

# **St. James Catholic School**



**700 Albert Rains Blvd.  
Gadsden, Alabama 35901**

**Parent/Student Handbook**

# St. James Catholic School



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Gadsden, Alabama 35901**

**Normal Hours: Teachers 7:15 AM - 3:15 PM**

**Principal 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM**

**Telephone: (256) 546-0132**

**Fax (256) 546-0134**

**Saint James Catholic School**

700 Albert Rains Blvd.  
Gadsden, Alabama 35901

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Telephone (256) 546-0132  
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Webpage: [stjamesgadsden.org](http://stjamesgadsden.org)

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Saint James Catholic School. You have chosen to be a part of the heritage of the Catholic educational system in which we become partners with parents in the spiritual and academic development of students.

The faculty and staff are committed to providing this outstanding educational opportunity and working with all to develop their spirituality as taught by the Catholic faith.

We will keep all families in our daily prayers, that all may find their true purpose in the kingdom of God on earth.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Michele Adams

**“Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you.  
Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom.”  
Colossians 3:16**

## **History**

Saint James Church began as a mission in the late nineteenth century. In a *Gadsden Times* article dated June 9, 1876, Will I. Martin wrote, “Mass was said in the home of James Lellande by Father Kerwin, for twenty Catholics of the community.” The church was built in 1885 and was given its first resident pastor on June 1, 1912.

Reverend Oswald P. Stahl in his 1912 report to the Bishop said there were 470 Catholics in the parish. He rented a house for a parochial school the same year and Saint James Catholic School began its mission. The first staff was formed by Benedictine Sisters from Cullman, Alabama.

The first parish owned school building was built adjoining the church in 1913. At this school there were four Benedictine Sisters teaching eighty-eight students. The four Benedictine Sisters taught until 1915 and were replaced by the Sisters of Divine Providence. In 1925 the Missionary Sisters of the Most Holy Trinity taught 32 children. This order of Sisters administered and taught at Saint James Catholic School until 1960. The Irish Sisters of Mercy were the next order at our school along with the first lay teacher.

Saint James Catholic School was relocated to a six acre campus in a parish built school building in 1961. The Irish Sisters of Mercy remained until 1971 when the Daughters of the Holy Spirit from Connecticut took over administration of the school. The first Parish Board of Education was formed in 1972 and is now known as the Parish School Council. In 1975, for the first time, Saint James Catholic School had an all lay staff for administration and teaching. Our school continued with a lay staff until 1981 when the Benedictine Sisters of Cullman, Alabama, sent two sisters to be the principal and secretary.

Saint James Catholic School was moved to its present location in 1985. The Benedictine Sisters continued administering the school, and it became a K-4 through eighth grade school. In 1991 the Benedictine Sisters left. This was the second time in the school’s history there was an entirely lay staff.

The Benedictine Sisters returned with two sisters the next year as principal and religion instructor. Sister Cecilia MacDermott remained principal until 2004. In 2002 a retired Sister of Mercy, Sister Barbara Anne, began working as our librarian. In 2004 there was an entire lay staff again.

In 2011 The Sisters of The Eternal Word came to teach confirmation and communion classes.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Saint James Catholic School states, “**Saint James Catholic School proclaims the faith of Jesus, and promotes social, educational, and spiritual excellence.**” The statement reflects the goals of Saint James Catholic School. It begins with Jesus and ends with the need for spirituality. The social skills and educational opportunities taught at Saint James Catholic School are very important parts of our school, but just as works without faith are dead, education without faith and moral teachings will not better society.

## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

Saint James Catholic School by its total design and operation fosters the integration of religion with the rest of learning and living.

The school recognizes the student as a child of God with unique potential and as a member of a series of ever-enlarging groups, beginning with the family. In cooperation with the family, the school seeks to guide and direct the student in the development of his or her unique potential. A well-balanced academic program is directed toward spiritual, intellectual, emotional, moral, physical, and cultural growth so that the student can make moral judgments and be of service to family, church, community, and nation. This service reflects an awareness of the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the members of a democratic society.

The learning experiences take place within a structured academic program which stimulates creative growth and understanding of unchanging concepts, leading to the development of the skills necessary for living in today’s world. It seeks to instill self-discipline, self-respect, honesty, and respect for the dignity and rights of others.

St. James Catholic School strives to create a Christian, Catholic educational community where human knowledge, enlightened by faith, is shared by all. Within a Christian atmosphere of love, discipline, and guidance, the faculty, the parents, and the students will continue to grow.

## **Accreditation**

Saint James Catholic School is accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

## **POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Every Catholic elementary and secondary school in the school system of the Diocese of Birmingham shall admit students of any sex, race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all rights and privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The schools shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and athletic or other school administered programs.

The priorities in acceptance to Saint James Catholic School:

1. Members of Saint James Parish
2. Members of other Catholic parishes
3. Non-Catholic students

Children entering Pre-K must be three (3) years of age or four (4) years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Prospective students are evaluated on the basis of current standardized test scores and report cards.

