes	Letter/phone call to parents, doctor note required
15 days/ 105 hours/6,300 minutes	Conference with administration and parents with a plan
16 days/ 112 hours/ 6,720+minutes considered for non-promotion	Conference with administration and parent’s child/children

## HEALTH SERVICES

All children must have proper immunization as required by law.

During the school year, the hearing and eyesight of all children will be tested. A health record is kept on each child. There is a visiting nurse available to the children. If a child needs to see the nurse, please make a request through the office. A licensed practical nurse is on duty when the nurse is not at school. The LPN is responsible for following **written** directives from **physicians** for dispensing prescriptions, written directives from parents for dispensing non-prescription drugs, administering first aid and assisting the school nurse as required. No medication may be taken by any child in the classroom. If a child needs

medication, parents should send directions in writing. The medication must be taken to the school office and administered from there or the health clinic.

Parents will be called if it is determined that the child is too ill to remain in school. No child will be sent home unless a parent or someone designated by the parent comes for the child.

## STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

Students' mental health is just as important as their physical well-being and academic achievement. On occasion, the school may contact the parents regarding concerns that have arisen. These concerns could stem from:

- Students reported troubling activity (online or in class).
- Student behavior interferes with his/her ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.
- Student behavior interferes with his/her academic performance.

If student behavior is determined by school administration to be a cause for concern, the parent will be notified to pick up their child. The parent/guardian must submit official documentation verifying that their child has been seen by a licensed and qualified mental professional and that their child is not a threat to him/herself or others before the child returns to school.

## CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

Cancellation of school takes place only during extraordinary circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. School will not be canceled unless a safety risk has been created by unusual circumstances. Please use your best judgment in determining whether it is safe to transport your child(ren) to school. Should conditions necessitate school closing, several systems are in place to communicate this to faculty, staff, parents, and students:

Parents and students are notified next through the One Call System through FACTS.

An email message will be sent.

A complete list of closings is also available on Channel 8.

## VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

The St. Vincent de Paul Parish School calendar is published with scheduled vacations.



Parents are asked to schedule family vacations within these time periods. Because of the serious disruption to a child's learning process, vacations during the school year are strongly discouraged. "Making up the work" never substitutes for the actual classroom experience and the expert instruction of a teacher. Likewise, grades invariably slip because of such vacations.

If parents do arrange such a vacation, however, advance written notice should be given to the main office, stating the exact days the child will be absent. The school takes no responsibility for the learning missed during the absence, nor are teachers required to prepare work to be done during the trip. When the child returns, he/she is to ask each teacher what work/test must be made up. It is the responsibility of the parents to see that the child learns the material, makes up the work, and prepares for the tests.

Each case of retention is treated individually and thoroughly discussed by the teacher, principal, and parents. Parents will be notified in the spring.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

**As a Catholic educational community, we believe in the discipline that respects the dignity of the individual and promotes Christian values, concern for others, and the acceptance and responsibility for one's actions.** As members of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School community, students are expected to display a positive attitude towards their education and behave in a manner that enhances the learning process. The foundation of Christian behavior rests on the words of Jesus "love one another as I have loved you".

We are committed to providing students with a high-quality educational experience that provides challenging, well-prepared instructional opportunities in a safe environment for all students. To provide this, the following responsibilities are required of the students:

- To contribute to the good of the school community through acts of service.
- To be respectful, honest and courteous to everyone in the community.
- To arrive on time at all classes and school activities, appropriately prepared.
- To accept responsibility for one's own education by putting forth best efforts every day, seeking help from teachers when needed, and participating in class.
- To respect school property and the personal property of other students and teachers.
- To obey all school and classroom rules especially regarding safety.
- To refrain from profanity or other vulgar language.
- To follow the dress code.
- To use technology responsibly to enhance learning.
- To include other students in activities, both in lunchroom and recess.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

## Rights and Responsibilities

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School is a Catholic school in the finest tradition. The faculty, staff, and student body aspire to adhere to the philosophy stated in the Student and Parent Handbook. This code specifies the school's requirements for student behavior; however, the list is not all inclusive. The school has the right to expect positive behavior from students.

The rules apply to student behavior or conduct at school, on school and church property, on school buses, and during attendance at any school-related or sponsored activity. Conduct which causes or may cause disruption or interference with any school function or may interfere with health, safety, well-being or rights of other students or staff members is prohibited. It must be clearly understood that St. Vincent de Paul Parish School is established and maintained by the Parish Community of St. Vincent de Paul, primarily for children of parishioners. We open our doors and welcome those who are willing to support the school with prompt tuition payments, help with fund-raising activities, volunteer, and cooperate with school policies. Hopefully, we can encourage one another to bring the children entrusted to our care to a fullness of Christian understanding and concern while we are educating and preparing these children for their adult lives.

Students engaging in any prohibited behaviors will be in violation of our School Code. Disciplinary action decided upon by the administration and staff will result and may take any or all the following forms: counseling, parental conference, noon detention, after-school detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, recommendation for expulsion, referral to community service agencies, expulsion from school, and/or other appropriate measures.

## Reflection Forms

A student will be assigned to complete an age-appropriate reflection form when they have done one of the following: disturbed class instruction, do not follow teacher/adult direction, running, are out of their seat, failed to follow a classroom rule, littering, inattentive in class, personal grooming in class, chewing gum, and eating in class. Students can receive a detention for accumulated reflection forms.

In the form students are asked what they did, why they did it, and what should they have done. Students and teachers will inform parents when reflection forms are received.

