

In compliance with State Health Standards, children **may not** return to school until fever free for 48 hours **after** illness.

St. Matthew's School

Student and Parent Handbook

2009-2010

St. Matthew's School
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Philosophy of Learning

We, the faculty and staff of St. Matthew's School, believe that the purpose of the school is to provide a Christ-centered environment in unison with the family and community, which encourages a life-long pursuit of learning through spiritual, academic, and physical education. We therefore commit to the following goals:

- ◆ To create a community environment based on respect and the teachings of the Gospel
- ◆ To develop faith community by encouraging our students to grow in moral character, responsibility, and self-discipline
- ◆ To provide a challenging, multifaceted, and integrated curriculum
- ◆ To relate educational experiences to life experiences
- ◆ To encourage students to maximize their learning potential now and in the future
- ◆ To empower students with the necessary skills to become vital and contributing members of faith community

Therefore, St. Matthew's School pledges itself, in partnership with the family and community, to the pursuit of educational excellence in an atmosphere of Gospel values.

Mission Statement

We, St. Matthew's, are called to make our church the center of our lives. We attempt to answer this call by providing a warm environment in which liturgy and worship, Catholic education and service, proclaim the kingdom of God to our community.

The philosophy and current mission statement of St. Matthew's School reflect the needs of the population we serve due to the interrelationship of school, family, and church and the committed support of each group.

Development of a Faith Community

Believing that the development of a faith-filled people is the priority of a Catholic school, St. Matthew's School places the highest value on its religion program. In addition to the regular classroom teaching and a sensitive awareness to other faiths, special programs highlight holy days, feast days and seasons of the church year. Prayers, led by the students, are said at the beginning and end of each day.

Spiritual Life of the School

Sacramental Preparation

Sacramental preparation is provided through each student's individual parish.

Students who belong to St. Matthew's Church must register for the sacramental preparation through the parish office. At St. Matthew's parish, First Reconciliation classes must be attended before First Eucharist classes. Information concerning times for these classes may be obtained by calling the parish office.

Liturgy

Throughout the school year, the students come together to celebrate the Liturgy. Parents are invited to attend and pray with us. School liturgies are celebrated monthly.

Religious Instruction

Religion is taught as a formal subject in grades Pre-K through 8. St. Matthew's School encourages the students to grow as Christians. Remember, it takes parents' involvement to shape children's spiritual life.

Prayer

Before classes begin each morning, the school gathers for prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance follows morning prayer. Children pray in their classrooms before lunch. Prayer also concludes our day.

Penance

Students will be given opportunities to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation as scheduled by the individual parishes.

Perpetual Adoration

Opportunity for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is available 24 hours a day in the chapel adjacent to the Parish Office.

Prayer Garden

A grotto in honor of Our Lady as well as representations of the Stations of the Cross may be found in a garden setting between the school and the church.

Office Information

Principal: Mrs. Barbara White
Assistant Principal: Mr. Lou Goldberg
Secretary: Mrs. Barbara Hawthorne
Office Manager / Bookkeeper: Mrs. Chris Babboni

Telephone Number: 420-2455
Fax Number: 420-4880
Web Site: www.smsvb.net

School Song: "On Eagles' Wings"
School Colors: Blue and White
School Team Name: St. Matthew's Eagles
School Motto: "Soaring to New Heights"

School Hours

7:30 a.m. Doors open. This convenience will remain without charge. Please do not bring your child before 7:45 a.m. unless absolutely necessary.

8:10 a.m. Teachers pick up children in the cafeteria.

8:15 a.m. Classes begin.

If your child arrives at school after 8:15 a.m. he/she must report to the office for a tardy slip.

Arrivals and Departures

Car riders are to be dropped off at the front office doors in the morning. Please discharge students at the curb to avoid accidents.

In the afternoon, grades K and 1 depart at the door nearest the church. Grades 2 and 3 exit through the cafeteria. Grades 4 through 8 are dismissed from the parking lot in front of the office.

Since parking is limited, please be courteous in the parking lot. If you are coming into the building, please park at the rear of the parking area and leave the front area for drivers who are picking up and departing.

Before School Care

Available from 7:00 until 7:30 a.m. For those parents who need to bring their children to school before the 7:30 opening, we have baby-sitting available for \$2.00 a day.

After-School Care

Available from 3:30 until 5:30 p.m. The after school telephone number is 449-9445. The rate for after school care is \$2.50 per hour per child. After 5:30, the rate changes to \$1.00 per minute per child. The after school program is state licensed and run by Mrs. Cindy Fencil. The program may be used daily or on an occasional basis. Students are automatically placed in after school if they have not been picked up by 3:30. Each family will be sent a monthly bill. **The bill must be paid by the date indicated or the student will not be permitted to be part of the after school program.**

Please note: After school care is available only on full school days. Parents must pick up their children on early dismissal days.

Friday Flash

The Friday Flash is issued each Friday of the school year. It lists upcoming events, information updates, and changes in the calendar.

Admissions

Catholic and non-Catholic students are welcome at St. Matthew's. First grade students must be 6, Kindergarten students must be 5, PK 4 students must be 4, and PK 3 students must be 3 by September 30th. All preschoolers must be toilet trained before entering the program.

