Best Wishes from "The Friendly Food People"
ST. CLARE SCHOOL

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2003-2004
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
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A Brief History of St. Clare School

Early in 1956, St. Clare Parish was established in Essex, Maryland, when Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Middle River had grown to a 1,700-member parish, and a new church in the area was sorely needed. At the suggestion of Monsignor C. Carroll Kerr, pastor of Mt. Carmel, St. Clare Parish was born, on eleven acres of swampy land on Myrth Avenue. The first rectory was set up on a “ramshackle haunted house” on the property. Nineteen hundred and fifty six saw the completion of the first building, which housed the school, consisting of eight classrooms, and a basement church. In September of 1956, the school opened with grades 1 through 3. The temporary faculty included Franciscan Sisters Francis Theodore, Dolorette, and two lay teachers, Mrs. Dorothy Hyer and Mrs. Helen Bisaha.

In 1957, Fr. Stallings began his search for a regular teaching faculty. He approached fifty-eight American Religious Orders and eighteen Irish Orders before coming upon the Mercy Sisters of Kells, Ireland, who sent five sisters to their new “foreign mission,” St. Clare in Essex. The new faculty arrived on the Feast of St. Clare. Tuition began at $15 per year, and $27 was charged for bus use. With the regular faculty, tuition, school buses and students, St. Clare School began.

As the population grew, so did the parish achievements. Some students put in many a recreation hour preparing for the famous St. Patrick’s musicales. Two students won prizes in national spelling bees. A school library was promptly opened. In 1962, a Kindergarten was begun by the parish. It was staffed by Mrs. Katherine Whelehan and her assistant, Mrs. Rita Martinak. Kindergarten proved to be an immediate success and soon expanded to a morning and an afternoon session. The entire school body grew to over 700, with a faculty of seventeen. The first graduation was in May, 1962.

As the years proceeded, the needs of the family changed. In 1986, St. Clare opened a Pre-School Program for three- and four-year-old children. A day care was opened and licensed by the state to serve children from two years of age to twelve years of age.

Location of School

St. Clare School is located in East Baltimore County at 716 Myrth Avenue, Essex, Maryland 21221.

Accreditation

On April 25, 1997, St. Clare School was granted accreditation by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges.
ST. CLARE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

St. Clare School is an extension of the Catholic Church whose purpose is to teach and exemplify Catholic morals and values. An emphasis is placed on developing self-worth, personal responsibility, self-discipline and respect for life. Students are empowered to live the Gospel message thus developing an understanding of membership in the community of family, church and society.

St. Clare School’s academic purpose is to educate the whole child with a multi-cultural approach of both functional and active learning. Our faculty builds a solid foundation for students to succeed in higher education utilizing both content and process orientations. By implementing specific goals, students are challenged to use their knowledge as power in their lives.

MESSAGE TO PARENTS

In enrolling your child in a Catholic school you agree to certain important responsibilities. These include:

1. to be a partner with the school in the education of your child
2. to understand and support the religious nature of the school
3. to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
4. to know who your child’s teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
5. to discuss concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved before contacting legal authorities
6. to be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
7. to promote your school and to speak well of it to others
8. to meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and to support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
9. to appreciate that Catholic education is a privilege that many persons do not have

So, welcome to our Catholic school. The entire school community pledges its support to you. May Jesus, the model of all teachers, be our encouragement in this important ministry of Catholic education. Surely, He who said, “Suffer the children to come unto me” will bless the efforts in His name.
OBJECTIVES

St. Clare School strives to:

1. Educate each individual in our faith and other areas of learning as a preparation for active membership in Church and society;
2. Provide opportunities for Witness and service.
3. Enliven Gospel values within all levels of community.
5. Develop an attitude of prayer through the daily experiences of praying with others.
6. Provide an opportunity for creative and critical thinking, in an environment integrating the child’s eagerness to learn with the necessity to acquire basic skills upon which to build future learning.
7. Promote the desire for fine academic achievement through good study habits and proper classroom behavior.
8. Encourage parental involvement as one of the potential strengths in preparing the student to live an effective, Christian-value-centered life.

COMMITMENT TO PARENTS

As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the greatest obligation of educating their family. With the Church we believe that the parents are the primary educators of the student, and so must be involved in the religious education of the student.

In fulfilling our responsibility to the parents we shall:

1. Assure parents of the religious formation and education of the student.
2. Guide parents regarding the educational needs of students.
3. Encourage parents in the necessity of being involved in the religious education of their children and the practice of that religion.
4. Provide parents with opportunities to discuss and evaluate the progress of the student.
5. Utilize every means to maintain and increase communication between home and school.

This handbook has been compiled to clarify the philosophy, goals, objectives and policies of St. Clare School. We ask that you follow it at all times and thus build up unity between home and school. If consistency exists between home and school, everyone (particularly the students) benefits.
COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS

We believe that the students should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities; that students should be stimulated to make sound moral judgments based on a well-formed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment and to know and love God more perfectly.

Therefore, we seek to give each student instruction in the Catholic faith, and to provide the opportunity to practice that faith in an atmosphere rooted in gospel values. We work to foster the spirit of inquiry and the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, for meaningful instruction in both religious and secular objects.

In fulfilling our responsibility to the student we shall:

1. Treat each student in a manner which exemplifies Christian principles, recognizing his value as a person.
2. Have an excellent curriculum in which instruction in religious truths and values is an integral part of the total development of the student.
3. Encourage each student to work to his potential.
4. Provide an environment conducive to learning so that each individual can grow and mature as a child of God according to his intellectual ability and personal gifts.
5. Maintain consistent and fair discipline so that students may learn self-control and become personal followers of Christ.

ADMINISTRATION

Emergency Cards

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE HAVE AN EMERGENCY CARD FOR EACH CHILD AND THE SCHOOL IS INFORMED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY CHANGE IN ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Change in Name or Family Status

If there is a change in the family status/or a change of a child’s name, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that names the custodial parent must be on file with the school.
Non-Custodial Parent

If a non-custodial parent seeks access to his/her child’s records, the school must allow access unless a copy of a valid court order or legal agreement prohibiting such access has been presented to the school. The school reserves the right to notify the custodial parent of any request to review records. St. Clare School DOES NOT allow a non-custodial parent physical access to his/her child during school hours or on school premises unless the custodial parent has consented or the school has a court order permitting access.

Communications

Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the concern should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Therefore, the parents should first contact the teacher involved and then, if necessary, teacher and parents should go to the principal PARENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO INTERRUPT TEACHERS EITHER BEFORE SCHOOL OR DURING CLASS HOURS. TEACHERS SHOULD BE SEEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. If a conference with the principal or teacher is needed, please call the office or write a note at least a day or two in advance of the conference date. Should a written request sent to the teacher be unanswered after allowing sufficient time, the parents are requested to call the office and leave a message with the secretary. The principal will then broker communication. In the best interest of the students, the school welcomes and encourages verbal and written communication between parents and teachers.

Principal/Parent Conference

Parents wishing to discuss a problem occurring within the classroom should first contact the teacher. If results are unsatisfactory they may then discuss the problem with the principal and the teacher. The principal can be reached by phone during school hours. If she is unavailable, leave a message and/or phone number and your call will be returned.

Telephone

The school phone is a business phone. Students will not be allowed to make or receive telephone calls except in cases of extreme emergency. Phone messages may be given to students at break, lunch time, or at the end of the day.

Emergency Response Plan

The Archdiocese has issued directives for handling emergency situations. St. Clare School will abide by and implement these directions. All personnel
have been versed on these procedures for proper implementation to insure the safety of the children.

The safety and security of our children are important. Please abide by all policies to help us provide such an environment.

**ADMISSION POLICY**

The following outlines the policies for admission to St. Clare School:

A. For students already attending St. Clare School, parents must complete the appropriate registration form which is provided by the school office. Registration fees MUST be paid at the time of registration. Dates for re-registration will be announced annually.

