

# St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School



## Parent – Student Handbook 2017 - 2018

*Through Knowledge and Prayer, We Grow in Faith*

**St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School**

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**Principal**  
Mrs. Carol Church

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School is accredited through  
the **Mississippi Department of Education and AdvancEd (SACS/CASI)**.

This handbook is designed to be a synopsis of the policies and procedures of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School and is not intended to be all-inclusive. General policies applicable to all schools within the Catholic Diocese of Biloxi and the SVS Advisory Council govern the school. These are available in the school office and form an integral part of the agreement the school has entered into with parents to educate their children. The handbook, local policies and general diocesan policies strive to be consistent. However, due to human error and/or amendments to various parts, conflicts may arise. To the extent that a conflict exists, general diocesan policies shall take precedence followed first by advisory council policies and then this handbook.

The principal reserves the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be promptly notified in writing if changes are made. All policies and procedures designed for St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School are in effect during the regular school day, aftercare, summer program and all school-related activities. The principal has the right and responsibility to take appropriate action regarding the situation at hand.

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### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

In compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1962, the educational Amendments of 1972 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School's policy assures that no one be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity of the school on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

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# St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School

## 1.1 Mission

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St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School, a ministry of the Catholic Church, leads and guides our students in the Catholic faith through a Christ-centered curriculum. Our students are sent forth into the community with a formation of a strong moral character, the skills necessary to succeed academically and socially, the call to evangelize and the leadership to serve others with their God-given potential.

## 1.2 Philosophy

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At St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School (SVS) we believe in encouraging persons to become more fully the unique individuals they are destined to be. This belief involves an acknowledgment that we are not the primary educators of children but, rather, participants in a perpetual growth process. In Christ, we find our reason for existence.

As Christian educators, we are commissioned by the Catholic Church to assist each child in developing a life according to the message of Jesus and the stewardship of creation. We further believe that everyone is both teacher and learner. To develop a faith community, it is essential that students, parents and faculty cooperate to:

- Attain the doctrinal foundation of Catholic values;
- Express belief in our basic relationships with God; and
- Realize Christian unity.

Perceiving individual differences as strengths rather than weaknesses, we hold it necessary to develop an environment of trust in which both adults and children can experience mutual respect and reverence. Moreover, we believe that flexibility is necessary to allow teachers to adapt to the needs of the child and to allow the child to build self-worth, self-identity, self-discipline, responsibility, leadership skills, Christian values and the formation of conscience.

SVS also seeks an environment in which faith in the Catholic Christian tradition affects the social development, academic growth and religious maturity of all members of its faith community.

### 1.2.1 School Honor Code

SVS faculty and staff expect all students to be:

- Respectful
- Responsible
- Safe
- Spiritual

### 1.3 School History

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SVS is a co-educational elementary school located in Long Beach, Mississippi. It is the consolidation of St. Paul School in Pass Christian and St. Thomas the Apostle School in Long Beach.

- **History of St. Paul School**

This school dates back to January 1870 when the Sisters of Mercy arrived in Pass Christian and established the Sisters of Mercy School for Girls. In 1882, the Sisters began serving both boys and girls. In 1898, the school's name changed to St. Joseph Academy. With the dedication of a new school building in 1962, the school became known as St. Paul School.

- **History of St. Thomas the Apostle School**

In 1922, the Daughters of Charity of St. Thomas the Apostle Church, under the direction of Father Joseph Hager, C.M., opened the doors of St. Thomas School—the first Catholic school building in Long Beach. One of the first teachers was Sister Mathilde Comstock, D.C. St. Thomas was blessed with service from the Daughters of Charity until they withdrew from the school in 1986. Both the Daughters of Charity and Sisters of Mercy, well-known as teaching communities throughout the world, laid the foundation for a strong Catholic identity in the foundational teachings of the schools.

- **The Merger of the Two Schools**

This rich educational tradition continued until the devastation of Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005, when both churches and school buildings were destroyed. The Knights of Columbus, the Navy Sea Bees, teachers, parents, parishioners and volunteers from all over the country came together to reopen the schools. The St. Vincent de Paul Council of the Knights of Columbus purchased a building in Long Beach for both schools to share for the remainder of the 2005-2006 school year. In February 2006, Bishop Thomas Rodi of Biloxi declared the consolidation of the two schools. After careful consideration, the name St. Vincent de Paul was chosen in honor of the Knights of Columbus that helped to reestablish the school following the hurricane. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School became the official school name on July 1, 2006.

SVS holds the highest accreditation with the State of Mississippi's Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges. Thanks to the collaboration of parents, priests and school personnel, SVS maintains a tradition for excellence in education and strives to develop basic Christian attitudes and values in students. There are more than 300 students enrolled in SVS, with some students being the fourth and fifth generations of their family to attend Catholic schools.

### 1.4 Facilities

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Our state-of-the-art facility is located on 28 acres of partially wooded property landscaped to preserve the natural wetlands surrounding the school. The school building includes classrooms, science task labs, music and art rooms, a library, a computer lab, a full-size gymnasium and cafeteria. Our grounds extend our classroom to the outdoors with a science garden, recreational area, nature walk and prayer garden. Through the use of our outdoor classrooms, our school is

committed to inspiring and motivating students so that they have a realistic understanding of their role as stewards of the earth and its resources.

**1.5 Catholic Diocese of Biloxi**

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The Catholic school community within the Diocese of Biloxi, a ministry of the Catholic Church, embracing the teachings and traditions of the past, accepting the challenges and opportunities of the present and preparing for the demands of the future, provides an education based on Christ’s teachings and Catholic values which focus on the formation of strong moral character, the furtherance of academic excellence, the inspiration to serve others, and the motivation to achieve God-given potential in the local and the world communities.

Seventeen Institutions of learning built on the long tradition of Catholic education are operating in Southern Mississippi under the leadership of:

- Bishop of Biloxi**..... Most Reverend Louis F. Kihneman III
- Superintendent of Schools**.....Dr. Michael Ladner
- Assistant Superintendent of Schools**.....Dr. Rhonda Clark
- Director of Religious Education**.....Mr. Leo Trahan

**1.6 Advisory Council**

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Below are the members of the St. Vincent de Paul Interparochial School Pastors & School Advisory Council for 2017-2018:

- Fr. Mike Austin, *Holy Family Parish*
- Fr. Cuthbert O’Connell, *St. Thomas the Apostle Parish*
- Fr. Bart Kunat, *Sacred Heart Parish*
- Fr. Patrick Mockler, *Most Holy Trinity Parish*
- Fr. Michael Vu, *Our Mother of Mercy Parish*
- Fr. Ryan McCoy, *St. John the Evangelist Parish*
- Fr. Khoa Phi Vo, *St. Ann-Lizana Parish*
- Lisa Kelley
- Harry Hull
- Natalie Nasrallah
- Matt Powers
- Jennifer Sutton
- Debbie Vignes

## 1.7 Faculty & Staff

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SVS employs teachers who are highly qualified, fully certified and/or licensed by the state. Teachers hold at least a bachelor degree from a four-year institution and demonstrate competence in each core academic subject.

## Admissions

### 2.1 Admissions Policy

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In compliance with Title IX and the Civil Rights Act, SVS reaffirms that it has a non-discriminatory policy with regard to race, color, national origin, and sex both in the enrollment of students and the employment of teachers.

Admission is based on the following criteria:

- Students currently enrolled will have first priority and will be allowed to pre-register for the following year.
- Preference for admission is then given to students based on their status. People having the same status will be accepted in the order of the date that they made initial contact with the school. The order of priority will be:
  1. In-parish practicing Catholics with siblings currently enrolled in SVS
  2. In-parish practicing Catholics, as defined in the SVS Tuition Policy (see Section 3.2)
  3. Out-of-parish<sup>1</sup> practicing Catholics with siblings currently enrolled in SVS
  4. Out-of-parish practicing Catholics
  5. Non-Catholics with siblings currently enrolled in SVS

#### 2.1.1 Age Requirements

The age requirements for the various grades and programs at SVS are set out below. The principal must approve any exception to this policy.

- **Kindergarten**—According to state regulations, the child must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 to be admitted and enrolled in kindergarten.
- **Preschool**—To be admitted to the Preschool program, the child must be three (3) years old on or before September 1 for the PK3 program and four (4) years old on or before

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Diocesan guidelines, the school principal will accept a student from another parish school, only if the pastor of the parish in which the family resides approves the child's enrollment in the school. It will be the obligation of the family to contact their pastor to explain why they wish to have their child(ren) attend a school other than their parish school and request a letter of approval that must be presented to the school principal.

September 1 for the PK4 program.

- **Toddler Program (PK2)**—To be admitted to the Toddler Program (PK2), the child must be two (2) years old on or before September 1.

### **2.1.2 Admission on Probation**

Students may be admitted on either or both academic and behavioral probation. At the end of the first quarter, the teacher and the principal will make an assessment and recommend whether or not the child may be officially accepted into the school. If a child is accepted at SVS, both parents and students are bound to abide by the directives of the Diocese of Biloxi, the general policies of the Diocese<sup>2</sup>, as well as the local policies set forth by the Advisory Council.