Registration requirements include:

- \*Verification of parish membership (Current registered families)
- \*Health Records
- \*Birth Certificate (original)
- \*Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- \*Report Cards
- \*Standardized Test Results
- \*Record of IEP (where applicable)
- \*Social Security Card

Students applying for Admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of their current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. James Catholic School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student is part of the admission process.

Testing in some academic areas may be held for new incoming students in Grades 1-8.

All new students will be given a trial period in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. James Catholic School.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of St. James Catholic School will be accepted on a space available basis.

**Finances**

**Tuition Schedule 2017-2018**

3 Year Old Pre-kindergarten

Tuition rate .....\$3,500.00

4 Year Old Pre-kindergarten

Tuition rate .....\$3,500.00

Kindergarten – Eighth Grade

Tuition rate for all families.....\$4,600

Registration, Books and additional Fees will also be added each year.

**Tuition Payment Options:**

**Payment Options:**

- Pay in full by July 15 (\$200.00 discount)
- Enroll in FACTS Tuition Program. Payments are taken from August to May.
- Please note that you may pay in full for one child and utilize FACTS for another.
- All Application Fees and Registration Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.
- All book, supply, and class fees are due by May 1.
- There will be a \$35 NSF fee for all returned checks made payable to St. James Catholic School.

**FACTS Tuition**

- FACTS brochures and forms may be found in the office and on the school website.

- There is an annual non-refundable \$38 administrative fee for enrollment in the FACTS Tuition program per family. This fee will be added to your tuition collected by FACTS – please do not make this payment to the school.
- Pay tuition over 10 months via personal check, money order, or automatic deduction to FACTS..
- All families not enrolling in the FACTS plan will be expected to make full or half tuition payment to St. James Catholic School in the office no later than July 1

**Withdrawal Policy**

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- Registered students who withdraw before August 27, 2017 are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw between August 27, 2017 and December 17, 2017 are responsible for ½ of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw after December 17, 2017 are responsible for the full tuition amount.
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance.

**PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE at 256- 546-0132.**

SCHOOL YEAR BOOKS/SUPPLIES and EDUCATIONAL FEES  
DUE May 1, of that school year.

Covers registration materials, rental of hard-cover textbooks, consumable workbooks, classroom supplies, assignment books, library fees, art materials, physical education equipment (playground balls, jump ropes, etc. for use by classrooms during PE times), Science lab fees for consumable materials; DOES NOT COVER FIELD TRIPS, BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, ATHLETIC PROGRAMS (basketball, volleyball, soccer, etc.) or other after school activities.

**Application/Registration Fee:** (non-refundable)..... \$125.00

**General Information**

**SCHOOL BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 7:40 AM.**

1. \*\*\*\*\* **Students arriving to school after 7:40 are tardy and must be signed in by a parent in the office. If a child is left without being signed in the parents will be called, and the student will remain in the office until they are properly checked in. Only in unforeseen circumstances should a child be tardy. The front doors will not be opened while we are saying our Morning prayers.**

**Doors will be opened at 7:15 for the arrival of students. All students, upon arriving at school, should report immediately to the cafeteria.**

**Parents are responsible for bringing the child to school at the correct time.** The time before school is not a recess period; therefore, no ball playing, running, or other play is permitted.

**Students may not leave the school grounds.**

**SCHOOL ENDS AT 2:55PM. (Pre-K and Kindergarten at 2:30PM)**

### **AFTER SCHOOL**

Parents are required to pick up students within 15 minutes of dismissal. **No supervision is provided by the teachers after 3:05 PM.** After School Care is available Monday through Friday. The teachers will lock their classrooms after the students are dismissed. Students should take all books, extra clothing, etc., with them when they leave and may not return to the classroom.

Only the After School Care facility will remain open to children after 3:00 PM. **Teachers will escort all children remaining on the premises to After School Care at 3:00. No child may remain on the school premises unless he/she is in After School Care.**

### **AFTER-SCHOOL CARE COSTS**

After School Care begins at 3:00 PM for students in K-4 through eighth grade. K-3 begins at 4:00 p.m. Costs are \$3.00 per hour per child. Any portion of an hour will be charged at the full hour rate of \$3.00. After School Care ends at 6:00 PM. Any child remaining after that time will pay a baby sitting fee of \$10.00 per hour. In the event that After School Care will not be offered on a certain day, parents are notified well in advance.

After School Care is **never offered** when classes are not in session or when classes are dismissed early (e.g., early closing for vacations such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter.)

During After School Care your children are supervised at all times. They are expected to treat the After School Care Supervisor with the same respect due their teachers or their parents.

After-School Care will usually be patterned as follows:

**3:00-3:45 PM Study Time**

*During this time students must do their homework, read, or in the case of little children, participate in some quiet activity.*

**3:45-5:30 PM Activity Time**

*During this time students are encouraged to read, participate in an indoor game of the director's choice, or watch television. In good weather, the director may take the children outside.*

Parents must collect their students from the After School Care room. The students must be signed out in the After School Care area (normally the cafeteria).

