

PURPOSE AND USE OF HANDBOOK

This handbook exists to foster the efficient operations of St. Ambrose School. To meet this objective, the school administration is given flexibility and the ability to exercise discretion. In appropriate circumstances, the principal has the discretion to take actions other than those specified in the handbook. This handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students or parent/guardians.

The contents of this handbook and policy guide are a legally binding contract between the parent/guardian and the school. The handbook represents the rules, policies, and procedures of St. Ambrose School, which must be followed and adhered to at all times by student and parent/guardian.

AMENDMENTS TO THE HANDBOOK

This handbook is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the school administration. If changes are made to the handbook, parents/guardians will be notified promptly.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The faculty of St. Ambrose School believes that the purpose of a Catholic School education is to develop in our children the desire to discover new ideals and to live productively within our society. To live productively in the society children must develop a sense of values to guide them in their future years. Only through a diversified education will children realize their full potential. There must be a relationship between that which we teach and that which we are, thus enabling the students to meet with confidence the challenges and responsibilities encountered in total community living. One of these challenges is for the students to become aware that they were created for a purpose in order to give meaning to their lives. Through creative thinking, and acceptance of responsibility and alert, active and articulate leadership, teacher and student become conscious of their call to live the Gospel values of message, community and service.

OUR MISSION

The mission of St. Ambrose School is to enable our children to grow in knowledge and love of learning within a faith-based community that fosters spiritual and moral development as well. Our standard of excellence in education is designed to inspire every child to reach their full academic potential in a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment.

St. Ambrose academics, consistent with Catholic School standards, are taught by an experienced and accredited faculty, always guided by the Master Teacher, our Lord, Jesus Christ. In addition, St. Ambrose provides a full range of physical and athletic opportunities, fine and performing arts instruction, state-of-the-art technological facilities and exciting extracurricular activities.

Our ultimate goal is to render students whose solid foundation of spiritual, social, and academic experiences will enable them to continue toward a life of responsible, moral and joyful Catholic adulthood.

Admissions Policy

Admission to St. Ambrose School is open to members of the parish. Other children will be accepted as space permits. St. Ambrose School strives to open its doors to as many children who seek an education with us. The school reserves the right to determine maximum class size in order to accommodate the many families that seek a quality education at our school.

Priority of admissions and enrollment go in this order: 1) Students already attending the school, 2) New families that wish to register in this school and are currently active members of the parish, 3) Families that wish to register students as active parishioners, 4) Parents of students who come from another Catholic school, and 5) Final priority goes to transfers from public school systems.

Class Size

Following the directives from the Diocese of Metuchen, class size in a viable Catholic school should be greater than 22 students per class. The school reserves the right to expand class sizes to an average of 25 *or more* as needed. Our priorities as a community are to accommodate as many students that need a quality education as possible. Families that are not comfortable with this policy are hereby notified that the school will not entertain specific request about class size.

Non-discrimination policy

St. Ambrose 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 at the school. St. Ambrose School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. In accepting new student to St. Ambrose, preference will be given to brothers and sisters of those currently attending St. Ambrose, and to those genuinely committed to Catholic education.

St. Ambrose School will adhere to the cut-off date of the sending district. In Old Bridge, the cut-off date is October 1st. Therefore, for Old Bridge residents:

- Children must be 3 years old by October 1st to be admitted to Pre-K3
- Children must be 4 years old by October 1st to be admitted to Pre-K4
- Children must be 5 years old by October 1st to be admitted to Kindergarten

A diocesan approve screening test may be administered prior to admission to the kindergarten program.

All kindergarten and pre-kindergarten students will be subject to a four month probationary period. Any student who is not behaviorally, socially, or academically prepared will be asked to leave the program. All students entering pre-kindergarten are required to be bathroom independent.

Transfer Students: Grades 1 through 8

Students that transfer to St. Ambrose School from other schools for grades 1 through 8 enter the school on a probationary basis. The principal will meet with the teachers to assess the transfer student's academic and social progress. This period of probation shall last for the first two marking periods of the student's entrance into St. Ambrose School. Any probationary student who is not behaviorally, socially, or academically prepared for the program will be asked to leave the school.

Service Hour Requirements

Each family registered at St. Ambrose School is responsible for completing service hours during the year broken down as follows:

Minimum eight (8) bingos completed between July 1 and June 30

Minimum two (2) shifts at the annual carnival

Minimum one (1) shift at another major fundraising event

Families registering after the annual carnival, and families unable to complete their carnival obligation will be required to complete an addition two (2) bingos for a total of (10) bingos for the year.

Failure to comply with the service hours requirements will result in financial compensation to the school equal to \$80.00 per incomplete carnival shift, \$70.00 per incomplete bingo, and \$80.00 for incomplete optional service event. This amount will be charged to the family's FACTS tuition agreement on July 5th. Families making a one-time tuition payment will be billed by June 30th, and payment is due on July 5th. Families of 8th grade students must have their service completed by May 31st or their child may not be permitted to go on the 8th grade trip. Monthly reports are distributed so that families may plan and complete service hours before the end of the school year. Service hours must be scheduled with the appropriate chairperson for each event. You may also opt to "buy out" of your service hours by adding \$800.00 to your family tuition agreement.