## **2.2 Early Withdrawal**

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- Parents or legal guardians of students withdrawing from SVS must complete the required paperwork in the school office.
- The student's teacher must complete a Withdrawal Form.
- Permanent records cannot be given to parents or students, but will be forwarded to the school to which the student transfers upon receiving the school's request. However, an unofficial copy of the records may be requested by parents/guardians for a minimal charge.
- All library books, tuition, textbooks and lunch records must be cleared before the child's transfer record is completed.
- If a student is withdrawn at any time during the month, the family will be responsible for the full tuition due that month.
- If an annual or semi-annual payment was made, the family will be reimbursed for the month(s) remaining after student(s) withdrawal.

## **Tuition**

### **3.1 Standard Rates**

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Standard tuition rates shall be afforded to any family who is not a registered, active, contributing member of a Catholic Parish.

- The SVS registration fee is \$300 per child.

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<sup>2</sup> A copy of the handbook of school policies of the Diocese of Biloxi is available for review in the principal's office.

- The in-house early registration fee is \$250 per child by March 31. Registration after this date requires the standard \$300 fee.
- All registration fees are due at the time of registration and are non-refundable.
- Registration fees include two tickets into the Knights Club. Please refer to Section 8.3.1 for more information on the Knights Club.

<b>Preschool Rates</b>	<b>Per Child</b>
5 Days Full Time 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$4875
3 Days Full Day (M,W,F) 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	\$3225
2 Days Full Day (T, TH) 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	\$2425

<b>K-6</b>	<b>Per Child</b>	<b>2 Children</b>	<b>3 Children</b>
<b>Parish</b>	\$4125	\$6950	\$9875
<b>Standard</b>	\$5125	\$8150	\$11175

### **3.2 Parish Supplement**

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Parish supplemented tuition rates are afforded to in-parish practicing Catholics and must be applied for each year. In-parish practicing Catholics are Catholic families who are registered, active, contributing members of one of the school’s seven associated parishes—Holy Family, St Thomas the Apostle, Most Holy Trinity, Our Mother of Mercy, Sacred Heart, St. John the Evangelist and St. Ann-Lizana.

- To be considered a registered parish member, the family must submit a completed parish registration form to the parish office of one of the associated churches and be placed on the parish census.
- To be considered an active member of the parish, the family must attend mass at one of the churches associated with SVS on a weekly basis.
- Church attendance and regular contributions are very important. To be considered a contributing member, the family must regularly contribute financially to the parish by using the church’s support envelopes. If automatic deposit is used for church contributions, the family should still drop an empty church envelope in the offering plate so that church attendance may be recorded.

- To be afforded the parish supplemented tuition rate, families must submit a Parish Supplement Request Form, which is included in the student registration packet, to the pastor of the parish where the family attends mass each week. The pastor should send the signed form to the school indicating if parish supplement has been awarded to the family.
- The parish supplemented tuition status may be afforded to parishioners from other local parishes that do not have a school if the pastor of the other parish approves in writing and states that the parishioner meets the parish supplement criteria. Parents are required to obtain a letter from their pastor and submit it to the school office. The request will also be subject to Advisory Council approval.
- Preschool students do not qualify for Parish Supplement. However, preschool tuition payments can qualify for childcare tax credit benefits (Tax ID #20-5780801).

All Catholic families will be registered at the standard tuition rate until their application for parish supplement has been returned to and evaluated by the school.

### **3.3 Payment Plans**

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Families have the following three options for paying tuition each year:

- **Monthly Payment Plan**- requires enrollment in the FACTS Tuition Management Program. The payment will be automatically debited from the assigned bank account in ten (10) or eleven (11) payments. Payments can be drawn on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month from July through May, or August through May, respectively.
- **Semi-Annual Plan** – requires enrollment in the FACTS Tuition Management Program. The payment will be automatically debited from the assigned bank account on August 5<sup>th</sup> and January 5<sup>th</sup>.
- **Annual Plan** – This plan does not require enrollment in the FACTS Tuition Management Program. Payment is due by August 1<sup>st</sup>. If the payment is not made by August 10<sup>th</sup> the FACTS form that is filled out at Registration will be activated and drawn on August 20<sup>th</sup>. Payments for the Annual Payment plan may be made anytime during the summer in order to comply with the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline by mailing the payment to the school office.

Payments by credit card are acceptable but they must be made in person at the school office. A 3% convenience fee is assessed to all credit card payments.

### **3.4 Tuition Assistance**

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Tuition assistance is based on need and availability of funds and must be applied for each school year. If circumstances change in the school year and additional tuition assistance is required, parents should contact their parish office.

### **3.4.1 FACTS Grant and Assistance Program**

If a family needs reduced tuition, an application form may be obtained from the school office. Tuition assistance must be applied for in the spring. The application form will be processed through FACTS Grant and Assistance Program. Applicants must adhere to all requirements and application fees from FACTS, which will review the application and return a suggested rate of tuition to the parish office by May 1.

### **3.4.2 SCRIP**

SCRIP is a school-sponsored fundraising program by which participating companies both locally and nationally allow the school to purchase gift cards at a reduced amount and to sell them at face value.

- SVS encourages every family to participate in the SCRIP program in order to keep school fundraising to a minimum.
- The Scrip program can also be used as a means of lowering individual tuition. When a family signs up online to participate in SCRIP and designates a student beneficiary, 50% of the profit from SCRIP will go toward a tuition voucher for the student once the minimum \$50 profit requirement is reached. The remaining proceeds will go toward school operating expenses.
- To register for SCRIP, please follow these instructions:
  - Go to school website, click on the **ShopScrip** icon, “Register” and then “Join Scrip”. Follow the instructions and accept the terms.
  - St. Vincent de Paul enrollment code is **59D317EB4998**.
  - Orders must be submitted by Tuesday at 9 a.m.
  - Orders can be picked up on Thursday after 11:30 a.m. They can also be sent home with students upon request.

### **3.5 Tuition Delinquency Policy**

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In the course of a school year, there may arise occasions in which families become delinquent in their tuition payments. This results in a drag on the school’s cash flow. Delinquent accounts will be handled as follows:

- If there is any outstanding balance seven (7) days prior to the start of the academic year, the student(s) will not be allowed to register or start the new school year.

- If there is an outstanding tuition balance in the middle of the quarter, the progress report(s) of the student(s) will not be released until payment has been received.
- If there is an outstanding tuition balance at the end of the quarter, the nine-week term grades of the student(s) will not be released until payment is received.
- If there is any outstanding tuition balance by December 20 of the school year, the school will inform the family during the Christmas holidays that their account must be current before the start of the spring semester and that the family's FACTS account must be reinstated and *remain active* for the duration of the school year. If the outstanding balance is not paid in full the day before the first day of school in January, the student(s) will not be allowed to return for the spring semester.
- If there is any outstanding account balance(s), including tuition, cafeteria, library books/fines or aftercare, by May 20, final report cards will not be issued.

### **3.5.1 Payment Attempts**

- **First Payment Attempt:** If payment is not processed on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of the month (as specified in the agreement), FACTS will try once again to debit the assigned bank account on the following date designated for the school's debit, the 20<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>, respectively:
  - FACTS sends a missed payment letter and assesses a fee for non-sufficient funds (NSF).
  - If a FACTS account is not active or has not been set up, the school will notify the parents/guardians by phone and/or email that they must have an active FACTS account for their child(ren) to continue at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School.
- **Second Payment Attempt:** If payment is not processed on the second attempt, FACTS will send another missed payment letter and assess another NSF fee. Within five days, FACTS will notify the school of the second unsuccessful attempt to draw on the account. At this time, the school will contact the family by phone and/or email to arrange for payment of the outstanding balance.
  - If a family still does not have an active FACTS account at this time, the school will contact the parents for a meeting to make the account active.
- **Third Payment Attempt:** If payment is not processed on the third attempt, FACTS will send another missed payment letter, assess another NSF fee and contact the school of the third and final attempt to draw on this account. The school will make a second attempt to contact the family by phone and/or email.

- If the balance is still not paid or the family has not contacted the school within a week of this second attempt at contact, a certified letter from the school will be sent informing the family of the outstanding balance and the need to contact the school.
- If payment arrangements are not made in response to this letter and a FACTS account is not activated, the nine-week term grades of the student(s) will not be released until payment is received.
- Power School use will be blocked until payment is received and the delinquent account is made current.

As a Catholic institution, we endeavor to help all families who are going through hardships. It is the responsibility of the family that has difficulty meeting its tuition obligation to immediately notify the principal and/or pastor to determine whether special arrangements and/or adjustments to the agreement can be made. If a new payment plan is agreed upon, it must be put in writing and signed by all parties.

### **3.5.2 Preschool Tuition Delinquency Policy**

Preschool tuition payment attempts will follow the process set out in Section 3.5.1. If there is an outstanding account balance of more than one (1) month, a letter from the school will be sent home informing the family of the outstanding balance and the need to contact the school. If payment arrangements are not made with the school and a FACTS account is not activated, the student will not be allowed to return to school on the first school day of the next month.

