



JUNIOR HIGH HANDBOOK

2018-19

Parent Communication – Teachers and Administration

Communicating with each other, whether it be our children, our spouse, a good friend, a relative, or a classroom teacher, is very important. How we communicate with them sends a powerful message to that individual. Thus, it is important that all of us communicate in an effective manner. All of us, at one time or another in our lives, have probably said something that we wish we could “take back”, “rephrase”, or handle differently than we did. Unfortunately, human nature being what it is doesn’t always cooperate with what we “wish” we had done. The following are some suggestions I offer you as a means of better communication with the school office, your child’s teacher, or myself.

Office: If you have a question about your tuition payment, medicine, calendar, etc., call the office. Identify yourself; even though we try to recognize all families by sight, over the phone is a little more difficult. Please try to remember that we are always willing to recognize an error on our part and will do our best to correct those errors whenever possible. All that we ask is that you not approach us in anger: with more than two hundred and forty families to keep track of, we do make mistakes.

Classroom teacher: If you have a question about something you do not understand, you would like to just touch base with your child’s teacher, or you have a concern you wish to express concerning your child, the following suggestions may help you with this process.

1. Send a note or an email, through your child, to the classroom teacher asking for an appointment. It is often helpful if you also send a list of days and times that are good for you so that the teacher has those when looking at his/her schedule.
2. It is also possible to call the office and leave this same message. We will get that information to the teacher as soon as possible. Please remember that the teacher is probably in the classroom when you call. Free time is at a premium, but they will get back to you at the first possible moment when they can talk uninterrupted.
3. **Calling the Office:** Please remember that Mrs. Pellegrino is not aware of confidential information concerning your child, thus elaborating with her concerning your child or your problem with a teacher or anyone else is not a good idea. She is often uncomfortable at hearing the information and feels that she should not be privy to these matters.
4. It is important for you to try and remember that “stopping by their classroom” in the morning when school starts, on your lunch hour, or at dismissal, is not a good idea. The teacher is busy with the children and it is not a good time to interrupt. As we all know, when we are caught “off-guard”, we often haven’t had the time to think through our response. It is important that all of us have that opportunity to communicate effectively.

5. Please make sure that you always go to the teacher FIRST! The staff at Saint Joseph is very good at communicating with me about everything about your child, whether it is a concern or just general conversations, about the classroom. Our hope is that we will all make sure that teachers/staff are treated as professionals. If there is a difficulty that can't be resolved with the classroom teacher or the teachers feel I need to be involved, then we will do so.

6. Above all, please be respectful of your child, the teacher, other children, or other parents. DON'T BECOME INVOLVED IN PARKING LOT GOSSIP, OR LISTEN TO WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES. Remember that there is always more than one side to every situation, that often "others" have not given you ALL of the "details". Listening to others' viewpoints, expressing them with others, or approaching staff with this "ammunition" will put everyone on the defensive.

7. Think about having your child involved in conferences when appropriate. Children are open to parents, teachers, and themselves working together as a team.

8. Please do not call teachers at home in the evening unless they have indicated that it would be appropriate. Staff members are here between 7:00 and 7:30 a.m. each day and often can be found at school as late as five o'clock. We will get a message to staff members if you call and they aren't available; your calls will be returned as soon as possible.

Principal: I am always glad to sit down and talk with parents, teachers, and children about anything. All I ask is that you respect my very busy schedule. I am often out in the classrooms, at meetings, or busy with one of those endless reports they give principals. Call, email, or send a note. I will get back to you as soon as possible and at a time when we will not be interrupted. I am asking that the time between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. be one of no interruptions. I will be visiting classrooms, attending our once a week all school Mass, doing Morning Prayer and announcements, etc.

I am here to help all of you in our common goal of providing the best education possible for our children. By following these simple suggestions, I feel that all of us will be taking that "first" step in being effective.

George Azar
Principal

Parent/Student Communication with Teachers

As teachers, we are looking forward to educating each individual student in a manner that best meets his/her needs. In concern for your student, it may be necessary for you to contact one or more of the teachers during the school year. We have provided our email addresses below for less complex concerns and quickest response. Should you need to contact us by phone, please leave a detailed message including a number and time to reach you during the school day as well as a number you may be reached after 3:00 p.m. Please know that we feel your call/requests are important but please consider that we are in the classroom the majority of the day and times to call are spread sporadically throughout the day. We will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for helping us to communicate with you in the best way possible.

Parents are encouraged to go to our websites and access each teacher's individual website as homework and other information is listed for your guidance and for your child. Teacher emails are also listed on the websites.

Name _____

COMMUNICATION FOLDER PROCEDURES

This can be found in front of your child's communication folder.