Single parent households are responsible to complete on half of the service hours per parent. Therefore, families in which the parents are divorced and share custody are expected to complete the total hours described above. It is up to each family how these hours will be satisfied. Parents that are single through death of a spouse, adoption, or military deployment are only obligated to complete one half of the service hours described above.

Active Parishioner Status

Active parishioner status is determined by faithful attendance at Mass each Sunday. The student's baptismal certificate must be submitted in order to be registered at the prevailing Catholic family rate. Additionally, to be considered an active parishioner, and to receive the prevailing base tuition rate, the envelope system must be used each time you attend Mass at St. Ambrose. Please note, that there is no minimum dollar amount that needs to be contributed via the church collection in order to be considered an active parishioner. Please be as generous as your means and circumstances allow. Receiving an envelope on a weekly basis will determine you eligibility as an active parishioner. You must note your envelope number on your registration form. Out of parish Catholics will be given the in parish rate once your faithful

participation is verified with the pastor of your parish. For non-Catholics, the out of parish tuition rate will apply.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

The re-registration process for enrolled families begins during Catholic Schools Week. ***Your students will be automatically reenrolled for the upcoming school year.*** Registration forms will be sent home with your child. If your child will not be returning to St. Ambrose the following year, you must notify the school in writing by March 15th. Tuition agreements will be finalized by the end of March. Early registration incentives are available as follows:

- Return all registration forms by February 10th, your family will receive the current year's published tuition rate. The registration fee of \$175.00 is due with your registration forms.
- Return all registration forms by between February 11th, and February 28th and your family will receive the upcoming year's tuition rate. The registration fee of \$175.00 is due with your registration.
- After February 28th the registration fee increases to \$250.00. This amount will be billed to your existing FACTS management agreement on April 5th, unless you notify us in writing that your child will not be returning to St. Ambrose.

Admissions Requirements

1. Birth Certificate
2. Immunization record
 - a. DPT: a minimum of four doses (five are recommended)
 - b. OPV: a minimum of three doses, provided at least one dose is given on or after the fourth birthday
 - c. Measles vaccine: two doses-the first administered after the first birthday, the second before the start of kindergarten
 - d. Rubella vaccine: administered on or after the first birthday; children who were immunized before the first birthday are to be re-immunized
 - e. Mumps vaccine: one dose administered on or after the first birthday; children who were immunized before the first birthday are to be re-immunized. A second dose is required before the start of kindergarten.
 - f. As of September 2001, all children born on or after January 1, 1990 and are entering kindergarten, first or sixth grade are required to have the Hepatitis B vaccine series. Also, all children born on or after January 1, 1998 are required to have the Hepatitis B vaccine series prior to entering school. Children born on or after January 1, 1998 must have a varicella (chicken pox) vaccine on or after the first birthday or proof of the disease.

An applicant whose immunization record is incomplete will not be admitted.

3. New student physical
4. Baptismal and any other sacramental certificate.

5. IEP or SP (if applicable)

Students transferring into St. Ambrose must present a transfer card, most recent report card, and standardized test scores. Children, who have been evaluated by a child study team, are encouraged to present the team's most recent evaluation, IEP or SP. Acceptance will be contingent upon fulfillment of these requirements.

In the event that a child is transferring from a Catholic school within the diocese, a public school, or private school, the principal of the last school may be contacted for an evaluation of the student.

All students in addition to review of records must have **personal interview with the principal**. All students will enter under a probationary status for the first two academic quarters. **Any student who is not behaviorally, socially, or academically prepared for the program will be asked to leave the school.**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Prompt, regular attendance is absolutely essential to academic success. The parent/guardian is expected to foster these good habits in the student, both for the benefit of the student's current academic achievement and to encourage mature adult behavior in the future.

Ample vacation time is available during holidays and religious holy days. Please arrange family vacations to coincide with these days. If a parent must take a student out of school on days other than the holiday listed in the calendar, the parent must seek approval by presenting a note from home to the office. **A teacher is not required to provide work prior to the trip, nor is it their responsibility to make up lessons. It is the child's responsibility to obtain all missed work and to complete it by the date indicated by the teacher.**

School Hours

School hours for students in grades K-8 are 7:40am-2:10pm. Promptness is an asset to adult life. Consequently, children need to be aware of the necessity for being on time for school. Students are expected to be in the auditorium no later than 7:40am for prayers, assembly, and announcements.

Late Policy

Any student that arrives after 7:50am is required to report to the main office for a late slip. After three (3) late slips in a single quarter, the student will be required to meet with the Dean of Students to discuss a corrective action plan. If the lateness persists, the parent will be asked to meet with the Dean of Students to discuss possible resolutions. Five late slips in a single quarter may result in an after school or recess detention. Parents will be notified of the date and time of this detention in advance.

Students who are late due to a doctor's appointment must present a note from the doctor's office upon arrival at school. Please make every effort to schedule appointments outside of school hours.