### **3.6 Returned Check Policy**

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If a family writes more than three (3) NSF checks at the school (including cafeteria, PTO, tuition, aftercare, SCRIP, etc.), no further checks may be written for the remainder of the school year, and they will be required to pay in cash. The family will also incur a service charge fee of \$35.00 for processing.

## **Preschool Program**

### **4.1 Admissions**

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For SVS's general admissions policy,<sup>3</sup> please refer to Section 2 of this handbook.

- To be admitted to the Preschool program, the child must be three (3) years old on or before September 1 for the PK3 program and four (4) years old on or before September 1 for the PK4 program.

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<sup>3</sup> Any exception to this policy must be approved by the principal.

- To be admitted to the Toddler Program (PK2), the child must be two (2) years old on or before September 1.

## 4.2 Tuition

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The rates for the preschool program are set out in the chart below. For more information on the general tuition policies of SVS, please refer to Section 3 of this handbook.

Preschool Rates	Per Child
5 Days Full Time 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	\$4875
3 Days Full Day (M,W,F) 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	\$3225
2 Days Full Day (T, TH) 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	\$2425

- Preschool students do not qualify for Parish Supplement. However, preschool tuition payments can qualify for childcare tax credit benefits (Tax ID #20-5780801).
- Preschool tuition payment attempts will follow the process set out in Section 3.5.1 of this handbook.
- Tuition Delinquency Policy—if there is an outstanding account balance of more than one (1) month, a letter from the school will be sent informing the family of the outstanding balance and the need to contact the school. If payment arrangements are not made with the school and a FACTS account is not activated, the student will not be allowed to return to school on the first school day of the next month.

## 4.3 Curriculum

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The PK3 and PK4 programs emphasize skill development for gross and fine motor, social integration, academic readiness and spiritual development. These skills are developed through the use of games, cooking activities, arts and crafts, music, story time, physical education, play, critical thinking activities and participation in formal church worship.

### 4.3.1 Student Evaluations

Each student will be evaluated according to specific assessment guidelines at the beginning of the school year and then again at the end of the school year. Promotion from Early Childhood shall be based upon accomplishing the required essential curriculum elements as well as progress made in social, emotional and physical growth.

## **4.4 Uniform**

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Students in the Toddler Program (PK2) are not required to wear the school uniform but must adhere to the Non-Uniform Dress Guidelines as set out in Section 5.5.4. All students in the Preschool Program (PK3 and PK4) are required to wear the school uniform<sup>4</sup> per the following guidelines:

### **4.4.1 Boys**

- Plain navy shorts or slacks (no patch pockets and the length of slacks must touch the shoe); preschool boys may wear pants with an elastic waist;
- White pique knit polo shirt (long or short sleeve) embroidered with the school crest, which must be tucked in;
- Black or Navy belt (if there are belt loops on the pants);
- White crew socks;
- White leather shoes (“sneakers”) with Velcro closure only;
- Red sweatshirt and fleece embroidered with the school crest may be worn in class and can be purchased through the school;
- Plain white undershirts or turtlenecks—with no visible logo—may be worn under the uniform shirt;
- Outer coats may not be worn in the classroom;
- Hair must be clean, neatly groomed and the child’s natural color and must not touch the collar, eyebrow or the ear;
- Simple jewelry may be worn, including a necklace, watch and/or bracelet. No rings or earrings allowed; and
- No make-up, nail polish or tattoos of any kind will be permitted.

### **4.4.2 Girls**

- School plaid jumper;
- White shirt with a peter pan collar embroidered with the school crest;
- White or navy bike/mini shorts;
- White crew socks;
- White leather shoes (“sneakers”) with Velcro closure only;
- Red sweatshirt and fleece embroidered with the school crest may be worn in class and can be purchased through the school;
- Plain white undershirts or turtlenecks—with no visible logo—may be worn under the uniform shirt;
- Outer coats may not be worn in the classroom;
- Hair must be clean, neatly groomed and the child’s natural color;
- Hair bows may only be red, white, navy or school plaid and must not exceed 6” and barrettes and bobby pins must be natural hair color only;

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<sup>4</sup> All clothing should be labeled with the child’s name.

- Simple jewelry may be worn, including a necklace, single pair of stud earrings, watch and/or bracelet, but no rings allowed;
- No make-up, nail polish or tattoos of any kind will be permitted.

#### **4.4.3 Uniform Suppliers**

Uniforms may be purchased through the following suppliers:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southern Printing<br/>230 Davis Avenue<br/>Pass Christian, MS 39571<br/>228-452-7309</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School &amp; Scrubs<br/>1765 Poppo's Ferry Road, Suite F<br/>Biloxi, MS 39532<br/>228-388-278</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

Families wishing assistance for uniforms due to financial hardship are welcome to visit the school uniform closet. Clean, used uniforms are available for purchase at \$2/item. Contact the school office for more information.

### **4.5 Classroom Procedures**

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#### **4.5.1 Discipline**

Conscious Discipline, which emphasizes praise and positive behavior, is implemented in the toddler classroom. The teacher will assist the child in talking things out and teaching the child ways to handle different situations. The teacher will model a variety of positive ways to behave and will work on redirecting children to more appropriate behaviors throughout the day. The goal is to help children use their own words and solutions to solve conflicts and assist them in making positive choices.

Occasionally, the teacher may use a supervised “safe place” (an extension of Conscious Discipline) for misbehavior that persistently occurs. The safe place is a chair or a cushion that the child will be asked to sit on to calm down. It gives the child time to think about his/her actions. The safe place will have books, stress balls and other items to soothe the child. The length of time to sit at the safe place is one minute for each year of age or until the child has calmed down and is ready to return to classroom activities.

Parents will be contacted to set up a conference if a problem persists or is more severe (e.g., scratching, breaking the skin or other physical behavior). The parents, principal and teacher will discuss ways to correct the behavior in a positive way. Should the behavior continue or become worse, the principal may take other actions as deemed appropriate, including potentially asking that the child be removed from the program.

It is normal for toddlers to throw tantrums when they do not get their way. Should a toddler throw a tantrum that exceeds two minutes, the child will be removed from the classroom and walked to the office, where the teacher or staff member will sit with the child until the tantrum is over.

Behavior sheets will go home daily, which will have information on behavior, rest time, food intake, etc. Parents should sign the report and send it back daily.

#### **4.5.2 Snack Time**

- All students in the PK3 and PK4 program will be provided a morning and afternoon snack. Students may bring their own lunch or purchase a meal in the cafeteria. Please see Section 7.1 for more details.
- All students in the Toddler (PK2) program will be provided an early morning snack, a mid-afternoon snack and a late afternoon snack. Students may bring their own lunch or purchase a meal in the cafeteria. Please see Section 7.1 for more details.

#### **4.5.3 Potty Training**

- Students in the PK3 and PK4 program must be fully potty trained (no pull-ups) by the time they start school.
- Teachers in the Toddler Program (PK2) will assist children in the potty training process. Children generally achieve potty training between the ages of 2 1/2 to 3 years old. Parents must begin potty training at home before the teacher starts at school. During this time the child should wear pull-up training pants for health and safety reasons while at school. It will be at the teacher's discretion when the parents may bring in big girl or big boy underpants to school.

#### **4.5.4 Supplies**

- A list of school supplies for the PK program will be available in May prior to the start of the school year. Lists are posted on the school Website or may be obtained at the school office. All students are expected to bring these supplies by the first day of school.
- Parents may order pre-packaged school supplies by an early summer deadline in order to save time and money.
- Teachers may ask for additional supplies throughout the school year, depending on the needs of and usage by the students.

#### **4.5.5 Enrichment Activities**

- Students in the PK3 and PK4 program will participate in the following enrichment activities:
  - Music
  - Physical Education
  - School Mass

- Library Storytime
  - Computer lab (PK4 only)
- Students in PK2 participate in music, physical education and story time.

#### **4.5.6 Party Policies**

- Any class celebrations, including birthday and holidays, must be approved by the teacher who will designate a date and time for the party so that it does not interfere with regular classroom instruction. If treats are provided, they must be in individual or pre-cut servings.
- All party invitations and holiday cards are to be placed in blank envelopes for easy distribution to all students in the class. Teachers will distribute invitations to student parties if *all* students in the class are invited. The only exception to this policy is if the invitation is to all of the girls in the class or to all of the boys in the class.

#### **4.5.6 Health**

Please see Section 5.9 of this handbook for complete details on the school's Health and Emergency Policies.

- PK students are required to present an immunization record and original Certificate of Compliance from the Mississippi Department of Health showing that the student has all of the shots necessary to attend school.

