



# Parent-Student Handbook

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*"Be Humble, Be Simple, Bring Joy to Others"*

*revised 9/15/17*



Dear Parents/Guardians,

This handbook represents the policies, procedures and regulations of St. Madeleine Sophie School . Saint Madeleine Sophie School wants to help each student and every child understand that they are made special and unique by God. That each member of the school community has been blessed with gifts and talents and skills that make them extraordinary. We want our school community to be a place where every child is challenged and supported in being their best selves. The goal of this handbook is to foster a culture of respect, compassion, acceptance and dignity of each person as a special child of God. The rules and approach to discipline are important to make sure that this culture of mutual respect and compassion is a daily-lived experience at Saint Madeleine Sophie School.

Please carefully read this handbook with your children, since failure to read this handbook does not excuse students and/or parents from the rules, policies and procedures outlined within. All parents and students are expected to follow both the spirit and the letter of the rules and regulations listed herein. Retain this handbook for the entire school year and use it as a reference. Changes to this handbook may be made at any time at the discretion of the school and/or parish administration.

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation and we are looking forward to a successful school year!

Sincerely,  
The Administration, Faculty and Staff of St. Madeleine Sophie School

### **Mission Statement of Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany Catholic Schools**

The schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, guided by the mission of Jesus, are places where students witness, share and grow in the faith community. While offering excellent academic programs, the schools provide for the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each individual within the framework of Catholic Christian values to witness God's unconditional love and bring Christ's healing presence to the world.

### **Mission Statement of St. Madeleine Sophie Church**

To live in Christ Jesus!

St. Madeleine Sophie Parish is a community of faith empowered by the Holy Spirit and committed to share the light of Christ through love of and service to God and neighbor.

### **Mission Statement of St. Madeleine Sophie School**

St. Madeleine Sophie Catholic School is a parish elementary school that provides an environment in which parents and teachers collaborate in giving youth a complete Catholic education. We follow the teachings of Jesus Christ by fulfilling our Christian obligations toward family, church and society. We provide a quality learning community comprised of Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Five students. Our school is rooted in faith. We work to provide academic excellence by recognizing, respecting and nurturing the unique gifts of our students, enabling them to reach their full potential.

### **History**

St. Madeleine Sophie School celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2010. So many years ago Fathers Woods and Walsh and their congregation dreamed of building a parish school – a school which would instill in its students a love of God and a continued desire to do good works in His name. Many people worked very hard to gather the resources to construct and sustain a place where children could walk in God's presence every day. Members of the original building committee worked hard raising funds to build our school. They had faith that their children would live His word and grow not only in their life skills, but in their spiritual beliefs. A plot of dirt was transformed into an extended home – a safe place where children could learn and nurture life-long relationships with teachers, friends, God and their parish community. The cornerstone was laid on October 24, 1959 and school opened the following September.

Today, over 50 years later, our faith still helps us to continue the dream to keep our children safe and provide them with a strong academic foundation while encouraging them to continue to build the same loving relationship with God that thousands of St. Madeleine Sophie School alumni have had the privilege to experience.

## Accreditation

Accredited by the AdvancED North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI).

## Admission

St. Madeleine Sophie School is a parish elementary school of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, New York. Enrollment is open to any child in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Five who desires a strong academic education in a Christian atmosphere. Students are required to meet the academic standards of the school and agree to the disciplinary guidelines set forth by the administration and faculty.

**Important Admissions Disclaimer: All financial aid decisions are determined by St. Madeleine Sophie School.**

## Discrimination Policy

“The schools of the Diocese of Albany base not only their educational purposes, but all their activities on the Christian teaching of the essential equality of all persons as rooted in the fatherhood of God, Christ’s love and supernatural destiny.

Thus, with discrimination so repugnant to their nature and mission, Catholic schools in this Diocese have not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, natural and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies and all school administered programs.”

“Catholic schools in the Diocese of Albany have not and shall not discriminate on the basis of sex in administration of educational policies, admissions policies and all school administered programs.”

## Educational Goals and Objectives

The curriculum of St. Madeleine Sophie School is aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards and the Diocese of Albany Catholic School standards. In order to foster the mission of St. Madeleine Sophie School, the faculty, staff and administration embrace and promote the aims of Catholic education and dedicate our energies and talents to provide the best possible assistance to parents and students in order to:

- Aid students in making their faith by providing religious instructions, liturgical worship and the reception of the Sacraments.
- Make students aware of their personal dignity, worth, gifts and talents as well as those of others.
- Assist students in acquiring the knowledge, skills, habits and attitudes necessary in making sound judgments based on Catholic principles.
- Enable students to think independently and be accountable for their decisions and actions by accepting the wisdom of God's Word as interpreted by His Church.

In order to foster these beliefs, each parent should:

- Attend Mass weekly with their children and receive the sacraments on a regular basis.
- Encourage prayer and witness Catholic values on a daily basis.
- Accept full responsibility of ensuring that their child attends school daily and is on time.
- Teach your child, by word and example, to respect God, people and property at all times.
- Be involved in your child's education through communication with school, knowing and respecting school rules and regulations, supervising homework and assignments and conducting private discussions with school personnel if you are in disagreement with school decisions.

In order to foster these objectives, each student should:

- Report to school promptly for 180 days per academic year.
- Respect God, people and property at all times.
- Develop an awareness of Catholic values and work to acquire the self-discipline and self-control to live them.
- Learn to think independently in order to make sound judgments based on Catholic principles.
- Perceive life as one of personal service to God, Church, family, school and country.

## Academic Curriculum and Programs

Our curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards and the Diocese of Albany Catholic School standards.

