

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 always followed and adhered to 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.

OUR MISSION

The mission of St. Ambrose is to cultivate confident and reflective life-long learners, whose personal goals and achievements are rooted in a foundation of Catholic doctrine, social self-awareness, and engaging academic experiences. The students of St. Ambrose are inspired to be dynamic members of our community; supporting each other while embracing the challenges of today with a positive and assured mindset.

The nurturing and accredited educators of St. Ambrose ignite a passion for learning with innovative differentiated instructional strategies and encourage opportunities for meaningful peer collaboration. Our teachers foster a supportive, faith-based, environment built upon the principles of social-emotional learning and a “growth mindset” approach. Our curriculum is designed to incorporate technology-infused applications & project-based learning that align with our data-driven standards of excellence for academic achievement. We rank in the in top 15th percent nationally in Mathematics and Language Arts.

Admissions Policy

Admission to St. Ambrose School is open to members of the parish, in addition to Catholic and non-Catholic families as space permits. The school reserves the right to determine the maximum class size in each grade level to align with quality educational standards.

Priority of admissions and enrollment are as follows:

Currently enrolled students

New families who are active members of the parish

Students transferring from another Catholic/public school

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 based on 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 school 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 baseline assessment may be administered prior to admission to the kindergarten program.

Students who do not adhere to our code of conduct may not be re-enrolled. All students entering pre-kindergarten are required to be bathroom independent.

Transfer Students: Grades 1 through 8

Transfer students in grades 1-8 may be required to meet with the principal and/or teachers to assess the student's academic and social readiness.

Tuition Collection Policy

Parents, families, or responsible parties are expected to pay tuition in a timely manner. All families are required to pay tuition, fees, and incidental charges through the FACTS Management Company, regardless of payment plan selected. Late fees apply for any tuition account that is more than 15 days in arrears. 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 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.

Families of 8th grade students must have all financial, service, and fundraising obligations completed before the commencement of final exams. Failure to comply at that time will result in your child not being able to sit for final exams, and therefore a grade of "incomplete" will be forwarded to the receiving high school.

St. Ambrose School is not 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 will make

reasonable attempts to allow families to satisfy payment delinquencies. The school also reserves the right to discontinue enrollment of any student, at any time during the school year, whose family fails to meet tuition payments to the school as outlined in the Family Tuition Agreement. If a family finds it necessary to withdraw their student from the school for any reason, 60 days written notice is required, and tuition payments are to be made up until the conclusion of the 60-day period, even if the student is not in attendance during this time.

Graduation Fee

Specific expenses related to 8th grade activities and graduation are not included in tuition. This fee is added to your existing FACTS account and is processed on January 15th. This fee includes items such as diploma, cap and gown, yearbook, teen outreach, etc.

Service Requirements

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

Minimum ten (10) bingos completed between July 1 and June 30

Minimum one (1) shift at another major fundraising event

Failure to comply with the service hours requirements will result in a tuition assessment equal to \$100.00 per incomplete service event. Families that are participating in the service option must complete a bingo service form as part of their registration paperwork. It will be assumed that families not submitting a bingo sign up form with the registration paperwork have opted to buy out of their service obligation, and their tuition agreement will be assessed accordingly. You may also opt to “buy out” of your service obligation by adding \$1,100.00 to your family tuition agreement. Families completing bingo service are expected to adhere to the bingo schedule. If it becomes necessary to reschedule a bingo for which you have been assigned, you must give the bingo coordinator at least 48 hours’ notice to request a change. A maximum of two schedule changes will be honored for each family. If you require additional changes, those will only be scheduled at the discretion of the bingo coordinator according to need. Please be aware a \$100.00 assessment will be applied to your FACT agreement for any bingo that you are scheduled to which you did not show up or give notice. Families of 8th grade students must have their service completed by May 31st or their child may not be permitted to participate in year-end 8th grade activities. Monthly reports are distributed so that families may plan and complete service hours before the end of the school year.

Parents that are single through death of a spouse or current military deployment are only obligated to complete one half of the service hours described above. All other families are required to complete the full service described above. If there is a special circumstance for which you believe you would qualify for a single parent family exemption, please contact the school business manager to discuss.