Parents - Please enter through the front door.

After School Care parents will be given a separate sheet of policies to read and sign. The after school care director will have emergency information for all students at St. James Catholic School in the event your child should stay at after school care when he/she usually does not.

**SPECIAL REMINDERS TO PARENTS**

Parents are not allowed to stand in the hallways at the end of the school day. Since we have many children going in different directions, they need the space to do so in an orderly manner. Parents may wait in the lobby at the front entrance. Parents are not allowed to walk into their child's classroom at any time during the school day. Please remember the teacher is teaching and all interruptions should be kept to a minimum. **All parents or visitors must report to the office and the office personnel will inform the teacher of their visit.**

Parents wishing an appointment with a teacher may request one in writing. All appointments will be scheduled after 3:10PM. Teachers are professionals and deserve the courtesy of receiving a request for an appointment when parents wish to meet with them. If you have an emergency, please call the office and ask if the teachers might be available to meet with you after 3:10 PM.

Please remember that all parents may send notes to the teachers requesting appointments. Parents should not call teachers at their homes.

If your child has a fever or communicable disease, please observe the following: the child may not return to school until he/she is without a fever for 24 hours. In the case of communicable disease, the child must have a doctor's release note.

*The faculty room is for the teachers and staff use. Parents doing volunteer work at school may also use it. Children are not to be in the faculty room at anytime. This includes after school hours.*

## **DURING SCHOOL**

### **SAFETY**

In order to comply with Safety Regulations, all doors will be locked at 7:40 AM and will remain locked during school hours. This will require that students arriving after 7:40 AM enter through the front entrance on Ewing Avenue. This also will ensure that no unauthorized persons enter the building. All our doors have crash bars; therefore, there will be no problem exiting the building. No student should enter the school building through the front door unless he/she is late.

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire drills are held monthly. Tornado drills are held quarterly. There will be a semi-annual lock down drill.

### **SCHOOL VISITORS**

All visitors (including parents) must report to the School Office upon entering the building. A Visitor's Pass will be issued to each person. This will indicate to teachers and staff members that this person has a legitimate reason to be in the school.

### **Weapons Policy**

All weapons and firearms are banned from school property.

### **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

In the event of inclement weather which causes the Gadsden City Schools to close or delay classes, St. James Catholic School will follow the same procedures.

The Principal will endeavor to announce the closing or delay on various TV or local radio stations. However, PLEASE REALIZE THAT THIS IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE. Follow the announcements for Gadsden City, please.

## **TRAFFIC PATTERNS - ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

**NEVER ENTER THE SCHOOL GROUNDS THROUGH THE EXIT GATE! (South gate)**

### **Do not pass cars in the drop-off/pick-up line.**

*Arrival* - To provide optimum safety for all students, parents who bring children to school **must use the North entrance on Hammond Street to deposit students in all grades.**

Grades Pre-K to 8:

1. Please pull in to the sidewalk at the double glass doors by the Chapel.
2. Do not leave your car unattended or **park** in this area.
3. Permit the child(ren) to exit the car.
4. Continue on to the South exit on Winston Street.

*Dismissal* - Again to provide optimum safety for our children:

1. Follow the same route
2. Collect children in Grades K-3 and K-5 at the same entrance (entrance glass doors), between 2:30 and 2:40 PM.
3. Collect children in Grades 1 through 8 at the Winston street side of the school between 2:55 and 3:10 PM.

### **Please note:**

Pre-K and Kindergarten children with older brothers or sisters will be collected with the older student at his or her dismissal time. Parents with students in Grades 1-8 must not arrive at S.J.C.S. before 2:50 PM.

### **Disclaimer:**

St. James Catholic School or our Insurance provider is not responsible for students deposited at and or collected from any point other than those indicated above.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is very important in order that the students may do their best work; therefore, students should not be absent except in cases of emergency. **A parent must call the office by 10:00AM each day of an absence.** If the

office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted; this policy is for the protection of the student. Following an absence, **a student must present a written excuse to the teacher.** Students not doing so will have unexcused absences. According to State regulations, **excused absences** include:

- (1) Illness
- (2) Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the student if he or she attended school
- (3) Legal quarantine
- (4) Death in the immediate family
- (5) Emergency conditions as determined by the principal

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

All work missed during absences must be made up within the following length of time: 2 days will be permitted per day missed because of illness. Work for students who are absent is to be picked up **after school.** Work missed because of unexcused absences must be complete the day following the return to school.

**STUDENTS WITH UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL NOT RECEIVE FULL CREDIT FOR WORK MISSED, NOR WILL EXCUSED STUDENTS WHO DO NOT MAKE UP THEIR WORK IN THE ALLOTTED TIME.**

### **ABSENCES – Elementary: Kindergarten – Fifth Grade**

The child may not be absent more than 20 times in a school year. Parent notes **must** be sent to school upon the child’s return (Section 305, Title 54, Chapter 11, 1940 Code of Alabama Law, as amended.)