B. For students TRANSFERRING to St. Clare School from another school or school system:
   1. Parents must contact the school office to set up an appointment for a conference with the principal. At this conference the school’s philosophy and various programs will be discussed.
   2. Any students entering grades 2 through 7 must provide a copy of the most recent report card or progress report, Baptismal certificate, a birth certificate and a copy of the child’s immunization records and social security card.
   3. An appointment will be made for the students to visit the school and spend the day in their current grade levels.
   4. Students will be tested in the areas of reading and math for placement purposes.

C. The age for acceptance into Kindergarten is changing. Therefore, to comply with Maryland state regulations, in order to enter the 3 YEAR OLD Pre-Kindergarten program a child must be 3 years of age before **September 30, 2003**, as verified by the birth certificate. All children entering the 3-year-old program MUST be toilet trained.

To enter the 4-YEAR-OLD Pre-Kindergarten program, the child must be 4 years of age before **October 31, 2003**, as verified by birth certificate.

D. To enter the Kindergarten, the child must be 5 years of age by November 30, 2003, as verified by birth certificate.

E. To enter the FIRST GRADE, the child must be 6 years of age by December 31, as verified by birth certificate, and must have successfully completed one year in Kindergarten.

F. Immunization records and general health reports for all students entering St. Clare School for the first time must be made available to
the school by the student’s first day or the student may not begin school.

G. All children entering Kindergarten or first grade are evaluated for placement by using the Early Prevention of School Failure Assessment.

H. Transfer students whose academic/behavior/testing records indicate potential difficulties at St. Clare School may be accepted on a trial basis for a reasonable amount of time, at the discretion of the principal. This will be noted by letter in the student’s cumulative file. The school reserves the right to require behavioral and/or psychological testing of a student prior to accepting that student, in the event that such testing is deemed necessary.

I. “Whereas: The philosophy of the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore is based on Christian social principles of the Gospel message...to love and respect the rights of all people.

   It is the policy of the Archdiocesan School Board that the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, admission policies, scholarship or loan programs, athletic, and other administration programs.

   **TUITION POLICY**

   A. The amount of tuition which each family in the school is expected to pay is established on a yearly basis. This is done in consultation with the Finance Committee of the School Board, the principal, and the pastor, and is based on the consideration of projected costs for education that year (the cost of educational material, teacher and staff salaries, etc.)

   B. The signing and submission of a registration application is considered a binding agreement to pay tuition at the stated rates for that academic year. If a child is withdrawn by the parents/guardians or if enrollment is terminated by St. Clare School, payment must be made up to and including the entire month in which the child was terminated or withdrawn.

   C. Tuition payments may be made in several ways:

      1. One annual payment to cover the entire school year. Payment due by August 15th to receive a 2% discount.

      2. Ten equal monthly installments. The first payment due August 15th and on the 15th of each month thereafter through May.

   D. Tuition payments are monitored by the pastor, the bookkeeper, the principal, and the School Board’s Finance Committee.
1. Tuition payments not received by the 20th of the month are considered to be in arrears and are subject to 10% late penalty and possible other penalties (loss of tuition assistance grant). Tuition in arrears by two (2) months or more may result in children being excluded from school until the account becomes current. Returned checks are subject to a twenty-five dollar returned check fee.

2. Unpaid obligations (tuition and/or fees) to the school could result in the debt being referred to a collection agency or attorney for collection. Parents/guardians will incur collection fees of 20% of the amount of tuition and other fees due to help defray the cost of collection, in the event of such referral.

3. The granting of parishioner rate tuition and/or tuition assistance is subject to the guidelines describing parishioner status and service hours to be performed for the benefit of the parish and/or school, namely:

* that each family be registered in St. Clare Parish.
* that each family receive and use the offering envelopes on a regular basis. (Envelopes should be put in the collection at Mass each week, not mailed or dropped at the parish or school office. This indicates to us that you and your children are actively participating in the spiritual life of the parish; even if you choose to make a financial donation on a monthly basis or can not afford to give every week, the envelope, even empty, should be put in the basket. Envelope usage is monitored by the pastor. Not using envelopes may result in the change in status to a non-parishioner.)
* that all children receiving this reduced rate must be baptized Catholics as well as at least one parent (or legal guardian).
* that all parishioner families participate in the parish and/or school by giving at least 10 service hours annually.

4. Final payment for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes must be made before the student will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises.

E. Because of the parochial nature of St. Clare School, and because a significant amount of financial support comes from the parish of St. Clare, there are two distinct categories into which tuition rates are divided for the families of the school;

1. Families who have applied for, and have been accepted at, parishioner status are afforded PARISHIONER rates of tuition.
2. Families who are not registered members of the parish of St. Clare are required to pay a NON-PARISHIONER tuition rate, an amount that reflects the full cost of education at St. Clare School.

3. All applications for parishioner rate will be reviewed quarterly. Those not fulfilling the conditions as stated will be required to pay NON-PARISHIONER rates.

4. When a family with school children transfers from another parish without change of residence, and wishes to enroll children in the school associated with the new parish, there is a waiting period of a year after enrolling before the family is eligible for parishioner rate or tuition assistance.

**OTHER FEES AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

A. **REGISTRATION FEE**
   
   This fee is paid at the time of registration. The amount of this fee is set yearly, and in the event of a student’s withdrawal from school, is non-refundable.

B. **FEES**

   a. **BOOK FEE**
      
      This fee is used for the purchase of new textbooks and workbooks either to continually update and upgrade our educational programs, or to replace books which need to be replaced.
      
      **NOTE:** This fee is not meant to cover books which are lost. The student to whom the book is assigned is responsible for that book throughout the year. The student is also responsible for replacing any book which is damaged beyond what would be expected through normal usage. Students will be expected to pay a percentage of the textbook cost if the book shows more than 1 year’s usage (i.e., bent bindings, ink markings on pages, etc.).

   b. **ARCHDIOCESAN STUDENT SERVICES FEE**
      
      This fee is set by the Archdiocese, and is used to cover services and materials provided to the school by the Archdiocese.

   c. **TESTING FEE**
      
      This covers the cost of the standardized tests which are given in the fall of the year. It also covers the cost of processing these tests.

   d. **TECHNOLOGY FEE**
      
      This covers the cost of upgrading technology and the purchase of computers and software.
C. HOME/SCHOOL FEE

This fee is charged per family, and is used to cover services and expenses of the Home/School Association at the beginning of each school year.

NOTE: St. Clare School reserves the right to refuse to provide any official school record, including report cards and diplomas, to a parent(s) or other educational institutions until all tuition, fees, and other obligations to St. Clare School are satisfied in full.

St. Clare School will consider requests for exceptions to this rule on an individual basis only if it judges extraordinary circumstances are demonstrated.

The Division of Catholic Schools will aid in the arbitration of cases, only if it deems it necessary.

TUITION ASSISTANCE AND FINANCIAL AID

A. Tuition Assistance and Financial Aid is available to families who have PARISHIONER status. Requests for assistance should be made, IN WRITING, to the principal.

B. Any requests for tuition assistance or financial aid are strictly confidential, and any information related to those requests is also confidential.

C. For those who wish to apply for tuition assistance from the parish, it is required that a Financial Assistance Application form be completed and submitted to the principal together with a copy of the most recent federal and state tax form. Where applicable, a statement from Social Services is required indicating disability. All applicants for financial assistance must provide an explanation as to why tuition assistance from the parish is needed. ONLY MEMBERS OF THE PARISH REGULARLY PARTICIPATING IN THE WORSHIP OF THE PARISH AS INDICATED BY USAGE OF ENVELOPES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE. APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY APRIL 16th.