Active Parishioner Status

Active parishioner status is determined by faithful attendance at Mass each Sunday. The student's baptismal certificate must be submitted 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 your 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 1st. Tuition agreements will be finalized by the end of March. Early registration incentives are available as follows:

- Families returning all registration forms by March 1st, will be billed the current year's published tuition rate. The registration fee will be automatically billed to your FACTS agreement on March 20th.
- Families returning all registration forms returned after March 1st will be billed the upcoming year's tuition rate. The registration fee will be automatically billed to your FACTS agreement on March 20th.
- After February 28th the registration fee increases to the new family rate. 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.
- After July 31st the registration fee increases to \$500.00.

Admissions Requirements

1. Birth Certificate
2. Sacramental Certificates (for Catholic students)
3. Immunization record

Entering Pre-K3 and Pre-K4

DTap	4 doses
Polio (IPV)	3 doses
MMR	1 dose
Varicella	1 dose
HIB	2 doses (1 given after 1st birthday)
Pneumococcal	2 doses (1 given after 1st birthday)
Hepatitis B	3 doses

Entering Kindergarten

Dtap	5 doses
Polio (IPV)	4 doses
MMR	2 doses
Varicella	1 dose
HIB	2 doses (1 given after 1st birthday)
Pneumococcal	2 doses (1 given after 1st birthday)
Hepatitis B	3 doses

Entering 6th Grade

Meningococcal and Tdap	1 dose (after 11th birthday)
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An applicant whose immunization record is incomplete will not be admitted.

4. New student physical
5. Baptismal and any other sacramental certificate.
6. 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, should present the team’s most recent evaluation, IEP or SP. Acceptance will be contingent upon fulfillment of these requirements.

If 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 **may be required to have personal interview with the principal upon enrollment. Students who do not comply with our code of conduct may be disenrolled.**

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Prompt, regular attendance is essential to academic success. Parents/guardians are expected to foster these good habits for the benefit of their child’s achievement.

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, parent must present a note to the homeroom teacher. **A teacher is not required to provide work prior to the trip, and 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 7:30am-2:10pm. **Students are expected to be in their classroom later than 7:50am for morning prayers and announcements.**

Late Policy

A parent or guardian must accompany any student arriving after 7:50 into the building to sign the student in. After three (3) late slips in a single quarter, the student and parent will be required to meet with the principal to discuss a corrective action plan.

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 to be considered present for the day **Students may not be able to participate in any after school activities (i.e. sports competitions, clubs, etc.) if not considered present.**

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. Requests for missed work must be requested at the time of the **initial phone call**. 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 note**. Students may only return to school if they have been fever free for 24 hours **without medication**.

Please ensure that your emergency contact form includes at least one adult that is on-call for immediate pick-up.

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.

The Diocese will be notified of a child's chronic absenteeism. A student who is chronically absent will be subject to attend summer school or retention of the current grade level.

Excused Absence

According to the policy of the Diocese of Metuchen, there are only a few instances where an absence is considered "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.

A student in attendance for less than 4 hours is considered absent. All absences, whether excused or not must be reported in PowerSchool.

Providing a doctor's note after a return from illness, although validates the absence, still remains unexcused.

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

- Make up any work missed during the time of absence. Students are allotted 24 hours per every day absent to submit work to their teacher.
- Complete tests and projects at teachers' discretion.

Students who have an unexcused absence during the day are not permitted to return to school for an after-school activity or sports event.

Transportation

School bus transportation is provided to students as determined by the Old Bridge Board of Education Transportation Department. Children who do not adhere to bus rules 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 driver for special drop offs. If you have questions or concerns regarding transportation, you must call Old Bridge Transportation directly at 732-360-4502:

Bus Behavior

The following rules have been established 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
- Always speak quietly and respectfully
- Do not speak to the driver unless it is necessary

- Keep head and arms inside the bus
- No eating or drinking on the bus
- Serious and persistent violation of bus rules and procedures could lead to a loss of bus service

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

Written notification must be submitted to homeroom teacher to inform them of any change in the end of day plan. **This must be in writing.** Please refrain from last minute changes to your child's dismissal procedure. Every effort is made to deliver these messages to the teachers, however any other form of communication regarding transportation changes may not be timely communicated to the necessary parties.

Early Pickup

If early pickup is necessary, parent or emergency contact person must sign 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

Parents who wish to meet with the principal are asked to call the office to arrange a meeting time. Parents wishing to communicate with teacher or other school personnel are asked to send-a-note, e-mail, or phone the office to request an appointment.