### **REPORT OF STUDENT PROGRESS**

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report cards will be given four (4) times during the academic school year. Report Cards differ to best address the abilities of varying ages:

- Three-Year Old Pre-K students receive school-produced progress reports.
- Four- Year Old Pre-Kindergarten students receive report cards with corresponding proficiency indicators aligned to the learning standards adopted by the Diocese of Albany.
- K-2 Report Cards contain standards-based proficiency levels (1,2,3,4) as well as progress indicators (E,S,N, NA)
- 3-5 Report Cards contain quarterly percentage grades in each subject area, as well as progress indicators (E,S,N, NA)

70% is considered passing for Grades 3-5.

Progress reports may be given midway between each grading period.

The dates of report cards will be included in the school calendars. Parents are to sign any Progress Report and Report Card envelopes and return to the student's teacher within one week. If you have questions or concerns after reviewing your child's report of progress, contact the teacher to schedule an appointment. Please note that grades earned by students will remain as given except in the case of a clerical error.

Progress Reports or Report Cards may not be given if tuition, After School Care or other fees are in arrears.

## Parent -Teacher Conferences

Conference days are scheduled twice during the school year. Parents are encouraged to attend conferences to discuss their student's progress. Unless an emergency necessitates a change to your scheduled conference appointment, parents/guardians are encouraged to adhere to the appointment schedule.

Conferences, either in person or by phone, may be scheduled at any other time during the school year. If you would like to meet with a teacher for a conference, please contact the teacher to schedule an appointment. (Please see the section on Student Safety for procedures and policies regarding appointments.)

## Code of Student Conduct

The Code of Student Conduct is the school's policy that creates a safe learning environment to ensure academic success and an atmosphere of Catholic values. If this objective is to be accomplished, it is necessary that the school environment be a safe and supportive community.

To assist students, parents, teachers and administrators in maintaining a safe and supportive environment, the Code of Student Conduct will:

- Emphasize the Values of Saint Madeleine Sophie School
- Describe the rights and responsibilities of all students and parents
- Describe the responsibilities of the teachers and administrators
- Identify prevention strategies
- Identify classifications of incidents and describe corrective strategies for minor behavioral incidents and disciplinary consequences involving suspension or expulsion for severe incidents.
- Set standard procedures for administering disciplinary action

**For Saint Madeleine Sophie School to be a safe, Catholic environment, everyone has a responsibility. Every student, parent, teacher, staff member and administrator has a role. The following are defined responsibilities of each:**

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS**

- Attend school and all classes daily as scheduled
- Follow the Student Code of Conduct
- Be accepting of individual differences between students
- Use respectful language and actions
- Do not be a bystander when bullying or harassment occur. Report any of this behavior to a teacher or administrator immediately
- Respect the rights of other students, staff, school property and the property of others.
- Obey all directions from the adult in charge at lunch or at recess.
- Obey and follow all posted lunch and recess rules.
- Remain seated while eating or drinking.
- Play in the assigned section of the playground.
- Be respectful and courteous at all times.
- Report any safety issues to the adult in charge

Discipline will be utilized based on the frequency and/or severity of student behavior. While the teacher will always use best practices and interventions to steer negative behaviors toward positive behaviors, the principal will intervene to ensure that all students are given an equal opportunity to correct their behavior.

In the event that a parent and child wish to discuss the decision of the principal, they will have the opportunity to meet with the Principal, who will be apprised of all prior disciplinary actions.

As part of the learning process, students may make choices inconsistent with the community values of Saint Madeleine Sophie School. **Inappropriate behavior is seen as an opportunity for growth.** As part of this process, the following actions may be taken depending on the nature of the behavior choice:\*\*\*

- Apology: Written or Verbal
- Daily Check in
- Conference with Parents
- Detention (after school or lunch)
- Mentoring
- Privilege Loss
- Reflective Assignment
- Teaching of Student Expectations
- Written Contract
- Community Service
- Schedule Change
- Suspension (in school and out of school)
- Expulsion

\*\*\* These are a sampling of possible corrective actions. Other actions may be implemented at the discretion of the administration.

Discipline incidents will be classified as Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. When deciding what disciplinary action should be taken, the teacher and Principal will consider the student's age, previous conduct and severity of the incident.

**Tier 1** incidents are incidents that have been previously addressed by the teacher and warrant a discipline referral to the principal.

- Attendance Incidents
- Cheating
- Minor Computer/Technology Misuse
- Inappropriate School Bus Behavior
- Repeated Dress Code Violations
- Failure to Comply with School Rules
- Classroom Disruption
- Cell Phone Violation
- Disobedience

**Tier 2** incidents are more serious than Tier 1 because they significantly interfere with learning and/or well-being of other students and members of the school community.

- Bus Disruption that is a distraction to the driver
- Profane/Obscene Language
- Repetitive Disobedience
- Abuse of School Property/Vandalism
- Petty theft



**Tier 3** incidents significantly interfere with other's safety and learning, damage property and are of a threatening or harmful nature, and warrant immediate administrative interventions.

- Fighting
- Physical and/or verbal aggression
- Possession or use of illegal substances
- False Alarm/911 call
- Possession of or threatening the use of any weapon
- Inappropriate, Lewd or Obscene Act

## **BULLYING**

The act of bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power of imbalance. This behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. This behavior is contrary to the Catholic values that are promoted and practiced at Saint Madeleine Sophie School. Bullying can include, but is not limited to, the following:

Verbal Bullying is saying or writing mean things. This can include:

- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Language denigrating a certain group or culture
- Taunting
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Threatening to cause harm

Social bullying involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. This can include:

- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other students not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying can include:

- Hitting, kicking, pinching
- Spitting
- Tripping/pushing
- Taking or breaking someone's possessions
- Making mean or rude hand gestures

Incidents of Bullying will be addressed in the same manner as the above incidents.

## **Off-Campus Incidents**

As members of the Saint Madeleine Sophie School community, all students are to represent our Catholic values and follow our Student Code of Conduct in and out of school. Any incident that occurs off-campus (i.e., bullying, social media abuse, inappropriate CYO behavior, etc.) that is discovered by the Administration will be subject to interventions. Parents will be notified immediately and interventions may be implemented.