### **4.6 Drop-off & Pick-up Procedures**

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Parents are responsible for their child(ren)'s transportation to and from school. For the safety of the students, the following procedures are to be followed:

- Parents may not talk or text on cell phones in the school parking lot while dropping off or picking up students.
- Students should not be walked through the parking lot to the school during carline.
- All parents must pick up their children in carline and remain in the car while the student enters the car.
- Only authorized persons may pick up students and must present a current school-issued ID card before a student can be released.
- School-issued ID cards should be displayed in the front car window when picking up students. If a parent or authorized person does not have the school-issued ID card, he or she will need to park in a designated parking space, report to the front office and sign out the student.

- The cost of replacing a school-issued ID card is \$3.
- Any change in the student's normal means of transportation must be sent to the school office in writing.

#### **4.6.1 PK2 Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures**

- Parents must park their car in the designated parking lots and walk their toddler into the PK2 classroom during drop-off.
- Parents must also park and pick up their toddler directly from the PK2 classroom for dismissal.

#### **4.6.2 Morning Drop-off Procedures**

- Normal drop-off times are 7:30 to 7:45 a.m. Drivers should enter SVS from Espy Ave. and drop off PK students in the front of the school. Teachers will escort students from their cars and student ambassadors will walk them to the PK hall. Parents should not let their child out of the car until a teacher is present to escort them into the building.
- If the PK student has older siblings, they may also be dropped off in the front.
- **Parents should *not* exit cars while in carline.** If a parent wishes to stay for Prayer & Pledge, students should be dropped off first and then the parent may park and join the child for the morning assembly.
- If a student arrives before 7:30 a.m., he/she should be taken directly to the school cafeteria where he/she will be supervised in before-school care. Students may *not* be dropped off before 7:00 a.m.
- If a student arrives after 7:45 a.m., the parent must park in a designated parking spot and escort his/her child into the building. For the safety of the students, parents may not leave their child unattended to enter the school building.
- Parents may not stop or leave their car unattended in front of the school.

#### **4.6.3 Afternoon Pick-up Procedures**

- PK students will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. in the front of the school. If the student has older siblings, both may be picked up from back car line at 3:00 p.m.
- Drivers should enter the campus for afternoon pick-up as they do for morning drop-off. They should remain in their car at all times. A teacher will bring the student(s) to the car and buckle the student(s) in.
- Student(s) who are not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be sent to after-care, which is held in

the school cafeteria. After-care charges are assessed from 3:30-5:30 p.m. See Section 6.5.1 for rates.

- PK students who attend for half-days should be picked up at 12:30 p.m. in the front of the school. A teacher assistant will escort these students to the front of the school no earlier than 12:25 p.m.
- In case of severe cold or rainy days, SVS will implement a gradual release in a single carline. Preschool students will be released from the front of the school at 2:15 p.m. Students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and any older siblings, will be released from the back of the school in a single carline at 2:30 p.m. Students in grades 3-6 will be released at 2:45 p.m. from the back of the school in a single carline. Parents will be notified if these procedures are implemented.

## **School Policies & Procedures**

### **5.1 Attendance**

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Normal school hours begin at 7:50 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Students are expected to arrive on time. Attendance is documented in school records.<sup>5</sup>

- Students may not arrive earlier than 7:00 a.m. Any student arriving before 7:30 a.m. will go directly to the cafeteria. At 7:30 a.m., students will go to their classrooms.
- At 7:45 a.m., teachers will escort students to the gym for Prayer and Pledge. The tardy bell rings at 7:50 a.m.

#### **5.1.1 Tardiness**

- Any student arriving after the tardy bell at 7:50 a.m. must check-in at the front office.
- Children with excessive tardiness (5 unexcused tardies within a 9-week period) will receive an after-school detention and parents may be required to meet with the principal to discuss the matter.

#### **5.1.2 Late Check-in / Early Check-out**

If it is necessary to leave school early for medical appointments or other important reasons, students must bring a note from home or a parent must call the office. The note should be given to the teacher, who will send it to the school office. Parents and/or visitors wishing to check a student out or return a student to school must sign the student in/out and wait for the office staff

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<sup>5</sup> Regular attendance helps maximize the school's textbook allotment, because the amount of textbook money from the state is based on average daily attendance of all students.

or principal to get the student from the classroom or return the student to the classroom. No teacher and/or teacher aide is to release a student to a parent or visitor without clearance from the front office.

### **5.1.3 Notification of Absence**

Parents are asked to call the school office after 8:00 a.m. on the first day of a student's absence.

- Excused absences require a doctor's note stating the reason for the absence. Official documentation for an excused absence must be received within five days of the absence. Students missing five consecutive days of school and/or a total of ten (10) days of unexcused absences will be reported to the State Attendance Officer in accordance with Mississippi Code Section 37-13-91, As Amended (1972).
- Excused absences are defined as those involving school business, illness or injury, death or serious illness (immediate family), court proceedings, medical appointment or religious observances.
- Unexcused absences are those deemed non-medical, non-emergency (including vacations) and/or not cleared and approved by the principal. The teacher is not obligated, but may assist the child in making up missed work or tests for any unexcused absence. Make-up work will be due within the same number of days that the student missed.

## **5.2 Records Review**

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In keeping with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, parents have the right to request an appointment with the school administrator to view their child's record at any time during regular school hours. SVS abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents:

*In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child.*

If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

## **5.3 Promotion & Retention**

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- A student will be promoted if, considering his/her abilities, s/he satisfactorily completes the work of the current grade.
- Promotion from Early Childhood shall be based upon accomplishing the required essential curriculum elements as well as progress made in social, emotional and physical growth.

- If a student receives a grade below 70, the student fails the subject. If two core subjects<sup>6</sup> are failed, the student may be recommended for retention. Parents must be informed of the likelihood of a student’s academic failure and possible retention after the January report card and before the end of the school year. Parents are ordinarily informed of the school’s recommendation in writing when placement concerns arise.
- A student may not be retained more than once in the same grade or twice during grades K-6. Every effort will be made by the school administrator and teachers to provide alternative programs or adjust the regular program for children with special needs.
- If all avenues have been explored and the school cannot meet the needs of the student or the parent(s) have not acted on the school’s recommendations regarding diagnostic evaluation and/or outside tutoring or remediation, the principal has the right to request withdrawal of the enrolled student or refuse re-admittance.

## **5.4 Uniforms**

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All students in the Preschool Program (PK3 and PK4) through Grade 6 are required to wear the school uniform<sup>7</sup> per the following guidelines:

### **5.4.1 Boys PK3 – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- Plain navy shorts or slacks (no patch pockets and the length of slacks must touch the shoe); preschool boys may wear pants with an elastic waist;
- White pique knit polo shirt (long or short sleeve) embroidered with the school crest, which must be tucked in;
- Black or Navy belt (if there are belt loops on the pants);
- White crew socks;
- White leather shoes (“sneakers”)—velcro closures are permitted in PK only;
- Red sweatshirt and fleece embroidered with the school crest may be worn in class and can be purchased through the school;
- Plain white undershirts or turtlenecks—with no visible logo—may be worn under the uniform shirt;
- Outer coats may not be worn in the classroom;
- Hair must be clean, neatly groomed and the child’s natural color and must not touch the collar, eyebrow or the ear;
- Simple jewelry may be worn, including a necklace, watch and/or bracelet. No rings or earrings allowed; and
- No make-up, nail polish or tattoos of any kind will be permitted.

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<sup>6</sup> Core Subjects for grades 1-3 consist of Reading, Language Arts and Mathematics and in grades 4-6, Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

<sup>7</sup> All clothing should be labeled with the child’s name.

### **5.4.2 Girls PK3 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

- School plaid jumper;
- White shirt with a peter pan collar embroidered with the school crest;
- White or navy bike/mini shorts;
- White crew socks;
- White leather shoes (“sneakers”)—velcro closures are permitted in PK only;
- Red sweatshirt and fleece embroidered with the school crest may be worn in class and can be purchased through the school;
- Plain white undershirts or turtlenecks—with no visible logo—may be worn under the uniform shirt;
- Outer coats may not be worn in the classroom;
- Hair must be clean, neatly groomed and the child’s natural color;
- Hair bows may only be red, white, navy or school plaid and must not exceed 6” and Barrettes and bobby pins must be natural hair color only;
- Simple jewelry may be worn, including a necklace, single pair of stud earrings, watch and/or bracelet, but no rings allowed; and
- No make-up, nail polish or tattoos of any kind will be permitted.

### **5.4.3 Girls 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

- School plaid skirt, no shorter than 3 inches above the knee;
- White pique knit polo shirt (long or short sleeve), with the school crest embroidered on the left chest, which must be tucked in;
- White or navy bike/mini shorts;
- White crew socks;
- White leather shoes (“sneakers”)—velcro closures are permitted in PK only;
- Red sweatshirt and fleece embroidered with the school crest may be worn in class and can be purchased through the school;
- Plain white undershirts or turtlenecks—with no visible logo—may be worn under the uniform shirt;
- Outer coats may not be worn in the classroom;
- Hair must be clean, neatly groomed and the child’s natural color;
- Hair bows may only be red, white, navy or school plaid and must not exceed 6” and barrettes and bobby pins must be natural hair color only;
- Simple jewelry may be worn, including a necklace, single pair of stud earrings, watch and/or bracelet but no rings allowed; and
- No make-up, nail polish or tattoos of any kind will be permitted.