Cell Phones and Phone Messages

Cell phones and SMART watches must be turned off and stored in lockers. Student use of these devices is not permitted during the school day. Necessary phone communication to and from parents will be communicated through the school office. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in confiscation of cell phone followed by parent contact for retrieval.

Visits to the School during School Hours

VISITOR'S WILL NOT BE PERMITTED INTO THE SCHOOL WITHOUT HAVING A SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT.

Visits to the School Building after School Hours

Parents requesting a conference must contact the teacher or call the office to make an appointment. Parents may meet with teachers by appointment only. Children are permitted to remain in the building

for extended care, tutoring, 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 Money 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, grade, 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 these meetings and during "Back to School" night.

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 shall 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

Failing two major subjects on the final average grade, may result in retention. If 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.

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

Assignment pads are to be utilized by all students in grades 3-8 and are distributed through the school.

Any projects assigned during an absence are to be completed by a date to be determined by the teacher. Parents are to ensure that homework is completed by the required date.

Any student who does not adhere to the above should expect the incomplete assignment to be averaged into their marking period grade.

Homework should have a proper heading and be neat. Teachers may refuse to accept assignments that do not meet specified guidelines.

PowerSchool

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

Parents are responsible for keeping track of passwords and usernames for their accounts and are responsible for keeping abreast of their child's academic performance.

Report Cards

Report cards will be distributed in hard copy only at the end of the school year. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's progress throughout the school year via PowerSchool.

Distinguished Honors

"A" or higher in **each** major subject

No less than a "B" in **minor** subject areas (specials)

Excellence Award

"B" or higher in **both** major and minor subject areas

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

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 to a “C” or higher, the student will not be permitted to attend any after school club or sports activity.

Students who have an unexcused absence during the day, are not permitted to return to school for an after-school activity or sports event.

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 will provide a permission slip. Since responsible 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.

Saint Ambrose Disciplinary System

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority, and cooperative interactions are expected throughout the learning environment of St. Ambrose School. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. Home and school will work together to assist in exemplifying qualities of responsible conduct and the elements of good citizenship.

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. Conduct expected of a student at St. Ambrose includes respect for others and of property, obedience to authority, cooperation with others, and behavior reflective of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Failure to meet these standards of conduct shall result in a meeting with either the teacher(s) and/or the principal to discuss a corrective action plan. **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 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 on 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.

Code of Student Conduct

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

- Demonstrate respect for self and others.
- Respect school property and the property of others
- Avoid disruptive behavior and obey school and classroom rules
- Obey all adult authority
- Be prepared and punctual for class.
- Observe uniform policy

Electronic Devices

- Students are to keep cellular devices, including SMART watches, in their lockers. Violation of this rule will result in confiscation of the device for parent pick up.

Cafeteria Behavior

- Students are to proceed and remain in areas designated for their class
- Students will be called for their lunch and snack
- Appropriate table manners and transitions are to be observed at all times.
- Tables must be cleaned before dismissal

Classroom Recess Behavior

- Students must remain in their own classroom
- 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 weather permits
- Students are to remain in assigned play areas
- Roughhousing and running on the blacktop is never permitted
- 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 7:50am**
- Students should enter the building through their designated entrance and report directly to their classroom.

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 fenced 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.

Locker Expectations

- Locker doors are not to be slammed
- Halls, floors, and windowsills 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

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 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 7:30am-dismissal. 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 8:00am 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 for at least 24 hours. 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 will 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.

All athletes in all grades 6 through 8 are required to have an up-to-date sports physical on file prior to participating in any sports. This includes, interscholastic, intramural, and club sports.

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 drink or snack machines between the hours of 7:30am-2:15pm. They may use these machines during extended care and after school activities.
- Lunches from fast food establishments are not permitted.

- If a child forgets lunch, it will be provided to them.

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 ensuring 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 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 sweatshirt with logo
- White socks
- Sneakers must be fastened securely

School Uniforms – Girls

K-3

- Flynn O’Hara Blue plaid jumper (**skirts should come to the top of the knee**) or navy-blue uniform slacks w/belt.
- Light blue Peter Pan collar blouse
- Flynn O’Hara 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.
- Flynn O’Hara navy blue shorts or skort for spring (**no more than 2 inches above the knee**)
- Flynn O’Hara Light blue polo shirt for spring

- Simple hair accessory (no large bows, flowers, etc.)