## *Home-School Collaboration Regarding Discipline*

As part of the St. Madeleine Sophie School community – including all students, parents, faculty, staff, volunteers and administration – acknowledge and accept the values and policies of the school and parish that are intended for the good of the entire school community.

Fair and consistent expectations of acceptable behavior in students provide the environment in which to develop a sense of conscience and of appropriate behavior expectations. Keeping this in mind, students may make mistakes, including mistakes in behavior choices, as part of their learning process. For many parents, it may be shocking and unsettling that their child, who may typically make appropriate behavior choices, has made a behavior choice that violates the school's – and hopefully, home's – rules and code of conduct.

As a school community, it is expected that parents work cooperatively and collaboratively as a cohesive team with the educational staff of the school in order to foster the moral development of the students. However, there may be instances in which parents may need additional information regarding a behavior or discipline event or may disagree, in whole or in part, with the disciplinary action taken. If you disagree with a decision, please model self-control by not openly venting your frustration and anger in the presence of the student. In such cases, we encourage you to calmly, respectfully and privately contact the educator issuing the disciplinary action so that active dialogue can take place.

### **Protocol for Addressing Individual Concerns**

If a parent/guardian has a concern at any time, bring this concern to the person in the school who is closest to or responsible for the issue of your concern. By following this protocol, the avenues of communication will be kept open. At St. Madeleine Sophie School, if you have a concern related to a classroom issue, please share your concern with the teacher first. If you then feel that your concern has not been properly addressed to your satisfaction, please contact the principal. If after giving the principal the opportunity to address your concerns you still feel unsatisfied, the next point of contact would be the Pastor.

## Cell Phone/Technology Policy

\*See the Diocesan Technology Policy in the Addendum

Cell phones should not be brought to school. If a student needs a cell phone after school due to walking home from school, entering a house where no one is home, or attending an afterschool activity the cell phone shall remain off and in the student's backpack during the school day. It is not to be used during the school day for any reason.

To clarify, as soon as a student enters our doors, their phone should be turned off and kept in their backpack all day long. Any phones that are out will be taken and kept in the office, only to be returned when a parent or guardian comes to pick it up. Phones are not to be used to call home or text to ask what dismissal plans are, to make play dates or to ask someone to bring a forgotten lunch. All such inquiries should be brought to the office for an adult to make the call home or to supervise the student when they are calling.

In addition we are reiterating the acceptable and responsible usage of technology in our school. Students have been reminded that no social media usage is permitted at school. Technology is only to be used for the intended educational purpose and not for any other reason. Technology usage is a privilege which can and will be rescinded if a child is improperly or maliciously using it.

Our top priority is the safety of all of our students. As your partners in education we hope that we can all agree that with all of the benefits of technology there are many pitfalls and opportunities for misuse. Students are reminded in many ways (during Child Lures lessons, in classroom and in technology classes) about not sharing their own or other's personal information on line, not engage in conversations with strangers, nor using inappropriate language.

## SEARCHES

All property of the school, including but not limited to, students, students' desks, and files on computers or network storage areas, as well as their contents, may be searched and inspected at any time without notice. School personnel have an unrestricted right to search the above, as well as any containers, book bags, back packs, purses or any articles of clothing.

*Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, the administration is authorized to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit, mission and philosophy of St. Madeleine Sophie School even though the act is not specified under the code of conduct and discipline policies and procedures.*

## School Calendar and Schedule

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

St. Madeleine Sophie School will be in session for students for 180 days during an academic year. The Annual Academic Calendar is available online through the school website and will be mailed to each family prior to the opening of school.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

St. Madeleine Sophie School will adhere to the following schedule:

#### **MORNING**

Arrival time for students: NO EARLIER than 7:30 a.m.

First bell rings: 8:00 a.m.

Late bell rings: 8:05 a.m.

Morning Prayer: 8:10 a.m.

#### **LUNCH/RECESS**

Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade: 11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: 12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.

#### **END OF DAY**

Switch classrooms for dismissal: 2:20 p.m.

Dismissal for pick up students: 2:25 p.m.

Dismissal for bus riders: 2:30 p.m.

Students arriving after 8:05 a.m. are considered tardy and must be signed in by an adult (parent/guardian).

Once arriving at school students will sit on the benches in the downstairs lobby until they are called to go to their classrooms. Students in grades 2-5 should not be escorted upstairs by family members.

When driving a student to school, parents must park in a parking space and walk their child in as far as the lobby. **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING OR STANDING IN THE FIRE LANES AT ANY TIME.** Parents should allow their child to enter the classroom on his/her own each morning.

Parents/guardians picking children up at dismissal should wait on the benches in the downstairs front lobby. Dismissal is at 2:25 p.m. for students being picked up. Students not picked up by 2:30 will be sent to the After School Care Program and charged accordingly.

## Parking Lot Safety

To ensure the safety of all of our students, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING OR STANDING IN THE FIRE LANE IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL AT ANY TIME.

All drivers must observe all signage and traffic patterns and traffic laws, including a 5 m.p.h. speed limit on school property.

When you are dropping off or picking up your student, you must park in a parking space and walk your student to and from the school building. Children are not allowed to be dropped off in the fire lane. With the traffic in and out of the parking lot at drop-off and pick-up, it is very dangerous for children to walk unaccompanied.

When the traffic cones are up, you may not drive through or around them. Please follow the traffic circle behind the school and park in the lot on the side of the school where there is plenty of parking for everyone.

For the safety of all, students who have been dismissed and picked up should not be allowed to play on the steps or railings or in front of the school.