It is the responsibility of the child (in Kindergarten – Grade 5, both child and parent) to obtain all missing work from the teacher. The work must be made up in accordance with the above schedule. A child who misses more than 10 days must bring a doctor’s excuse to the teacher upon his/her return to school after each additional absence. (Section 305, Title 54, Chapter 11, 1940 Code of Alabama Law, as amended) The rule regarding make-up work must also be followed.

### **ABSENCES - Middle School Grades 6 - 8**

A student may not be absent more than 20 days in a given school year. A parent note or a doctor’s excuse must verify the first 5 absences. (Section 305, Title 54, Chapter 11, 1940 Code of Alabama Law, as amended) **The 6th through**

**20th absences must be verified by a doctor's excuse.** Either the parent note or the doctor's excuse **must** be presented on the day of the child's return to school. The rule regarding make-up work must be followed.

Absences are unexcused when a parent's or doctor's note is "not received the day the child returns to school."

Parents, it is most important that you follow these directions. If you do not do so, and your child misses a 21st day, the principal will not be permitted to promote your child. With the proper documentation, however, and providing that the child has met all the requirements for the present grade, there will not be a problem. Students having 20 or more unexcused absences may not be promoted.

## **TARDIES**

Parents/Guardians will be notified by the teacher after the **third tardy** is recorded in a nine week period. Once a child accrues **5 tardies** in a nine week grading period, the parent will be required to attend a conference to discuss strategies to address punctuality in arriving at school. In the event that a child accrues **8 tardies** in a nine week grading period, the issue will be referred to the truancy office and the family will be contacted by this agency.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Doctor's appointments should not be scheduled during school hours, if possible. However, if after-school appointments are not available, every effort should be made to have the child miss a minimum amount of school time.

**When a student is taken out of school, a note must be sent to the teacher giving the reason and times the student will be picked up and returned to school.** Before a student can be taken from the classroom, the parent must go to the office and sign him or her out. When returning to school, the student must be signed in before he or she can return to the classroom.

Any work missed during excused time other than illness must be made up **by the next school day.** The student is responsible for finding out what work is to be made up.

**Three early withdrawals from school are considered a one-half day absence.**

## **TRAVEL**

If a parent takes a child out of school for a number of days, he/she should inform the office and each of the child's teachers at least 7 school days in

advance, thus enabling each teacher to prepare assignments for the child. These requests should be an exception; reading the textbook is no substitute for classroom experience.

## **Academic Information:** **Curriculum**

The Birmingham Diocesan guidelines, which follow the State of Alabama guidelines, are followed for all secular subjects.

Saint James Catholic School offers instruction in the following major subjects:

### **Religion**

The teaching of Catholic doctrine, tradition of the early Church with Bible study, societal issues with an emphasis on a Catholic's responsibility in his/her world, and preparation for the receiving of the Sacraments of Penance and First Eucharist.

Liturgical services are held every Wednesday at 9:30 in our school chapel, and are prepared by a different class each week. Parents are encouraged to attend these services with their child(ren).

Students in Grade 5 and Grade 8 will take the ACRE test.

### **Language Arts**

Language Arts consist of Reading, English, Spelling, Vocabulary, Composition, Library Skills, and Literature. Accelerated Reader tests are used for reading comprehension. Students in Grades 4 and 8 take the Diocesan Writing Assessment Test.

### **Mathematics**

Mathematics consists of Mathematical Skills, Pre-Algebra, Algebra, and Geometry.

Students in Grade 6 take a placement test at the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Students in Grade 8 will be placed in either Algebra and Geometry when transferring to high school based on the teacher recommendation.

### **Physical Fitness**

Physical Fitness will have age appropriate exercises and sports. Emphasis is given to sportsmanship and team endeavors.

### **Social Studies**

Social Studies consists of History, Geography, Civics, Alabama History, Current Events. Each is taught within the context of the Catholic understanding of the need for social justice.

### **Science**

The Science program consists of general science and a hands-on approach to laboratory based experiments.

### **Handwriting**

Zaner-Bloser handwriting is taught in all elementary grades and used for all written assignments.

### **Fine Arts**

Music, Choir, Band, and Art are taught. Appreciation for the Catholic Church's role in the history of the arts is included in Art History.

### **Computer Literacy**

Computer Literacy consists of Keyboarding, Word Processing, Formal Presentations and Graphing, Database, Spreadsheets, Web Design and Upkeep, and technician skills.

### **Grading Scale**

A = 93-100

B = 84 – 92

C = 74 – 83

D = 65 – 73

F = 64 or below

### **Report Cards/Progress Reports**

These are used for communication. They are not meant to take the place of dialogue between parents and teachers. A Parent/Teacher conference is required after the first quarter.

Saint James Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records.

**Please see the calendar for the times when reports will be given.**

## **Testing**

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is given to students in Grade 3 to 8.

## **Student Records**

Requests for student records/transcripts/recommendations must be made in writing and sent or brought to the Saint James Catholic School office. Official records will be sent by U.S. Mail.