Requirements for PK - 1st School Admission

- a) Birth certificate
- b) Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c) Proof of adequate immunizations as required by the Code of Virginia.
- d) Physical examinations within 12 months of entering school
- e) Proof of custody (where applicable)
- f) Social security number (if U.S. citizen)

Requirements for Admission to Other Grades

- a) Birth certificate
- b) Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c) Proof of adequate immunizations as required by the Code of Virginia (including Hepatitis B immunization).
- d) Records from previous school
- e) Proof of custody (where applicable)
- f) Social security number (if U.S. citizen)
- g) Placement testing (if applicable)

Attendance and Academic Policies

Absence

To ensure the safety of all students, parents are asked either to call the school office between 8:30 and 9:00 to report your child's absence or have another child or friend report the absence to the office. If an absence is not reported by 9:00am, the office will phone the child's home to verify the absence. When returning to school, a student is to give a written excuse to the homeroom teacher. Planned absences due to family vacations, etc. are to be discussed with the principal, and arrangements made with the individual teachers regarding assigned work prior to the absence. We follow the mandate of the Commonwealth of Virginia. A copy is available on the school website. If a student misses more than 30 days of school (or 30 meetings of a same subject area class), he/she will not be eligible for promotion.

If a student must leave school early, a note must be given to the homeroom teacher when the student comes to school. The student is to be picked up at the school office by the person designated in the note. **Students will not be dismissed between 3:00pm – 3:15pm.**

Tardiness

When a student is late for school (i.e. after 8:15) he/she will report to the office to receive a pass before proceeding to the classroom. Three times tardy without an excuse within a grading period merits a conduct notice. Middle school students who are late must come to the office at lunch time and complete a written assignment. They lose lunch socialization privileges that day.

Homework

Homework assignments are given to reinforce and/or supplement concepts covered during the day. As a rule, students should spend no more than twenty (20) minutes on any one subject area each night. Homework should be done independently without assistance from parents. If a child is spending too much time or is requiring too much help, this could mean the student needs additional assistance from the teacher. Do not allow your child to become frustrated or confused. Simply stop him/her and write a note to the teacher explaining the situation.

When no formal homework assignments are given, all students should spend at least fifteen (15) minutes each evening on some type of reading and math activity or practice.

Usually, no formal assignments are given during the weekend to allow time for work on long term assignments and projects.

Absence from school does not exempt a student from having all class work and homework assignments completed.

Classwork and/or homework assignments which are late are subject to a 10 point reduction in grade per day. After 2 days, a grade of 0 may be recorded; however, the assignment **must** be completed.

Grading Scale

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

Honor Roll

Principal's List "A" level work in all subjects, including conduct and effort.

First Honors "A" level work in most areas, allowing for a maximum of two "B" level grades.

Second Honors No grade lower than "B" in any area.

Above grade level academic classes are weighted so that they are considered one level higher for honor roll.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent home on a regular basis. These are to be signed and returned the following school day. The reports help parents track the progress of their children during a marking period between report cards, which are issued quarterly.

Terra Nova Testing

Standardized tests are administered to grades 1 through 7 in the spring. Reports on test results are provided by the testing service for parents and teachers.

Promotion

Promotion is based on progress in all major subjects, including religion. Parents are informed in a timely fashion if it is likely or beneficial that their child will be retained.

Eighth graders who successfully pass all subject areas will be included in graduation festivities. Any student who is to be retained or who will be attending summer school to complete eighth grade requirements will not participate in graduation activities.

Probation

When deemed necessary by the principal, a student may be placed on academic and/or disciplinary probation. All new middle school students are automatically put on a 9-week probation. In order to remain a student at St. Matthew's, those on probation must meet these minimum requirements:

Academic: Students must maintain a minimum overall average of "C", receiving no grade of "F" in any academic subject, while earning at least a "C" in conduct and effort.

Disciplinary: Students must maintain a minimum grade of "C" in both conduct and effort. Students on probation must maintain contact on a daily basis with either the principal or an assistant principal. This will allow the student's progress to be monitored.

Withdrawal From School

If you are withdrawing your child from St. Matthew's school please do the following:

1. Notify the office as soon as possible.
2. Make sure that all classroom books and library books have been returned.
3. Make sure all tuition payments and other fees (i.e. after school care, lunch money, etc.) have been paid.

Records will be forwarded by mail to the receiving school upon request as long as there are no books and/or money owed.

Health

All students must meet requirements of state law as enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia to cover the following conditions:

Basic Immunization

A certificate from a licensed physician must be presented to the school prior to admission stating that the child has completed his/her immunization against communicable disease:

- a. Rubeola (red measles) - 1 shot alone or combined with 1 shot Rubella
- b. Rubella (German measles) - 1 shot alone or combined with 1 shot Rubeola
- c. DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) - 3 shots
- d. Poliomyelitis - 3 doses
- e. Mumps - 1 shot alone or MMR
- f. Hepatitis B - series of 3 shots

Physical Examinations

All children entering a school for the first time must present evidence of a physical examination no earlier than twelve months prior to the date of entry. The Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health form must be used.

Dispensing Medication at School

Dispensing of prescription or non-prescription medication at school requires a doctor's permission in writing. Prescribed medication must be given to the office to be kept in an appropriate place until time for dispensing. Students may not have medication of any kind in their possession.

All medicine must be in its original bottle. Prescription medicine must have the physician's name, address, and times for administering medication. Name of medication must be clear.

The health service extended to each student throughout the year includes vision and hearing tests and weight and height measurements.