## Tuition Policy

The tuition rate at St. Madeleine Sophie School is set yearly. Our school is fortunate to have support and financial assistance from our Parish and our Diocese to assist in making a Catholic education affordable for all. Please contact the school office for the tuition rate for this school year. St. Madeleine Sophie School tuition is collected by FACTS Tuition Management. Tuition is paid directly to FACTS via personal check, money order or automatic deduction

### **Tuition Payment Options:**

- Pay in full by September
- Pay ½ annual tuition by September 1st and the remainder by February 1st
- Begin payments in July and end in April or begin in September and end in June.
- Payments can be made on 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. (Family's choice)

### **Registration/Re-Registration**

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FORMS are available ON-LINE at [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com) or in the school office. Financial assistance is available only for students in K-5.

- There is an annual non-refundable administrative fee for enrollment in the FACTS® program per family. This fee is included in the registration/re-registration fee.
- All Registration Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.
- There will be a \$25 returned check fee for all checks made payable to St. Madeleine Sophie School that do not clear the bank.
- Records of graduates or withdrawing students will not be forwarded until all financial obligations have been satisfied

## **Delinquent Tuition Policy**

In order to provide quality Catholic education to our students at an affordable cost and ensure the financial stability of our school, the timely receipt of tuition is of the utmost importance. For this reason, the following policy will be adhered to for the management of delinquent tuition.

Families with delinquent tuition accounts may be subject to the following:

1. Late fees
2. Withholding of progress reports, report cards and/or transcripts
3. Dismissal of the student(s) from the school

If a tuition account is not rectified within 60 days, a meeting with the parents or guardians will be held to seek a resolution. If there is no resolution, a process for withdrawal and transfer from Saint Madeleine Sophie School will take place.

**PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICE at 355-3080.**

## **Uniforms and Dress Code**

### **Appearance and Uniform Policy**

An important part of the educational atmosphere is the appearance of the students. In most instances, children act the way they dress. To encourage and provide this educational mood and create a learning environment befitting a Catholic school, students are required to wear a uniform and be neat and clean.

Our school uniform encourages students to focus on self-expression through the development of an individual's skills and talents, not on self-expression through material goods. Neatness, cleanliness and appropriateness in dress and appearance are conducive to a Catholic academic atmosphere and will be expected of all St. Madeleine Sophie students at all times. Parents are the primary teachers of their children and are expected to teach their children the importance of personal hygiene and good grooming. Please check your child before he/she leaves for school, as adhering to the dress code is the responsibility of the parents and is a reflection of home training. Repeated non-compliance of dress code offenses could result in the student being asked to leave the school to find an environment better suited to his/her needs or philosophy.

While dressed in the St. Madeleine Sophie School uniform at school and in public places, all students' conduct, actions and language will be consistent with the Catholic philosophy and values of St. Madeleine Sophie School and the St. Madeleine Sophie School Code of Conduct.

Uniforms should be clean and pressed with all buttons attached and hem intact. Shirtheads should be tucked in at all times.

**Outerwear:**

All students will wear outerwear appropriate for the weather. Boots should be worn throughout the winter, when there is snow/slush on the ground. Wet shoes become slippery (and dangerous). Students must change into appropriate shoes upon arrival at school.

During the winter months, girls may wear pants or leggings under their uniform during arrival, recess and dismissal; but they may not be worn all day.

**Hats and Caps:**

Hats, caps or other head dressings may not be worn in school without prior consent from the principal.

**Hair:**

All students should arrive at school with their God-given hair color, neatly combed. Unusual hairstyles, bleaching, dying of hair or heavy use of styling products is not allowed. Fad or extreme styles are not permitted. Hair must be conservative, neat and out of students' eyes. Boy's hair length must be shorter than the collar and shaped around the ears. Boys will be clean-shaven without sideburns. Girl's hair accessories must be simple, tasteful and compliment the school uniform.

**Make-up:**

Students are not permitted to wear make-up of any kind. This includes artificial nails, body glitter, body piercing, and tattoos (real or fake).

No body piercing except pierced ears. Girls may wear **one** pair of age appropriate earrings. For safety purposes, earrings should be stud-style or very small hoops; no dangling earrings. Boys may not wear earrings of any type.

**"FREE DRESS" DAYS**

The principal reserves the right to declare a "FREE DRESS" day for all or part of the school and to determine what may or may not be worn on such day. Notification (either oral or written) will be given at least one day in advance.

On free dress days and at school functions, students' attire will reflect the general guidelines and spirit of the St. Madeleine Sophie School dress code such that common sense, modesty and decency will be followed.

If a student is dressed in a manner not consistent with the guidelines of the free dress day, disciplinary consequences may include those listed in the uniform policy violations below PLUS the student may lose the privilege of participating in all free dress days for the remainder of the school year as determined by the principal.

Free Dress day attire is defined as the following: T-shirts, jeans, athletic slacks, shorts (mid-thigh or longer) or capris when in season, leggings or attire determined by the event. Socks and shoes or sneakers are required. Boots are permitted. Socks on free dress days may be low-cut athletic socks that are free of logos.

Examples of inappropriate dress are: Clothes that are too short, too tight or too baggy. Backless tops, tank tops, halter tops, tops that do not cover midriff or any clothing displaying inappropriate words or pictures.

Students may wear clothing, as a privilege, in accordance with the reason for the FREE DRESS day (Lee Denim, Go Red, Pajama Day, NUT certificate, etc.).

## **APPEARANCE AND UNIFORM POLICY VIOLATIONS**

All students must be in full uniform compliance every day. If there is a time when the uniform cannot for some legitimate reason be worn, a note from the parent/guardian must be written to the principal before (not after) disciplinary consequences are enacted. If a student arrives at school and is not in compliance with the St. Madeleine Sophie School uniform policy, the parent will be called to bring the proper clothing to school. The administration makes the final decision as to what is appropriate or inappropriate, as well as disciplinary action to be taken. The administration reserves the right to rule on all questions relating to the areas of dress and grooming not covered by the code until such time as this code may be amended or revised.