**No records will be sent if financial obligation with Saint James Catholic School is in arrears.**

## **Counselor**

We have a certified counselor who visits our school on Thursdays, or as needed. The counselor works with both classes and individuals to fill their needs.

## **Promotion Policy and Retention Policy**

Advancement to the next grade in St. James Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade. If a parent chooses to reject the administration's decisions regarding retention, his or her child will no longer be permitted to remain at the school.

## ***Academic Probation***

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation.

## **Student Academic Guidelines**

### **Study Habits**

Each student is responsible for his or her homework. **Outside activities such as sports, dance, Scouts, etc., do not excuse anyone from homework.**

Most students should not take more than the following amount of time:

20 - 40 minutes..... Primary grades (1-3)

1 hour.....Elementary grades (4-5)  
1 1/2 - 2 hours.....Middle School grades (6-8)

Students have some time to begin homework while at school. If anyone takes an undue amount of time to complete an assignment, perhaps study habits need to be investigated.

Quite frequently, it is found that improper study habits and not lack of intelligence are responsible for the poor quality of work. Here are ten suggestions that might prove helpful:

1. **ALWAYS WRITE DOWN THE LESSON ASSIGNMENT!!!**
2. Have physical conditions conducive to study. Do not try to study with the radio on.
3. Concentrate on the problem at hand. Do it **NOW**. Don't delay. Avoid interruptions.
4. Budget your time. Have a fixed time for study. Don't spend an inordinate amount of time on one subject at the expense of another. Finish the disagreeable task first.
5. Read for comprehension. Look up words not understood. Underline, outline, take notes, and reread.
6. Enlarge your comprehension by restatement and review.
7. Recall from memory, refer to your outline, reproduce, and keep all possible associations in mind.
8. Make all possible applications. We remember what we use. Use 3 x 5 cards for learning vocabulary, formulas, etc.
9. Strive for mastery. Review to achieve accuracy. Secure additional information. Memorize difficult problems. Always outline your thoughts before a written or oral presentation. Discuss your ideas with others. Keep assignments up to date.
10. Test yourself. Don't wait for the teacher to give the examination.

#### **OLDER STUDENTS**

**KEEP TESTS TAKEN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. THESE MAY BE USED TO REVIEW FOR EXAMINATIONS.**

#### **LIBRARY**

The library belongs to the students. It is planned to contribute pleasure as well as instruction. In order for all to get the most use from the library, students

are required to be quiet so they will not disturb others and deprive them of its use. Handle books with great care.

Each class will have a regularly scheduled time to use the library. To use the library at other times, the student must have the permission of the teacher. While using the library, each student should speak in a low voice and be considerate of others who are using the facility.

A fine of \$.10 per day, per book, will be charged for overdue books. The students must pay for any lost book, any book overdue, and library materials which are damaged.

## **REFERENCE BOOKS MUST NOT BE TAKEN FROM THE LIBRARY.**

### **FIELD TRIPS**

1. Field trips are an outgrowth of the regular classroom curriculum and are learning activities. Therefore, all students are expected to go on field trips.
2. Saint James Catholic School reserves the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, consistently inappropriate conduct, or improper dress, or poor academic performance.
3. An official written permission slip, signed by the parent, must be given to the teacher at the indicated time before a student can go on a field trip. Verbal permission **cannot** be accepted
4. A **telephone call** will **not** be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
5. Parents may refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip by returning the proper form. Teachers have the right to assign class work related to the educational opportunities the student will miss.
6. All monies collected for the field trip are **non-refundable**.
7. **Cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips unless specifically directed by the administration.

### **LUNCH PROGRAM**

Saint James Catholic School provides a daily lunch program following the guidelines of the Federal Lunch Program.

#### **Lunchroom Fees**

Lunch \$2.60 Milk \$.50 Adult Lunch \$3.10

Our Cafeteria Program is a Federal Program, and we must follow the guidelines established for the Program. Charges may not be made for more than five (5) days. Payment must then be made for these charged lunches or we may not serve the student. Teachers will notify you of charges when they send home papers each week.

Students may choose to bring their lunch each day. Students must drink milk, unless under a doctor's order. We do not serve juice; therefore, it must be brought from home. **No soft drinks or fast foods** are allowed for lunch.

Students may be put on lunch detention, if they do not display proper manners during lunch.

\*Free and Reduced Lunch Forms should be filled out and presented to the school administration for processing. If you qualify for either of these programs, please do not hesitate to apply. Remember, your tax money is used to help fund both programs. The names of all those who qualify for these programs are held in confidence.

A \$35.00 charge will be applied to any worthless check received.

\*If you intend to eat with your child, please notify the office before 8:00 AM on that day.

## **DRESS CODE**

The proper uniform is to be worn at all times. Students who are not in uniform must have a written excuse from parents. Being out of uniform should be a rare occurrence. After the third time a student has been observed out of uniform, the parent will be required to bring a uniform to school. Teachers will bring the student to the phone to make this request.