D. When a family with school children transfers from one parish to another without changing residences, or is new to the parish, and wishes to enroll children in the school associated with the new parish, there is a waiting period of one year after enrolling, before the family is eligible to apply for parishioner rate or tuition assistance from the new parish.
SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

It is our responsibility to provide your children with the best possible education as well as a structured and safe environment in which to function and grow. From the time the children are brought to school until the time they are dismissed, they are expected to follow certain rules and regulations, a responsibility which parents also share when it comes to children’s safety.

Personal disagreements and confrontations of any kind have no place on St. Clare premises, nor should anyone incite others to display inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to address each other in a civil manner. Foul and abusive language, intimidating gestures, and behavior which the administration believes to be threatening, disruptive, or harassing will not be tolerated on St. Clare premises. Should such behavior occur, parents will be asked to withdraw their children from the school.

THE SCHOOL DAY

ARRIVAL

Children should be brought to school no earlier than 7:30 AM. We are unable to guarantee proper supervision before that time.

Parents who drive children to school should enter the property by the driveway near the Fire Station, drive AROUND the school building approaching the CAFETERIA DOOR from the Day Care play area, and then form a SINGLE FILE LINE, dropping the children off by the stairs which are covered, and exiting by the rectory driveway. The children will be assisted out of the cars by our traffic team, and proceed into the CAFETERIA.

Children are to wait in the CAFETERIA until they are sent to their rooms at 7:45. ALL students will enter the school by the CAFETERIA DOORS until the bell rings at 7:55 for homeroom/prayers to begin.

DAILY SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45 AM</td>
<td>Students proceed to the classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:55 AM</td>
<td>Homeroom/Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Instructional Day begins/late bell rings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:05 AM</td>
<td>Lunch K-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:40 AM-12:10 PM</td>
<td>Recess K-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:10-12:40 PM</td>
<td>Lunch 4-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:40-1:10 PM</td>
<td>Recess 4-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:10 PM</td>
<td>Afternoon Instruction begins K-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2:30 PM  Bell for end of instruction
2:45 PM  Car lines K through 8 dismissed
2:50 PM  Walkers dismissed

PRE-KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE
THREE-YEAR-OLDS: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 AM-11:30 AM
FOUR-YEAR-OLDS: Monday, Wednesday, Friday
9:00 AM-11:30 AM  Morning Session
     Noon-2:30 PM  Afternoon Session

DISMISSAL

Order of Dismissal
1. Pre-Kindergarten will be dismissed to the front parking lot at 2:30.
   NOTE: Parents with ONLY Pre-Kindergarten students may use the
   front parking lot when picking up students.
2. The bell indicating the conclusion of the instructional day for K
   through 8 will ring at 2:30.
3. At 2:45 a second bell will ring indicating the dismissal of students
   who go home by car.
4. At 2:50 a third bell will ring indicating dismissal of students who
   walk, or ride a bicycle home.

Procedure of Dismissal
1. Parents/guardians picking up children are to enter the property
   by the Fire Station, drive to the far end of the parking lot lining up
   according to the directions of the traffic team. Once the bell rings
   for the dismissal of students, ALL traffic will be stopped in the
   driveway until the students have left the building and have entered
   the cars already on the lot. At that time cars in the driveway will be
   directed to the parking area.
2. All children, K through 8, whose parents/guardians are meeting
   them and transporting them by car, will be dismissed into the main
   parking lot behind the school building. Classes will be dismissed in
   an orderly fashion. NO cars will be permitted to leave the parking
   lot until ALL students are dismissed. Students MAY NOT be picked
   up elsewhere on the property.
3. Generally, walkers will be dismissed by the main doors of the school
   building. Students living in the housing development behind the
school will be dismissed by the back door of the school.

4. At all times, drivers are requested to follow the directions of the teachers and student safety patrol who will be directing the parking and the flow of traffic.

5. In the event that special arrangements have been made to pick up a student on a particular day, the school office must be notified IN WRITING the morning of that day.

6. In case of an emergency, we reserve the right to verify any call, by contacting the immediate parent/guardian for authorization.

7. NOTE: At the beginning of the year, students in grades K through 3 are required to bring a note indicating their regular means of transportation from school. This will then be kept on file in the classroom.

8. Many families have unique arrangements for custody or guardianship of their children. Unless there is legal notification IN WRITING, given to the office, it is assumed that both parents are permitted to pick up children, and to have access to school-related information.

**Early Departure**

Students are expected to arrive on time every day and to remain until the time for regular dismissal. If a student arrives after 9 a.m. or leaves before 2 p.m., he/she will be marked absent one half day. This will affect perfect attendance.

**Early Dismissal**

1. Scheduled early dismissal will be 12:00 noon. No lunch will be served on these days.

2. The school discourages early departures and requests that families arrange medical and dental appointments, etc., either after school hours, on Saturdays or during vacation periods. Check the calendar for days when school is not in session. In case of an emergency, the student must submit a note to the office, signed by the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), on the day of dismissal. The note should include the reason for the request and the time the student must leave school. The parent/guardian must sign the student out in the office. The student is counted absent from classes missed and must make up the work at the discretion of the teacher. Early departure for a day preceding a holiday must be requested a day in advance.

3. If a child becomes ill at school, parent/guardian will be notified. Please be sure that all information on the EMERGENCY FORMS
kept in the health room is current and accurate so that parents or designated persons can be reached.

4. If a child is being dismissed early because of illness, that child is to be picked up in the health room. The parent/guardian must sign the child out in the office.

**SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of inclement weather, when there is a good possibility that SCHOOL will be affected, St. Clare School follows the decisions of the Baltimore County School System EXACTLY.

- If Baltimore County schools are closed, St. Clare School will also be closed.
- If Baltimore County Schools open 1 hour late, St. Clare School will do the same (opening at 8:45 AM instead of 7:45 AM). The late opening time will pertain directly to the St. Clare School Schedule.
- If Baltimore County schools open 2 hours late, St. Clare School will do the same (opening at 9:45 AM instead of 7:45 AM).

The same procedure holds true for any early closing due to inclement weather.

- If Baltimore County schools are closing 1 hour early, then St. Clare School will close at 1:45 PM (instead of the regular time of 2:45 PM).
- If Baltimore County schools are closing 2 hours early, then St. Clare School will close at 12:45 PM (instead of the regular time of 2:45 PM).

Pre-Kindergarten procedures are as follows:

- If Baltimore County schools open 1 hour late, AM Pre-Kindergarten will begin at the regular time, 9:00 AM. If Baltimore County opens 2 hours late, AM Pre-Kindergarten is canceled.
- If Baltimore County schools are closing 2 hours early, PM Pre-Kindergarten is canceled.

In the event of inclement weather, we suggest that you listen to WBAL (1090 AM) for the most comprehensive coverage of school closing information.

In the event of an emergency which affects ONLY St. Clare School (such as a boiler problem or water problem), an announcement will be made on WBAL radio (1090 AM).

**POLICY FOR STUDENT ABSENTEEISM**

A child is marked “absent” if he or she is not in school or with his/her class on a school-sponsored activity. When a child returns to school following
an absence for any reason, a note of explanation is required. If a child has been absent 3 school days, a doctor’s certificate stating the reason for absence is requested.

Parents should contact the school office by 9:00 AM to indicate that their child will be absent that day. The school reserves the right to call home if a child is absent and the parents or guardians have not informed the school. All absences and tardies become part of the student’s permanent record.

It is expected that the student will be present at school 90% of the allotted instructional time. A student who has missed more than 20 days of class will have his/her record reviewed by the principal and administrative team, in order to determine whether a sufficient understanding of class work has been attained. Absence in excess of 30 days may necessitate a student being retained. The school reserves the right to notify the Baltimore County pupil personnel officer in the event of excessive or unexcused absence from school.

Ordinarily, students who are absent from school may not participate in any after school or evening school sponsored activity such as a band or dances.

A child may not return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in school activities including recess at lunchtime. Since there is no indoor monitor, a student must be well enough to participate in outdoor play. Absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is STRONGLY DISCOURAGED.