Illness At School

Children who are ill must always report to the clinic. A call will be made to the parents or guardians if necessary for the child to leave school. Parents must make arrangements to pick up their children immediately.

Parents/guardians are expected to inform the school of any physical limitation the student might have.

Parents should contact the school if a student or a family member contracts a communicable disease. This is mandated by Social Services.

Parents/guardians should request that reports of any psychological testing be sent to the school.

*In case of emergency at school, the principal will have the child transported to the nearest emergency care or emergency room facility by ambulance, if necessary.

Emergency Information Form

These forms will be brought home by each student in each family. We ask that you type or print all information requested and have your child return the form to his/her homeroom teacher. Be sure to sign the form. This information is most important for us to have on file in case of emergency.

Please keep the school informed of any changes in home or work phone numbers and addresses.

Clinic

The clinic is run by a staff nurse. Parent volunteers are also needed in the clinic to help with screening. Any serious bumps or cuts will be reported to you by the clinic person or the office.

Physical Education

Physical education is a required class. A note signed by a parent or doctor is to be presented to the P.E. teacher to have a student excused from participation for reasons of health. P.E. uniforms (as outlined in the Dress Code) are required. P.E. uniforms are necessary even on out-of-uniform days.

Cafeteria

We offer a daily hot lunch program at St. Matthew's. Lunch includes entree, side dish, dessert and milk/water. Milk, fruit, and salads are also sold separately. Fruit is always available as an optional dessert. Tickets are purchased through the homeroom teachers. Prepaid multiple tickets may be purchased also. (For example, 10 lunches for \$25.) **For those students who desire an extra helping of the main entrée, an add-on ticket may be purchased for \$1.50...these cannot be included in prepaid tickets.**

We also offer a limited breakfast menu.

Lunch	\$2.50	Bagels	.75
Add On	1.50	Cereal	.75
Salad	1.50	English Muffins	.75
Milk	.50	Granola Bars	.75
Hot Pretzels	.50	Milk	.50
Snacks	.50	Fruit	.50
Ice Cream	.75	Juice	.50
Breakfast Items	.75		

Please note: There is no cafeteria service available on early dismissal days.

Discipline Policies

Discipline

Christian education can only exist in an atmosphere of respect and obedience. Parents, teachers, and administration must support each other in this endeavor. Parents will be notified immediately whenever there is a serious infraction, and suitable disciplinary measures will be undertaken.

Types of disciplinary actions which may be taken when rules are broken are shown on the following pages. The principal determines the type of action to take, depending on the seriousness of the violation. In most cases, steps such as letters, telephone calls, and conferences involving teachers, principal, students and parents or guardians have been taken beforehand to correct the student's behavior. (Exception: Any child who intentionally bites another student or a staff member will be sent home for the remainder of the day.)

In addition to the official disciplinary actions outlined here, a student may be required to repair, clean up, or paint any area damaged by him/her. A student may lose the privilege of participation in school activities. Court action may be taken when local, state or federal laws have been broken. *Please note that an accumulation of conduct notices and/or suspensions, especially for repeat offenses, may result in expulsion.* Conduct by students or parents which is disruptive to the learning atmosphere, contrary to Catholic principles, or detrimental to the welfare of the school is justification for dismissal.

Conduct Notice

A conduct notice is sent to the student's parents or guardians to inform them of a behavior problem which should be discussed with the student. The notice also details any actions by the classroom teacher or the principal. The white copy received should be signed and returned to the school on the next school day. If not returned in 2 days, an additional conduct notice will be issued.

In-School Suspension

An in-school suspension removes a student from his/her regular class schedule for an entire day. The suspension will be served two days after it is issued, allowing time for the student to take the responsibility of contacting teachers to collect assignments to be completed that day. Students will spend their day of suspension in a supervised area of the school, removed from classmates. **Students must be in uniform, bring their lunch (no lunches can be delivered), and may not leave early that day.** In addition to class work assigned by teachers, students will be given additional tasks appropriate to the infraction which led to the suspension.

A grade in conduct no higher than "C" will be recorded for any quarter in which an in-school suspension has been served.

Out-of-School Suspension

An out-of-school suspension removes a student from school for a certain period of time. During this period students are required to stay at home. All missed schoolwork must be made up. In addition to class work assigned by teachers, students will be given additional tasks appropriate to the offending action. An out-of-school suspension is usually issued for major offenses or after three (3) in-school suspensions.

A conduct grade of "F" will be recorded for any quarter in which an out-of-school suspension is served.

Disciplinary Actions

Automatic Conduct Notices

Three times out of uniform (by quarter)

Chewing Gum (This policy applies to all school-sponsored events, in and out of the building).

Cheating*

Lying*

Three times tardy (by quarter)

Automatic In-School Suspension

Three conduct notices in a semester

Disrespect to a staff member

Vandalism*

Possession of pornographic materials

Automatic Out-Of-School Suspension

Forging a parent's signature

Three in-school suspensions

Smoking

Automatic Expulsion

Possession of drugs or paraphernalia*

Possession of alcohol*

Possession of any weapon*

Accumulation of three out-of-school suspensions during one academic year

Punishment at Principal's Discretion

These include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting
- Showing disrespect to a staff member
- Showing disrespect to another student
- Vulgar or inappropriate language in writing, verbal, or in sign
- Stealing*
- Disobedience
- Disrupting class
- Repeat offenses