## **Attendance Policies and Procedures**

Regular attendance is compulsory. Parents and students accept full responsibility for regular and timely attendance. Students are expected to report to school on time for 180 days during each academic year. The principal reserves the right to determine if irregular attendance, frequent tardies and/or chronic or habitual absences indicate the need to retain the student or refuse admission to St. Madeleine Sophie School for the following school year.

## **PROCEDURES FOR ABSENCES**

In the event of a student absence, a parent or guardian must call the school office (518-355-3080) by no later than 8:30 am on each day of the absence in order to notify the school. Before 7:00 am, parents/guardians may leave a message on the school voice mail. Do not e-mail or text your child's teacher. When reporting a student absence, please include the following information:

- Date of absence
- Student's full name and grade
- Your name and relationship to the child
- The reason for absence. If the reason is due to illness, please state the illness or symptoms.

In the event that a parent or guardian has not notified the school office on the day of absence by 8:30 am, school personnel will contact parents. This policy is for the protection of St. Madeleine Sophie School students.



## **EXCUSED (LEGAL) ABSENCES**

In order for a student's absence to be considered excused, the parent or guardian must:

- Call the school office by no later than 8:30 am, AND
- Send a written excuse, including the date, reason for absence, and be signed by the parent or guardian no later than the date after the absence.

Acceptable reasons for an excused absence include, but are not limited to: illness, medical appointments, death in the family, family emergency or other reasons approved by the principal. Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to consult with the Principal and present a written reason for the absence. The final determination of whether an absence is legal is at the discretion of the principal.

## **VACATIONS/UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Since prolonged absences interfere with the academic progress of the student, family requests to remove students from school for a prolonged absence due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. Such absences will be recorded as unexcused.

Assignments missed due to family vacations are the responsibility of the student to complete within the time limits assigned by the teacher and are at the discretion of the teacher. Since assignments flow from classroom instruction, assignments cannot be given prior to the student's absence.

Faculty members have no responsibility and will not provide work for students prior to the scheduled prolonged absence. Please do not request work ahead of the vacation.

In the case of regular class assignments, any assignments given prior to a planned absence must be turned in prior to the vacation. It is the student's responsibility to complete make-up work in a timely manner since reminders will not be given. Arrangements for regular classroom tests missed because of a vacation are to be made with the individual teachers.

## **MAKE UP WORK DUE TO STUDENT ABSENCE**

Upon a student's return after an excused absence, the teachers will give the student the assignments to be completed with the due date required. After the second consecutive day of a student's absence, the parent may request make-up work to be sent home with a sibling or classmate, or be picked up by an adult no later than 3:00 pm.

Parents should bear in mind that although written assignments can be completed and teachers are willing to give assistance as needed, the daily classroom interaction between students and teachers cannot be duplicated. Students, with the assistance of their parents, are responsible for completing work missed during any absence from school. Although due dates for make-up work for excused absences are at the discretion of the teacher, one day per absence is typically allocated for the students to complete and turn in all missed assignments. During unexcused absences, students will not receive credit for completing missed assignments and will receive zeroes for all work missed during an unexcused absence.

## **IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AND CHRONIC OR HABITUAL ABSENCES**

Chronic absences are defined as seven or more school days a month, or fifteen or more school days in a school year. Chronic and habitual absences will be investigated by school administration and will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities if warranted. The school administration may require a physician's written excuse after a pattern of repeated absences. The principal reserves the right to determine if chronic or habitual absences indicate the need to retain the student or refuse admittance to St. Madeleine Sophie School for the following school year.

## **TARDY POLICY**

Punctuality is an important aspect of responsibility since tardiness interferes with the student's progress in school and is a distraction to the other students.. Parents are expected to cultivate the habit of punctuality in their children.

Students may enter the building at 7:30 am, and students entering the building after the 8:05 a.m. bell are considered tardy. Please note that students who are late due to bus transportation are not marked tardy. For a student's tardy to be marked excused, the parent must provide an acceptable written reason for the tardiness.

Chronic and habitual unexcused tardiness is considered contrary to the mission and objectives of our school. If a student is repeatedly tardy, consequences include but are not limited to: parent-teacher conference, principal-parent conference, other disciplinary actions (see Code of Conduct), report to the proper legal authorities and/or refusal of admittance for the next school year.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Students needing medical appointments during school hours require a written note by the parent to be sent in the morning of the appointment. The principal must approve all requests for early dismissal. When appointments are necessary, it is suggested that parents/guardians make appointments close to the end of the day.

In order to release a student early, a parent/guardian must come into school to sign out the student. The student will only be released to an authorized parent or legal guardian. No student will be released to another adult, nor will a student leave the school grounds during the school day without written permission of a parent/guardian and the approval of the principal. If the student will return to school following an appointment, a parent or guardian must come into school to sign the student back in.

## **DISMISSAL CHANGES**

Before each student leaves for school in the morning, the student should know what their dismissal plan is at the end of the school day. If an emergency arises during the school day, the parent/guardian must call the school office (355-3080) prior to 2:00 p.m. to notify the school of the change.

Unless the school is otherwise notified, students will be sent home via their assigned afternoon plan. In order for a student's means of transportation to change in the afternoon (except for emergencies), a parent/guardian must send in a signed, written note explaining the change (bus, pickup, after school care), including the name of the adult picking up the student and a contact phone number for that adult.

A student residing in one school district may not be transported to an address in another school district.

## Bus Transportation

Bus transportation to and from St. Madeleine Sophie School for Kindergarten through Grade Five may be provided by the student's home school district. All transportation request forms must be submitted by April 1 for the upcoming school year.

Bus schedules and regulations are set by each individual school district. If you have any questions regarding your child's transportation, please contact your local school district's transportation department.