SCHOOL POLICY ON TARDINESS

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Unless there is a valid reason, any student entering school late (after 8:00 AM) MUST have a late notice from the MAIN OFFICE, before being admitted to class. Parents are asked to notify the office in case of any emergencies which could be honored or excused. Consistent lateness (more than 3 consecutive days) may necessitate a telephone conference with the homeroom teacher. If lateness continues after a conference, the school reserves the right to notify the Baltimore County Pupil Personnel Office.

POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN BEFORE AND AFTER REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS

On regular days, St. Clare School admits students at 7:30 AM and dismisses students at 2:45 PM. On regularly scheduled half days, the school admits students at 7:30 AM and dismisses students at 12:00 PM.
The school is not responsible for supervision before or after the times stated above, and the school is not liable for any injuries and accidents which may occur. Parents are advised to follow the times stated above.

If children are participating in a scheduled supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pickup at the designated times.

If for some reason a student must be dropped off or picked up before or after the hours noted above, arrangements must be made with the school office to ensure the safety of the students.

**High School Visitation**

St. Clare School schedules three high school visitation days for eighth graders. These days are planned so that all eighth graders visit on the same day. Attendance is taken at the high school and reported back to the elementary school. These are excused absences and do not count against perfect attendance. If the student does not attend the visit to the high school, he/she must report to St. Clare School or he/she will be considered absent from school.

**Truancy**

Truancy is defined as a student absenting him/herself from school without parent/legal guardian permission, or leaving school grounds without permission during the school day. Truancy may result in disciplinary actions up to and including suspension or expulsion. Proper civil authorities will be notified.

**Student Dress Code**

The guidelines set for dress and grooming at St. Clare School reflect a traditional approach which is intended to direct the student in the areas of cleanliness and good taste. Anything which detracts from that traditional standard or deviates from the concept of good taste will be considered inappropriate and unacceptable. All uniforms must be purchased from Flynn & O’Hara (410-828-4709).

**Standard Girls’ Uniform Grades K through 5:**
- Green plaid tunic style jumper (may be worn all year)
- White turtleneck (optional) November 1st through March 30
- White blouse—Peter Pan collar, short or long sleeve
- Navy or hunter green sweater (cardigan or pullover)
- Navy or white tights, or socks (socks must cover ankles)
Rubber soled shoes—dark brown; black; navy; navy/white or black/white saddles (no athletic shoes)

STANDARD GIRLS’ UNIFORM GRADES 6 THROUGH 8:

- Green plaid kilt hemmed to the knee
- White turtleneck (optional) November 1st through March 30
- White blouse—Peter Pan collar, short or long sleeve
- White oxford shirt; short or long sleeve
- White golf shirt
- Navy or hunter green sweater (cardigan or V-neck)
- Navy or white tights, knee high socks or crew socks (socks must cover ankle)
- Rubber soled tied shoes—dark brown; black; navy; navy/white or black/white saddles (no athletic shoes)

OPTIONAL WINTER UNIFORM - NOVEMBER 1 - MARCH 30

GIRLS GRADES K THROUGH 8

- Navy blue dress pants
- White turtleneck or white school blouse
- Navy/white pinstripe sweater or navy pullover or navy blue sweater vest
  (Only a uniform sweater may be worn with winter uniform.)

STANDARD BOYS’ UNIFORM GRADES K THROUGH 8

- Navy trousers
- White golf shirts/short or long
- White dress shirt with navy tie
- White turtleneck (OPTIONAL) November 1st through March 30
- Navy or hunter green sweater (cardigan or V-neck)
- Black or brown belt
- Socks (white acceptable, must cover the ankle)
- Rubber soled shoes—black or brown (no athletic shoes)

BOYS’ AND GIRLS’ SUMMER UNIFORM (OPTIONAL) MAY BE WORN IN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER AND MAY/JUNE ONLY

- Navy walking shorts (knee length)
- White golf shirt—short sleeve
- White socks (must cover ankle)
- Rubber soled tied shoes (as regular uniform)
GYM UNIFORM - Should be purchased from Flynn & O’Hara

Gold T-shirt
Black running shorts—NO spandex
Gold or black sweatshirt
Black cotton/flannel sweat pants (stretch pants or nylon pants are not permitted)
Athletic shoes
White socks to cover ankle

GENERAL GROOMING

All students are expected to be neat and clean. Shoes are to be cleaned or polished, and all clothing should be properly laundered, and labeled with the student's name. Shirts/blouses are to be tucked in at all times. Socks MAY NOT have any ornamentation or labels.

HAIR

Hair is expected to be well kept and out of the face. Fad hairstyles like “spikes,” “shaves,” and “rat tails” are NOT acceptable at any grade level. The hair length of boys should NOT exceed the shirt collar. Hair MAY NOT be dyed.

GIRLS

Only hair accessories that enhance good grooming are permitted. Accessories MUST be simple and plain, and colors that match the uniform.

JEWELRY

Jewelry other than watches, small crosses or religious medals on chains is NOT permitted. Girls may wear only one pair of posts, NOT dangling or large. Rings should NOT be worn in school.

It is NOT considered appropriate for boys to wear any type of earring with the school uniform. Boys MAY NOT hide earrings worn under a band-aid.

MAKE-UP, NAIL POLISH AND ACRYLIC NAILS ARE NOT PERMITTED

The school reserves the right to contact parents in the event that any of the guidelines are not being followed. Demerits will be given and repeat violations may necessitate a conference and after school detention.

GUIDELINES FOR TAG DAYS/SCHOOL DANCES

Because we are a Catholic school dedicated to teaching Christian principles, it is necessary to set a specific dress code for tag days.
The dress code for tag day is as follow:

1. Shorts must be halfway down to your knees, no shorter than the length of your gym shorts.
2. Backless dresses, spaghetti straps, low cut dresses, and sundresses may NOT be worn.
3. Clothing made of spandex is inappropriate for school wear.
4. T-shirts or shorts advertising musical groups or stations should not be worn in school.
5. T-shirts with questionable or inappropriate language should not be worn in school.
6. Tank tops, muscle shirts, fish net shirts, see-through shirts, and those shirts which do not come down to the waist are not appropriate for school.
7. Flip-flop sandals or thongs are considered unsafe to be worn in school.

St. Clare School is an educational institution, not a recreational park or a beach. What is worn on tag day and at school dances should be appropriate to this purpose.

**CONFERENCES**

In any effective educational system, communication between the school and parents is imperative. To encourage open communication, the following guidelines concerning conferences have been included.

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

A required Parent-Teacher Conference is scheduled with the distribution of the first report card.

A teacher or a parent may request a conference at any other time during the year. An appointment can be set by writing a note directly to the teacher, or through the school office.

**PARENT-PRINCIPAL CONFERENCES:**

The principal welcomes parents to discuss problems with her. If the issue involves a problem that has occurred within the classroom, the parent should make an appointment first with the teacher, before involving the principal in the situation.
ACADEMIC POLICIES

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued three times each year: November, March and June. Report cards serve to show the students and the parents the progress that is being made in each subject at the time.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Students and parents will be notified of unsatisfactory academic progress at the mid-point of each trimester by means of an “Academic Progress Report.” Please follow any recommendations noted on the report, sign it, and return it to the teacher. (One of the recommendations may be a request for a Parent/Teacher Conference.)

STUDENT RECORDS

All parents have a right to make an appointment with the principal to review their child’s records. If a child is graduating or transferring to another school, only the report cards, test scores, and health files are sent. The records are sent directly to the new school after we receive written permission from the parent. If the custodial parent can show a court order denying access to the non-custodial parent, then the school may deny access. Student files are NOT to be transported by the parent.

RELIGION REQUIREMENTS

Religion is required for each year a student attends St. Clare School. All students enrolled in St. Clare School must attend religion classes and services.