4th – 8th

- Flynn O’Hara Blue plaid kilt – **(skirts should come to the top of the knee)**
or navy blue uniform slacks w/ belt
4th Grade may continue to wear the jumper with Peter Pan blouse
- Light blue polo shirt
- Flynn O’Hara Navy blue v-neck pull over sweater or navy blue vest – with school logo
- Flynn O’Hara Navy blue pants (purchased from Flynn and O’Hara only) may be worn for a winter uniform
- Flynn O’Hara Light blue polo shirt for spring
- Flynn O’Hara Navy blue shorts or skort for spring **(no more than 2 inches above the knee)**
- 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-4

- Navy blue pants – properly fitting
- Navy blue shorts for spring
- Light blue polo (long or short sleeve)
- Navy blue or black crew socks
- Navy blue cardigan with school logo
- Navy blue or black socks
- Black rubber sole lace up or Velcro close shoes

4-8

- Navy blue pants – properly fitting
- Navy blue shorts for spring
- Light blue polo/golf shirt (long or short sleeve)
- Navy blue vest or pull over v-neck sweater with logo **(4th grade boys may continue to wear the cardigan sweater)**
- 4-8 black rubber sole lace up shoes – **NO LOAFERS OR SLIP-ON SHOES**
- Navy blue or black socks

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 always worn. 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.

Physical Education Uniforms – Boys and Girls – All Grades

- Navy blue shorts with logo – **(no more than two (2) inches above the knee)**
- Navy blue sweatshirt with logo
- Navy blue sweatpants with logo
- Gold t-shirt with logo
- Sneakers must be tied or fastened securely
- WHITE athletic socks
- 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.

Miscellaneous Uniform Items

- Girls may wear only one pair of stud earrings or earrings that hug the lobe, at a time. Hoops and dangling earrings are not permitted. Boys may wear one small stud earring in one ear. Religious medals may be worn if they hang inside the shirt and cannot be seen. Short choker style neck chains are not permitted. Simple wristwatch may be worn. SMART watches are not permitted. Rings and other jewelry are not permitted. School is not responsible for lost/misplaced items.
- Make-up and nail polish are not permitted. Only natural hair color is permitted.
- Hair must be neatly groomed and out of the eyes. Boy's hair must be above the collar.
- Hats, bandanas, or any other form of headgear may not be worn in the building.
- "Hoodie" tops and sweatshirts may be worn to school, but must be removed in homeroom.
- Any form of body piercing, modification, or tattoos (temporary or otherwise) are not permitted on any part of the body.

Dress Down/Spirit Wear Days

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

- Tank tops
- Ripped Jeans
- Bike Shorts
- Midriffs or halters
- Make-up and nail polish
- Open toed shoes
- Shorts/skirts more than 2 inches above the knee

Violation of Dress Code

Failure to comply with the uniform policy may result in providing your child with appropriate clothing from our uniform thrift, for the school day. Parents may also be notified to bring appropriate clothing to the school.

Students may be called to the nurse's office to remove make-up and other non-compliant items.

Loss of privileges may occur for repeat offences.

Miscellaneous Regulations

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 always covered.
- 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, loss of privileges may occur.

Teams/School Clubs and Good Sportsmanship – Student and Parents

Students that have an unexcused absence during the school day may not participate in a team/school clubs that day. 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 always model good behavior.

Change of Address or Phone Number

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

Crisis Management Preparedness and Response

St. Ambrose School works to prepare students for any emergency or crisis that may occur. On a monthly basis, our school practices various crisis drills. 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 notify following procedures. Until local authorities arrive, the school will practice the policies designed to help maximize student safety.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy

Conflict vs. Bullying

Not all disagreements and arguments are bullying. Conflict is a normal part of human interaction, and learning how to deal with and respond appropriately to conflict is part of maturing. Recognizing the difference between conflict and bullying will help students, parents, and teachers know how to respond.

Conflict is:

- A disagreement; an argument
- All parties have equal power to solve the problem
- All parties have an equal interest in the outcome and are equally involved
- All parties are of relatively equal size, age, or status
- A conflict can be resolved by talking or working things out together or with help from an adult.