### **5.4.4 Uniform Suppliers**

Uniforms may be purchased through the following suppliers:

- Southern Printing  
230 Davis Avenue  
Pass Christian, MS 39571  
228-452-7309

- School & Scrubs  
1765 Popp's Ferry Road, Suite F  
Biloxi, MS 39532  
228-388-2787

Families wishing assistance for uniforms due to financial hardship are welcome to visit the school uniform closet. Clean, used uniforms are available for purchase at \$2/item. Contact the school office for more information.

#### **5.4.5 Non-Uniform Dress Code**

On special occasions, students may be permitted to wear “free dress”, according to the following guidelines:

- Regular jeans, slacks or shorts (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee);
- Girls may *not* wear gym shorts;
- Skirts, skorts or dresses (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee);
- Shirts that fully cover the midsection;
- No shirts or dresses with sleeves less than 2” in width;
- No flip-flops, tight clothing, low rise, hip hugger or saggy/baggy pants; and
- Shoes must be closed toe and closed heel.

Any student wearing clothing that does not comply with the non-uniform policy will be required to change clothing, either by the parent being called to bring a change of clothes or by borrowing a school uniform from the school. The principal has the final decision on all matters of dress and grooming.

### **5.5 Discipline**

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SVS uses a school-wide behavioral management plan, which clearly communicates behavior expectations and consequences while fostering positive reinforcement and nurturing students to be self-disciplined with Christian behavior.

Communication to parents regarding student misbehavior is accomplished through a system of written “Checklists” divided into categories, which graduate in severity based on the behavioral infraction.

- The “Category 1 Checklist” results in a warning. However, three (3) warnings within a 9-week period will result in an afterschool detention.
- The “Category 2 Checklist” may be given for repeated warnings and also for more serious behavioral infractions. These result in an immediate afterschool detention. A student receiving three “Category 2 Checklists” within a 9-week period will receive an

in-school suspension.

- The “Category 3 Checklists” are most severe and may result in an in-school suspension, meeting with the principal and/or Pastor, school suspension or expulsion.

### **5.5.1 Campus Expectations**

- Students are expected to behave respectfully and orderly throughout campus so as not to disrupt learning.
- Students are expected to follow all school rules and procedures and must adhere to the SVS Honor Code:
  1. Be Respectful
  2. Be Responsible
  3. Be Safe
  4. Be Spiritual
- Students are expected to conform to the uniform code at all times.
- Students are expected to learn in a safe, bully-free environment.

### **5.5.2 Classroom Expectations**

- Each student should be allowed to learn without interruption from other students.
- Teachers expect to teach without behavioral disruption, so when the teacher is speaking, students must listen and follow directions.
- Students will respect all others and keep hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- Students should be prepared for class each day, including having the necessary books, supplies, homework and updated planner.
- Students should stay in their seat unless given permission to do otherwise.
- Students should raise their hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
- All assignments are to be turned in on time. Failure to turn in homework/classwork on the correct day will result in a checklist. It is the responsibility of the student to discuss with the teacher missed or incomplete assignments.

Individual teachers have the discretion to expand on these classroom behavioral guidelines and/or disciplinary procedures.

### **5.5.3 Detention**

Detention sessions are held each afternoon from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday. Students receiving detention will serve the detention on the day assigned. Sporting events, music lessons, parties or other general activities are not reasons to be excused.

### **5.6 Grievance**

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A Grievance Policy has been established to ensure due process and to provide a process of appeal for a perceived wrong:

- If a family has a grievance, they must first communicate that grievance to the teacher.
- If the issue cannot be resolved or requires a higher authority, the family should then go to the principal.
- If the issue remains unresolved after meeting with the principal, the family may submit a written appeal to the school Advisory Council within five (5) days of the event requesting the council to act as a mediator between the principal and the aggrieved party. The president of the school Advisory Council will place the request on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
- Upon hearing and reviewing all the evidence, the Advisory Council will deliberate and send a recommendation within five (5) business days to the parties involved concerning a proposed resolution of the matter.
- The principal will respond in writing to the aggrieved party, whether to accept the Advisory Council recommendation, reverse the previous decision of the complaint or modify the original decision.
- If the matter cannot be resolved within this grievance policy, the aggrieved parties may pursue an appeal process according to Governance #8 of the Diocesan Policy Manual.

### **5.7 Communication**

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Every effort is made to keep parents informed of school events. Important information is communicated through the school website ([www.svdpcatholicsschool.org](http://www.svdpcatholicsschool.org)), Power School, School Messenger, SVS app on Android and iPhone, *SVS This Week* newsletter and church bulletins.

Parents are welcome to confer personally with the principal and/or teachers. In each case, it is advisable to call or email the school office in advance to arrange an appointment to discuss any issues of concern.

### **5.7.1 PowerSchool**

PowerSchool is an online program that allows parents to take an active role in their student's school life. Parents will be assigned a login and password to access their child's records, including grades, assignments, attendance, fees, calendars and weekly bulletins from teachers.

### **5.7.2 School Messenger**

School Messenger is a diocesan-wide communication system that allows SVS to send parents information through email, text and telephone messages. During registration, parents are asked to provide their preferred method of contact in order to receive these messages.

### **5.7.3 Media Release**

By signing the media release form, parents grant the school the right to disseminate and utilize the following listed information pertaining to your child(ren):

- Photographs, video images or similar technology that portrays a visual representation of your child(ren), including candid images taken during school hours and at school functions;
- Audio or digitally reproduced, taped and other vocal reproductions and representations of your child(ren)'s voice;
- Honor roll lists containing your child(ren)'s name;
- Student of the Month, religious, athletic and other awards received by your child(ren) as judged appropriate for inclusion at the sole discretion of the school;
- Samples of your child(ren)'s work (e.g., art, essays, etc.); and
- The school newsletter and/or newspaper with any references made to your child(ren) and his/her school activities; and

### **5.7.4 Internet Use**

SVS provides all students, faculty and staff access to the Internet. Students must have permission from at least one parent/guardian to access the Internet at school. Any use of the Internet at SVS must comply with the philosophy and rules of discipline as outlined in the handbook. Any infraction will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Discipline Policy (see Section 5.5).

- A student's Internet activities at school must be in support of education and research and be consistent with the educational objectives of SVS.
- Students are required to have teacher supervision when accessing information on school grounds.
- The use of the Internet is a privilege. Inappropriate use may result in a loss of the privilege.
- Actions that constitute unacceptable Internet use include, but are not limited to:
  - Using impolite, abusive or otherwise objectionable language in messages;
  - Placing unlawful information on the Internet;
  - Using the Internet illegally in ways that violate federal, international, state or local laws or treaties;
  - Using the Internet at school for non-school related activities;
  - Sending messages or data that are likely to result in the loss of the recipient's work, data and/or hardware or software;
  - Sending chain letters, flame letters, pyramid schemes or any other content to lists or individuals that would cause congestion or otherwise interfere with the work of others;
  - Using the Internet for advertising or commercial purposes;
  - Using the Internet for political lobbying;
  - Sending or receiving copyrighted materials or materials protected by the trade secret without owner's permission;
  - Knowingly giving one's password to others;
  - Using another person's password;
  - Using Internet access for sending or retrieving pornographic, threatening or violent material, such as information on bomb, and/or inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network;
  - Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks;
  - Attempting to gain improper access to another's resources, programs or data;
  - Vandalizing, which includes any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user on the Internet, including the uploading or creation of computer viruses;
  - Revealing one's name, address, phone number or any personal information to any person or identity on the system (If anyone requests this information, the user should immediately disconnect and inform a faculty member of the incident.);
  - Falsifying one's identity to others;
  - Changing any computer fields that do not belong to user; or
  - Posting defamatory statements about the school on social media or other public site; or
  - Posting content and/or pictures on social media that violate the school's rules, policies or honor code.

- No student should personally solicit emails, and parents should not send emails to students during school hours.
- All communication between students and faculty should be through official school communication channels (e.g., Power School or parent email).
- Any inappropriate messages will be reported.
- Use of any information obtained via the Internet and related technologies are at the user's own risk and will not be considered private.
- The educational programs governed by the school specifically deny any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained and make no warranty with respect thereto or costs incurred thereby.

## **5.8 Transportation**

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Normal school hours begin at 7:50 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Students are expected to arrive on time. Parents are responsible for their children's transportation to and from school. For the safety of the students, the following procedures are to be followed:

- Parents may not talk or text on cell phones in the school parking lot while dropping off or picking up students.
- Students should not be walked through the parking lot to the school during carline.
- All parents must pick up their children in carline and remain in the car while the student enters the car.
- Only authorized persons may pick up students and must present a current school-issued ID card before a student can be released.
- School-issued ID cards should be displayed in the front car window when picking up students. If a parent or authorized person does not have the school-issued ID card, he or she will need to park in a designated parking space and report to the front office.
- The cost of replacing a school-issued ID card is \$3.
- Any change in the student's normal means of transportation must be sent to the school office in writing.