TESTING PROGRAM

The following tests are administered in St. Clare School:

1. Early Prevention of School Failure is administered to in-coming Kindergarten students in the spring.
2. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is administered to students in grades 2, 4, 6, and 8 in the fall.
3. All new students are tested for Reading placement.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an outgrowth of class work. It is assigned as a reinforcement or extension of what has already been taught in class. Students are expected to complete all assigned homework on time and in a careful manner.
Suggested time allotments for homework per day range from 30 minutes at the primary level to 2 hours in the middle school. This allotment includes time for written work, study, review work and long-range projects or papers.

Parents/guardians are expected to see that their children fulfill their homework responsibilities.

If home assignments cannot be completed because of home conditions, e.g., sickness in the family, death of a relative, etc., students may be permitted to defer doing the prescribed work. A written explanation should be provided to the teacher in order to obtain this permission.

At all grade levels, homework may be included in determining the subject area grade on the report card. When a teacher notices that a student is consistently missing assignments, he/she will notify the parents and offer appropriate suggestions to remedy the situation.

Parents/guardians support the teachers and fulfill their supervisory responsibilities by attending to the following:

• Reviewing the assigned work with the child
• Providing a quiet, well-equipped place
• Providing the time required
• Providing assistance to the child as needed
• Emphasizing with the child the need for study
• Assuring the return of the homework to school
• Helping their children plan their time so as to complete long-term assignments* by the due date

*Some long-term work or projects are due a week or two from the date assigned.

WORK HABITS

• Written assignments must be neat, legible, and complete.
• Books and notebooks should be free of scribbling inside and out.
• Notebooks, folders, and other supplies must be replaced when worn or depleted.
• Students must always have a library book to read.
• At all levels, students are required to do homework.
• Homework is important for the reinforcement of skills, for developing good study habits and a sense of responsibility.
• Requirements for homework are determined by the staff annually and communicated to the parents via letter or at the Back to School meeting.
MAKE-UP WORK
In case of absence, it is the responsibility of the child to obtain, complete, and submit missed work. **Teachers will not supply work prior to an absence.** Homework is available after dismissal.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR
The following are the standard classroom policies. Teachers may have other regulations not listed here. Students are bound by both the following rules and by teachers’ rules.

1. Students are to be in their seats when class begins. They are not to leave their places in the classroom without explicit permission.
2. Each student is to have all the necessary materials for class.
3. Students are to be attentive to the teachers and to teachers and to participate actively in all class activities assigned by the teachers. They are not to do work for another class or read other-than-class materials, unless given explicit permission to do so by the teacher. Materials for another class or for non-class activities should not be on students’ desks.
4. Each student is to refrain from talking out without permission and from talking to others while instruction is going on or study periods or tests are under way.
5. Students are to avoid any action that is distracting to the learning procedure under way in the classroom, especially harassing other students.
6. Students are responsible for the cleanliness around their chairs, in their desks, etc. Students should dispose of any trash around their desks at the end of the day.
7. Students are to refrain from insulting expressions, overt demonstrations of disapproval, and all other behavior disruptive to the classroom situation. They are not to argue about tests, grades, and punishments during the class, but rather they should see the teacher after the school day in order to resolve such difficulties.
8. The location of desks, the condition of windows, blinds, and lights, etc., are the teacher’s responsibility; students are not to regulate these unless directed to do so by the teacher.
9. Students should always enter and leave a classroom quietly.
10. Eating or drinking must take place in the cafeteria only.
11. Chewing gum is prohibited throughout the school at all times.
CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION/RETENTION

Grades 1 Through 3
1. Failure in one or more major subjects for the school year (Reading, Math, English) necessitates summer school attendance or tutoring. When successful completion of the summer school program has been verified by the administration through written testing, the child may proceed to the next grade.
2. Failure in two or more subjects necessitates a conference with the teachers and the administration to discuss possible retention.
3. Lack of developmental readiness in grades K, 1, and 2 could warrant retention.

Grades 4 Through 7
1. Failure in one or more subjects for the school year (Reading, Math, English, Social Studies, and Science) necessitates summer school attendance or tutoring. When successful completion of the summer school program has been verified by the administration through written testing, the child may proceed to the next grade.
2. Failure in two or more subjects necessitates a conference with the teachers and administration and usually results in retention.

Grade 8 Students
1. Failure in one major subject for the school year:
   a. A student must attend summer school;
   b. Graduation certificate will be withheld until successful completion of summer school program is verified by administration.
2. Failure in two major subjects for the school year:
   a. Student will not receive a graduation certificate;
   b. Student will not participate in graduation exercises;
   c. Student must attend summer school;
   d. Student will be promoted if summer school has been successfully completed;
   e. Any high school that has accepted the student will be notified.
3. Failure in three or more subjects:
   a. A student will not be promoted to grade 9;
   b. Repeating grade 8 at St. Clare will be discouraged.
RETENTION
A student can be retained for the following reasons:
1. Not meeting academic requirements.
2. Absence.
   Absence of more than 20 days will result in the review of the student’s records.
3. Social or behavioral problems which negatively influence the child’s work.
   After parent consultation, the final decision for retention will be made by team teachers and the principal. Parent consultations will begin after the second report card.

To retain a student in the same grade for the next academic year, the following procedure is followed:
1. Before the end of March: In writing, the principal notifies the parent/guardian that the student is in danger of being retained. The principal meets with the parents/guardians for discussion. The parents/guardians sign a statement acknowledging they have been informed of the possibility of retention.
2. By the end of April: Another meeting is held between the principal and parents/guardians, who sign a second statement acknowledging they have received second notice of retention possibility.
3. In May: After notification in writing that the student will be retained in the same grade, the parents/guardians are provided the opportunity to review the decision process with the principal.

WITHDRAWALS
Whenever a student is transferring:
1. Notify the school office.
2. Return all textbooks, library book, etc., belonging to the school.
3. Pay all debts.
4. Sign request for release of records.
All financial obligations must be met before student’s academic records will be released.

ACADEMIC AWARDS
Throughout the school year students are acknowledged for various academic and non-academic achievements.
STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

In a pleasant atmosphere of study and work, the faculty strives to teach self-discipline; the reinforcement of these ideals of self-discipline in your home will be the measure of our success at school. Parents, teachers, and students must work together to accomplish positive results for all concerned.

GOALS FOR DISCIPLINE:

• To grow in the knowledge of and the ability to live Christian values
• To grow in respect for self, others, and property
• To share responsibility for creating a calm, courteous, friendly atmosphere throughout the school
• To grow in ability to accept responsibility for personal actions and behavior
• To take pride in and support the school community

CONSTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR

Constructive behavior builds from within and reflects a person striving for spiritual, moral, and human growth.

Basic courtesy and respect for one another as shown by a sincere “thank you,” “please,” and “I’m sorry,” are expected of St. Clare students. Christian values demand thoughtful concern for one another at home, at school, in the parish, in the neighborhood, and in the community.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

To maintain a positive learning environment and standards that are consistent with our Christian philosophy, it is essential that students exhibit a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves as well as others. Listed below are some behaviors that are unacceptable:

Tardiness
Lack of Responsibility
Failure to have necessary supplies for class work
Disrespectful manner and/or language
Rowdiness
Using the property of others without permission
Dishonesty
Theft or extortion
Disruptive Behavior
Fighting
Dangerous Play
Rudeness
Vulgarity
Dress code violations
Defacement/destruction of school property
Gum chewing
Harassment of any kind by word or manner
Unchristian Behavior
On the playground, in school, in class, or when representing the school (field trips, sports gatherings, assemblies, etc.)

Any other types of behavior not specifically stated in this handbook, but which the administration considers to be acts of seriously disruptive behavior. Generally, the teacher will deal with infractions. Should circumstances warrant, the parent and/or the administration involved will be consulted.