1. When you see this folder, please review its contents and return the folder with your child immediately.
 - a. Items in the "Return to School" pocket need to be reviewed, instructions followed, and returned to school in that pocket.
 - b. The "Keep at Home" items need to be reviewed and kept at home.

2. If you have concerns about any of the items, please email your child's homeroom teacher at the address below.

Some examples of items that may appear in this folder:

- Permission slips
- Tests (these may need to be signed)
- Quizzes
- Projects
- Communications from the office
- Hot lunch forms



Progress Reports

- Students will be issued two progress reports each trimester unless it is the month we issue report cards, or the month is shortened due to vacations and/or other circumstances.
- Progress reports may also be given on an “as needed” basis.
- Progress reports will be sent home with the students in school envelopes.
- Each packet will have a cover letter attached with a place for a parent signature. This cover letter must be signed and turned in within the next three days.

Revising Assignments

- Individual subject teachers will handle revising assignments on a day-to-day basis based on the assignment and individual student circumstances.

Power School

- Please make sure you are checking Power School for grades – parents and students will be given information on accessing their child’s grades at the beginning of the school year. Power School codes will be given to parents at Parent Night

Special Notes

- Students with an ISP or ICEP will be given considerations per ISP/ICEP.

Saint Joseph Grade School Discipline Policy

Our goal at Saint Joseph Grade School is to provide a Christ-centered environment. The discipline code will maintain a safe environment, which will be conducive for learning, help the students grow in self-discipline, and provide the students with responsibilities as part of their education.

A good school fosters a disciplined student body where individual members enjoy appropriate educational opportunities and experiences. Conscientious teachers supported by administrators, parents, and parish members are essential to good discipline in the school.

By enrolling in Saint Joseph Grade School, students have contracted to know and follow the rules, guidelines, and procedures that are presented in this handbook. In cases of misconduct, the administrator, faculty, and staff members have the right and the responsibility to deal with a situation as it presents itself. Usually a reminder of the rule is all that is necessary. The staff firmly believes in assisting students to develop a personal self-discipline. To further this aim we will apply a uniform and consistent set of behavior expectations in the classroom. These expectations will be reviewed with students by the individual classroom teachers and sent home in written home with your child.

Any student who does not accept or conform to the philosophy of Saint Joseph Grade School may forfeit his/her privilege of attending the school. Offenses committed away from school, which may affect the school's climate, may result in disciplinary action on the part of the school. If a violation of the state's Criminal Code occurs in or on school property, or near a school activity, the administration may turn investigation over to local police authorities.

*** The administration and staff reserve the right to evaluate each situation and choose the appropriate disciplinary action according to the severity of the behavior.**

I. Offenses Which Warrant Immediate Expulsion *

- * Possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs at school or a school related function
- * Arson
- * Accessing inappropriate websites

- * Possession and/or use of weapons or explosives at school or a school related function

II. Offenses Which Warrant Immediate Suspension *

A 1/2-day to a 3-day suspension will be determined by the administration to be served at school or home.

- * Causing false fire alarms
- * Harassment of a student or adult
- * Stealing
- * Vandalism (students will be responsible for restitution)
- * Plagiarism

- * Fighting or causing injury to another by failing to adhere to the school or classroom discipline policy.
- * Cheating

Other offenses will follow our Junior High Responsibility (JHSR) Contract

Saint Joseph Grade School celebrates the fact that God resides in every student and every experience of each day.

For many years as each school year begins, students and teachers in each classroom at SJGS have worked together to establish classroom rules and guidelines.

We have developed an approach to these classroom rules that integrates more explicitly the role our faith plays in growing and living as a classroom community. We worked together with each junior high class to develop responsibilities. Through this discussion and brainstorming we intend to help each member of the Saint Joseph Grade School community remember that all of our choices and our behaviors strengthen or weaken our relationship with God. Recognizing the significance of our relationship with God and the role our choices play in it, we believe that *The JHSR* can inspire each student to respect self, others in the classroom community, and the entire school environment.

Our faith invites us to be rooted in God's love in all that we do. *The JHSR* aspire to reflect this central essence of our Catholic Christian journey as our children grow in their communities of learning and faith.

The JHSR creates a classroom environment that encourages the following:

1. Respect yourself
2. Respect others
3. Respect this environment

Our brainstorming sessions helped to write our contract and to allow students a voice in what they feel their responsibilities are to creating a community of respect.

Saint Joseph Grade School Junior High Student Responsibility

The following are the discipline action steps for The JHSR for this year.

- Step 1
 - Student will receive a verbal warning
- Step 2
 - Student will speak with an administrator and make a phone call home
- Step 3
 - Student will have a parent-teacher meeting
- Step 4
 - Student will have a parent-administrator

Assignment Notebook Key

Common abbreviations for all classes

1. book-bk.
2. notebook-ntbk.
3. workbook-wkbk.
4. worksheet-wkst.
5. page-p.
6. pages-pp.
7. questions or problems-#
8. Internet-Int.