Students are expected to follow all bus rules, regulations and procedures as well as follow the St. Madeleine Sophie School Code of Conduct. In the event of a bus violation, a bus driver may submit a referral to the principal who may require that a parent sign the referral and return it to the principal the following school day. In addition to this referral, consequences for a bus violation may include, but are not limited to, any disciplinary actions listed in the St. Madeleine Sophie School Code of Conduct or loss of bus privileges.

## Textbooks

Textbooks for all students are provided through Capital Region BOCES or your local school district. Students are expected to cover their books and keep them in good condition. Damaged or lost textbooks are the financial responsibility of the student. There is an additional textbook fee for those necessary texts and materials not loaned from BOCES (i.e., Religion texts, homework planners, etc.)

## After School Care Program

The After School Program at St. Madeleine Sophie School offers an "unstructured," supervised playtime for students attending St. Madeleine Sophie School and Guilderland elementary schools.

St. Madeleine Sophie students go to After Care upon their dismissal at 2:30 p.m. or following an extracurricular activity, if necessary. The After School program is open Monday through Friday, until 5:30 p.m. Parents will be notified well in advance of any dates when after school care will not be provided.

"Unstructured" playtime includes:

Outdoors: You will find us on the playground behind the school where we can enjoy the following activities: basketball, touch football, hula hoops, sidewalk chalk, playground games, etc.  
**(If the traffic cones are up, we are outside.)**

Indoors: Throughout the winter months and during inclement weather, you will find us in the Parish Center, where we can enjoy the following activities: basketball, Legos, board games, puzzles, coloring/crafting, etc.

Children attending after school care should bring a snack and beverage every day. On especially warm days, more than one beverage or a refillable water bottle is recommended. Children should always have a sweater or lightweight jacket, in case the weather cools off when we are outdoors.

The fee for the After School Program is \$6.00/hour.\*. You will be billed for the time your child is in attendance.

It is very important that we have current contact information (**Address and telephone numbers**) at all times. If any of these numbers change throughout the course of the school year, please give us that information promptly.

If, at any time, you have any questions, please call the school office at 355-3080.  
\*All prices are subject to change

## *Student Health*

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The St. Madeleine Sophie School Health Office is staffed by a nurse (RN) five days a week. St. Madeleine Sophie School's Health Services are staffed partially by the Guilderland Central School District and partially by St. Madeleine Sophie School.

### **STUDENT ILLNESS**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student's parents or the emergency contact person will be called. It is important that the student be picked up as soon as possible. The parent/guardian or authorized emergency contact person must report to the school office to sign-out the student.

Parents are to report all communicable diseases (including but not limited to streptococcal infection, chicken pox, influenza) to the school office. In the case of communicable diseases and contagious diseases, consult with your child's physician when it is permissible for the child to return to school. Should your child develop streptococcal infection (strep), the student should remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours after treatment has begun and free of all symptoms. Students who are ill should not be in school. If they are not well enough to participate in outdoor recess or regular class activities, they should remain at home until they are well enough to do so. In the case of accident or illness, it is extremely important that the school has each student's emergency contacts current and accurate. In addition, it is important that you keep your child's medical history up-to-date.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Record of each student's immunization dates is kept on the school health record. The school nurse will notify parents when a child is lacking any immunizations required for school attendance by New York State Law. If your child receives any immunizations from a health care provider, please send this information to the school nurse so that the immunization is recorded on the student's health record.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DISPENSING MEDICATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Parents or guardians are responsible for administering medication to their children during all hours of the day. The administration of any medication, including prescription and over-the-counter (over-the-counter medications include but are not limited to aspirin, Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, cough syrup, cough drops, ointments, etc.), by school personnel without the written order of the student's physician and the written permission of the parent or guardian could be interpreted as practicing medicine and is prohibited by law. Therefore, students should not carry with them or take medication of any type during the school day.

Since most medications (including antibiotics) can be arranged around the school schedule, discuss this with your child's physician at the time he or she is prescribing the medication.

In the case of chronic medical conditions (including but not limited to allergies, asthma, diabetes, ADHD, ADD, OCD, GAD), it is the duty of the parents to inform the school nurse who should explore with the parents the possibility of varying the time so that it is not necessary to give medication during school hours. If this cannot be arranged, the following requirements must be met:

### **A. Written Authorization**

Both a Physician's Authorization and a Parent or Guardian Authorization is required for each and every medication. Forms are available in the school office. Please note that a new written authorization is required for each medication and/or if there is any change in medication.

### **B. Physician's Authorization including the following information:**

1. Student's full name and date of birth
2. Name and dose of medication
3. Time of school day medication is to be administered
4. Duration of medication (beginning and ending)
5. Possible reaction that should be reported to physician
6. Special instructions (i.e., storage and sterile technique requirements)
7. Physician's name, address, phone number and date of request
8. Physician's signature

### **C. Parent/Guardian Authorization The required form must be completed fully. Parents agree to notify the school in writing if they change physicians.**

### **D. Labeling of Medication by Pharmacist/Physician with:**

1. Student's name
2. Medication Name
3. Dosage
4. Frequency and route of administration
5. Date dispensed

**E. The parent or guardian is responsible for ensuring that the medication and the signed permission forms arrive safely to the school office. Do not send form or medication into school with the student. In addition, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to pick-up all medication at the end of the school year.**

**F. New request forms must be submitted each school year and as necessary for changes in each medication order.**

## *Student Safety*

It is the responsibility of the entire school community to ensure the safety of all students.

- All visitors and volunteers must follow the Visitor Policy and School Appointment Policy during school operations hours.
- All school volunteers must be in compliance with the VIRTUS guidelines set forth by the Diocese of Albany which includes VIRTUS training, a criminal background check and a signed Code of Conduct.
- Parents should have periodic talks about the hazards of talking to strangers.
- Parents should follow all procedures for arrival and dismissal

## *School Visitors*

For the safety of students, faculty and staff, all visitors and volunteers (including parents and former St. Madeleine Sophie School students) who are on the school grounds for any reason must report to the school office during hours of school operation. The procedures for all school visitors and volunteers are as follows:

All visitors must enter the school grounds through the designated doors during school operation hours (7:30 am until 3:30pm).