**Indicates a more severe punishment may be received.*

Dress Code

Uniform

The purpose of the school uniform is to minimize distractions and direct students' efforts toward who they are and the important business of their education. Wrinkled or soiled uniforms, or shirts with holes or missing buttons are not to be worn. All uniforms must be sized to fit and be worn properly. They should be neither too small nor too large, too long nor too short. Uniform pants of all types are to be worn at the waist, not on the hips. Shirts and blouses must be worn tucked in properly. Only necklaces depicting Christian symbols may be worn. No tattoos, permanent or temporary, are allowed, nor is any altering of natural hair color. Makeup is not permitted. **It is the parents' responsibility to guarantee that the dress code is enforced for uniform and dress down attire, and hair length.**

*Please note: All parts of student's uniforms are to be marked with a name. **All PreK and Kindergarten students should wear sneaker type shoes every day.***

Dress Down Days

Dress down days given to the whole school will be either PE attire or a special colored shirt with the rest of the school uniform. Girls may wear pants, skirts or jumpers.

Dress down passes that are earned allow students to wear appropriate casual attire (including jeans).

Girls

Blouse: Grades 1-5. White round collar, short or long sleeves. Grades 6-8. Navy polo shirt with St. Matthew's logo, short or long sleeves.

Jumper: Grades 1-5. Plaid, with matching belt, worn no shorter than at the knee.

Skirt: Grades 6-8. Navy and white checkered kilt, worn no shorter than at the knee. When purchasing the kilt from Rose's make sure that proper length and room for growth are provided. (Skirt worn at waist, not hips).

Slacks: All grades on Fridays only. Navy blue slacks (Grades 1-5) or khaki slacks (grades 6-8) worn with school spirit shirt.

Socks: Navy blue knee socks or tights.

Hair: Must be neat and stay out of eyes. No distracting styles.

Nail polish: Clear only.

Earrings: Small in size and limited to one pair only.

Boys

Shirts: Grades 1-5. White polo shirt with St. Matthew's logo, long or short sleeves.

Grades 6-8. Navy polo shirt with St. Matthew's logo, short or long sleeves

Slacks: Grades 1-5. Navy blue dress type, free from any brand names, with a belt if there are belt loops.

Grades 6-8. Khaki dress type, with a belt if there are belt loops. Please do not buy Dockers, Bugle Boy, or other 100% cotton slacks. They will fade too quickly to a color that is not uniform. Logos and brand names also defeat the purpose of a uniform code.

Socks: Navy or white crew socks and must be at least 2 inches above the ankle.

Hair: Must remain short and combed. It must stay out of the eyes. It may not touch the shirt collar. Hair must not cover the ears. Bangs must be cut above the eyebrows. Hair fads of any kind are not permitted. Plaits are not allowed.

Earrings: Not permitted.

Both Boys and Girls

Shoes: Dress type. No high tops, hiking boots, or black leather tennis shoes. Coloring should fit the uniform (black, brown, navy, saddle shoes, etc.) Shoe heels should be no higher than 1 inch. If in doubt, please bring shoes to the office for approval before wearing.

Sweater: Grades 1-5. Navy blue button front.

Grades 6-8. Navy blue button front, crew, or V-neck pullover.

St. Matthew's blue fleece pullovers may be worn in place of a navy blue sweater. A sweater or pullover is mandatory attire.

Pajama pants are not allowed on dress down days.

No Show Socks cannot be worn with sneaker passes or at any time.

Optional Uniforms

Scout Uniforms: May be worn on meeting days; however, regular school uniform shoes must be worn.

School Spirit Fridays: To show school spirit, students may wear St. Matthew's T-shirts or polo shirts on Fridays during the school year, unless otherwise directed.

First and Last Months of School

Girls grades 1-5

Blouse: Regular uniform blouse or white short sleeve polo shirt with SMS logo.

Shorts: Navy blue uniform short provided by Rose Uniform Company, no more than 3 inches above the knee, worn with a belt.

Boys, grades 1-5

Shirt: Short sleeve white polo shirt with St. Matthew's logo.

Shorts: Navy blue uniform shorts provided by Rose Uniform Company, worn with a belt.

Boys and Girls, grades 6-8

Shirt: Navy blue polo shirt with St. Matthew's logo.

Shorts: Khaki uniform shorts provided by Rose Uniform Company, no more than 3 inches above the knee, worn with a belt.

Both Boys and Girls, grades 1-8

Socks: White crew length socks, without stripes or insignias. Tennis socks are not allowed.

Shoes: Navy or white canvas oxford sneakers. No high tops, no insignias or logos on the shoe.

P.E. UNIFORMS

Boys and Girls, grades 2-8

P.E. shorts with St. Matthew's logo, St. Matthew's P.E. T-shirt, white socks, and sneakers (white or blue).

Tennis socks are not allowed. Crew-length socks (for both girls and boys) must be worn. During cold weather, sweat clothes in plain navy blue or with St. Matthew's logo will be required. No skater tennis shoes, Vans, Airwalks, or Hawks, etc. are permitted. Girls' hair must be pulled away from the face.

Boys and Girls, grade 1

Sneakers. Girls are required to have a pair of shorts to wear under jumpers.

Non-Uniform Days

Please note that the rules for skirt and shorts lengths are in force, even on non-uniform occasions. Clothes should fit properly as well. Students not adhering to proper dress codes will receive a conduct notice and may lose the privilege of participating in non-uniform days.

PK through Grade 8 – T-shirts with suggestive or inappropriate sayings are never permitted.