## Detention Policy

When assigned a detention, a student needs to inform parents, obtain a parent signature, and

bring the signed slip back to the teacher who issued it the next school day. If the student fails to bring the signed slip back the next day, the student can receive a second detention. If a parent does not sign the slip, **the student will still serve detention**. A detention notice home informs the parent of the infraction during school. The signature signifies parent awareness. Detentions are recorded in the FACTS system for parents to view.

**For students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades, the detention is served after-school.** The after-school detention will include a letter of reflection and restitution. Detentions are served on Wednesdays from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Students in grades K – 4 serve detentions at recess.

A detention will be issued for actions that may include, but are not limited to:

- Disrespectful behavior toward an adult or student. Disrespectful behavior includes, but is not limited to, defiant language and/or actions and disruptive behavior.
- Three (3) Dress Code Violations
- Dishonesty/Cheating/Plagiarism
- Inappropriate language (spoken, written, picture, or gesture)
- Inappropriate physical contact with another person
- Possession of cell phone or another personal electronic device
- Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy
- Stealing
- Vandalism, destruction or defacing school property, school materials, or personal property.
- Use of cell phone/ having phone during school day.

Depending on the severity of the offense, another disciplinary action may be taken.

## Accumulation of Detentions

If a student receives three detentions in a semester, that student will receive an out-of-school suspension\*\*.

### End of Semester

At the end of each semester, students' records will be "wiped-clean" of all detentions. The student will have the opportunity to begin a new semester with a clean slate. Suspension accumulates throughout the year.

### Suspension

The administration has the right to suspend or expel a student from school for a violation of school rules (whether habitual offenses or for a single infraction). Suspension is the exclusion of a student from school or class for a specified time. No school activity, including after-school clubs or activities, will be permitted on the day of the suspension.

Grounds for suspension may include but are not limited to:

- Receiving three detentions

- Tobacco or alcohol possession, usage, transmission, or sale on school grounds, at school related activities, or on school buses.
- Possession and/or usage of drugs
- Possession and/or usage of weapons, firearms, explosives, or incendiary devices. Please see Weapon Policy under the Diocese of Cleveland Legal Policies.
- Bomb threats and false alarms
- Profanity or obscene language (written, oral, or pictorial) directed to school personnel/students. This includes obscene gestures or signs.
- Insubordination in refusing to comply with the directions of school personnel or school volunteers.
- Theft of school property, another student's personal property, or the personal property of school personnel.
- Vandalism or Destruction of Property (Restitution is required.)
- Fighting
- Youth gang activity
- Falsifying by using, in writing, the name of another, or changing records of school data (including report cards)
- Bullying of another student or adult
- Harassment/Extortion/Intimidation
- Misconduct after an in-school suspension
- Any incident deemed serious by the principal. Out-of-School Suspension\*\*

When assigned an out-of-school suspension, the student is responsible for obtaining the missing class work from the teachers when the student returns to school after the suspension. The student will have the same number of days as the days designated for the out-of-school suspension to complete and turn in the work to the individual teachers. The highest grade that can be received for any work / tests completed because of the out of school suspension will be a "C".

### **Special Circumstances**

An immediate suspension is given if the student's presence poses a clear and present danger, or if the student is inherently disruptive to a person, property, or the educational process. An immediate suspension will occur in, but not limited to, the following circumstances: truancy, fighting, bullying, threats, possession of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, possession of weapons, incendiary devices, and sexual harassment. The student will call their parents to come and provide transportation home. A conference with the administration will take place at this time. The student will have an out-of-school suspension the following day. This decision is the right and responsibility of the school administration.

### **Immediate Suspension\*\***

When sent home from school immediately, the student cannot make up any work missed that

day. Upon returning to school, the student must consult with individual teachers about making up tests that were missed because of the suspension. The highest grade that can be received for any tests completed because of the immediate suspension will be a "C". The student may not attend any after-school activities that day. If the immediate suspension is followed by an out- of- school suspension the following day, then the same guidelines apply for the out- of- school suspension as previously mentioned.

\*\* Any student suspended may not attend any planned school activity or field trip that day, nor can they attend or participate in any after school-sponsored activities for that day.

In the event of a second suspension, a meeting will take place between the principal, the student, and his/her parents to plan the best course of action for that student. Possibilities include extended suspension and/or investigation into another school that will better suit the needs of that student. Because of the seriousness of expulsions, the principal may decide to place the student on probation. The students are expected to improve. Record of academic progress and general behavior is kept by the administration and the faculty involved. Any student failing to remove himself/herself from probation will not be allowed to return to St. Vincent de Paul Parish School.

If a student receives three suspensions during the school year, then the process toward expulsion will be taken. A meeting with the school administration and parent(s) will take place.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion of a student from school is a serious matter. In some cases, the principal and/or pastor may deem an action by a student so severe that it would result in immediate expulsion from school. This decision is the right and responsibility of the principal and/or pastor. If expulsion is contemplated, notification will be provided to the student's parents. A conference may be held with the student, parents, pastor, and principal and/or assistant principal.

Grounds for expulsion may include, but are not limited to:

- Disruptive or immoral behavior that presents a clear and present danger to oneself or others or is continually disruptive to the learning environment.
- Possessing, handling, transmitting, selling fireworks, explosive devices, weapons, drugs or drug paraphernalia.
- Assault and battery or sexual harassment to any school personnel or student while on school property, including buses, or any school-sponsored activity.
- Damage to school or private property on school premises. Any damage to private property of any school/parish personnel. Total restitution is required for any repairs or replacement costs.
- Failure to comply with behavioral contract.
- Bullying of another student or adult
- Repeated violations of school or classroom rules after disciplinary actions have been attempted.