Girls may **not** wear make-up; this includes nail polish and artificial nails. Only stud earrings or loops smaller than a dime may be worn. Watches and **small items** of jewelry are acceptable from Grade Three through Grade Eight. Earrings are **not acceptable** jewelry for boys.

Students must be clean and neatly groomed at all times, especially with regard to hair styles. Hair may not be styled with long bangs and/or side sweeps which fall and cover the student's face. Boy's hair may be a reasonable length, but must not touch the collar of the shirt. Parents are responsible for having their child's(ren's) hair cut when the length/style no longer follows school regulations. On the days that Mass will be celebrated, the school uniform should be for the

boys, the button down shirt with tie and the girls must be in a skirt, skort, or jumper with the white blouse with cross tie.

**Extreme hair coloring or bleaching is not permitted.** Sweat bands may not be worn by any student.

Disclaimer: St. James Catholic School is not responsible for jewelry lost by a student.

## OFFICIAL SCHOOL UNIFORM

The following items **must** be ordered from the Uniform Company, or may be purchased from the school if the sizes needed are available:

**BOYS**.....Slacks, Sweaters, Shorts, S.J.C.S. Sweat Shirt, blue or white knit shirt with school crest.

**GIRLS**.....Slacks, Sweaters, Shorts, Jumpers, Skirts, long Skorts, S.J.C.S. Sweatshirt.

Jumpers and white blouses with Peter Pan collars are worn in K5 through Grade 4, and these must be purchased from the Uniform Company, also. Girls in K-5 – Grade 4 may wear knit shirts (see above) with school slacks, long skorts, or shorts only. Skirts, long skorts, or school slacks with white or blue knit shirts (with school crest) are worn in Grades 5-8. All girls may wear the new  $\frac{3}{4}$  sleeve overblouse. The new blouses must be worn underneath jumpers.

**Cargo pants, Duck Heads, etc., are not uniform pants.**

All other items may be purchased locally.

**School uniform shorts** may be worn by all children only during the months of August, September, April, and May, unless otherwise directed by the administration.

**Turtle necks with a uniform sweater may be worn from November through March. Turtle necks may not be worn under blouses/shirts or with skirts/jumpers. Only plain white V-neck tee shirts may be worn under blouses and shirts.**

**All girls** may wear plain white or navy blue tights during the winter months. White school socks may be worn with the tights. They may also wear leggings that go to the ankle.

**Socks** - Plain white or navy blue socks are acceptable uniform socks. All students must wear socks. (Knee socks may be worn by girls) *No frills, ruffles, or sport socks may be worn.*

**Belts** - Navy, brown, or black - No emblems or large buckles.

**Shoes** – Regular brown or black school shoes or tennis shoes may be worn.

**NO HIGH TOP SHOES, BOOTS OF ANY KIND, SANDALS, CLOGS, OR TENNIS SHOES WITH BLINKING LIGHTS, OR TENNIS SHOES WITH WHEELS MAY BE WORN IN ANY GRADE.**

All girls must wear shorts under their skirts or jumpers. These do not have to be uniform shorts; however, no Umbros, jogging, wide-leg or short shorts are permitted.

**SHIRTS MUST BE TUCKED IN, AND BELTS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES. SKIRTS/JUMPERS MAY NOT BE SHORTER THAN ONE INCH ABOVE MID -KNEE.**

School Sweatshirts (St. James Crest) may be worn over shirts or blouses. Sweatshirts may not be worn alone. These may be ordered through the school at designated times. Sweatshirts may be worn from mid-September through mid-April.

**The number of the Dennis Uniform Company is 1-205-822-7025.**

**The website for Dennis Uniforms is [www.dennisuniform.com](http://www.dennisuniform.com)**

**School code is BASJSG**

## **Out-of-Uniform Guidelines**

**Students may wear:**

- jeans
- tennis shoes
- short socks
- shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skorts
- sweatshirts
- jogging suits
- nail polish
- jewelry

- dresses
- slacks
- crocs

**Students may not wear:**

- tank tops
- T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- tennis shoes that convert to roller skates
- biker shorts
- pajama pants
- make-up
- hats

**Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't.**

**ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL.**

## **Medication**

If a child must take any medication in school which is prescribed by a doctor, that medication must be sent to the school office in the container received from the pharmacy and must have on its label the following information:

- a. Child's name
- b. Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
- c. Frequency
- d. Dose
- e. Date

All non-prescription medication (cough drops, lip balm, etc.) should be taken to the school office with the following information:

- a. Child's name
- b. Frequency
- c. Dose
- d. Date

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Parents may provide cupcakes or cake for the enjoyment of their children and the class on each child's birthday. If desired, and with the teacher's permission, some short entertainment may be provided. No gifts are exchanged in school. Invitations may be issued at school only if all the students in the class are being invited to a party. Students may come to school out-of-uniform on their birthday or half-birthday. They may not be out-of-uniform on Mass days.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

### **Rationale:**

The goal of good discipline is that of guiding, directing, and encouraging students to choose what is good, right, and just for themselves and for the good of others. Discipline possesses the attributes of positive self-image and the ability to conduct oneself in a manner keeping with respect and human dignity. Rules and good conduct are in place for leading others to virtue as well as order and harmony in human relations. **The moral obligation of training children to good conduct and discipline rests first with parents.** The responsibility of the school is to give broadening and experience to parent training. The teachers and principal of St. James Catholic School are dedicated to finding the best means of aiding, guiding, and implementing positive self-discipline for children, and in this way helping their parents.