Please be aware that a student must be in attendance for a minimum of four hours in order for him/her to be marked present **and to be able to participate in any after school activities (i.e. sports competitions, clubs, etc.)**

Student Absence

A parent/guardian must call the school no later than 8:00am to report a student's absence. If no call has been received, the school nurse will make a reasonable effort to reach a parent/guardian by phone to verify the legitimacy of the absence. These procedures represent a mutual effort to account for the presence of students during school hours. Requests for missed work must be requested at the time of the initial phone call. No guarantee for work can be made for requests later in the day. The requested work will be available to be picked up after 2:15pm on the day of the absence.

When the student returns to school, he/she must present a written note from a parent/guardian, stating the student's name, date, and reason for the absence. In addition, an absence of three or more consecutive days requires a doctor's. Students may only return to school if they have been fever free for 24 hours **without medication**.

If a student is absent from school because of illness or disciplinary actions, he/she will not be permitted to take part in extracurricular activities that day. If a student is absent from school for a reason other than illness or disciplinary actions, the school reserves the right to make a judgement regarding same-day extracurricular and athletic participation.

A student who deliberately avoids coming to school, contrary to the wishes of the parent/guardian is considered truant. Habitual truancy will be reported to the appropriate authority. A student who is chronically truant will be subject to disciplinary action.

Excused Absence

According to the policy of the Diocese of Metuchen, there are only a few instances where an absence may be excused:

- 1) Student attends the funeral of an immediate family member
- 2) Freshman for a Day visit (one allowed for 7th and 8th graders only)
- 3) Documented court appearance
- 4) Take your child to work day. Written notice must be submitted to the student's teacher **prior to the absence**, and a written statement from the employer must be given upon the student's return the next day.

Please be aware that all absences must be reported on PowerSchool. Excused absences will not count toward perfect attendance.

All other absences and illness of any form are considered unexcused and will count against perfect attendance.

Transportation

School bus transportation is provided to students as determined by the Old Bridge Board of Education Transportation Department. Children who do not obey the rules on the bus will be excluded from bus service. It will then be the responsibility of the parent to transport the child. Children cannot switch busses to ride home with a friend. No arrangements may be made with the bus drives for special drop offs. If you have questions or concerns regarding transportation, you must call transportation or your student's bus company directly:

Old Bridge Transportation – 732-360-4502

First Student – 732-536-3485

Unlimited – 732-739-9300

Shamrock – 732-787-1113

Wehrle – 732-566-2634

Bus Behavior

The following rules have been established in order to ensure the safety of all students who ride the bus:

- Use only the bus and bus stops assigned
- Orderly behavior is required at the bus stop
- Remain seated and facing front when the bus is in motion with seatbelt secured
- Talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise
- Do not talk to the driver unless it is absolutely necessary
- Keep head and arms inside
- No eating or drinking on the bus
- Serious and persistent violation of bus rules and procedures could lead to a loss of bus service
- Homework is not to be done on the bus

Students transported by car are to follow the traffic lines around the side of the school to the auditorium entrance. Parents are not permitted into the building for morning drop off or afternoon pick-up.

Parents must write a note to their student's homeroom teacher to inform them of any change in the end of day plan. **This must be in writing.** Please see dismissal form attached. Please refrain from last minute changes to your child's dismissal procedure. Every effort is made to deliver these messages to the teachers, however dismissal time may become confusing when multiple calls come into the office to change requests.

Early Pickup

If, due to an urgent matter, early pickup is necessary, please go to the nurse's office to sign your child out to prevent his/her exit with an unauthorized person.

The school will permit only the custodial parent, or his/her designee (designated in writing), to pick up the child during the school day. The non-custodial parent will not be permitted to remove the child from school during or at the end of the school day unless there is written authorization from the custodial parent, or such rights are expressed in submitted legal documents.

Communication with School Personnel

Communication is important to the entire school community. Parents who wish to meet with the principal are asked to call the office to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time. Parents wishing to communicate with a teacher or other school personnel are asked to “send-a-note”, e-mail or phone the office to request an appointment. Teachers cannot meet with parents during the school day as this would interfere with teaching responsibilities.

Phone Messages

Personal phone messages to students will be handled on an emergency basis only.

Students are not permitted to call home during the day for any forgotten item, including clothing, homework assignments, missing projects, lunch, etc. Teaching responsibility is essential for student growth and development.

Visits to the School during School Hours

All visitors must enter by the main office entrance (door #1), sign in the guest book, and proceed directly to the main office. Students should be encouraged to be responsible and prepared for class each day. It is the student's responsibility to be prepared for the day. Lunch will be provided in the event that lunch is forgotten, and payment will be due the next school day.

No one will be admitted into the school building between 2:00pm and 2:15pm (11:45am and 12:00pm on half days), or be permitted to loiter in the school building. This provides an orderly and safe dismissal of the students.

Visits to the School Building after School Hours

Parents may meet with teachers by appointment only. Parents should not enter the building expecting to see a teacher without having made prior arrangements. Children are permitted to remain in the building for extended care, tutoring, music or other prearranged events but must remain with the adult in charge. **Students in extended care or any other student involved in after school activities are not permitted back into their classroom after dismissal. Parents and students are not permitted back into the building after school for forgotten items.**

Students Bringing Cash to School

Money that is sent to school for a specific event or purpose should be placed in a sealed envelope and identified with the child's name and room, the amount enclosed, and its purpose.