All visitors must sign-in at the office and must visibly wear a St. Madeleine Sophie Visitor's Badge while on school grounds. If you are not wearing a Visitor's Badge, you will be asked to return to the school office.

In addition, a member of the St. Madeleine Sophie School faculty, staff or administration must have notified the school office of each visitor prior to allowing the visitor to enter school grounds.

All visitors must sign-out at the school office and return the Visitor's Badge upon leaving the school building.

## Parent Volunteers

Parent involvement is welcome at St. Madeleine Sophie School and what a joy and pleasure to see parents and guardians engaged with their children in our school family. As the year progresses, there will be plenty of opportunity for parents to be a help to our faculty and for you to enjoy spending time with your child at school functions. There will be some activities that will be open to all parents such as field trips, classroom events, etc. Other functions will have limited volunteers based on need, space or type of activity. Details will be given prior to each activity.

- When in doubt about policies, procedures, or regulations, contact the school office (518-355-3080). The school office staff will either answer your question or direct your question to the most appropriate member of our staff.
- When you have questions regarding classroom procedures, policies, regulations or your child's academic progress, contact the classroom teacher by either: (1) a written note to the classroom teacher, (2) an email to the classroom teacher, or (3) a phone call to the school office who will give the classroom teacher the message to return your call at their earliest opportunity.
- If you have a question regarding a disciplinary action, contact the issuing teacher via written note, email, or phone message.
- If you need to meet with a teacher, please contact the teacher in order to schedule an appointment for a conference.
- If you have a question or concern regarding school policy or procedures, please contact your child's classroom teacher first. If you still need additional information, contact the school office in order to schedule an appointment with the principal.
- St. Madeleine Sophie faculty, staff, and administration must not be called at home and their phone numbers will not be released. Please respect their right to their private life.

For safety and security reasons, please do not go directly to the teacher's classroom at arrival, dismissal, during lunch, or at any other time.

## **OTHER PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION**

### **HOT LUNCH PROGRAM**

St. Madeleine Sophie School contracts with the Guilderland Central School District to provide a hot lunch program to our students. Families may purchase either a hot lunch or milk for their children. Menus and details for ordering will be sent home each month through backpack mail.

### **MONEY COLLECTION AND SALES**

Money collections of any type may not be collected without the expressed written permission of the principal. Selling anything at school or on school grounds must have the principal's approval.

### **BIRTHDAY TREATS**

Parents may send in a treat in order to celebrate a child's birthday. We do encourage a healthy treat. Due to health considerations, please check with the child's teacher prior to sending in any birthday treat. In addition, please send in enough treats for every student. No gum or lollipops should be sent in due to safety considerations; also, please respect and follow guidelines a teacher may send home regarding food allergies in the classroom. In order to promote fairness, students may not distribute party invitations at school. In addition, sending in a special gift for one child on a school day is discouraged.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS/LOCKDOWNS**

St. Madeleine Sophie school conducts Fire, Lockdown and other Emergency drills throughout the year. Drills are part of our effort to plan for and ensure that staff members are trained in how to act during a potential emergency and to give students practice opportunities. As always, our goal is to make sure that students and staff are as safe as possible at all times, and drills are an important way for us to practice and improve our protocols and procedures. Please speak to your children about the importance of being prepared for such events at school, just like the plans and protocols you have at home to keep your family safe.



## **CUSTODY MATTERS**

St. Madeleine Sophie School is finding an increasing number of families experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships. In addition, laws governing divorce settlements and custody have been recently changed. For this reason, we find it necessary to clarify and re-state the usual procedures followed by the administration and faculty in dealing with parents in such situations.

In two-parent families, it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. St. Madeleine Sophie School personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc. with the child. It is assumed that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes but is not limited to conference appointments, report cards, progress reports, discussions with school personnel and tuition statements.

In families experiencing the separation of parents, or pending divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child to whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared by the parents and between the parents. Since this situation frequently impacts on a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform both the principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. St. Madeleine Sophie School personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors or demands of a parent, but only with proper documentation.

## **School Spirit**

School Spirit is an important and influential factor in the life of the school. School spirit calls for loyalty to the school in all that it undertakes, cooperation in making these undertakings successful and a sense of responsibility for making the experiences gained in school worthwhile and happy. School spirit permeates the school, whether it is wearing our school uniform or spirit wear, participating enthusiastically and prayerfully in a school Mass or cheering at an assembly. School spirit calls for respect for the school traditions, respect for school property and good sportsmanship in school and out in the greater community.

# Addendum A

## **WARM WEATHER DRESS UNIFORM (Boys & Girls):**

Gray Twill Walking Shorts

Red or White Polo Shirt w/SMS logo

Sneakers

Socks - Solid Colors ONLY (Knee socks or ankle socks are all fine) - NO low-cut athletic socks with dress uniform

NO "mismatched," novelty or patterned socks

The warm weather uniform may be worn beginning the first day of school. As the weather gets cooler, a note will be sent home when it is time to change to the full-dress uniform. When warmer weather returns in the spring, a note will also go home allowing the wearing of the warm weather uniform once again.