DISCIPLINE CODE

The Discipline Code at St. Clare School is subdivided into three groups to allow for age-appropriate discipline and gradual progression toward becoming accountable for one’s own actions.

ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

This system is based on rewarding positive behaviors and, if necessary, issuing consequences for inappropriate behaviors. This system is explained to all Pre-Kindergarten through third grade students and parents by the teachers.

In addition, students will receive written notice from the teacher for individual misbehavior:

1. Fighting
2. Biting
3. Disrespect
4. Hitting
5. Constant calling out
6. Leaving your seat
7. Excessive crying
8. Leaving the supervised area without permission
9. Repeatedly missing homework assignments

If inappropriate behavior persists, the student will be referred to the principal for further action.
ADJUSTED DEMERIT SYSTEM
This system also allows for rewards for positive behaviors, but demands a higher level of accountability for one’s actions. Demerits, detention, and/or suspensions may result from inappropriate behaviors. This system is explained to all fourth and fifth grade students and parents by the individual teachers.

TRADITIONAL DEMERIT SYSTEM
This system allows for rewards for positive behaviors, but demands the highest level of self-control and accountability for one’s actions. Demerits, detention, suspensions, or expulsion will be the consequences of inappropriate behaviors according to several categories. This system is also explained to all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students and parents by the individual teachers and/or the middle-school team.

DEMERITS
Students will receive demerits for the following reasons:
• Lack of respect (in actions, words, or written) for faculty, staff, and students
• Not being prepared for class
• Being out of uniform
• Being late for classes during the day
• Gum chewing
• Leaving a supervised area without permission

DETENTIONS
Students will receive detention for the following reasons:
• Accumulation of three demerits
• Cheating in any form (copying another’s work, forging signatures or altering assignments)
• Fighting (verbal or physical)
• Inappropriate conduct, including foul language or conduct that endangers others
• Destruction of school property

SUSPENSION
A student involved in any of the following situations may be subject to suspension and or expulsion:
• Possession or consumption of any drug or look-alike drug while at school or attending a school function.
• Possession or consumption of alcohol while at school or while attending a school function.
• Possession of knives/weapons or look-alike knives/weapons
• Possession of pornographic material(s)
• Smoking/using matches
• Willful destruction of school property
• Leaving school property without permission
• Theft or extortion
• Fighting
• Harassment (sexual or otherwise)

While on suspension, the student is still responsible for missed work. After the specified amount of time for suspension, the student and the parent/guardian will meet with the administration for reinstatement. Administration reserves the right to determine the conditions for reinstatement.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Lockers and desks are properties of the school and can be searched at any time. The principal, or designee, shall request the student’s consent for search of personal belongings. Failure of the student to give consent may result in automatic suspension and/or expulsion from the school.

EXPULSION

The decision to expel a student will be made by the administration after consultation with the Division of Catholic Schools.

• Any illegal activity*
• Buying, selling, or distribution of alcohol or drugs*
• Physical assault on a teacher, volunteer or school personnel*

*Proper civil authorities will be notified.

The school reserves the right to expel any student at any time when his/her conduct warrants it. Any expelled student forfeits all privileges of a St. Clare student. The administration reserves the right not to re-admit an expelled student at a later date.

HARASSMENT POLICY

I. Policy

It is the policy of the Archdiocese to prohibit discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic school shall adhere to this policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.)
II. Scope

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle, and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, at school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual’s disciplinary record.

III. Prohibited Conduct

A. For purposes of this policy, “harassment” means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity, that:
   (i) Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;
   (ii) Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic performance; or
   (iii) Otherwise adversely affects an individual’s educational opportunities.

B. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, handicap, or disability. “Sexual” harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

IV. Procedure

A. Any person who believes that a student is being subjected to harassment should immediately report the harassment to any one or more of the following individuals: the student’s teacher, the principal of the school, or the superintendent of Catholic schools.

B. Individuals are encouraged to report harassment early, before it becomes severe or pervasive, so that preventive action can be taken.
All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.

C. Any retaliation, reprisals, or intimidation, whether by the alleged harasser or from another source, directed toward the complaining party or anyone else as a result of the filing or investigation of a harassment complaint is considered a serious violation of this policy and should be reported immediately.

D. Once the investigation is complete, the school will take immediate and appropriate corrective action when it determines that this policy has been violated. The complaining party and the complained-of party will be advised of the investigation’s finding and conclusions. A report of the findings will be forwarded to the Division of Catholic Schools.

**SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE**

**ILLNESS**

A child who is too ill to remain in class reports to the health room personnel. If it is necessary that the child be sent home, parents or the emergency contact person will be notified, and the parent or emergency contact person must sign the parent/student sign-out book before taking the child home.

**INJURY**

Care given in the school is limited to first aid in accidents until the parent or emergency contact person can be reached to take the child home, to the doctor or hospital.

**EMERGENCY FORMS**

Forms are kept for each student providing information to assist in locating parents or an emergency contact person. It is important for parents to keep this information up-to-date in the school.

**HEALTH POLICIES**

Upon entering St. Clare School, students must have a complete physical, a dental checkup, and the required immunizations.

**State Immunization Requirements**

A child may not enter school unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day, and year of each vaccination, be signed by a physician or health department official,
and be approved by the school. A parent must show a medical contraindication, signed by a doctor, for his/her child to be excused.

**Vision and Hearing Screening**

Vision and Hearing Screening will be done on all students in grades K, 3, 5, and 8 as well as students in grades 1, 2, 4, and 6 who are new to St. Clare School.

Periodically, health and safety programs are offered to students at various grade levels.

**Scoliosis Screening Requirement**

Maryland law, effective July 1, 1982, mandates scoliosis screening for every student at least once in grades six through eight. A student whose parent or legal guardian objects **IN WRITING** to the screening is not required to be screened. Trained physical education teachers, a physician or trained personnel from the local public school jurisdiction will conduct a screening program to determine if any of the students screened have scoliosis (an abnormal curvature of the spine). According to the available information, 4 children in every 100 may develop scoliosis, and 2 of these may require treatment. If the condition is detected early, and appropriately treated, progressive spine deformity can be prevented.

**MEDICATIONS**

The administration of medication in school is discouraged. However, if a student’s physician decides it is necessary for the child to receive prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, a written order from that physician is required.

**ALSO NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

Medication can only be dispensed with a written order from the student’s physician.

The original medication container or box for inhalers must be sent to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, and strength of medication/dosage.

Students may not possess, dispense, or distribute medication on their own.

Calamine lotion and cough drops may be administered with a note from parents. Cough drops should be brought to school in the original package.
in a zip-loc bag with the student’s name. The package should be given to the student’s teacher. Cough drops that contain an anesthetic will be kept in the health room.

**Parents should not send a youngster to school who is ill in the morning, including if the child is running a fever.** Since there is no indoor monitor, a student must be well enough to **fully participate** in outdoor play. A doctor’s written and signed request is needed for a student to be excused from physical education classes.

Any student with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher or who has vomited will be sent home. Parents should not send a child to school who is ill in the morning. A child should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

A doctor’s written and signed request is needed for a student to be excused from physical education classes for any length of time.

Parents must call school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify the health department. All reports are confidential. The following communicable diseases/conditions need to be reported.

- Measles–regular or German
- Meningitis
- Hepatitis
- Food Poisoning
- Pediculosis–Lice
- Adverse Reactions to Pertussis Vaccine
- Any student with drainage from the eyes associated with conjunctivitis (pinkeye) must be kept at home until treated by a doctor. A doctor’s note will be required for readmission to school.

Parents are requested to notify the school if their child is hospitalized for any reason.

A student’s medical records must be complete, accurate, and kept current. The school must be kept informed. If an emergency arises, the school should know the existing conditions (diabetes, convulsions, epilepsy, emotional problems, allergies, etc.), any medication that the child may be taking, and what is needed to render assistance. The school must be notified of changes that occur during the school year.