Home School Association

Saint Ambrose School has an active HSA. All parents are encouraged to participate in HSA sponsored activities and regularly scheduled meetings. Important events and items are discussed at the meetings. Parent attendance at “Back to School Night” in September is mandatory.

Court Orders

If there is a court order specifying the rights and responsibilities of individual parents, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. The custodial parent may wish to supply the principal with the “custody section” of the divorce decree if it contains information which may be useful to the school in fulfilling its obligations.

Academic Policies

Every opportunity is provided to enable each student to perform satisfactorily in all subject areas. However, should the student receive a failing grade in any subject area, the following will apply:

Failure to successfully complete the curriculum for each grade may result in retention. **If a student fails two major subjects on the final average grade, retention in that grade is possible.** In the event that summer tutoring is required, certification from the tutor of the child’s satisfactory progress must be presented to the school. Tutoring must come from either a certified teacher or recognized tutoring program. An evaluation may be made by current and former teachers to see if promotion will occur in September after the summer tutoring has occurred.

In case of absence from class, the student is responsible to:

- Make up any work he/she has missed during the time of absence. Homework and class work are to be completed by the date determined by the teacher.
- Take all tests and hand in projects, on a day determined by the teacher.

Religious Education and Religious Services

Non-Catholic students are welcomed at Saint Ambrose School. The non-Catholic student is expected to understand and agree that the school exists to educate in the framework of Catholic values. Non-Catholic students must participate in daily religion classes and weekly liturgical services that are scheduled for students during the school year.

Homework/Projects/Assignments

Homework is a vital part of Catholic education. It reinforces lessons taught in class and acts as a strengthening factor in mental creativity.

- Assignment pads are required of all pupils in grades two through eight. Regulation assignment pads are to be purchased from the school.
- Parents are asked to supervise and check all assignments, especially study assignments.

Parents have the responsibility to provide a place of quiet that is conducive to study and to exhibit a real interest in the accomplishment of their children's assignments. Accuracy and neatness are prerequisite to any assignments. Children who are absent due to illness are responsible for making up all missed work.

Any projects assigned during absence are to be completed by a date to be determined by the teacher. Parents are to see that homework is completed on the day it is required for class. Late homework must be completed.

Any student who does not adhere to the above should expect that grades would be averaged according to the number of assignments to the entire class. Failure to successfully complete the curriculum for each grade may result in retention.

All written work/assignments must be completed in blue or black ink (pencil for math) from 4th through 8th grade. Homework should have a proper heading and be neat. Teachers may refuse to accept assignments that don't meet specified guidelines.

Power School

All student attendance records, grades, test scores, and project work shall be recorded on Power School. Parents may access this information via the internet at any time. Power School is administered by the Diocese of Metuchen.

Parents are responsible for keeping track of their passwords and usernames for their accounts. Parents are responsible for keeping abreast of the child's academic performance, and are encouraged to visit the site often.

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued four times each year for grades 1 through 8. Kindergarten will receive three report cards on a trimester schedule. Report cards are not issued for Pre-K students. The teacher instead provides a daily formative assessment. Parents should carefully examine their child's progress and the reasons checked in each area.

Honor Roll

We at Saint Ambrose School are proud of the achievements of our students. In this spirit we shall recognize them with Honor Roll certificates. Certificates are given to students who have earned them in grades 3 through 8. Students who put forth their best effort will receive honorable mentions. Students who achieve high academic standards must also maintain high standards of personal behavior. Any student with two or more checkmarks for department on their report card will not be eligible for any form of honor roll.

Most Distinguished Honors

“A+” - (100-97) in **each** major subject

Distinguished Honors

“A” - (96-93) or higher in **each** major subject

First Honors

A (96 to 93) or higher in at least three major subjects, two B+s are permitted.

Second Honors

B+ (92-89) or higher in at least three major subjects, two Bs are permitted.

Effort Award

Any student who has made consistent efforts to improve their grades may be considered for this award. This award is given at the sole discretion of the homeroom teacher. No grades lower than a C is permitted for this award.

Conduct Referral and Honor Roll Policy

Students that receive three, or more, conduct referrals in a marking period will not be eligible to receive any form of honor roll award.

Exams: Final exams will be administered to students in 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade.

Records and Transcripts

A parent/guardian has the right to review his/her student's a) academic record, b) academic standardized test results, c) health records, and d) emergency sheet (emergency phone numbers, etc.). These records can be made available upon request. Transcripts of academic and health records may not be given directly to the parent/guardian in the event of a transfer. A request for transfer must be made in writing.

Parental Rights to School Records

Saint Ambrose School abides by the provisions of applicable law with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, and upon request, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the student's essential academic records

Policy on Field Trips

On occasion, St. Ambrose School will sponsor and conduct field trips for the educational enrichment of the students. Participation in field trips is a privilege. No student may participate in a field trip unless a signed parent/guardian permission slip for the specific event is submitted to the school. The school provides the permission slip. Since mature behavior is expected on field trips, student behavior in school can become a factor in denial of field trip privileges. If a student is deemed ineligible to attend a certain field trip, parents will be notified at least three weeks in advance of the trip in an effort to remediate the situation.