Student Activities

Student Council Association

Grades 5 through 8 select two classroom representatives to serve on the student government. Officers must be 6th, 7th, or 8th graders who are elected by the entire student body. Representatives and officers must maintain no lower than a “B” grade average. The role of the Student Council is to communicate ideas to the teachers and the administration. Student council sponsors special activities for students during the year: movies, dress-up/down days, Easter egg hunt, Santa’s helpers. Members also provide leadership examples to their fellow students and aid the teachers and administration in sharing ideas.

Extracurricular Music

Choir: Grades 2 through 5 choir meets on Wednesdays at 2:15p.m. They perform at special events during the year.

Middle School Chorus: Grades 6 through 8 chorus meets on Wednesdays during the elective period.

Band: Grades 4 through 8.

Athletic Association

The Athletic Association offers basketball to boys and girls in grades 3 through 8. Soccer is offered during the spring and the fall to children in grades PK through 8. There are also junior and senior cheerleading squads for grades 2 through 8. Track, Cross Country and Golf are offered to middle school boys and girls. Field hockey is offered to girls in grades 2 – 8. Volleyball is offered to boys and girls for grades 7 & 8.

Book Fair

We sponsor two book fairs a year: one before Christmas and one in the spring. Children and parents have the opportunity to buy paper back books on a wide variety of subject matters.

School Musicales

Our students present an annual Christmas Pageant and Spring Musicale. Participation in these events is mandatory and a written excuse needs to be given to the teacher if your child/children cannot attend.

Catholic Schools Week

The last week of January is reserved to celebrate the pride in our Catholic School heritage. Our celebrations include special liturgies, teacher appreciation day, open house and a special grandparents’ meal.

May Procession

In honor of the Blessed Mother, we celebrate with the parish in a May procession and the crowning of Mary.

Field Day

St. Matthew’s has a Field Day at the end of each school year. The children compete in foot races, long jump, pull-ups, ball throw, jump rope, and other athletic contests. Emphasis is placed on having fun.

Dress-Up Days

Dress-up days (no uniform required) are the first and last days of school and individual picture day. Dress-up clothes for girls means a dress (knee length), a skirt (knee length) with coordinating blouse, top, sweater or pant suit (defined as a two-piece matching outfit). Sleeveless tops and flip-flops are not allowed. Dress-up clothes for boys means dress slacks/shorts (no jeans) with dress shirt or knit shirt with collar, turtleneck shirts, or pullover sweaters (no T-shirts).

Students may have additional dress-up days during the school year, as announced.

Dress-Down Days

On special occasions, as deemed by the principal, students may have dress-down days. Attire on these days will be announced as they occur.

NOTE: RULES FOR APPROPRIATE LENGTH OF SKIRTS, DRESSES, AND SHORTS ARE IN EFFECT ON NON-UNIFORM DAYS. SLEEVELESS ATTIRE IS NOT PERMITTED. SHORTS MAY NOT BE MORE THAN 3 INCHES ABOVE THE KNEE. FLIP FLOPS ARE NOT ALLOWED FOR BOYS OR GIRLS. STUDENTS NOT ADHERING TO PROPER DRESS WILL RECEIVE A CONDUCT NOTICE AND MAY LOSE THE PRIVILEGE OF PARTICIPATING IN NON-UNIFORM DAYS.

School Socials

Periodically our students participate in school socials. Attendance at these events is a privilege and behavior and dress at these functions must reflect our Catholic/Christian principles. Anyone who, in the opinion of adult chaperones, is dressed or is acting inappropriately will be required to contact a parent or guardian and leave the school.

At the end of each social, students will depart only when an adult is present to take responsibility for them.

Graduation

Graduation from the eighth grade at St. Matthew's is a very special time for our children. The seventh grade hosts and serves the reception for the graduating class. We gather for a special ceremony followed by a reception and dancing. We proudly gather in the celebration that completes the foundation for their academic and religious future.

Parent Participation

Home and School Guild

The Home and School Guild at St. Matthew's provides financial support for the school. Parents/guardians, students and staff members are actively involved in the school and parish community. Funds are raised through activities such as magazine and wrapping paper sales, carnival, and the sale of Matthew's Money to promote maintenance of quality educational materials.

Carnival

St. Matthew's annual school carnival, a two day event, is one of our biggest and greatest fund raisers. Sponsored by the Home and School Guild, the carnival depends solely on the participation of all families. As we all learn the magic of being carnies for a weekend, we feel the true sense of fun and community, set a good example for our children, and raise much needed funds. At least 2 of the mandatory service hours must be used at carnival time.

Development

The Development Office provided financial support through the Annual Auction and the Annual Giving Campaign. Funds from these events aid in the major capital improvement project. The Annual Auction held in November is our leading fundraiser and the adult social event of the school year. Individual classes offer elaborate baskets with items donated by the parents. Families are encouraged to participate and donate.

School Board

The purpose of the school board is to propose and monitor policies in cooperation with the principal and the pastor. The school board is an advisory board to the principal. Catholic school boards do not dictate policies, but rather work cooperatively with the principal and the pastor.