## Pre-Kindergarten Discipline Restrictions

The center's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises. In addition to the restrictions outlined in rule 3301-35-15 of the Administrative Code, the following apply: (1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting. (2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child. (3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, so the child may regain control. (4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in a closed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle. (5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse. (6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents. (7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child. (8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior. (9) Separation, when used as a discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space. (10) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program. (11) A staff member who suspects that a child has been abused or neglected is to immediately notify the public children services agency and a serious incident report is to be completed and submitted to the department in accordance with section 2151.421 of the Revised Code.

## ANTI HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School teaches belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in St. Vincent de Paul Parish School is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action,

including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying," in accordance with House Bill 276, mean any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts i.e., Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

- Causing mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel including placing an individual in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damaging of students'/personal property; and
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student, school employee, or volunteer. A student, school employee or volunteer shall not intimidate or harass another student, school employee or volunteer through words or actions whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school- sponsored events, or from any computer not on school property.

## **Definition**

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students, school employee or volunteer exhibited toward another student, school employee or volunteer more than once and the behavior both:

- Causes mental or physical harm to the other; and
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other.

Such behavior includes overt intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate another student, school employee or volunteer. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include:

- Physical violence and/or attacks.
- Threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures.
- Extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions.
- Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors; and
- Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others with information and communication technologies and other Web-based/online sites (also known as “cyberbullying”), such as the following:
  - Posting slurs on Web sites where students congregate or on Web logs (personal online journals or diaries);
  - Sending abusive or threatening instant messages.
  - Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs of students and posting them online; and,
  - Using Web sites to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.
- Excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

## **Procedure for the Alleged Victim**

- Communicate to the harasser that the individual expects the behavior to stop.
- If the harassment does not stop, or the individual does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the individual should:

- Tell a teacher, counselor or principal; and
- Write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another copy to the teacher, counselor or principal including:
  - What, when and where it happened.
  - Who was involved.
  - Exactly what was said or what the harasser did.
  - Witnesses to the harassment.
  - What the student said or did, either at the time or later.
  - How the student felt; and
  - How the harasser responded.

### **Complaint Procedure:**

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or his/her designee. Staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. “A school employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with a policy if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying promptly in good faith and in compliance with the procedures specified in the policy.” (ODE Model Policy, Rev. 03, 05/14/07 #2.2.11.)

The principal upon receiving a complaint must notify parents or guardians of any student involved in a prohibited incident and must provide access to any written reports pertaining to the prohibited incident within the spirit of the Ohio Revised Code 3319.321 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended. (See attachments.)

The principal may appoint an investigator. The complainant completes an Anti- Harassment/Bullying Complaint Form (see attachment). Any evidence of the harassment, including but not limited to letters, tapes and pictures should be turned over to the investigator. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. The investigator, with the approval of the principal, or the principal has the authority to initiate an investigation in the absence of a written complaint.

Any witness to the event is encouraged to complete an Anti-Harassment/Bullying Witness Disclosure Form (see attachment). Information received during the investigation is kept confidential to the extent possible.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant, witness or any participant in the complaint process. Any person who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Investigation Procedure.

It is imperative that harassment, intimidation, or bullying be identified only when the specific elements of the definition are met because the designation of such prohibited incidents carry special statutory



obligations. However, misconduct by one student against another student, whether appropriately defined or not, will result in appropriate disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes harassment, intimidation or bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

The investigator will reasonably and promptly commence the investigation upon receipt of the complaint. The investigator will interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. The alleged harasser may file a written statement in response to the complaint. The investigator may also interview witnesses as deemed appropriate.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will make written findings and conclusions as to each allegation of harassment and report the findings and conclusions to the principal. The investigator will provide a copy of the findings of the investigation to the principal.

### **Resolution of the Complaint**

Following receipt of the investigator's report, the principal may investigate further, if deemed necessary, and decide of any appropriate additional steps that may include discipline. Prior to the determination of the appropriate remedial action, the principal may, at the principal's discretion, interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. The principal will file a written report closing the case and documenting any disciplinary action taken or any other action taken in response to the complaint. The complainant, the alleged harasser and the investigator will receive notice as to the conclusion of the investigation. The principal will maintain a log of information necessary to comply with Ohio Department of Education reporting procedures.

### **Points to Remember in the Investigation**

- Evidence uncovered in the investigation is confidential.
- Complaints must be taken seriously and investigated.
- No retaliation will be taken against individuals involved in the investigation process.
- Retaliators will be disciplined up to and including suspension and expulsion. Conflicts if the investigator is a witness to the incident; an alternate investigator shall be appointed to investigate.

## **DRESS CODE 2024-2025**

All children are expected to adhere to the school's dress code. The dress code is in effect from the first day of each school year. The principal has the authority to make the final decision on all matters related to the student dress code.

## MASS UNIFORM

*As Catholics, we believe that the Mass is the source and foundation of our lives, and that Jesus Christ is present in His Humanity and Divinity in the Eucharist. An outward sign of that belief is our reverent disposition and behavior when we go to Mass. There will be a specific dress code for ALL Mass days. Most Mass days are on Friday, but several times throughout the year, Mass falls on a different day. Please pay attention to the school calendar. Students will be required to wear the following dress uniform on Mass days.*

**All** students wear a white button up oxford shirt with a button-down collar.

**Boys** wear an oxford shirt, Schoolbelle plaid tie and choice of uniform pants or shorts, belts are optional. Socks must cover ankles.

**Girls** will wear an oxford shirt, Schoolbelle plaid cross tie, choice of uniform bottoms, plaid jumper, skirt pants or shorts, belts are optional. **Girls must wear navy or black leggings or opaque tights (under skirt/jumper)** or socks that cover ankles when wearing pants.