General Strategy: When given an assignment/project/test date, you need to write it on the day it is due and a few days before.

Common Terms for Art

sketchbook-skbk.

Language Arts Terms

1. Literature Book-Lit. Bk.
2. Grammar Book-Gram. Bk.
3. Wordly Wise-WW

Class Abbreviations

1. Language Arts-L.A.
2. Religion-Rel.
3. Social Studies-S.S.
4. Science-Sc.
5. Spanish-Sp.
6. Computers-Comp.

Honor Roll and Grading Scale

All students deserve to be recognized for their academic achievements regardless of their ability. Special efforts are made by all involved in the academic process to recognize successes by students no matter how big or small. Individual classroom teachers have developed their own system for student recognition and make every effort to consider the achievements of all children. Honor Roll status can be achieved by achieving the following:

High Honors

“A” in all core academic subjects. Students may only receive one B in special areas: Music, Computers, Physical Education, and Art.

Honors

Letter grades of “A” and “B” in all graded subjects including Music, Computers, Physical Education, and Art.

Honorable Mention

Grades of “A”, “B”, and “C” in all graded core subject areas resulting in a B average, as well as letter grades of A or B in Music, Computers, Physical Education, and Art.

GRADING SCALE

A+	97-100%	C	73-76%
A	93-96%	C-	70-72%
A-	90-92%	D+	67-69%
B+	87-89%	D	63-66%
B	83-86%	D-	60-62%
B-	80-82%	F	59-50%
C+	77-79%		

ABSENTEE WORK POLICY

Students will be given their homework assignments the day they return from being sick if Internet access is not available. (Student needs to approach the teacher upon returning.) Accessing the teacher's individual website is strongly encouraged.

- Students are responsible for turning in missing assignments after being ill or absent from school due to personal reasons.
- Student work for unexcused absences is due the day following the day missed.
- **Students are responsible for asking individual teachers for any paperwork that is needed in order to complete their assignments.**

1. Students are to be given the same number of days they are absent to complete this work. For example: If a student is absent two days they have two days to complete the assignments. Work handed in after the two days will receive a reduction in points.
2. **Tests:** If a student misses a test while they were absent they must see the individual teacher on the day he/she returns and arrange a date to take the test.
3. If a student returns the day a previously scheduled test is to be given it is the child's responsibility to let the teacher know they do not feel prepared to take the test. They must take the test the following day.

FAQ

Can we call the office and request homework?

- Yes, on the second day a student is absent and any other day after that initial day. (Student is sick numerous days in a row.)

Why can't we call the first day?

- We are asking teachers to list assignments as well as what was discussed on their teacher website. This is done at the end of the school day.
- **For example:** Math/subject – followed by the topic discussed/assignments covered

If we call on the second day for assignments how late can we call?

- Parents calling for homework assignments **must call by 9:00 a.m.** in order to pick up the assignments that day.
- Parents can email the homeroom teacher and/or subject teacher directly if you are unable to call the office and make a request.

Why so early?

- Parent calls need to be called in early in the day in order to give individual teachers time to get the assignments written down and to the office by three o'clock. The time given above coincides with the deadline for homerooms to turn in the names of those students who are absent.

6+1 Traits

Writing Assessment

We have been implementing the 6+1 Traits writing assessment for the past thirteen years, and we continue to be excited about the improvements we have seen in the children's writing. The six traits represent a language that empowers students and teachers to communicate about qualities of writing — ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation. The Traits are an excellent fit with the writing process and are the language of writing workshop. The steps of the writing process are prewriting, writing a rough draft, conferencing, revising, editing, and finally, publishing in some way. The traits fit into every single one of these steps because they influence how students think about writing. The step that is influenced most, however, is revision. Students often do not know where to begin and the traits define the things writers need to attend to as they revise. As they work with the rubric, or scoring guide, they discover it provides a stepladder to success. The rubric is flexible and can be adjusted at each grade level. It can also be used to assess writing in any subject area. Following is a brief overview of the traits of good writing:

IDEAS: A clear point, message, theme or story line, backed by important, carefully chosen details and supportive information.

ORGANIZATION: How a piece of writing is structured and ordered.

VOICE: The fingerprints of the writer on the page — the writer's own special, personal style coming through in the words, combined with concern for the informational needs and interests of the audience.

WORD CHOICE: Language, phrasing, and the knack for choosing the "just right" word to get the message across.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: The rhythm and sound of the writing as it is read aloud.

CONVENTIONS: Editorial correctness and attention to any detail a copy editor would review, including spelling, grammar and usage, capitalization, paragraph indentation, and punctuation.

PRESENTATION: The overall look of the final copy, including neatness and page layout.