Mandatory Service Hours

Parents/guardians are responsible for contributing 25 service hours over the course of the school year. Opportunities include helping with the clinic duty, cafeteria duty, tutoring, helping with physical fitness testing, planning programs for the children, and chaperoning field trips for those parents/guardians that are available during the school day. Special events that are planned requiring volunteers include a Santa's workshop, uniform swap, Field Day, Carnival, Teacher's Appreciation Day, and the Annual Auction. **Mandatory 2 hours to be worked at Carnival. Families will be charged for any hours not fulfilled, at a rate of \$10.00 per hour.**

Those parents/guardians who are not available during school hours can still earn service hours by such activities as sending in baked goods/food/party supplies, working basketball games on weekends, coaching, assisting with maintenance activities at the school and working on special projects that may be sent home. Even the purchase of Matthew's Money earns service hours. Information distributed at the orientation meetings details many more opportunities. The Friday Flash is also a good source of volunteer opportunities.

While efforts are made to contact parents/guardians for service hours, it is the ultimate responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the 25 hour commitment is fulfilled. Families must record their service hours in the school office. Single parent families are required to perform 12.5 hours.

Diocesan VIRTUS Training (Protecting God's children) is mandated for all volunteers who have contact with our students. Training session times and dates are available in the office and on line (www.virtusonline.org).

Room Parents

Parents/guardians assist the teachers with various activities throughout the year, in and out of the classroom. They coordinate volunteers to assist with parties, field trips, and phone trees.

Athletic Association

Parents/guardians are always needed as coaches and assistant coaches for soccer, cheerleading, basketball, track & field, field hockey, volleyball and golf. Parents are also needed to keep time clocks, staff the concession stand, and collect money at the door. In order to provide healthy activities for the children, parental involvement is a must.

Other Information

Books

All hardcover textbooks are rented to the students who are to keep them covered and in good condition. Torn covers must be replaced in order to maintain the good condition of the book. Contact paper or any other type of adhesive materials may NOT be used as a book cover. A book bag must be used for carrying books to and from school.

Library

St. Matthew's has a quality library. The librarian conducts planned library classes for all grades PK through 5. The Book Fair, held twice a year, raises funds to expand the library. The library is also open other times for research or browsing.

Computers

St. Matthew's provided students access to a teaching computer lab for instruction, a working computer lab for research, reports and/or independent work, and computers in the classrooms for reinforcement and self-instruction.

Fundraisers

Students are not to participate in door-to-door sales.

Yearbook

St. Matthew's School has a yearbook which is distributed as the school year closes. The yearbook contains all the pictures, group pictures, staff pictures and pictures of class and school activities.

Conferences

Parents must request a conference by contacting the teacher in advance by calling the office or sending in a note. Teachers are not available for unscheduled conferences.

Bus Transportation

Policies and Procedures

1. Parents must not assume that children who are not registered bus riders can automatically ride home with other children. We try to keep the buses at capacity to keep the cost down, therefore there are typically no extra seats available.

2. When picking up children early from school, parents must notify the office so they can be removed from the bus lists.
3. Bus changes should be made in a timely manner, i.e, if you decide to pick your child up instead of having him/her ride the bus, please try to call in plenty of time for the office to notify the child and the teacher.

St. Matthew's Bus #1 will pick up at Prince of Peace Church in Chesapeake.

St. Matthew's Bus #2 will service the Riverwalk community.

St. Matthew's Bus #3 will service Prince of Peace & Orchard Square.

There is a charge for all bus use. Please contact the office for details. This is a first come-first served offer. Please Note: Parents will be responsible for providing the school with a car seat for a student to use, if directed by the principal.

All bus stops are subject to change based on ridership.

Bus service is not intended for occasional use. If an emergency arises, transportation must be arranged through Lou Goldberg. Parents must contact the office in advance.

If a child who is regularly scheduled to ride the bus is dismissed early, the parent should make sure the child has been taken off the bus list.

Whether riding the bus to and from school or on school sponsored field trips, students must stay seated at all times, speak in a voice that will not disturb others, and maintain the same standard of behavior expected during the school day. **Students who fail to follow bus rules will NOT be permitted to ride the bus.**

For Parents/Guardians Only

Tuition

Tuition fees are yearly fees, based on 180 days of school. Payments are made in ten monthly installments due on the first of each month, starting in August and ending in May. Payments may be made at the school office, mailed, or sent in with your child. Other fees are due July 1st. Any delinquent accounts (including before & after school, band, bus and lunch) will result in report cards being held. Late fees will be posted to past-due accounts.

PK3 and PK4 programs have separate fees, regulations, and some scheduling differences.

Policy on Inclement Weather

1. On severe weather days please listen to radio station WHRO 90.3 FM, TV channel 3 WTKR, or TV channel 10 WAVY for the announcement as to whether school is closed or operating on a delayed schedule. Please do not call school concerning these announcements.

2. On severe weather days, parents may choose to pick up their children at any time during the day. A parent driving the car pool is responsible for notifying other parents in the car pool that their child will be home early.

3. On severe weather days, when school is closing early, please follow this procedure to pick up your children:

◆ If parents arrive early (before closing time) come to the office, and the child(ren) in your family or car pool will be called to the office.

Please DO NOT go to the classrooms.

◆ If parents arrive at or just after closing time, the children will be in the cafeteria. Stop there to pick them up. In either case, parents must come into the school building.

4. It is the parents' responsibility to listen for weather related announcements during severe weather. If you cannot make arrangements to pick up your children at the early closing time, please call the school office.

Cell Phones and Beepers

Students are not allowed to have cell phones or beepers during school or during the after school program.

Classroom Etiquette

Neither parents nor students should be in the classroom without permission from either Mrs. White or a faculty/staff member.