\* During winter months, students may layer their shirt with uniform sweaters, vests and sweatshirts, **No spirit wear sweatshirts or other non-uniform sweatshirts.**

## GIRLS UNIFORM

When wearing Schoolbelle banded shirts, they do not have to be tucked in. Non-banded shirts must always be tucked in. Belts are optional with pants and shorts when wearing banded shirts. Belts in a solid color of black, brown, or blue when they are worn. Leggings (full-length or knee-length), or opaque tights, in navy blue or black must be worn under jumpers and skirts. Because we begin and end school in warm weather months, all students can wear uniform shorts from August until Nov. 1 and then again beginning on April 1 to the end of May. Girls also have the option to purchase the plaid skirts from Schoolbelles to wear during the warm months.

Uniform sweatshirts may be worn.

**Girls in Kindergarten through 5th grade** may wear knee-length jumpers or knee-length skirts in Schoolbelle plaid, navy blue or black leggings must be worn under skirts. Navy blue shorts, or pants with a white blouse, white polo shirt, or Schoolbelle St. Vincent de Paul green polo and socks that cover the ankles. Leggings (under skirts) must accompany the jumpers and skirts.

**Girls in 6th grade through 8th grade** may wear the Schoolbelle knee-length plaid skirt or

knee-length skort, navy blue or black leggings **MUST** be worn under skirts and skorts. Girls may also wear navy blue or khaki knee-length shorts or pants with a white blouse, white polo shirt or Schoolbelle St.

Vincent de Paul green polo. All girls' tops and bottoms should be loose fitting. Socks must cover ankles when wearing pants or shorts. Leggings must be worn with skirts and skorts.

(Denims, jeans like, corduroys, pants with studs or rivets, skinny, joggers or cargo like pants are not permitted.)

## BOYS UNIFORM

When wearing Schoolbelle banded shirts, they do not have to be tucked in. Non- banded shirts must always be tucked in. Belts are optional. When wearing a belt, it must be in a solid color of black, brown, or blue. Uniform sweatshirts may be worn. Shorts can be worn August -27 to November-1 and again from April-1 to May-28.

**Boys in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade** may wear navy blue uniform dress pants or shorts. (Denims, jean like, corduroys, skinny or cargo like pants are not allowed.) Plain white polo shirts with a collar or Schoolbelle St. Vincent de Paul green polo shirts are to be worn with pants or shorts.

**Boys in 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade** may wear navy blue or khaki uniform dress pants or shorts. (Denims, jean like, corduroys, skinny, jogger or cargo like pants are not allowed.) Plain white polo shirts with a collar or Schoolbelle St. Vincent de Paul green polo shirts are to be worn with pants or shorts.

## SOCKS

All students are to wear white, navy-blue or khaki socks that cover the ankles. Leggings must be worn under skirts,skorts, and jumpers and are to be navy blue or black.

## SHOES

**PLEASE NOTE: If in doubt, please bring the shoes to school before they are worn.**

Dress shoes are highly encouraged. Students may wear dress shoes in solid colors of brown or black. Dress shoes in oxford style, penny-loafer, saddle-shoe (black/white), or Mary-Jane

style with non-marking soles are permitted. **No boots or booties are permitted.** ALL styles of dress shoes must be black or brown color.

Athletic shoes in **mostly** white or black are permitted. (NO markings or accent colors on athletic shoes are acceptable.) The entire shoe must be mostly white or black. This includes the sole of the shoe and the shoelaces. All parts of the shoe must be mostly white or black. High tops and mid tops are not permitted.

## HAIR

All students are to have haircuts which will keep their hair out of their eyes. All students' hair is to be neatly combed.

Boys' hair must be off the collar, no significant change in length or hard parts, no shaven designs. Hair must be a natural color. Distracting styles or fads are not acceptable.

Girls' hair bows, head bands, and beads must be simple: nothing large. All hair accessories are to be the colors of white, green, navy blue, or black.

## COSMETICS AND JEWELRY

No SMART/Apple or communicating type of watch allowed.

Make-up is not permitted in any grade, with the exception of blemish cover-up makeup.

Girls in Pre-K through 8th grade may only wear clear nail polish. Artificial nails are not permitted. (Colored polish and artificial nails receive dress code violations).

Jewelry for both boys and girls is to be simple. (if large jewelry is worn it will be removed).

Girls and boys may only wear post/stud earrings. (If a student wears a different type of earring, the student must remove them).

## GYM

Students do not change clothes for gym class. Tennis shoes are required for gym class. Students can keep their gym shoes in their lockers for scheduled gym days. Athletic shoes of mostly white or black are permitted. NO markings or accent colors on athletic shoes are acceptable. The entire shoe must be mostly white or black. This includes the sole of the shoe and shoelaces. All parts of the shoe must be mostly white or black. High tops are not permitted.

Girls in kindergarten through 8th grade should bring or wear shorts under their uniform jumpers during gym class.

## DRESS DOWN /SPIRIT WEAR/ PICTURE/ DRESS UP DAYS

All students are to follow the school's appropriate guidelines. The length of shorts, skirts, dresses must be to the knee. If skinny pants or leggings are worn, the shirt length must cover the bottom. No joggers, sweatpants, etc.

No spaghetti strap tops, shoulders must be covered. No sandals, heels, boots, booties, croc-like shoes.

**Dress down days are jean days.** Meaning students can wear jeans with a favorite appropriate shirt. No joggers, sweatpants, "short" skirts or shorts.