After School Activities and Sports Program Policy

Students who receive a grade of F in any major subject area will not be permitted to play in any after school or sports activity. Students who receive a D in any subject are to be put on a probationary period for the remainder of the marking period. If grades do not improve above a D, the student will not be permitted to attend any after school club or sports activity.

Students who do not attend school during the day are not permitted to return to school for an after school activity or sports event. Parents who violate this rule put other students' health in jeopardy since many common ailments that afflict the young are contagious. This policy is instituted for the safety and security of all students.

Saint Ambrose Disciplinary System

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority, and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment at St. Ambrose School. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. They must take seriously their obligation to develop lifetime habits of self-control and concerns for the well-being of others. Home and School will work together to help students learn and live the qualities of responsible behavior and the elements of good citizenship.

The principal and staff at St. Ambrose School will make every effort to promote an atmosphere of nonviolence. We invite parents to work in partnership with us in guiding and directing students toward standards of good conduct. It is therefore expected that parents/guardians support and work with the school in preventative and corrective disciplinary measures regarding their children.

St. Ambrose School is dedicated to establishing the best possible environment for teaching and learning in school. We have adopted a behavior management program to achieve an ideal school climate. Our policy is based on Lee Canter's Assertive Discipline Program which is composed of three major components: rules for behavior, consequences for students who choose not to follow the rules, and positive reinforcement for students who do follow the rules.

Conduct expected of a student at St. Ambrose is: respect for others and of property, obedience to authority, cooperation with other, orderliness and age appropriate behavior reflective of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

A student, who chooses to disrupt the good order of the school or to violate a policy or regulation, will have to accept the consequences of those irresponsible choices. Appropriate discipline is within the discretion of the principal. Accountability for uncooperative, disruptive or unsafe behavior may take any of the following forms: conduct referrals, warnings, conferences, detentions, in-school suspensions, out of school suspensions, expulsions.

Failure to meet these standards of conduct shall result in a meeting with either the teacher(s) and/or the principal to discuss the consequences of the infraction. It is essential for the school and the parents to work together for the benefit of the child. Please note that all conduct referrals are cumulative for the academic year. In special cases, at the principal's discretion, a history of prior referrals from other academic years may be considered when implementing appropriate discipline policy. Also note, that the existence of any Service Plan, or IEP does not permit or excuse any form of misbehavior that may occur in school. All students are held to the same standards of spiritual, behavioral, and social excellence.

All infractions apply to school, parish, and grounds at all times.

Actions that violate the law, threaten or cause harm to other students or staff members, disrupt or impede the welfare and progress of the school community, or bring discredit to the school will not be tolerated. Such actions or other severe violations of school rules may result in immediate expulsion. If a student persists in violating the basic obligations of courtesy, consideration, respect, cooperation or safety, a teacher/parent/student/principal conference will be scheduled. All subsequent discipline, counseling, consultation, and corrective action plans will be viewed as positive home-school efforts to help the student improve behavior. If these cooperative efforts of parents and school staff prove ineffective, the student will be subject to expulsion or may be denied re-admittance to the school.

Only the Diocesan superintendent has the authority to expel a student.

In accordance with diocesan policy and New Jersey state law there is an agreement with the local authorities. As mandated by this agreement, the following behavior will be reported to local police immediately:

- Physical violence or threat of physical violence
- Bringing weapons/drugs to school
- Threatening another person with weapons/drugs
- Extreme and/or on-going bullying that has been established via investigation
- Bringing toys or other items to school that can be used as weapons
- Bringing objects to school (such as matches) that can be potentially dangerous.

If such action is taken, the student will be immediately suspended from school until the police department has completed its investigation. Parents will be informed after the police have been called.

The prosecutor will inform the principal of its findings. The principal will use this information and other internal school information to determine what is the best course of action for the school, as well as the student. The decision may include: counseling recommendation,

continued suspension; recommendation for expulsion, or other action as deemed necessary or appropriate.

Code of Student Conduct

It is our expectation as St. Ambrose School that every student will:

- Maintain standards of socially acceptable behavior
- Respect school property and the property of others
- Avoid any type of behavior which will prevent others from learning
- Obey all adult authority and respond to those in authority
- Follow classroom rules regarding behavior in class, walking through halls, behavior in church, etc.
- Cell phones are not to be used during school hours. Cell phones are to be turned off and kept inside backpacks or lockers for the entire school day.

Electronic Devices: Cell Phone, Ipods, MP3 players, handheld devices

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- Students are allowed to have cell phones in school but they must be shut off during the school day. Students are to keep such devices in their lockers/backpacks and may not use them under any circumstances during school hours. Violations of this rule will result in confiscation of the device and/or loss of privilege. **The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items.**

St. Ambrose policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation and bullying on school property, at all school sponsored functions, and on school busses.

“Harassment, intimidation, and bullying” means any gesture or written, verbal or physical act that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity an expression, or mental, physical or sensory handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, an any school-sponsored function or on a school bus. Such behavior is forbidden at St. Ambrose School. The principal, in consultation with the Diocese of Metuchen, will deem appropriate discipline for any infraction.