Asbestos Inspection

Asbestos inspections are conducted every 6 months through the school and every 3 years by the ICT (company designated by the diocese.) There is no friable asbestos in the building; however, there are areas of overspray that pose no danger, but are inspected on a regular basis.

Missing Child

If a child is missing during the school day, the police and a parent or guardian will be called immediately. A picture of the student will be made available while a search of the school property continues. Information from witnesses (if available) will be given to the police.

Dismissal from School

Per Diocesan policy, "Conduct by a student or parent which is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and/or contrary to Catholic principles is justification for the Principal to dismiss a student at the close of the school year."

Expulsion

Expulsion may be considered if a grave infraction of school rules occurs, a student demonstrates continuing disregard for school policies, or a student's continued presence in school has the probability of being a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community.

Emergency Plans

The school has a management crisis plan which has been approved by the Diocese of Richmond. This plan is reviewed annually to guarantee the safety of the students. Lock down and tornado drills are performed annually. Fire drills are performed monthly.

Other Services

Parent & Teacher Resource Library

Parents and teachers may checkout books, videos, and audiotapes on various topics. These materials are located in the Discovery Coordinator's office. Topics include learning differences, attention deficit, intervention strategies, as well as other topics.

Teachers Assisting Teachers (T.A.T.)

The T.A.T. Team is a group of experienced teachers who are well respected and meet to generate solutions that support students who are experiencing difficulty in school. These professionals meet on a regular basis to brainstorm and exchange ideas that facilitate learning. Teachers or parents may refer a student to the T.A.T. Team.

Child Advocate

The Advocate works with parents to establish or improve services for students who are in need of services not offered at St. Matthew's. The Advocate understands the educational process, assists in the development of appropriate goals & objectives for individual students, attends private & public meetings to help parents negotiate for appropriate educational services for their child, and makes educational recommendations.

The Discovery Program

In the Discovery Program students are taught techniques that help the brain process information correctly; which leads to an increase in self-esteem, greater academic achievement, and independent learning. The Discovery Program is available to current St. Matthew's students and their parents. An additional fee and tuition is charged for the Discovery Program.

Guidance Counselor

Catholic Charities provides a guidance counselor for students and their parents on the school premises. No additional fee is charged for this service.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

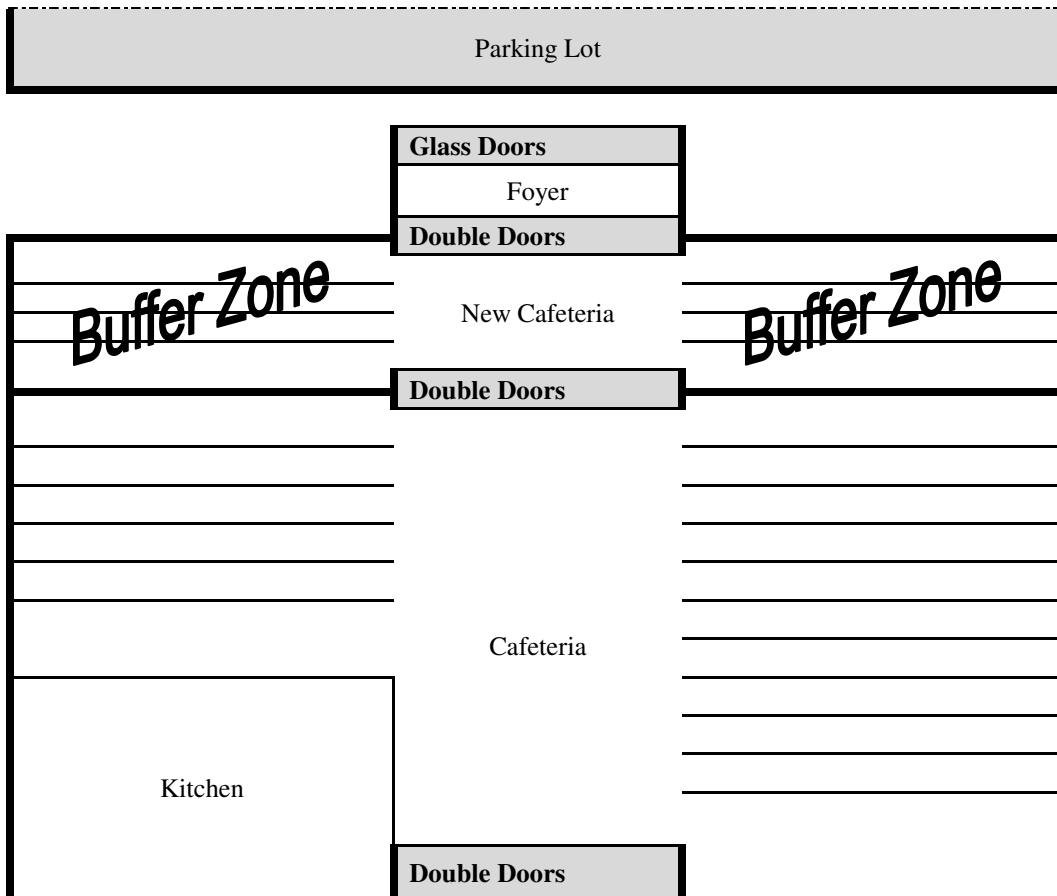


Lock Down

1. A specific code will be given over the P.A. system.
2. All students and teachers will remain in classrooms.
3. Doors will be locked, windows closed and secured.
4. No one will leave until a "return to normal" code is given over the public address system.