# PARENT SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

## Partnering with Parents

At the heart of the foundation of our school is our faith and shared values. In the best interest of the children we serve, it is important that the school administration, faculty, and staff be able to work as partners with parents and that parents be able to partner with one another, to foster a school community and culture where everyone thrives. Our expectations in this partnership are grounded in mutual respect and trust.

The greatest single factor in building a child's intellectual, cultural, and moral attitude is the example you provide in your home.

As our partners, you are responsible for adhering to the following principles.

1. Be kind to one another, as God wants us to be.
2. See the good in one another.
3. Listen to one another, hear what they are saying.
4. Model and build positive relationships with your child's teachers. Contact the teacher first when a problem or misunderstanding arises at school.
5. Model and build positive relationships with fellow parents. Contact the other parent first when a problem or misunderstanding arises with another child.
6. Begin your conversations from a position of respect and an open mind, there are always multiple sides to a story.

Please follow appropriate ways to share concerns that arise at school. As partners, please discuss concerns and go directly to the source to seek resolution. The administration, faculty, and staff cannot address a situation if they are unaware of it. Fellow parents cannot work with you to resolve child-to-child issues if you do not reach out to them.

Social media and class group chats are powerful ways to communicate. With this power comes responsibility. Know the facts before you post. If you do not know the facts, do not post. Speak truthfully, refrain from misleading others, and do not obstruct or interfere with school business. Make it clear that opinions you post are your personal opinions. Understand that what you post might impact the school and those associated with it. Be respectful.

For the school to carry out its Christ centered mission, it is important that every parent be respectful and supportive of the school, its faculty, staff, students, and the school and parish administration. Just as we seek to partner with parents in the education of each student, we expect parents to act as partners with us. While we respect the right of parents to have opinions that may differ from ours or even to be critical at times, we ask that opinions and criticism be shared in a respectful, private manner.

**The above principles are expected to be followed. The actions specified below will not be tolerated:**

Harassment or disrespect of teachers, staff members, or administration, whether directly or indirectly, by email, in person, or by other means.

Negative social media posts about the school, its faculty, staff, students, administration, policies, or events.

Committing, tolerating or otherwise being involved in any negative or unkind treatment of a student.

Any other derogatory, negative, or unsupportive behavior that serves no purpose other than to undermine the mission of the school.

The parish and school reserve the right to expand upon this list as warranted.

Any person who commits any of the above actions, or similar actions not specifically listed above, will be required to meet in person with the pastor and principal.

Please understand that, as a Catholic private school, the continued enrollment of every student is subject to approval by the administration, and severe or repeated infractions of the above nature may result in a family being asked to leave the school.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Scheduled parent teacher conference days during the school year promote a greater understanding of the needs and growth patterns of the student, as well as strengthen home- school communications. Following the first trimester, a traditional 10/15- minute parent/teacher conference will be scheduled. The teacher will present the data they collected that provides insight into a student's strengths and areas that could use attention. **All parents are expected to schedule and attend a 1st quarter parent/teacher conference.**

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Each family must have an emergency form on file in the school office. The form includes the following information:

- Parent(s)' or guardian(s)' name(s).
- Up-to-date address.
- Home, cell phone and work numbers.
- Emergency contacts and phone numbers.
- Physician's name and phone number.

Parents/guardians should notify the school promptly in writing of any change of home address, or home, emergency or work and cell phone numbers.

# COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is one of our priorities. The school pursues different avenues of communication to ensure that parents are informed of what is happening at school.

ANNUAL BACK TO SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE: Parents are required to attend the annual Open House prior to the first day of school for the purpose of providing parents with the opportunity to receive important information, learn tips on how to make this a successful year, and meet the school faculty.

FACTS: The schools' information system. Parents are expected to view grades, assignments, and teacher's newsletters at this site on a frequent basis. Parents are to order their students hot lunch, pay tuition, and pay aftercare using this system.

WEEKLY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER: Each week an email from the principal will be sent to parents. These emails include important reminders, deadlines, and other relevant school news. It is expected that all families read the email.

WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN LETTER: Each weekend a letter from the principal is included in the parish bulletin. These letters include important reminders, deadlines and other relevant school information.

SCHOOL ONE CALL PHONE MESSAGES AND EMAIL: Parent Alert through the FACTS system has the capability to send pre-recorded phone messages. This option will be used to remind families of important events, snow days, emergencies or announcements.

WEBSITE: Our school website is a great resource of information and materials relevant to our school life and community. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the website.

PHONE CALLS: Phone calls are a quick and efficient way to communicate a student's struggles or challenges, as well as their accomplishments. Teachers are encouraged to make positive phone calls as the need arises. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to phone teachers with any concerns or questions. Teachers and staff members cannot accept phone calls during the school day since they are busy with the school children. Please allow 24 hours for all calls and e-mails to be returned.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Teachers and parents can write quick and efficient notes back and forth using an assignment book. Handwritten and electronic communication is also another means to maintain contact. All teachers and staff members have assigned St. Vincent de Paul Parish School e-mail accounts. Although teachers are often able to respond quicker, please allow 24 hours for a response.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All student records and information are always held confidential by all employees of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School. Employees must comply with the Family Educational

Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) always. Employees of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School will discuss student situations with the parents/guardians of those students only. Employees

of St. Vincent de Paul School will not meet with anyone except a parent/guardian to discuss student situations even if a parent gives consent.

## VOLUNTEER

A school is only as strong as the partnership that is created between home and school. At St. Vincent de Paul Parish School we believe in our mission of educating our students in a diverse and challenging environment. To this point, we look to parents for

their leadership in providing their time and talent to aid in our efforts to reach this point of excellence. Every family is encouraged to make a meaningful commitment of time and energy to St. Vincent de Paul Parish School. There are many opportunities to volunteer.