Emergency cards are kept on file for each student. Telephone numbers must be kept current.

If a head injury occurs, the nurse will send home a note. The note is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school.
If the parent/guardian or alternative contact person cannot be reached in an emergency, the school will contact police/ambulance for assistance.

**ALLERGIES**

Parents must notify the school of their child’s allergies, including food allergies. School medication orders must be renewed each year by the physician, and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student carries an EPIPEN with him/her, the physician’s order must state this requirement.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**LUNCH PROGRAM**

Students may either purchase their lunch or bring it from home. St. Clare School participates in the Child Nutrition Program through the Archdiocese of Baltimore. These hot lunches are prepared at school on a daily basis.

Students wishing to order a hot lunch for a particular day must order that hot lunch that morning, following the procedure outlined by the hot lunch coordinator. Lunch menus are sent home monthly.

The price for the hot lunches, milk and any other á la carte items are set by the Archdiocese of Baltimore Child Nutrition Program.

Students who wish to purchase only milk or grape or orange drink may do so at lunchtime. The money for drinks will be brought in daily.

In the event of financial difficulties, parents are encouraged to apply for free or reduced-price lunches. This is done by filling out the Free or Reduced Lunch Application, a form which is sent home in September. (NOTE: If your financial situation changes anytime during the year, you may apply at that time.) All information regarding free or reduced-price lunches is kept CONFIDENTIAL.

**MONIES**

Any money sent to the school should be in a sealed envelope which is clearly marked with the student’s name and homeroom number (or grade number, or teacher’s name) and the purpose of the money.

**TELEPHONE CALLS**

Students will be called out of class to the school office to answer a telephone ONLY in the event of an emergency.
GRADUATION

A graduation ceremony is held for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and eighth grade students at the end of the school year.

Dress for graduation should be neat and befitting such an occasion. Boys must be dressed in a jacket, tie, etc. Girls are to wear a suitable dress. Sun dresses, bare backs, strapless or spaghetti-strap dresses are not good taste for graduation.

COMMUNICATION

The school sends out a correspondence envelope to the parents each week. It contains important information. Envelopes are to be returned to the school each week.

COUNSELING SERVICES

St. Clare School engages the services of a qualified counselor to assist with developing programs for students at risk due to academic, social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties.

Counseling is available to students or groups during school hours twelve hours a month according to the availability of the counselor.

Students may be referred to the counselor by written request of the teacher or principal; a copy of the request is sent to the parent/guardians to inform them of the need. Parents/guardians may request a conference with the referring teacher before the child meets with the counselor. Students may also be referred to the counselor by written request of a parent.

Rainbows for All God’s Children is available at lunchtime for students in need of a support group who are experiencing the loss of a loved one through death, separation or divorce.

Counseling may include work with whole classes on issues relating to the cooperative and socialization skills needed for coping with society.

All new students are seen by the counselor.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our school system is committed to providing the best possible and most appropriate learning experiences for all children. Occasionally, there are factors in a student’s appearance and behavior that lead to suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped.
Our school policy supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, and the local police department. At all times, the intent is to protect the children from harm by providing services to maintain and strengthen the child’s own family.

Any parent who wishes to volunteer for field trips, etc., must have attended a STAND training and completed a volunteer application.

**LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

A well-equipped Library/Media Center provides an excellent addition to the educational atmosphere of St. Clare School. It is expected that through class and individual work each student will discover not only the benefits of reference materials and proper use of the library system and audiovisuals, but also the sense of enrichment that comes from the world of books and audiovisual.

Students may sign out library materials under the guidelines set by the librarian. They are held responsible for all materials checked out. Fines are imposed for overdue materials and equipment. The borrower is also responsible for all damaged or lost materials.

**LOST AND FOUND**

All articles belonging to the students are to be labeled. Any articles found will be turned in to the school office. Any articles left in the “Lost and Found” at the end of each semester will be forwarded to a local or parish charitable organization (such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Goodwill Industries, etc.)

**VISITS TO SCHOOL**

If parents have occasion to come to school, they must report first to the school office. We request that parents or guardians do not go to the classroom to bring a forgotten item, such as lunch or gym clothes, etc. Such items should be left at the school office.

If a parent has to come to school as an aide or as a classroom or lunch monitor, we ask that he/she report first to the school office to sign in.

**ELECTRONICS, CELL PHONES**

Student **may not** bring electronic equipment such as CD players, MP3 players, Gameboy, etc., to school.

Students **may not** carry cell phones or pagers.

Such equipment will be held in the office.
TRANSFERS

If you are moving, notify the school office of the new address and the last day you expect your child(ren) to be in attendance. A “Release Of Records” form must be signed by the parents or guardians before school records are forwarded to a new school.

Official school records will be sent directly to the new school as soon as we receive its request, providing there are no outstanding financial obligations. School records may not be transported by parents.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities assume many shapes, and involve many different elements. Some of these activities involve only a segment of the student body. On the other hand, some involve the entire student population. Regardless of the extent to which the students are involved, the responsibility and obligation to participate are considered very important.

Extracurricular activities such as Student Council, Yearbook Staff, or Safety Patrol have criteria which are set by the teacher or teachers involved in coordinating those programs. If a student is involved in any of those programs or similar ones, his/her presence at and participation in those programs is his/her responsibility.

Throughout the school year, the entire student population may be called upon to participate in an event or program. Such programs, such as the Christmas Show or the Spring Concert, are publicized well in advance of the performance date. Therefore, students should make every effort to be present at those performances.

Approval

From time to time, various organizations ask to distribute material to our students and/or their families via the school. This is done ONLY if this material has been cleared and approved by the principal.

Also, any activity which is directly or indirectly related to the school, and occurs during the regular school hours or during a school-sponsored activity, must be approved by the principal.

SAFETY

A primary consideration in all disciplinary decisions is the obligation of the school to maintain a safe place for students and an acceptable learning atmosphere.

St. Clare School in the Archdiocese of Baltimore conducts suitable background review and evaluations of child abuse for prospective employees.
St. Clare School adopts and puts in place procedures requiring the prompt reporting of incidents of child abuse/neglect, which complies with the requirements of the law.

In order to ensure a safe environment for your child, all school doors will remain locked during the day.

FIELD TRIPS

Class trips are permitted and encouraged. Teachers will supply information regarding date, time, dress requirements, etc., after confirming details with the principal. In order to attend ANY off-campus activity during the school day, students must have an Archdiocesan “Field Trip” permission slip, with parent or guardian signature, on file with the teacher(s).

While on a class trip, all the rules of courtesy and proper behavior are still applicable, even though a class may be off-campus. The same disciplinary criteria hold, as well as the punishments which breaking those rules entail.

In any off-campus activity, the teacher (or teachers) is the primary person in authority. However, an adult who has been designated by the teacher(s) as a “chaperone” is to be given the same respect and obedience as the teacher(s).

Students are required to return from field trips using the same transportation that was initially provided, as insurance coverage does not include transportation by individual cars.

Permission Slips and Money

The use of an Archdiocesan Field Trip permission form is mandatory. Please be sure permission slips are returned to school on time. NO CHILD will be permitted to take part in these special activities unless permission slips are signed and fees are returned on time. If you do not wish to have your child take part in an activity, please send a note to that effect to the teachers.

When sending money to school, please be sure to send EXACT change in an envelope with child’s NAME, GRADE, and WHAT THE MONEY IS FOR written clearly on the envelope. This is extremely important. School cannot make change.

PLAYGROUND

Grades K, 1, 2, and 3 have lunch at 11:15, and play on the school grounds from 11:35-12:10, weather permitting. The teachers and parents supervise the students’ recess activities.
Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 have lunch at 12:00, and play on the grounds between 12:25-12:40, weather permitting. Teachers and parents supervise the students' recess activities, as well as help organize play.