Bullying is:

- A repeated form of mistreatment where the victim cannot defend him/herself
- An imbalance of power in size or status, and uses this power against the victimized child
- Usually involves repeated acts of harassment, harm, or humiliation
- Causes a change in the school climate for the student who is the victim

Differences in Addressing Conflict and Bullying

Conflict is a part of growing up but bullying is not. Conflict teaches children compromise, how to come to an agreement and how to solve problems. When it comes to encounters of differing opinions, children need to learn resolution and resiliency skills. These skills promote listening and cooperation to reach an agreement and plan to move forward.

Bullying is different. Those who bully make a choice to intentionally hurt another person with the goal of exercising power over them. When bullying occurs, the bully is fully responsible for the situation. And the bully bears all the responsibility for change. Bullies usually do not negotiate with others. They want power and they blame others for their actions. Even if an adult can get them to apologize, bullies will often retaliate when no one else is around. As a result, it is crucial to recognize the difference between conflict and bullying.

The most common form of student incidents is identified as teasing. Teasing may begin as playful but can turn into verbal bullying or taunting. This behavior is intended to distract, disturb, offend, sadden, anger, bother, irritate, or annoy the recipient. Because it is hurtful, it is different from joking and is generally accompanied by some degree of social rejection. This behavior will be addressed under the same guidelines as bullying.

The school prohibits any act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student or staff member. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like any other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate students in a safe environment.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any gesture, written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication that:

- Can be reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or mental, physical, or sensory disability; or
- Takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, social media or on a school bus that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or rights of other students; and
- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students; or
- Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with the student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

REPORTING

All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be reported verbally or in writing, first to the classroom teacher, as soon as possible. The teacher will then report the incident to the Principal or designee as soon as is practicable from when the school employee, vendor, student or volunteer witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. The school principal or designee shall immediately initiate an investigation.

A school employee who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, to the appropriate school official designated by the school's policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from the reporting of the incident or any failure to remedy the reported incident.

The school's employees, students or volunteers are prohibited from engaging in reprisal, retaliation or false accusation against a victim, witness, and one with reliable information or any other person who has reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying or who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal, retaliation or false accusation shall be determined by the principal after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

INVESTIGATION

The Principal or designee will interview the students who made the accusation and the student who is accused of committing the act(s) as soon as the report is received. Additionally, the Principal will interview any adult who was or may have been present when the act(s) took place. The principal, as part of the interviews, will inquire as to the names of any witnesses to act(s) and interview them. If there is any documentary evidence (i.e., text messages, social media, photos) the principal will request copies. The Principal will keep written notes of the interviews.

Confidentiality for all students involved will be maintained to the extent possible. The students involved or staff involved will be instructed not to discuss the incident in order to preserve the integrity of the investigation. The parents, police and any other appropriate agency shall be informed by the Administration if the accusation meets the criteria for reporting to law enforcement and deemed exclusive of pastoral discretion.

Parents shall be notified verbally or in writing within 24 hours of the start of an investigation. The investigation shall be completed as soon as possible, but no later than 10 school days from the date of the report of the incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Upon completion of the investigation, the principal will determine consequences of the incident report.

The parents will be advised verbally and in writing of the completion of the investigation and the conclusion reached. No parent will be advised as to the discipline of any child other than their own. The principal's decision is binding.

ADDRESSING DISPUTES WITH THE SCHOOL (as per the Diocese of Metuchen)

The School and parents should strive to communicate with one another in an open and collaborative manner. It is the goal of the School to address parent concerns regarding their child's experience in the school. In turn, there may be times the School must raise issues pertaining to a student that are related to disciplinary, educational or social issues.

Recognizing that students are best served when families and the School can find mutually agreeable solutions to resolve differences or problems, it may sometimes not be possible to find a solution or compromise to accommodate the needs of the School and the student or their family. It is agreed by the School and the family that it is not an effective manner of communication to bring third parties into the conversation as it impedes collaboration and creates an adversarial relationship.

It is the policy of the School and the Diocese of Metuchen that in the event a family engages an attorney, the student cannot remain in the School as it represents a complete and irrevocable breakdown of the relationship between the School, the student and the family. Accordingly, the student must immediately withdraw from the School. The student is not eligible to be re enrolled at a later time.