### **5.8.1 Morning Drop-off Procedures**

- Normal drop-off times are 7:30 to 7:45 a.m. Drivers should enter SVS from Espy Ave. and drop off PK students in the front of the school. Teachers will escort students from their cars and student ambassadors will walk them to the PK hall. Parents should not let

their child out of the car until a teacher is present to escort them into the building. If the PK student has older siblings, they may also be dropped off in the front.

- Students in Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade should be dropped off in the back of the school by the cafeteria. Students may exit the car on the right sidewalk at any point on the circle and walk to either of the two back doors. Parents should not exit their vehicles at any point in the carline.
- If a parent wishes to stay for Prayer & Pledge, students should be dropped off first and then the parent may park in a designated parking lot and join the child for the morning assembly. Parents should exit the school from the cafeteria immediately following Prayer & Pledge and should not linger in the halls or outside of the classrooms. If a parent wishes to stay, the visitor's policy must be followed (see Section 9.1).
- If students arrive before 7:30 a.m., they should be taken directly to the school cafeteria where they will be supervised in before-school care. Students may *not* be dropped off before 7:00 a.m.
- If a student arrives after 7:45 a.m., the parent must park in a designated parking spot and escort his/her child into the building. For the safety of the students, parents may not leave their child unattended to enter the school building.
- Parents may not stop or leave their car unattended in front of the school.

### **5.8.2 Afternoon Pick-up Procedures**

- PK students will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. from the front of the school. If the PK student has older siblings, s/he may be dismissed at the back carline at 3:00 p.m.
- Students in Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be dismissed from the back of the school in a double carline.
- Drivers should enter the campus for afternoon pick-up as they do for morning drop-off. They should remain in their car at all times. A teacher will bring the student(s) to the car and buckle the student(s) in.
- Student(s) who are not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be sent to after-care, which is held in the school cafeteria. After-care charges are assessed from 3:30-5:30 p.m. See Section 6.5.1 for rates.
- PK students who attend for half-days should be picked up at 12:30 p.m. in the front of the school. A teacher assistant will escort these students to the front of the school no earlier than 12:25 p.m.
- In case of severe cold or rainy days, SVS will implement a gradual release in a single carline. Preschool students will be released from the front of the school at 2:15 p.m.

Students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and any older siblings, will be released from the back of the school in a single carline at 2:30 p.m. Students in grades 3-6 will be released at 2:45 p.m. from the back of the school in a single carline. Parents will be notified if these procedures are implemented.

### **5.8.3 Field Trips**

In connection with their classroom studies, students may take various educational field trips throughout the year. These trips are an integral and exciting part of learning. Parents will be notified in advance of the specific details for all field trips and will be required to return a signed permission form. If a parent does not want his/her child to participate, it should be indicated on the form. ***Field trips are a privilege afforded to students. If a student fails to meet academic or behavioral requirements, s/he may be excluded from participating in the field trip.***

The following rules will apply:

- Students must follow the SVS Honor Code at all times.
- Teachers will be responsible for communicating to parents the class's needs for chaperones and details about the field trip.
- All students will ride the bus to the field trip destination but may be signed out by their parent at the end of the field trip. Only a parent of a child or authorized person on file at the school will be permitted to sign a child out from a field trip.
- In the event that the bus is not available, the school depends on parent volunteer drivers for field trips. Specific procedures are in place for the safe transport of the children, and it is imperative that these procedures be followed.
- All parent drivers must complete the driver information form provided by the office and have current insurance documentation on file before driving for any field trip. ***This must be completed at least a week before the field trip.***
- In accordance with the Diocese of Biloxi Risk Management Office, *"no student participating in any program and/or activity, under our actual or perceived care, custody and/or control, will be permitted to ride in the front passenger seat of any vehicle," regardless of whether the vehicle has side airbags.*
- All children in the lower grades are to be transported using booster seats according to the weight and height limits prescribed by law. Parents should leave their child's booster seat at school with the teacher on field trip days to be used by volunteer drivers.
- All students must wear seat belts at all times when riding with a parent driver; there may be only one child per working seat belt while traveling.

- The teacher in charge of the field trip will make vehicle assignments for students, provide a map and/or directions for the trip and carry copies of emergency medical information for each student on every trip.
- Students are to remain with the assigned chaperone/driver for the entire day.
- Drivers will remain with the field trip “caravan” and follow the designated route. It is imperative that drivers not make unauthorized stops or detours while transporting children.
- Drivers are expected to obey all traffic laws and acceptable speed limits.
- Drivers are to call the school immediately in the event of car trouble, separation from the caravan or inability to find the field trip destination.
- If a child requires medication during a field trip, it must be submitted to the front office, along with detailed instructions, at least two days prior to the field trip to allow the teacher time to plan and organize for its distribution on the day of the field trip.

## **5.9 Emergency, Health & Safety**

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- PK and/or Kindergarten students are required to present an immunization record and original Certificate of Compliance from the Mississippi Department of Health showing that the student has all of the shots necessary to attend school.
- If a student transfers from another school within the state, his/her records should contain the Certificate of Compliance.
- Parents are asked to inform the school of any serious or chronic ailments a student may have.
- A child may not attend class with any of the following symptoms: fever, diarrhea, undiagnosed rash, inflamed or discharge in eyes, vomiting, severe cold or sore throat.
- Parents are required to keep emergency information current.
- If a child becomes ill or injured while at school, the parent will be called and the child will rest at the nurse’s station near the front office until picked up. If parents cannot be reached, the staff will attempt to contact other individuals listed on the emergency contact list.
- In the event of a serious accident or injury, SVS staff will contact 911 immediately and then the parent. Paramedics will decide on the appropriate action. If the child needs emergency treatment, he or she will be taken to the nearest available medical facility that is capable of providing the necessary treatment. The parent will be responsible for all medical charges.

- SVS staff will only administer medication that has been prescribed by a doctor. The medication must be in the original prescription bottle and have the student’s name on the label. Medication cannot be expired and must have adequate dosage. A written medical release form is available at the school office and must be completed and signed in order for SVS staff to administer the medication.<sup>8</sup> It is the parents’ responsibility to keep regular prescriptions up-to-date.
- Medications may not be left with the child’s teacher nor should students bring medications to school in their backpacks. Parents are required to personally bring any medications and instructions directly to the front office to be kept at the nurse’s station, where the child will report to receive his/her proper dose.
- Parents should provide a record of any regular medications a student may be taking in order to provide SVS staff a better understanding of the child’s educational needs.

## Academics & Religious Education

### 6.1 Curriculum

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The academic program is continually updated and designed to meet the needs of all students through a Christ-centered environment. The basic curriculum offered includes Religion, Reading, English, Public Speaking, Handwriting, Spelling/Vocabulary, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Technology, Art and Music. Our goal is for all students to successfully complete their academic expectations based upon their personal needs. A wide range of teaching materials and media are used at each level with emphasis placed on enrichment activities. Remedial assistance is available at each level.

- **Preschool**—the PK3 and PK4 programs emphasize skill development for gross and fine motor, social integration, academic readiness and spiritual development. These skills are developed through the use of games, cooking activities, arts and crafts, music, story time, physical education, play, critical thinking activities and participation in formal church worship.
- **Kindergarten**—curriculum is based on a structured program of intense readiness and recognition skills designed to prepare the child for early success in first grade. For added enrichment, students also participate in library, music, technology and physical education. The following chart outlines the subjects taught in Kindergarten.

Subject	Program
Reading	Project Read/Reading Street
Math	Saxon

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<sup>8</sup> It is preferable to request that the child’s physician prescribe medication that can be administered outside of school hours.

Religion	Sadlier
Phonics	Project Read
Thinking Maps	Art/Music/Technology

- **Grades 1-6**—SVS offers a challenging curriculum that exceeds state standards and provides enrichment opportunities at each grade level. For added enrichment, students participate in art, music, public speaking, technology, library and physical education. The curriculum is continually updated to meet the needs of current students. The following chart outlines the subjects taught in grades 1-6:

Subject	Program
Reading	Project Read/Reading Street/Thinking Maps
Math	Saxon/Thinking Maps
Language Arts	Project Read/Written Expression/ Reading Street/Thinking Maps
Spelling/Phonics/Vocabulary	Project Read Phonology
Social Studies	Scott Foresman/Thinking Maps
Science	McGraw-Hill/Thinking Maps
Religion	Sadlier/Thinking Maps

### **6.1.1 Homework Policy**

Homework is meant as practice for skills taught. It is not meant to be overwhelming. To determine approximately how long homework should take, add a “0” to each grade to determine the average range. For example, homework in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade should take about 20-30 minutes, in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 30-40 minutes, and so on.

Homework journals are provided for each student in Grades 1 through 6, to record daily assignments and establish good work habits. Parental assistance is needed to ensure the student has enough time and a suitable environment for completing assignments. Classroom Homework policies will be given to parents at the beginning of the school year. Homework newsletters for each grade level will be posted on Power School.