The Diocese of Cleveland set forth the mandate for volunteers to be VIRTUS Trained. St. Vincent de Paul Parish School will meet these mandated requirements to promote and protect the dignity of our children.

Each volunteer must have the following information completed and on file in the school office:

- Virtus Training (Protecting God's Children)
- Complete Virtus bulletins monthly.
- Background Check completed.
- Code of Conduct signed.



## PARENT ASSOCIATION

The Parent Association is an organization of the school dedicated to collaboration between parents, guardians and members of the school and parish staff in the pursuit of quality, faith- centered education.

*Parent Association promotes and fosters the following goals:*

Spiritual, educational and formational development for parents/guardians and families who are part of the school community.

Support of the school in its role of educational and spiritual development of children Regular communication that fosters the partnership of home and school.

Social interaction among the members of the school community Volunteer service to the school.

Promotion of the school in the local community

## ROOM PARENTS

Each year there are one or two parents who act as the main liaison between school and home for each homeroom. If there are no candidates, last year's room parent(s) may return as current room parents. Room parents are usually associated with one homeroom. Special circumstances may require a room parent to be associated with two homerooms.

There are three main responsibilities involved with being a room parent. They are communication, party coordination, and celebration/appreciation of our community. Mass communication sent by the room parents must be informative in nature and may not contain personal messages or opinions. Mass communications must have the administration copied.

## NON-ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

### BUILDING SECURITY

All exterior doors are always kept locked. The main entrance is controlled by a buzzer system. All visitors, including parents, volunteers and vendors, are required to check in at the school office upon arrival. The school has security cameras monitoring the building. Access to the building is greatly limited. The school has a security guard on the premises throughout the school day.

Each classroom has an intercom call button to call the school office. Each classroom has a phone. St. Vincent de Paul Parish School has a state approved Emergency Operation Plan. This is a confidential plan that is only shared with our first responders. St. Vincent de Paul Parish School participates in all state required safety drills.

## HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Our wonderful cafeteria staff provide lunches daily. Order and pay for your child's hot lunch through the FACTS system. The monthly menu is posted in the FACTS system calendar. All meals are prepared on site and adhere to USDA guidelines.

Applications for free and reduced lunches must be completed each school year.

Children who do not participate in the Hot Lunch Program are to bring a bag lunch from home. Milk can be ordered throughout the year for students who bring lunch from home. Glass bottles or breakable items may not be sent to school as part of the bagged lunch. Parents are encouraged to provide healthy lunches. Parents may not pack lunches for students that are purchased at fast food restaurants. (per Diocesan Wellness Policy).

Parents cannot drop off fast food lunches. If lunch is forgotten, a cafeteria lunch will be ordered.

## SCHOOL PICTURES

Each year the school enters into a contract with a photography company for school pictures. Pictures are optional. We hope no one feels obligated to purchase them. A yearbook is available for purchase each school year. Pictures are taken in the fall for the school yearbook. Students will wear their school uniform for fall pictures. Optional pictures are taken in the spring, students may dress up for spring pictures.

## AFTER-CARE PROGRAM

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School offers after-school care to our school families on days when school is in session. All parents must complete the registration form for these services.

Information is available on the school website or in the school office. The program begins on the first full day of school. The after-care program hours are 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Suspension of service will result if program hours are not followed. After-care is not available on half days of school. The school discipline policy is in effect during aftercare. Payment for the program is through the FACTS system.

## BIRTHDAYS TREATS/CELEBRATIONS

Students may bring in their birthday treats for the entire class. This is to be a small treat to recognize your child's birthday. All large items will be denied access into the building.

Adult access to the building during the school day is limited.

If you are having a birthday party for your child, the invitations are not to be passed out at school. Students are not to exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.

## CARE OF PROPERTY

As part of our mission to exercise responsible stewardship, members of the St. Vincent de Paul Parish School community are reminded that the school building and grounds belong to the Catholic Church, are blessed and dedicated to God, and have been built and maintained by the generous contributions of numerous people. As such, students are asked to demonstrate appreciation by helping to keep the school building, campus, furniture, equipment, educational materials, and other school property clean and free from damage of any kind.

Because of the serious nature, students are required to report any violations of this policy to a member of the faculty or staff or directly to the principal.

Parents/guardians of students will be held responsible for the replacement of property damaged, and materials damaged or lost through the negligence of their children.

**Textbooks:** Students are expected to take proper care of their textbooks, which remain the property of the school. All hardcover textbooks should be always covered with a book cover. No writing is allowed in any hardcover books. Lost or damaged books are to be replaced by the student's family. Fines will be imposed for books damaged beyond what is expected in normal use for a year.

**Chewing Gum:** Due to the unsanitary conditions and the damage caused by its improper disposition, chewing gum is not permitted on school premises.

**Personal Belongings: Personal items will be greatly limited.** An unseemly number of personal items are lost every year because they have no identification. Parents are strongly encouraged to ensure that their student's personal items, such as jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes, and the like, are clearly marked with his or her name.

## CELL PHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We understand that parents sometimes decide to allow their children to have a cell phone; however, it is not necessary for students to bring cell phones to school. Students are always allowed to make a phone call to a parent from the school office, even after “normal” school hours.