**It is extremely important that a child be thoroughly convinced his/her parents stand behind the school. It is also important that the child understand that parents expect an accounting of what the child does in school.** Without understanding, the child can perceive that home and school are unrelated areas of authority and he/she soon learns to communicate differently at home and school. Parents and teachers can best serve the student they jointly care about by working together, by checking out in a calm manner any misunderstandings that might arise, and by supporting one another in all things. If there is a difference of opinion, the school administration and teachers strongly suggest that it be worked out between the parent and teacher. It is in the student's best interest that we come to some understanding, which will safe-guard the student's respect for parental and school authority.

### **Development of Student Attitude and Conduct:**

The St. James Catholic School Code of Conduct shall include, but not be limited to, the following concepts:

1. Students shall treat each other, school employees, and visitors with concern and respect that is a sign of Gospel Values.
2. When attending a school or social function the students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and Christ like manner.
3. Any disruption of the learning environment is considered an infringement on the rights of others and will be handled according to behavior code of St. James Catholic School.
4. Students shall be concerned about the health of themselves and others while on school grounds.
5. They shall not possess, use, or transmit weapons of any kind.
6. Students shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of an intoxicant of any kind, or any drugs not prescribed for them by a physician.
7. Students shall use material items with care and respect that shows they understand what it means to live in a world in which our resources are limited and need to be shared. Any attempt to damage or steal material goods will be handled according to disciplinary procedures.

### **Courtesy and Discipline:**

True courtesy is born out of Christian charity and is prompted by consideration of others. School authorities have a right to expect wholesome respect from their students. This is shown by students' behavior to one another as well as outward marks of respect such as speaking in a polite manner, holding and opening doors for adults, not walking between adults while they are talking, and general acts of kindness toward adults and other students. **Students are expected to show obedience and respect to all teachers and employees of the school.** Students are expected to show respect to volunteers of St. James Catholic School, thus recognizing that these people are giving of their time and talent on their behalf. **In turn, each student is to be treated by teachers, staff, students, and volunteers with dignity and respect as befits a child of God.**

**Disciplinary sanctions may be used for, but not limited to, the following infractions:**

1. Disrespect and/or disobedience to teachers, staff, or adult volunteers during all school activities.
2. Continual uniform violations.
3. Inappropriate behavior or disrespect at a school Mass.
4. Chewing gum during school or at after school care.
5. Running, screaming, scuffling, or loud raucous behavior in classrooms, hallway, or cafeteria.
6. Fighting of any kind.
7. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, forgery, or plagiarism.
8. Use of profanity or crude language.
9. Obscene conduct, gestures, or speech.
10. Misuse of school property.
11. Rude or inappropriate behavior in the cafeteria.

### **Serious Disciplinary Action:**

Unfortunately, but realistically, there are times when students choose to violate the guidelines of Christian behavior in a serious manner. Due to the fact students are capable of many serious actions that cannot be itemized, St. James Catholic School administration reserves the right to decide about serious disciplinary actions and their subsequent consequences. Just cause for disciplinary action (detention, in school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion), will include, but not be limited to the following serious violations:

1. Serious fighting
2. Repeated academic dishonesty, including cheating, forgery, or plagiarism.
3. Belligerent, disruptive, or incorrigible behavior to teachers, school staff, students or volunteers.
4. Possession of narcotics, drugs, (including counterfeit or look alike drugs) drug paraphernalia, or alcohol in any school function.
5. Smoking or carrying of cigarettes or tobacco products
6. Habitual or willful use of crude or profane language
7. Obscene conduct, sexual acts, or possessions of obscene literature or materials.
8. Theft or stealing of the property of the school, staff, or other students.
9. Deliberate damage to school property, books, furnishings, or equipment. The student will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs or replacement.

10. Possession of knives, firearms, weapons, fireworks, etc., on school property.
11. Leaving school grounds without permission.

All actions taken will be in accordance with the Diocese of Birmingham policies for Catholic Schools.

**In case of a serious infraction, the following actions will be taken:**

The student will be removed from the classroom, or the company of his peers, and sent to the principal's office. The principal will notify the parents and the student may be sent home for the remainder of the school day, until a suitable course of action is decided upon. Depending upon the nature of the serious offense, a meeting with the parents, principal, and pastor of St. James Catholic Church may be called. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the student's behavior and decide on an appropriate course of action. The final decision rests with the pastor and principal.