Cafeteria Behavior

- Students are to proceed and remain in areas designated for their class
- Students will be called for their lunch and snack
- Screaming, fighting, pushing, running, and yelling are forbidden
- Appropriate table manners are to be observed at all times

Classroom Recess Behavior

- Students must remain in their own classroom
- Students are to show respect to lunch parents
- Recess is a privilege, which can be revoked due to misbehavior
- Appropriate behavior is expected of students during inside recess

Outdoor Recess

- Recess shall be held every day when the temperature is acceptable
- Students are to remain in assigned play areas
- Running, pushing, fighting, and other inappropriate behavior are forbidden
- When the bell rings children are to walk to their lines
- Parents must have a doctor's note excusing students from recess for a valid reason.

AM Arrival

- Students should arrive at school between 7:30am and 7:40am
- Students should enter the cafeteria via the auditorium door (#13) and report to their designated area and wait for their teacher. Students are to line up to participate in morning prayers and to hear important announcements. There is no running or inappropriate behavior.

Dismissal

- Bus riders will be dismissed first between 2:05 and 2:10pm, and between 11:45 and 11:50am on half days.
- Students are to walk quietly through the halls with their classes
- Walkers will be dismissed at the door closest to the nurse's office (#5) after the busses have left the premises
- Parents are to remain outside in the fences area until their student(s) come outside.
- Bus riders will proceed through the cafeteria to the door near the church (#11) and proceed to their bus line. Attendance will be taken as the students board the bus.

No one will be admitted into the school building between 2:00pm and 2:15pm (11:45am and 12:00pm on half days), or be permitted to loiter in the school building. This interferes with the orderly dismissal of the students and poses a threat to their security.

Locker Behavior

- Quiet must be maintained at the lockers. Doors are not to be slammed
- Halls, floors, and window sills must be kept clean and free of debris.
- Lockers are to be kept clean and orderly
- No food is to be left overnight in any locker
- Lockers may be inspected at any time at the discretion of the teacher or principal
- Locker privileges will be taken away from any student who does not adhere to these rules.
- Cell phones are to remain in lockers (turned off) for the entire day.

Medication

Policy on Administration of Medication

If it is essential that a student receive medication while under school supervision, the following procedures apply:

- A. A parent/guardian should come to the school and personally administer the medication

- B. If this arrangement is not possible, the school nurse will administer the medication under the following conditions:
- The medication must be given to the school nurse by the parent/guardian
 - The medication must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container
 - The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an "Authorization to Administer Medication in School" form. This form is available from the school nurse.
 - All of the above requirements apply to prescription as well as nonprescription medication
 - No child may carry medications to or from school.

Students will be permitted to self-administer medication only for life-threatening illnesses or conditions. The parent/guardian must schedule a conference with the school nurse to discuss in detail the need for the medication. The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an "Authorization for Self-Administration of Medication in School" form. This form is available from the school nurse.

The school nurse is available to us on from 8:30am-1:30pm. State law forbids staff to dispense any kind of medication to any student in her absence unless a substitute nurse has been provided. First aid may be given, but in a serious matter, a parent will be notified immediately.

Health and Safety

Parents/Guardians of children in grades K-8 are required to call school by 8:30am on any day when a child is absent. A note explaining the absence and specifying the exact dates of the absence is required on the day the student returns to school. An absence of three days or longer requires a doctor's note upon the child's return to school.

Please do not send children to school when they have symptoms of an illness, or if they are not fully recovered from an illness. Also, students must be free of an elevated temperature without medication. Parents are asked to keep their children home when they exhibit severe cold symptoms, e.g. Runny nose, persistent cough, heavy congestion, and sore throat. The nurse may send children with such symptoms home after evaluation.

Any child with a temperature of 100 degrees or more may be sent home and may not return to school until 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided without medication.

Any child with a skin rash may not come to school without a physician's note of explanation. Children with any undiagnosed skin rash will be sent home.

Nutrition

- Each child is to be provided with a nourishing breakfast before leaving home each morning
- Children are to eat an adequate lunch every day. Carbonated beverages are not permitted in school.

- Children are not permitted to use the soda or snack machines between the hours of 7:30am- 2:15pm. They may use these machines during extended care and after school activities.
- Fast food lunches are forbidden.
- No lunches may be brought in to the office. If a child forgets lunch, it will be provided to them. No child will ever miss lunch because it was left at home.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

New Jersey State law requires that any person, who has reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect, must make a report to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The school follows a policy of early detection when any form of abuse is suspected.

Memorandum of Agreement

St. Ambrose School is legally required to follow the rules, policies, and procedures as determined by the Memorandum of Agreement made with the local law enforcement agencies. The school will comply with any requests made by an appropriate legal law enforcement agency.

Asbestos Management Plan

In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and Federal Regulation 40 CFR Part 763, we are required to notify you that an Asbestos Management Plan (APM) is currently in place. The APM file contains all necessary documents insuring compliance, covering activities such as, periodic surveillance and 3 year re-inspections. The APM file is available for your review at any time. It is located in the school office.