### **6.2 Grading Scale**

Grades on daily assignments will be posted on Power School. In addition, progress reports will be sent home midway through each quarter. Report cards will be sent home after every nine (9) weeks.

- **Preschool** students are not graded on their activities and, therefore, will not receive progress or report cards. However, students will be evaluated by the teacher at the beginning of the school year to gauge approximate social and learning development skills. Parents will also receive updated reports on these skills mid-year and at the end of

the school year.

- **Kindergarten** students will receive report cards three (3) times during the school year— after the second, third and fourth quarter. Teachers will schedule parent/ teacher conferences during the first quarter to review initial evaluations. The following grading scale will be used to report progress: O (Outstanding), S (Satisfactory) and N (Needs Improvement).
- Students in **Grades 1-6** will receive report cards four (4) times a year, at nine-week intervals. Progress Reports are sent home at least once at the midpoint of each quarter for the parents to sign and return. Additional progress reports may be sent, as the teacher deems necessary to keep the parents informed of the student's progress. Formal parent/ teacher conferences are scheduled at the first and third grading period for grades 1-6. The following grading scale will be used to report progress:

A	Beyond Mastery	100-93
B	Mastery	92-85
C	Proficient	84-75
D	Minimal Understanding	74-70
F	No Evidence of Understanding	69-0
<b>EXTRA CURRICULAR SUBJECTS (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)</b>		
O	Outstanding	
S	Satisfactory	
N	Needs Improvement	
<b>EXTRA CURRICULAR SUBJECTS (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade)</b>		
A	Beyond Mastery	100-93
B	Mastery	92-85
C	Proficient	84-75
D	Minimal Understanding	74-70
F	No Evidence of Understanding	69-0

- Conferences may be requested by teacher or parent at any time during the year and are highly encouraged. Parents should call the school during office hours to schedule conferences with teachers and/or the principal.
- Students with a grade average of 85 or above in each subject will be eligible for Honor Roll.

### **6.2.1 Testing**

- Students will be assessed in each subject on a weekly basis.
- Quarterly exams are given to the students and provide one measure for assessing student progress for promotion/retention as well data to drive instruction. The goal is to show

growth for every child.

- Students in grades one through six will be given the secured form for Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). These scores determine the level of knowledge of students in comparison to national standards and help inform the curriculum of the school. A profile of all scores is shared with the parents, and all test scores become a part of the cumulative record of the student.

### **6.3 Textbooks & Supplies**

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Textbooks are issued on loan to the students at the beginning of each school year. Students are required to keep the books covered at all times and expected to use the books with care to allow the maximum years of use.

- Book cards listing the textbooks assigned to the student are sent home for parents to sign acknowledging responsibility for the return of the books in good repair.
- Fines and replacement fees for damaged or lost textbooks must be paid before the final report card is issued.
- Many of the school's textbooks are furnished through funds allocated by the State of Mississippi. The amount of textbook money allocated the school from the state is based on average daily attendance of all students. ***Regular attendance is encouraged to maximize textbook allotment.***

School supply lists for the academic year are posted on the school Website in May. Hard copies may be obtained from the front office. Supplies may be dropped off to the student's classroom during final registration or on the first day of school. Families may also opt to order a supplies box for their respective grade in June, which will be delivered to the school on behalf of the student by the first day of school. Please label any personal items sent to school, including lunch boxes, uniforms, mats, book bags, sweatshirts and jackets.

### **6.4 Enrichment Programs**

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In addition to the core curriculum, SVS offers a number of enrichment learning programs that offer a well-rounded learning experience for students. Each class participates in these programs at designated times throughout the week:

#### **6.4.1 Library**

SVS has an attractive, well-stocked library with books for every reading level. Its selection adopts the proposals by the American Library Association. Students participate in the Accelerated Reading Program and are given time each week to visit the library, where they can read and check out books. They also receive instructions regarding the use of the library as a resource.

Books are checked out for a period of one week. Students will be fined 5 cents per day for any overdue books. Students who lose books will be charged a replacement fee, not less than \$10.00, based on the cost and age of the lost book. Notices are sent home twice monthly regarding late book returns, fees and fines.

Additional books may not be checked out until outstanding book(s) are returned or fines/fees are paid.

#### **6.4.2 Physical Education**

Physical Education is an integral part of a child's physical and mental development. All SVS students are required to participate in physical education classes each week according to their physical ability.

- Any physical limitations should be addressed with the teacher and/or principal verbally or in writing.
- Students are expected to wear proper dress for PE classes. Tennis shoes should be worn on non-uniform days. Girls must wear white or navy shorts under their skirt or jumper.

#### **6.4.3 Art**

Students in grades 1-6 participate in weekly art classes. Through the study of various artists, movements and art history, students are introduced to a culturally diverse world. Students practice the techniques of different artists while gaining an appreciation for various mediums. This program encourages confidence in their creative voice.

#### **6.4.4 Music**

All students participate in weekly music lessons and bi-annual productions. Music lessons are engaging and allow students to experience the art of performance while learning about different genres of music. Students practice the technique of singing, learn rhythm and read music.

#### **6.4.5 Technology**

Students in grades PK4—6 engage with various forms of technology both in the classroom and the technology lab. Younger students use technology to reinforce basic classroom objectives while older students, as they progress in skill, are taught to use the computer as a resource tool. All students and faculty must adhere to the rules and policies of internet use as set out in Section 5.7.4.

#### **6.4.6 Public Speaking**

All students in grades 1-6 will participate in public speaking classes. The informal course focuses on teaching students communication and leadership skills. They learn to overcome

nervousness when speaking in front of groups, to organize and present ideas logically and convincingly, to listen carefully to the ideas of other students and offer helpful advice.

## **6.5 Aftercare Program**

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The SVS Aftercare Program is designed to integrate academics, tutelage, play and spiritual guidance for students after the school day has officially ended. All students enrolled at SVS are eligible and invited to participate in after-school activities. Additional fees are assessed for Aftercare and select after-school activities.

- The program officially begins at 3:30 p.m. during school days. All school facilities are used for the Aftercare Program; however, students in grades K-6 will primarily be located in the gym and cafeteria and preschoolers in the PK pod. A snack and drink are served daily.
- The Aftercare Program ends promptly at 5:30 p.m., at which time all children must be picked up. Parents must have an emergency plan for unforeseen delays in picking up the children. In the event a parent is not able to arrive on time for close of aftercare, it is imperative the school be notified as soon as possible, and the parent should have the emergency pickup designee en route to pick up the child(ren).
- A late fee of \$20 will be assessed if children are picked up between closing and 5:35 PM. An additional \$2 per minute will be charged after 5:35 PM. Late Fees are to be paid in the office. Any late charges assessed must be paid before your child returns to aftercare.
- During Aftercare hours, parents should contact the Aftercare Director directly with any questions or concerns.

### **6.5.1 Fees**

- **Preschool** children attending Aftercare on a full time basis do not have fees associated with this service. However, part-time students will be charged \$3 per half hour at a maximum of \$180 per student, per month.
- **Full-time participants** in the Aftercare program must pay these fees through FACTS Management Program. Please make note of this choice on your Registration Form. Full time participants receive a reduced rate of tuition by paying for the year and will *not* be refunded for time not used.
- Aftercare may be utilized on a **part-time** basis at \$3 per half hour at a maximum \$180 per student, per month.

### **6.5.2 Requirements and Discipline**

There is a required study hall time for students in grades K-6 for 45 minutes on Monday through Thursday. When homework is completed, students are required to read a book during the

remaining time in study hall. *All students must have a book to read every day.*

Aftercare is an extension of the school day. All students are required to follow the school's defined rules and procedures as set out in Section 5.5 of this handbook.

- In the event a student chooses to not follow rules and procedures, he/she will receive a behavioral form indicating the problem. Behavioral forms are to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the counselor prior to the student's return to Aftercare.
- A second discipline form will result in student probation, and the parent will be required to conference with counselor and/or principal prior to the child returning.
- A third behavior form will result in a conference with the Director and possible exclusion from the program for the remainder of the year. This decision is solely at the discretion of the Principal.
- Severe infractions (e.g., bullying, biting, fighting) may result in the parent being called to pick up the child immediately.

## **6.6 Student Assistance**

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SVS provides a full time language resource teacher who teaches students with atypical needs through an intervention program. Students may receive assistance in the classroom as well as one-on-one tutoring when needed.

Other student resources and services provided to SVS students include:

- Student Referral for Learning Deficiencies (Harrison County Schools)
- Project Read
- Hearing Screenings
- Eye Screenings
- Volunteer Aids
- Family Life
- Educational Assemblies

Students also have access to an on-call school counselor either by request or teacher referral. Students must have a signed permission form from a parent/guardian in order to meet with the counselor.

## **6.7 Religious Education**

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All students receive religious instruction according to the directives from the Diocesan Religious Education office. Liturgy and prayer are a major part of our Catholic faith. Students begin their

day in prayer and pray before meals, dismissal and at other appropriate times during the day as they live their faith.