The administration, faculty and staff highly discourage parents allowing students to bring a cell phone to school. Issues arise when the cell phone goes missing. **The school takes no responsibility for lost or damaged cell phones.**

If your child brings a cell phone to school, it must be immediately given to their homeroom teacher upon the student’s arrival. The phone must be turned off and remain off until the student leaves the school grounds. If a student is caught on school grounds, either during school hours or after school hours, with a cell phone or other electronic device (electronic games, headphones, ear buds, iPads, SMART/Apple type watches, cameras, etc.) will be confiscated immediately, the students will receive a detention, and it will be returned to the parent/guardian after school.

Please carefully weigh the need for your child to have a cell phone. It is important that parents/guardians monitor the content of the communication that is occurring on these phones. If a child brings a cell phone to school, students must tell their teacher they have one. The phone must remain off and remain with the teacher.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please change your address, phone number, email address in the FACTS system immediately. We used the information you place in the FACTS system to contact you. Should an emergency arise, it is extremely important that we are able to contact parents/guardians in the quickest manner possible.

## FIELD TRIPS

Parents must sign the field trip permission form for the child to participate in the field trip. Due to liability, only children who are registered students at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School may go on class/school field trips.

## VALUABLES

Because it is often impossible to recover stolen personal possessions, the school does not recommend that students carry money or valuables to school and store them away from their persons. The school

principal and faculty cannot be responsible for the valuables that students bring to school. If special circumstances make it necessary for a student to bring a substantial amount of money or other important possessions to school, she/he can leave these items at the school office for safekeeping. Students who do decide to bring valuable items to school (cell phones, hand-held games, etc.) assume full liability for any loss.

## VISITOR POLICY

For the security and the safety of all our children, all school visitors (including parents) must sign in the office. A visitor's badge must be worn while in the building. The visitor may be escorted through the building. Teachers have been instructed to ask visitors without a name tag to return to the office. Parents are not allowed to enter a classroom to talk to a teacher during classroom instruction time. Parents must schedule an appointment to formally speak to a teacher.

## WINTER WEATHER

When the outside temperature and/or wind chill factor is 20 degrees or below, all children remain indoors. When the temperature is above 20 degrees and the air is generally dry, all children are expected to go outdoors. Please dress appropriately. The students will need their coats and or rain wear during dismissal.

## DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND LEGAL POLICIES

### AIDS Policy Regarding Students

Our school supports the AIDS policy as adopted by the Diocese of Cleveland. Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) enrolled or seeking enrollment in Grades K thru 12 shall be permitted to attend school or parish religious education programs in a regular classroom setting provided:

- The health of a child, as documented by his/her physician, allows participation in regular academic activities.
- The child behaves acceptably; in a manner that would not cause the spread of the disease or in any way put others at risk.
- The child does not have open sores, skin eruptions, or any other condition which prevents his/her control of bodily secretions.

- There are periodic evaluations of the child's physical condition with written certification from his/her physician allowing continuing participation in regular academic school activities.

At St. Vincent de Paul Parish School, the pastor and principal will confer with the appropriate persons and consult with the regional superintendent before the pastor and principal make the final decision on each case in the school. Parents have the obligation to report to the school administration when any child has been diagnosed as having AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC (AIDS related complex), or other illnesses caused by HIV (human deficiency virus, the virus that causes AIDS, also known as HTLVIII or LAV).

## Family Custodial Situations Relationships with the School

### **Two Parent**

In two-parent families it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. School personnel will, therefore, send home notices and communication regarding the child and that information is shared by and between the parents. The information includes, but is not limited to, conference appointments, report cards, progress reports, discussion with school personnel, and tuition statements.

### **Separation**

In families experiencing separation of parents or pending divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child to whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared by and between the parents. Since this situation frequently

impacts on a child's achievements and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform both the principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child.

School personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or demands of a parent. Requests will be acted on only with the appropriate documentation.

### **Custodial Parent**

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving clear custody by one parent, the principal is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the first page of the decree bearing the case number, the pages referring to custody and the relationship to the school, and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be submitted to the principal.

Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the custodial parent. Custodial parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access the records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access as the custodial parent.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School will, unless instructed by a court order, release such records upon request to the non-custodial parent. However, we ask the custodial parent to cooperate with the school and share information, correspondence, and conference appointments directly with the non-custodial parent. This avoids time-consuming duplication of services.

Further, parents should realize that unless restricted by court order any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of the child including sports activities and class programs. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities to avoid duplication of communication and to allow the school to better attend to the duty of teaching your children.

### **Joint Custody**

In cases of “joint custody” entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communication and information will be sent home with the child, and this will be shared by and between the parents.

Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations, it is preferred and will be the general procedure that one conference appointment will be scheduled “jointly” if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents are able to set aside differences and to come together on behalf of the child for this time. A joint conference further ensures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstanding and misinterpretations.

In cases where joint conferences are clearly neither possible nor desirable by all parties involved, alternate arrangements may be discussed with the principal.

Every effort will be made to keep communications open with both parents while at the same time avoiding duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher’s time.

Visitation should generally begin at the home of one of the parents and not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents to the consistency and routines that foster security in a child and allow for school responsibilities and homework to be taken care of during the school week.

If there are questions concerning the restatement of procedure or circumstances that you feel necessitate other arrangements, please contact the principal personally.

### **Separately Mailed Information to Non-Custodial or Joint Custody Parents**

If a non-custodial parent or a joint custodial parent wants progress reports, report cards, or a school calendar mailed to them, it is necessary for them to provide self-addressed stamped business envelopes to the homeroom teacher of their child during the first full month of the new school year. Otherwise, it will be assumed that information is being shared as stated in the above policy of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School.

### **Search and Seizure**

Student lockers, desks, cabinets, and similar property are the property of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School and provided to students as a convenience for their use.