Dress Code

PreK-3 & PreK-4 (boys & girls)

- Navy blue gym shorts or gym pants with logo
- Gold t-shirt with logo
- Navy blue sweat shirt with logo
- White athletic socks (not colors or patterns)
- Sneakers must be tied or fastened securely

School Uniforms – Girls

K-3

- Blue plaid jumper or navy blue uniform slacks (BELT MUST BE WORN)
- Light blue Peter Pan collar blouse
- Navy blue cardigan with school logo
- Navy blue tights or knee high socks
- Navy blue, or black, lace up, or buckle shoes (no ballet flats) with rubber soles, no heel.

- Navy blue shorts or skort for spring
- Light blue polo (golf) shirt for spring
- Simple hair accessory (no large bows, flowers, etc.)

4th – 8th

- Blue plaid kilt – skirt should come to the top of the knee or navy blue uniform slacks (BELT MUST BE WORN)
- Light blue oxford shirt (button down blouse)
- Navy blue v-neck pull over sweater – with school logo
- Navy blue pants (ppurchased from Flynn and O’Hara only) may be worn for a winter uniform
- Light blue polo (golf) shirt for spring
- Navy blue tights or knee-high socks
- Navy blue or black lace up or buckle shoes with heel no higher than one inch.

(NO BALLET FLATS OR SLIP ON SHOES)

Blouses are to be tucked in at the waist. Rolling or blousing at the waist is not permitted.

School Uniforms - Boys

K-8

- Navy blue pants – properly fitting
- Light blue button down shirt
- Navy blue shorts for spring
- Light blue polo (golf) shirt for spring
- Uniform tie – worn correctly
- Navy blue or black crew socks
- Properly fitting black or navy blue belt
- K-3 Navy blue cardigan with school logo
- 4-8 Navy blue v neck pullover sweater with logo
- K-3 Black rubber sole lace up or Velcro close shoes
- 4-8 Black rubber sole lace up shoes – NO LOAFERS OR SLIP ON SHOES

Baggy pants are not permitted. Pants are to be worn on the waist, properly fitted, with the pant legs meeting the shoes. A black or navy belt is to be worn at all times. The belt is to be the proper length, threaded through the riders. The strap end is not to hang down the front of the pants. Shirts are to be tucked in.

The spring uniform may be worn on the first day of school until October 15th, and from April 15th till the last day of school. Since weather is hard to predict, the school office will announce if the day to switch uniforms will be changed. The spring uniform consists of walking/shorts or skort with the light blue polo shirt with the school logo.

8th graders may wear the light blue polo shirt as a “8th grade privilege”, year round

Physical Education Uniforms – Boys and Girls – All Grades

- Navy blue shorts with logo – (no more than four (4) inches above the knee

- Navy blue sweat shirt with logo
 - Navy blue sweat pants with logo (or mesh shorts in warmer weather)
 - Gold t-shirt with logo
 - Sneakers must be tied or fastened securely
 - WHITE athletic socks (no colors or patterns)
 - Navy blue shorts with or without logo – 8th GRADE PRIVILEGE ONLY
- No team shirts, including St. Ambrose teams, may be worn for gym classes. St. Ambrose gym uniforms are mandatory. The students are allowed to wear this uniform on their designated gym day only. Sweat pant legs must be pulled down below the ankle bone.

Miscellaneous Uniform Items

- Girls may wear only one pair of stud earrings at a time. Hoops and dangling earrings are never permitted. Religious medals may be worn as long as they hang inside the shirt and cannot be seen. Short choker style neck chains are not permitted. Inexpensive, simple wristwatch may be worn. Rings and other jewelry are not permitted. No jewelry may be worn on gym days.
- Make-up and nail polish are never permitted in school
- Hair must be neatly groomed and out of the eyes. Boy's hair must be above the collar. Dyed hair, (including highlights and ombre hair), shaved heads, Mohawks, fad or extreme hair-dos are NOT PERMITTED.
- Hats, bandanas, or any other form of headgear may not be worn in the building.
- "Hoodie" tops and sweatshirts are not permitted to be worn in the building
- Any form of body piercing, modification, or tattoos (temporary or otherwise) are not permitted on any part of the body.

Spirit Wear Days

Spirit wear days will be specified as they arise. However, the following items are never permitted:

- Tank tops
- Bike Shorts
- Midriffs or halters
- Make-up and nail polish
- Jewelry
- Open toed shoes
- Hoodie sweatshirts (including SAS logo tops)

Violation of Dress Code

A verbal warning will be given to a student on the first offense. Students who violate the dress code a second time will be sent home with a notice and parents will be contacted.

If the problem is not remedied after the notice has been sent home, parents will be called to discuss the violation and consequence (i.e., after school detention and/or loss of privilege). Dress code violations are a distraction and often disturbing to other students.

Miscellaneous Regulations

Tuition Collection Policy

Parents, families, or responsible parties are expected to pay tuition in a timely manner. All families are required to pay tuition through the FACTS Management Company, unless a one-time payment is being made by August 1st. If a family neglects to pay school tuition or fees, a student may be dismissed from the school prior to the end of the 3rd marking period with a formal written notice. If a student is dismissed, he or she will receive a grade of “incomplete” for all of their classes. Multi-child family discounts apply to sibling residing in the same household. Extended family such as cousins, nieces, nephews, etc., is considered a separate family for the purpose of tuition collection and service obligations, even if residing in the same household.