Bio-chemical Alert

1. A specific code will be given over the P.A. system.
2. All students from outlying buildings (PK, Middle School, Art, 3A) will report immediately to assigned tables in the cafeteria, unless instructed to do otherwise. See adjoining map.
3. No one, including parents, will be permitted to enter the building.
4. Dismissal to parents will be from the cafeteria with new cafeteria area to serve as a buffer zone.
5. The principal or her designate will handle the transfer of students through the buffer zone.
6. All students of staff members are to be released to their parents within a reasonable amount of time.
7. Additional information, i.e., the wearing of masks, etc. will be given as needed. Student emergency forms will be kept with a designated staff member.
8. All pertinent information will be posted to our web site in a timely manner.



**Technology and
Internet Acceptable Use Policy
For Students
Diocese of Richmond
St. Matthew's School**

Technology is an essential educational tool whose use must be grounded in the values and mission of Catholic education. All users, faculty, staff, administrators, and students, are expected to exhibit high standards of behavior at all times when using the Internet, email and other technology.

The use of the School's network and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. The use of computer systems and the Internet at School must be in support of the educational mission and objectives of the Diocese of Richmond and of St. Matthew's School. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges. Based upon the Acceptable Use Policy guidelines in this document, the Principal will deem what is inappropriate use and his/her decision is final. In addition, the Principal has the right to close an account at any time. School authorities may take other disciplinary actions for any unacceptable behaviors. The administration, faculty and staff may request that the Principal deny or revoke specific user access. Additionally, the cost of any repairs caused by inappropriate behavior will be the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

Prior to being given access to the School's computers and Internet, students and their parent(s) must return the signed Technology and Internet Acceptable Use Contract. These agreements will be completed every year.

System users at St. Matthew's School have no right to privacy and should have no expectation of privacy in materials sent, received, or stored in School-owned computers or on the School network. All communications and information accessible via the network is School property. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to authorities. The technology coordinator/system administrator supervises the use of the network by students. He/she has access to all files and may authorize access as necessary.

Security on our computer system is a high priority. Anyone with reason to suspect a security problem on the School network must notify an appropriate authority.

At St. Matthew's School, the faculty and staff blend thoughtful use of computers and the Internet throughout the curriculum and provide guidance and instruction to students in their use. The School provides controls and filtering protection on the School's network. Outside of School, families bear responsibility for the education and monitoring of their students in Internet and computer usage much as they do with television, telephones, radio, movies, and other media. The School may not be held responsible for users' intentional misuse of the Internet or equipment.

Acceptable Computer and/or Internet Use

1. The School's technology is meant for educational purposes: classroom instruction, research, and/or approved projects. In order to accomplish these goals, the School's computers may be used, with permission, for accessing research databases and libraries of information in the form of text, graphics, photographs, video, and sound, as well as for interacting and collaborating with others.
2. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) being polite, using appropriate language, properly citing and/or obtaining permission for all information from research sources when the information used from those sources is included in a work as a direct quote or paraphrase.

Unacceptable Behaviors which must be promptly reported to the Principal or his/her designee include but are not limited to the following:

1. Refusing to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette as mentioned above.
2. Attempting to log on to the School network or the Internet using a user ID/password other than his/her own. Sharing passwords or trespassing in other's folders, work or files. Failing to respect the privacy of another student, including touching the mouse, keyboard, other hardware, files or papers of another without permission.
3. Sending any written comment or picture that is malicious regarding another student or individual. All forms of e-communication harassment of any kind, unfounded accusations, derogatory remarks, confidential information or promotion of illegal or immoral behavior.
4. Sending and receiving of any material in violation of any national, state or local regulation. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted, threatening or obscene material.
5. Using School name or logo on personal websites. The School discourages revealing personal information on the Internet and can make no guarantees of privacy or security when the user shares personal information on non-secure web sites.
6. Publishing information on the Internet, such as blogging, that brings discredit to the School (whether on or off School premises).
7. Non-School related social contacts between faculty/staff and students.
8. Any access of inappropriate materials that are offensive graphically or display unlawful messages, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, threatening, and/or illegal content or downloading/installing unapproved software or files. Attempting to use or install any software not authorized for use at that computer, or attempting to copy any programs from a computer for personal use.
9. Damaging/vandalizing computers (including the uploading or creation of viruses), systems, networks or any peripherals, attempting to gain access to unauthorized sources, attempting to harm or destroy data of another user, or attempting to circumvent protective security software. Changing the configuration of the computer, its system files, or application settings. This includes toolbar and desktop settings as well as computer accessories. Failing to immediately report a malfunction during the last period in which it is noted.
10. Using network in any way that will limit or disrupt network use or attempting to alter School system settings or data. Using removable storage media brought from home or anywhere else without authorization. Wastefully using resources such as printer paper and ink/toner. Using food, candy, gum, drinks or magnets around computer equipment or leaving the area in an untidy condition.
11. Using the network for political or commercial purposes such as endorsing political candidates or selling items or services.
12. Assisting others in violating any of these policies.
13. Abuse or fraudulent use of the computer system, network or Internet not specifically mentioned

Prohibited unless authorized by the Administration:

Using computers for other than school assignments, including access to personal email, chatting, instant messaging, discussion boards, or social networking sites.

Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the computers and Internet.