Lockers and other such property carry no expectation of privacy for the students who occupy them. School lockers, desks, cabinets, etc., and their contents are subject to search by school authorities at any time and without warning.

### **Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy Purpose**

The administration and staff of St. Vincent de Paul Parish School are firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, St. Vincent de Paul Parish School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence in the school environment. This policy reemphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others.

### **Sexual Harassment**

For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment includes but is not limited to, the following specific instances: verbal sexual abuse; disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics, pornographic pictures, or other literature, or having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities; obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school grounds, continuing and unwanted written or oral communication directed to another of a sexual nature; spreading sexual rumors/innuendoes; obscene T-shirts, hats, or buttons; touching oneself sexually in front of others; obscene and/or sexually explicit gestures; and any other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient.

The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute sexual harassment.

Allegations of sexual harassment are to be reported to the teacher and the principal. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter will be kept confidential by all parties involved, and every effort will be made to protect the alleged victim from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation.

If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary action will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency, and severity of the action, the ages of the offender and victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred.

Possible disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following:

- Verbal warning/reprimand and apology to the victim,
- A parent/student/principal conference,
- Written warning/reprimand and parent notification, entered in the student's file
- Detention or removal from selected school activities and/or extracurricular activities,
- Behavior/probation contracts, possibly requiring professional intervention,



- Suspension, and
- Expulsion.

### **Student Threats Policy and Procedure**

- Any and all student threats to inflict any harm to self or others must be taken seriously immediately.
- Whoever hears the threat should report it immediately to the principal, teacher, or staff person.
- Police should be notified immediately.
- The student should be kept in the principal's office under supervision until the police arrive.
- The parent/guardian of the student who has made the threat shall be notified immediately.
- Any adult or the parent/guardian of any students who have been verbally mentioned as potential victims or listed in writing as potential victims shall be notified immediately.
- The student should be suspended and not be considered for readmission to school until a comprehensive mental health evaluation/risk assessment has been conducted by a psychiatrist/psychologist. If a psychiatrist performs the primary evaluation, he/she shall determine the necessity to utilize a psychologist for psychological consultation and/or testing. If a psychologist performs the primary evaluation, he/she shall determine the need for psychiatric consultation. The evaluation shall comply with the provisions of ORC 2305.51.

The principal shall provide the mental health care professional with all relevant facts, including but not limited to aggressive behavior, details of the threat as known to the principal, copies of any drawings or writings, disciplinary history of the student, behavioral concerns, and the names of any known victims or potential victims.

The mental health care professional shall provide a follow-up assessment of the student within 30 days if the student is readmitted to school and shall provide the principal with a copy of the follow-up assessment and/or evaluation and shall inform the principal if therapy, counseling and/or treatment will be needed and/or provided.

- Counseling should be made available to children who are victims of the threatening behavior or who observed the threatening behavior if it is determined that such counseling is needed, and parental permission is granted.
- Documentation from the mental health care professionals concerning any student are to be placed in a separate, confidential file and should not be a part of the student's
- academic/disciplinary file with access only by the principal. This documentation may be kept for a period of one year beyond the time when the child leaves the school as a result of expulsion, withdrawal by parent/guardian, graduation or non-readmission before being destroyed.

## **Weapons Policy**

In furtherance of the overall philosophy, goals, and objectives of the Catholic educational experience, St. Vincent de Paul Parish School policy expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. This policy shall apply to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, and other personnel in the school.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, any dangerous object or object used as a weapon (look-alike weapon), knife, deadly weapon, or explosive or incendiary device. As defined by state law, a deadly weapon is “any instrument, device, or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specifically adapted for use as a weapon, or possessed,

carried or used as a weapon” (O.R.C. 2923). Firearms shall include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition also includes any pistol, rifle, or other device that uses air or gas-propelled projectiles.

Violations of this policy may warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or other administrator should immediately contact the police department. If it is determined that the policy has been violated, the parents of the offender shall be immediately contacted and must cooperate with the disciplinary process.

A model disciplinary process should include immediate in- or out-of-school suspension, pending investigation and resolution. If the student’s infraction does not warrant immediate dismissal, then the parents may be required to sign a probation contract that includes all conditions of the student’s retention at the school. Possible terms of this probation agreement may include professional counseling, participation in a community program addressing youth violence, suspension from extracurricular activities, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the administration of the school.

## **Youth Gangs**

Youth gangs and gang-related activity are prohibited. A gang is defined as any non-school sponsored group, usually secret and/or exclusive in

membership, whose purpose or practices include unlawful or antisocial behavior or any actions that threatens the welfare of others. Gang activity includes recruitment, initiation, a manner of grooming, hair style and/or wearing of clothing, jewelry, head coverings, or

accessories which by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attributes denotes membership in a gang, displaying gang markings or slogans on school or personal property or clothing, having gang tattoos, possessing literature that indicates gang membership, fighting, assault, hazing, extortion, establishing turf, use of hand signals, gang vocabulary and nicknames, possession of beepers or cellular

phones, possession of weapons or explosive materials, possession of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, attendance at functions sponsored by a gang or known gang members, exhibiting behavior fitting police profiles of gang-related drug dealing, being arrested or stopped by police with a known gang member, selling or distributing drugs for a known gang member, helping a known gang member commit a crime, or any other action directly resulting from membership or interest in a gang.

### **Other Diocesan Policies**

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School adheres to the following Diocese of Cleveland Policies:

- No. 5135 Students – Pregnancy Policy
- No. 5118 Possessions, Use or Abuse of Drugs, Alcohol, Hallucinogens, Controlled Drugs, or Drug Paraphernalia