- Students attend mass every Friday morning and on Holy Days of Obligation. Students prepare for the Mass and participate as altar servers, lectors, choir members, gift bearers and banner makers. Parents are encouraged to attend Mass and sit with their child(ren) on Fridays. Appropriate dress is required.
- Daily Religion classes are held at all grade levels. The curriculum is uniquely Catholic and follows the guidelines of the Department of Religious Education of the Diocese of Biloxi. In addition to formal religious instruction, care is taken to provide regular opportunities for receiving the sacraments and participating in the liturgy of the church.

**6.7.1 Receiving Sacraments**

As a school community, we celebrate and honor those children who have received any of the Holy Sacraments from their parish. If you wish for your child to receive any of the sacraments, please consult your parish priest for more information.

**Student Services**

**7.1 Cafeteria**

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- SVS serves both breakfast and lunch daily.
- Federal assistance is available for qualifying families regardless of race, sex or national origin. Due to government regulations, all families are asked to please fill out all federal forms, even if you are *not* eligible for assistance.
- As part of federal guidelines, “fast food” items and carbonated beverages may not be brought into the cafeteria at lunch by the student and/or the parent.
- Lunches must be prepaid each month. Preorders are not required for breakfast, although payment should be sent in as needed.
- Each student will have a cafeteria account within Power School. Payments may be paid toward each account and tracked for daily balances.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Price</b>
Breakfast Meal	\$2.00
Entree Meal with milk/juice	\$3.50
Extra milk/juice	\$0.50

Bottled water	\$0.35
Main Item or Sandwich	\$1.50
Chicken Breast/Scoop of Tuna	\$1.25 / each
Salad w/Meat	\$2.75
PB&J/Side Salad	\$1.00
Any Side Item (ex. Fries, veggies, Fruit)	\$0.75 / each

*Prices and availability are subject to change, at which time you will be notified.*

## 7.2 Student Organizations

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To further enrich the academic experience, SVS offers a number of clubs, organizations, service projects and events in which students may participate throughout the year:

Academic	Activities & Events	Religious & Service Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACE – Academic Completion for Excellence</li> <li>• Economic Summit</li> <li>• Financial Fitness</li> <li>• Duke Talent Identification</li> <li>• Math Olympiad</li> <li>• Science Fair</li> <li>• Reading Fair</li> <li>• Spelling Bee</li> <li>• <i>Knightly News</i> Newspaper</li> <li>• Student Council</li> <li>• Summer Reading programs at local public libraries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CALB Art Contest</li> <li>• Music Lessons</li> <li>• Children of the Arts</li> <li>• SVS Tech Run</li> <li>• Gymnastics</li> <li>• Krewe of Wrecks</li> <li>• Field Day</li> <li>• Robotics Club</li> <li>• Basketball</li> <li>• Fall Festival</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easter Basket Drive</li> <li>• Food Drives</li> <li>• Monthly Community Service</li> <li>• Walk for the Poor</li> <li>• St. Jude’s Math-a-thon</li> <li>• Hoops for Hearts</li> <li>• Weekly Liturgy and Class Masses</li> <li>• Altar Servers</li> <li>• Retreats &amp; Prayer Rallies</li> <li>• Feast of Corpus Christi</li> </ul>

## 7.3 Activity Policies

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- Accreditation regulations do not allow SVS to sponsor competitive team sports. However, students may participate in diocesan sports leagues, such as track and basketball, and will only compete against other Catholic school leagues within the Biloxi Diocese.
- As a convenience, various groups use SVS facilities after school hours to hold their activities. Such groups include SVS choir, Brownies, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, gymnastics, basketball and tennis. Outside groups that use school facilities are required to provide their own insurance.

### **7.3.1 Classroom Parties & Invitations**

- Party Policy—any class celebrations, including birthday and holidays, must be approved by the teacher who will designate a date and time for the party so that it does not interfere with regular classroom instruction. If treats are provided, they must be in individual or pre-cut servings.
- Invitation & Card Policy—all party invitations and holiday cards are to be placed in blank envelopes for easy distribution to all students in the class. Teachers will distribute invitations to student parties if *all* students in the class are invited. The only exception to this policy is if the invitation is to all of the girls in the class or to all of the boys in the class.

## **Parental Involvement**

### **8.1 Parent Teacher Organization**

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The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is composed of the parents and guardians of the students at SVS, school staff and interested members of local parishes. The objectives of the organization are to:

- Assist children in developing character and a community lifestyle grounded in Catholic teaching and gospel values.
- Foster the religious, intellectual, physical, cultural, aesthetic and social development of each child.
- Enhance the ability of parents to participate actively and effectively in their child's education.
- Provide support and information to the parents that will assist them in the growth, development and maturation of their children.

The PTO will communicate with parents through the school website, app and weekly newsletter. In support of its objectives and to build community, the PTO will sponsor a number of events throughout the year, including the Back to School Picnic, Fall Festival, Christmas Blessings, Family Nights and Teacher Appreciation Week.

### **8.2 Volunteer Opportunities**

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SVS's goal is for every student to reach his/her potential. Consistent with this philosophy is the concept of volunteer-in-education, whereby parents and other community persons are involved in enriching and supplementing the school curriculum. This approach can increase the teacher's

effectiveness and help provide individual attention to students on occasion. SVS welcomes and relies on volunteers for a variety of services, including:

- Public relations
- Office aids
- Substitute teachers
- Classroom aids
- Lawn care and maintenance
- Room Parents
- Field Trip drivers
- Library aids
- Fundraising
- Cafeteria servers
- Baking (on special occasions)
- Creative assistance
- Professional expertise
- Club sponsor

*Service is a big part of Catholic education. One way to teach service to our children is to lead by example. All families are encouraged to volunteer at least 5 hours per year. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer both at school and from home.*

### **8.3 Fundraising**

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SVS relies on fundraising to help supplement the costs of educating its students. Tuition does not cover the full expenses of the school. Thus, every family is expected to volunteer and/or participate in at least one of the major school fundraisers, which include Boogie on the Beach, Carnival Association of Long Beach and St. Paul Carnival Association. Parents are regularly given information and opportunities relating to these fundraisers throughout the year.

#### **8.3.1 Knights Club**

Knights Club is an annual fundraiser sponsored by SVS that supplements the operational costs of SVS.

- Each student is required to purchase two Knights Club tickets as part of the school's annual registration fee. However, they may opt to sell these tickets to friends, colleagues or family members to redeem the cost.
- Annual membership fee is \$50.00 and entitles each member to participate in weekly drawings for cash prizes.
- Drawings for cash prizes will be made each Monday that school is in session, beginning in August.
- Any ticket received after the first drawing will participate in the remaining drawings.
- On the first two Mondays in December the winner will receive \$250.00. On the third Monday, the winner will receive \$500.00.

- The final drawing will be held the last Monday of the school year.
- Participants need not be present to win.
- Names of the winners will be published in the weekly newsletter, *SVS This Week*.
- All checks to winners will be drafted by a member of the school administration and will be made available the day following the drawing.
- All tickets are eligible for the remaining drawings regardless of whether the ticket has already been drawn as a winning number.

## Campus Safety & Security

Parents, visitors and volunteers are always welcome. However, for security reasons, exterior doors will remain locked throughout the school day.

### 9.1 Visitors Policy

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- Visitors may only enter through the main entrance, where they must first ring the bell and be identified before being admitted.
- Visitors must sign in and obtain a visitor's pass before entering the school hallways. They must leave their keys at the front desk, which will be returned once the visitor returns the pass and signs out. The only exception will be during family luncheons and Prayer & Pledge when visitors must sign in at the front office but exit only from the cafeteria.
- The visitor's pass must be worn at all times while on campus.
- After signing in, the office staff or principal will direct or escort guests to the appropriate place. No parent or visitor should stand in the hallway outside a classroom or office unless receiving approval.
- The Long Beach and Harrison County Police Departments provide regular walk-throughs for additional security.

## **9.2 Emergency Procedures**

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SVS has a crisis management plan in place that defines the actions for quickly ensuring the safety of students in the case of an emergency. Evacuation procedures will be implemented as rapidly and safely as possible. Causes for evacuation include fire, flood, severe weather, threats or intruders. A copy of this plan is available at the school office.

As part of the Safety Preparedness plan:

- Fire drills will be held monthly.
- Tornado drills will be held annually.
- Lockdown drills will be held annually.
- Emergency equipment will be tested regularly throughout the year.

The plan is re-evaluated every year to ensure the most up-to-date safety measures are in place.

## **9.3 Parental/Guardian Custody Adherence Guidelines**

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In order to provide the services rendered by the law, a certified copy of the complete Custody Agreement must be on file in the school office.

## **9.4 Insurance Policy**

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All parents are required to carry the school insurance through Christian Brothers, a plan offered to SVS students through the Diocese of Biloxi and included in tuition. Coverage extends only to school-related activities. A brochure outlining the coverage is distributed at registration.