St. Ambrose School is not compelled or required to re-register a student for the next academic year if a family owes the school money for tuition and/or other related fees from the prior year. The school reserves the right to cancel registration of any student whose family fails to meet tuition payments to the school.

Graduation Fee

Specific expenses related to 8th grade activities and graduation is not included in tuition. Each year, the 8th grade fee is due no later than the Friday before Catholic School Sunday. This fee includes items such as diploma, cap and gown, yearbook, teen outreach, etc. Failure to pay the fee by the due date may result in your child not being able to participate in 8th grade activities beginning with Catholic Schools Week.

Care of Books

Textbooks are on loan to the children. All children are responsible for the proper care of them throughout the school year.

- All books must be covered at all times.
- No writing or drawing is permitted in books, on book covers, and on notebooks
- If a book is lost or destroyed, payment for it must be made to cover the cost of the replacement. Report cards will not be given unless the book has been paid for.
- All workbooks are to be cared for in the same way
- All students must have a book bag to carry books back and forth to school

Care of School Property

Children are responsible for the proper care of their desks and all school property. There is to be no writing on student desks or chairs. Any child who defaces school property will be responsible for cleaning that item. In the event of physical damage to school facilities, the child's family will be responsible for the cost of all repairs.

In the event of such damage, the child risks the possibility of suspension or expulsion.

Teams/School Clubs and Good Sportsmanship – Student and Parents

Joining any school club, team, or activity is a privilege that can be revoked at any time for reasons relating to poor academic performance, the existence conduct referrals, or issues of poor sportsmanship.

In the event of poor student sportsmanship, the coach or principal may remove a student from any team sport if it is deemed that a student is acting in a manner not appropriate or sportsmanlike.

Parental attendance at sporting or any school event may be limited or restricted if a parent conducts improper unsportsmanlike behavior at school events. All students are supervised by adults under the direction of the coach, and parental coaching at sporting events is not required unless specifically noted or requested by the administration. Parents, students learn a great deal of their behavior at home. Please model good behavior at all times.

Change of Address or Phone Number

Every change of address or phone number must be reported to the school office immediately. Up to date records are essential in handling emergency situations.

Crisis Management Preparedness and Response

St. Ambrose School works very hard to prepare students for any emergency or crisis that may happen in a school setting. On a monthly basis the school prepares students by practicing various crisis drills. Teachers will direct students in the event of a real emergency. In the event of a lock-down, no parent shall be allowed into the school building. In the event of any other emergency the local police or similar agency will make the final decision as to what must take place. Until local authorities arrive, the school will practice the policies designed to help maximize student safety.

False bomb threats are a federal offence punishable with a penalty of up to 10 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. 18USC 884(e)

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Note: Signing this handbook agreement indicates that you have read, understand and agree to abide by the provisions of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

Students are only permitted to use the internet under the direct supervision of a teacher. The school takes great measures to assure that students do not access inappropriate material. Elaborate firewalls and other protection systems are used to help prevent students from accessing inappropriate websites. Students that misuse the internet or any other technology can receive a conduct referral, detention, suspension, or even possible expulsion depending on the severity of the misuse.

The use of technology is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of the user's privileges. The administration has the right to monitor all communication on the network.

The user will not upload, download, or bring into the school, material deemed inappropriate. This would include, but not be limited to any material that contains profanity, vulgarity, obscenity or violent content. Materials that are racist, abusive, degrading, and demonic or promote intolerance, prejudice, harassment, or insult any individual, ethnic, or religious group are unacceptable.

Transmission of material, information or software in violation of any church, school, local, state, or federal law is prohibited.

The user will not meet in person any individual whom he or she made contact through the school technological resources.

As a parent or guardian you understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, you recognize it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials and you will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the network or any unauthorized actions of your child.

Cyber Bullying

As technology constantly changes, students may misuse the internet to bully, harass, or make fun of other students. Cyber bullying may take place via cell phone, text message, smart phone, Facebook, or any number of electronic venues or social media, and shared Google docs. Since the school cannot control what students access or do online out of school, the school cannot ultimately be held responsible for the misdeeds of students online. It is the responsibility of parents to contact the local police authorities to investigate such matters. However, the school can take actions to prevent any continued bullying or harassment that affect the school environment. Parents must bring proof of any concerns to the school related to internet use. The school cannot act on cyber bullying hearsay. The school is also not responsible for researching or looking online to find evidence of cyber bullying. Parents must bring claims that are relevant to the school.

School E-Mail Policy – Privacy Matters

Teacher and principal email addresses are to be used for informational email communication only. Emails of a private nature will not be addressed or responded to. Examples of private topics: Student health, issues over student discipline, issues regarding students that are not your own, specific grades or grading policy, homework and class work policies. This is by no means exhaustive. It is the responsibility of the parent to contact the teacher via private note or phone call to arrange a meeting.

Emails and voice mails will be checked daily and responded to within 48 hours.