**Diocesan Catholic School Board / Policy adopted: April 18, 2006**

The good name, reputation, and personal safety of each student, faculty, and staff member as well as the good name of each school in the Diocese of Birmingham as an institution of the Catholic Church, is vitally important. Two specific aspects of this are:

1. Internet activities (such as blogs, chat rooms, etc.) that a student may independently choose to participate in can make the student vulnerable to predators. We strongly advise our students to be very careful about the personal identification information they share via the Internet. We also advise parents to monitor these sites to be sure their child remains safe. Should information come to the school regarding a student sharing personal identification and/or information concerning a student demeaning him/herself, the school will notify the parents, and it will be the parents' responsibility to take action.
2. In order to protect each and every student as well as employees and the institution itself each student enrolled in a Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School is expected to treat the good name and reputation of each of the above with dignity and respect. The same is expected of each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in our schools. Public

defamation of any student, employee, or Catholic school by a student or parent/guardian is serious whether this be done orally, in writing, via email or on the web and whether it is done on a school computer or not and on school time or not. Therefore any student or parent found to be participating in any defamatory activity will be subject to disciplinary/responsive action by the school. This could include dismissal of the student whether the action is by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

Students will receive a further form which will be explained to them in detail by the computer teacher. Both parent and teacher will be required to sign this form in order for them to use the school's computer facilities.

## **School Safety/Harassment or Bullying**

Saint James Catholic School provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (**seriously or in jest or online**) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, MySpace.com®, Xanga®, Friendster®, etc., may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish.

## **PLAYGROUND**

Christian courtesy and fair play are expected on the playground **at all times**. Students who fail in this courtesy will forfeit their right to play. The playground supervisor has the same authority as any teacher and must be obeyed by the students. Those who use play equipment are responsible for making sure it is returned to the proper place. Failure to return material will result in loss of its use. Papa's Playground is for the use of children in Grades K4-2 only.

## **CARE OF BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

Every student should have a deep feeling of interest and pride in taking care of our beautiful building and grounds. Students should be careful that no marks are made on furniture, equipment, or walls. **Book bags with wheels are allowed.** Be sure to clean shoes well before entering the building. Paper and trash on the grounds shows poor citizenship and a lack of respect for our property. Restrooms are for your use and should be kept neat and clean at all times. Confine running and playing to designated areas outside.

## **Detention**

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. Parents are provided with a written notification of the detention. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the Principal who monitors the detention. **Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, ballgames, etc. (Regular after school charges apply)**

## **Suspension**

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and work with a substitute teacher paid for (\$65.00) by the suspended student's parents.

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but failing grades will be recorded for this work.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from Saint James Catholic School.

Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal.

**All students have the right to be heard before serious discipline will be taken.**

## **Child Abuse Laws**

Saint James Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Alabama. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

## **Volunteers/Chaperones**

All individuals who volunteer in the school must complete the Volunteer Sign-Up form and may be asked to complete the Diocesan mandated background check. All volunteers/ chaperones must complete the Youth Protection Classes.

## **Communication**

Folders will be sent home every Wednesday with a principal's note and the students' work for the previous week. There will be a form from the teacher to sign in order to ensure that you have received this folder. This signed form and folder is due back the next day. If the folder is not returned, then papers will not be sent home the next week.

## **TELEPHONE**

The telephone is for the purpose of transacting school business. Students may be permitted to use the telephone **only in case of absolute necessity**. Students will not be permitted to call home to have a parent bring any item that has been forgotten (e.g., homework, band instrument, soccer gear, etc.).

\*\*Neither will they be permitted to call for Permission Slips, etc., unless there are mitigating circumstances. Only in case of emergency, sickness, or equally urgent cause will any student be called to the telephone during the day. Infrequent messages may be left in the office for transmittal to students at some convenient time during the day.

## **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be placed in the Lost and Found box in the cafeteria. **Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items are donated to charity.** **In the case of uniforms they are put in the used uniform store.**

## **CELL PHONES**

2. The policy of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic Schools does not allow students to have cell phones at school or in after-school care. If your child

brings a cell phone into the school, it must be left in the office. The first offense is loss of the phone for a week, and parents must pick it up after that week. Second offense the phone is given to the recycling company.

## **ELECTRIC GAMES/IPODS**

Hand held video games and music players may not be used during the school day. They may be used during after-school care with permission of the after-school supervisor. They may not be used during study hall or study period.

## **FEES**

All fees must be paid by the end of each quarter. Students will receive an “incomplete” until fees are current. Exception to the above may be made only after discussion with the principal. If there is a problem regarding finances, please speak with the principal. Arrangements may be discussed. **No records will be sent to another school until all accounts are paid in full.**

## **Right to Amend**

Saint James Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents in the Wednesday folder.

We have read and understand the regulations printed in the St. James Catholic School Handbook. We recognize the right of the school to establish rules and provide for their enforcement. St. James Catholic School retains the right to amend the Handbook. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made. Parent's signatures indicate that they understand the contract into which they have entered with St. James Catholic School.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature

Grade

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I give permission to Saint James Catholic School for my child's image to be used on the school's website, or in school publications and advertisement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