SAFETY ON THE PLAYGROUND IS VERY IMPORTANT; THEREFORE, ALL STUDENTS WILL SHOW PROPER RESPECT TO THE PLAYGROUND SUPERVISORS.

STUDENT INSURANCE
A student accident insurance plan, approved by the Archdiocesan Department of Education, is offered at the beginning of each school year. Participating in this plan is optional.

FIRE DRILLS
Fire drills are held on a regular basis. It is important that students follow the directions for fire drills posted in each room.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Catholic Schools Week
Every year during CSW, special activities are planned. Parents and other visitors are invited to visit the school.

Liturgical Celebrations
The children participate in the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgical celebrations. Celebrations of the Sacrament of Reconciliation are held periodically during the school year.

Altar Serving
Those children in grades 5 to 8 who wish to assist at the liturgy are trained to be altar servers.

School Pictures
Student pictures are taken once a year by a professional photographer and are available for purchase by the parents for a nominal fee. The purchase of these pictures is optional.

Instrumental Music Program
A program in instrumental music is offered on a weekly basis through a private company. The Instrumental Music Program information will be forwarded to parents in September. Instrumental music instruction is available to students in grades 4 through 8 for an additional fee.

Athletic Program
In addition to the regular physical education program taught, soccer and basketball teams are formed for various age groups and sponsored by

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the parish. Information concerning these programs will be forwarded as it becomes available.

**HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The Home School Association is based on the philosophy that the partnership between parents and school professionals is essential in the development of values consistent with and reflective of Christian principles.

It believes that the development and nurturing of the school community is based and accomplished in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation which respects the distinctive qualities, talents, abilities, and needs of each person.

By providing a means of service, social, and fund raising activities in support of the school the Association recognizes its role in affirming the school community and its members as living expressions of God's love.

Mindful of Gospel values, the Association seeks to model service, promote good will, and foster a sincere appreciation for the ideals of a Catholic school education.

**ACTIVITIES**

**110 Program**

Begun in 1993, the 110 Program is a service program requesting parents with children in St. Clare School full time (K through 8) to support the school by contributing 10 hours of service work within the school year. Those parents who elect not to contribute service hours are requested to donate $100 toward the program. Please note, school children are NOT permitted to earn credit hours to the program.

The 110 Program allows us to offer stronger educational programs for the school without an additional financial burden to the school budget.

Parents are encouraged to contribute their service, and we ask that they complete their time by the end of May. Any hours not completed will be billed at $10 per hour for the delinquent hours. Parents participating in 110 activities are responsible for signing in and signing out to insure proper credit is given.

Parents who choose to send in the $100 are asked to do so by November 1st of each year. A list of fund raising activities is sent home in the beginning of each school year.

**ROOM MOTHERS**

Each class will have a room mother appointed by the teacher. Her role in assisting the teacher will vary according to grade level. Her basic duties could include:
2. Plan with the teacher any parties the class will have and contact parents to request donations or party goods.
3. Schedule workers for school or church activities.
4. Inform parents via telephone of last-minute school closings due to an emergency.
5. Help plan and supervise field trips.

**ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

In October of 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and unfriable asbestos, develop management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings, and implement response actions in a timely manner.

These programs assign schools many new responsibilities. Our program fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on our inspection, reinspection, response actions, and post-response action activities that are planned or in progress.

You can review this plan at the Archdiocese of Baltimore Administrative Office, The Catholic Center, 320 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, Maryland, during normal business hours. The plan will also be available for review at St. Clare School, 716 Myrth Ave., Baltimore, Maryland, within five (5) working days of receiving a request for inspection.

If you have any questions about reviewing our management plan or about planned or in-progress asbestos-related activities, please contact the school office.

**INTERNET ACCESS**

Electronic information research skills are fundamental to the preparation of our students, our future citizens, and employees. The acquisition of these technological tools puts an enormous power at the fingertips of all members of our community. As such, it also places a great deal of responsibility on all users. It is our aim to provide guidance and instruction to our students in the appropriate use of such resources.

As in other areas, our students are expected to make good choices with regard to their behavior on the Internet. Access will be provided for our
students to conduct research and communicate with others under the supervision of their teacher.

Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries and databases throughout the world. We believe that the benefits to students from access to these forms of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. But ultimately, you, as the parents and guardians of minors, are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that your children should follow when using media and information sources.

With these opportunities come some responsibilities and restrictions. St. Clare School reserves the right to limit personal information about students, to edit Internet accounts for child-only configurations, and to run software, such as CyberPatrol. For their protection, students may not access Internet accounts provided by their families during school time because the school has no control over the configuration of those accounts.

Internet services are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Failure to adhere to the following guidelines may result in a revocation of a student’s Internet access and disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

All users of the network within the boundaries of St. Clare School are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines.

- **Acceptable** uses of the Internet are activities that support learning and teaching.

**Unacceptable** uses of the network include, but are not limited to:

- Violating the rights of privacy of others.
- Using profanity, obscenity, or other offensive language.
- Unauthorized copying of materials or installation of software.
- Revealing home phone numbers, addresses, or other personal information while using Internet resources.
- Downloading or copying information onto disks or hard drives without prior teacher approval.
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that may be offensive to others.
- Sharing of passwords, if provided, or attempting to discover another’s password.
• The intentional writing, producing, generating copying or introducing of dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to, viruses, bugs, “worms,” etc.
• Intentional damaging of or tampering with any hardware, software, printers, keyboards, mice, speakers, etc.
• Intentional erasing, renaming, or disabling of anyone else’s files or programs.

St. Clare School will be responsible for:
• Teaching students about these guidelines
• Supervising and guiding student access to the Internet.

ETHICAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The school is committed to Christian community, academic excellence, and lifelong learning. It is imperative that technological resources be used to build community, encourage critical reflection, and foster readiness for future learning. All developments in technology at the school are, therefore, meant to ensure broad access and to promote ethical, legal, and responsible use. This policy serves to define expected standards of behavior by all users of computers and networks within the school. Failure to adhere to this policy and guidelines herein will result in revocation of computer privileges, and possible disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

In a spirit of cooperation, all employees and students are expected to adhere to the following standards in their use of computers and networks in the school.

• Respect and protect individual rights, as well as the well-being of the school.
• Individual users are responsible for any activity on their computers and for materials stored therein.
• Computers are to be used exclusively for academic work and school-related activities.
• Members of the school community will respect copyright laws and software licensing terms.
• Individuals may access only those files for which they have specific authorization. Searching through directories and folders without the owner’s permission is prohibited.
• All computer equipment and software is to be treated with respect.
• Only authorized personnel may alter equipment or equipment configurations.

• Use of technology for obscene, offensive, disruptive, or threatening messages is prohibited.

• Network accounts are to be used only by those persons for whom the account has been established. Account users may not authorize anyone else to use their accounts.

• Individual account users must maintain adequate security for their accounts, including frequent changing of passwords.

• Use of any program designed to breach network security, such as software designed to capture passwords or break encryption protocols, is prohibited. Use of any program designed to disrupt the performance of the network is likewise prohibited.

• All e-mail must clearly identify the sender of the message. Use of anonymous or pseudonymous communications over the network is prohibited. False information is prohibited.

• Students should avoid posting personal information via e-mail and responding to inappropriate messages.

• Use of the computer facilities to obtain, distribute, or store inappropriate materials is prohibited. If material gathered from other media (books, magazines, TV, video) is unsuitable for the school environment, the same material brought in over the Internet is equally unsuitable.
ST. CLARE SCHOOL

I/we have received a copy of the school handbook and have carefully read, discussed, and understand the policies, procedures, and regulations of this school, including tuition charges, parent responsibilities, dress, and disciplinary regulations.

_________________________________________________  DATE

_________________________________________________  STUDENT(S)

_________________________________________________  PARENT/GUARDIAN

_________________________________________________  PARENT/GUARDIAN
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