STUDENT SUPPORT

The administration and faculty will provide ongoing support for students who are subject to harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including some or all of the following:

1. The student(s) will meet with the Principal to discuss the incident and explore conflict/resolution strategies.
2. Grade and homeroom teachers will closely monitor the student and provide support as needed.
3. The school environment will be altered as needed, such as changing seats or assigning cafeteria seats.
4. The administration will encourage positive peer relationships and support.
5. Principal will provide information of licensed mental health services to families.

NOTIFICATIONS

If the Principal, or his or her designee, determines that Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying or Retaliation has occurred, he/she shall:

- notify the local law enforcement agency if called for by the Memorandum of Agreement with Law Enforcement;
- notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; and
- notify the parents or guardians of the target.

The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the aggressor will not be disclosed to the parents or guardians of the target.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Once the investigation is complete, the Principal, or his or her designee, shall determine the consequences for the aggressor(s) on a case-by-case, age appropriate basis. Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms and can vary dramatically in severity and impact on others. While conduct that rises to the level of a violation of this policy will generally warrant disciplinary action against the students responsible, whether to impose disciplinary sanctions and what sanctions to impose in a particular case are matters within the professional discretion of the Principal, or his or her designee. It is the goal of the school to have students partake in the reflection and remediation process. If the Principal, or his/her designee, deems that expulsion is the appropriate consequence, the Principal must first contact the Office of Schools.

CONSEQUENCES

The following list of consequences and remedial actions is provided as a guide and by no means limits the school from implementing other additional consequences and remedial actions consistent with the requirements of this Policy.

Student Consequences may be one or more of the following:

- Loss of a privilege
- Reflection period(s)
- Reparation to target in the form of payment for, or repair of damage to possessions
- Reassignment of seats in class, cafeteria or bus, or removal from the bus or extended care
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Extended suspension
- Expulsion

Remedial Actions:

- Recess or after-school reflection period
- Parent/Student Conference.
- Counseling with licensed counselor or psychologist at the parents' expense;
- Education about the effects of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying;
- Behavioral agreement
- Cooperation with a behavioral management program developed in consultation with a mental health professional and the Principal.

St. Ambrose School

Technology Acceptable Use and Responsibility Agreement

St. Ambrose School is committed to the use of technology as part of our mission to cultivate confident and reflective life-long learners. We recognize the educational value of electronics-based information technology, both as a means of access to enriching information and as a tool to develop skills that students need. St. Ambrose's goal in providing technology tools and opportunities is to promote educational excellence in our students and integrate 21st century digital learning skills into our classrooms.

All St. Ambrose students and well as all parents/guardians are responsible for knowing, understanding, and acknowledging the policies and regulations for the use of all devices and technology at St. Ambrose School.

Chromebooks and other St. Ambrose issued devices:

- Access to devices, internet, and other resources will only be available with a signed User Agreement.
- Devices are the property of St. Ambrose School or the Old Bridge School District.
- Devices and other resources should be used only with permission and direction from St. Ambrose staff members.
- Loss, damage, or technical problems with school issued devices should be reported immediately. **Students and/or parents/guardians may be responsible for any damage or replacement of devices.**
- No stickers, labels, or writing of any kind are permitted on St. Ambrose devices.
- No attempts to disassemble (remove keys, etc.) or repair St. Ambrose devices should be made.
- All St. Ambrose devices will be returned in good working order at the end of the school year or upon request.

Internet and application usage:

- Students in grade K-8 are assigned Google for Education Accounts.
- St. Ambrose Google accounts are provided, monitored, and controlled by St. Ambrose School.
- Students should be always signed into devices with their St. Ambrose Google accounts when using devices during school hours.
- St. Ambrose reserves the right to monitor all student internet activity on the school network and/or on all school devices. St. Ambrose utilizes a variety of resources to filter and monitor internet activity, including Cipafilter and Net-Ref.
- While St. Ambrose does use aggressive internet monitoring and filtering systems, no system is 100% effective. Students are responsible for their internet usage and should not attempt to visit inappropriate or unauthorized sites under any circumstances.
- Students should not add or remove any programs, apps, or extensions without permission.
- Students should not log in to another student's device or attempt to access anyone else's accounts.

Consequences for violating any of the above policies may include loss of technology privileges, in addition to any other consequences as prescribed by the Student Handbook.