## **GRAY TWILL SLACKS (Boys & Girls)**

Red or White Polo Shirt w/SMS logo

SHOES – NO SNEAKERS when wearing Slacks

Socks - Solid Colors ONLY (Knee socks or ankle socks) - NO low-cut athletic socks with dress uniform

NO "mismatched," novelty or patterned socks

## **FULL-DRESS UNIFORM:**

### **BOYS (All Grades):**

Gray Twill Slacks

White Dress Shirt (Tucked in at all times)

Red Plaid Tie

Belt, socks and SHOES\*

### **NO SNEAKERS WITH DRESS UNIFORM**

Black, brown, white or dark blue socks - NO low-cut athletic socks with dress uniform NO "mismatched" or novelty patterned socks

Optional: Red or Green Sweater (Cardigan or Pullover) or Sweater Vest w/logo

### **GIRLS (Gr. K-3):**

Jumper

Peter Pan Collar Blouse (round collar) (Tucked in)

Red plaid cross-over tie

Tights, knee socks or ankle socks (red, white or green) - NO low-cut athletic socks with dress uniform – Solid Colors Only NO "mismatched," novelty or patterned socks

Optional: Red or Green Cardigan w/logo

**GIRLS (Gr. 4-5):**

Skirt

Oxford Collar Blouse (pointed collar) (Tucked in)

Red or Green Sweater, Vest or Red Weskit w/logo

(For modesty's sake, Sweater, Vest or Weskit must be kept on at all times)

Tights, knee socks or ankle socks (red, white or green) - NO low-cut athletic socks with dress uniform - Solid Colors Only

NO "mismatched," novelty or patterned socks

**DRESS UNIFORM OPTION for GIRLS:**

Girls in grades K-5 have the option of wearing gray uniform slacks with a white blouse (grade appropriate) and a sweater or vest. The sweater, vest or weskit must remain on at all times. Girls in grades K-3 must wear the crossover tie as well. SHOES must be worn when wearing the gray uniform slacks.

All sweaters and hoodies worn during the school day must be approved St. Madeleine Sophie School sweater or spirit wear products, bearing the SMS logo. No other sweaters or hoodies are allowed. Sweatshirts should only be worn with the gym uniform.

\*ACCEPTABLE SHOES for GIRLS: Shoes must be Black, Blue, Brown, Gray or Saddle Shoes : Mary Janes, Laces, buckles, penny loafers, Velcro closures  
NO HEELS, FLIP-FLOPS OR SANDALS NO SNEAKERS WITH DRESS UNIFORM

\*ACCEPTABLE SHOES for BOYS: Shoes must be Black, Blue, Brown or Gray  
Dress shoes with tie laces, penny loafers, Velcro closures  
NO SNEAKERS WITH DRESS UNIFORM

**GYM UNIFORM:**

All Grades (Boys and Girls)

Green or Gray T-Shirt w/SMS logo

Green or Gray Sweatshirt w/SMS logo

Green Sweat shorts w/SMS logo

Green Sweatpants w/SMS logo

Sneakers and SOCKS (Low-cut athletic socks are acceptable for gym class)

The gym uniform is worn ALL DAY on gym days. The "Dress Uniform" is worn on non-gym days. The "warm weather dress uniform" is an option during stated months. Polo shirts are not to be worn as part of the "dress uniform". Students may choose to wear the full-dress uniform during any season.

PLEASE CONTACT:  
Flynn O'Hara Uniforms, Inc.  
10905 Dutton Road  
Philadelphia, PA 19154  
[www.flynnohara.com](http://www.flynnohara.com)  
(800)-441-4122

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

# Addendum B

## Diocesan Policy on Standardized Testing

It is clear to all at St. Madeleine Sophie School that the reason for education is to address the whole child. We in Catholic education are able to do so with a great 'fullness.' We not only focus on the academic, physical and social-emotional development of the student, but the spiritual development as well. To be a Catholic school, we must be truly Catholic and academically excellent. To be an academically excellent Catholic school, we must build a unique curriculum, delivered by quality instruction, and assess knowledge of students' learning. It is in this cycle that we continue to evolve as we continuously improve as educators and as a school.

The Diocese of Albany's Catholic Schools have taken a detailed look at our participation in the New York State Testing Program. The usefulness of testing data, the appropriateness of the exams' timing, and the dependence on a state-driven assessment for student performance were examined with our focus on what is best in providing a quality Catholic education for our children and young people.

While we recognize the value in continued participation in the State's standards-based assessment, all Diocese of Albany Catholic Schools will strategically scale back from our current model of state testing for all students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The Diocese of Albany Catholic Schools will only administer the state tests to students in grades 3, 5, and 7. The rationale for continuing these grades is three-fold:

- (1) It enhances our intended use of the New York State Testing Program as a program assessment. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade assessment should now be viewed as a Kindergarten to Grade 3 assessment of our school's program, *not* our students. Likewise, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade assessment should now be viewed as a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade assessment and the 7<sup>th</sup> grade assessment should now be viewed as a 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade assessment.
- (2) Our school's participation in New York State Assessments has never been used for the evaluation of our teachers. By stepping away from a year-by-year state test, we remove the misperception that our school is using the data in the same way as public schools.
- (3) Catholic schools in our Diocese have different structures. Elementary schools are PreK to 5, PreK to 6, and PreK to 8. Due to our varied organizational structures, testing at these three grade levels provides important programmatic data for our elementary schools at a minimum of two-grade levels.

Instead, Diocese of Albany Catholic Schools will administer the Iowa Assessments to all students in Grades 3 through 8. This national assessment will provide valuable information on student performance for teachers to use during the current school year with their current students. It includes an item analysis and class and school reports which will assist in differentiating instruction for the students and provide the programmatic data needed by our school for continuous improvement. The assessment includes subtests within English-Language Arts and Mathematics.



# St. Madeleine Sophie School Student Code of Conduct

## Be Polite and Kind to others

We greet visitors to our room with Good Morning or Good Afternoon. We answer someone when they speak to us and look them in the eye.

## Be Reverent and Prayerful during liturgy and Prayer times.

We pay attention to Father Jim, Mrs. Sloan, our teachers and other adults who are leading us. We participate in the celebration.

## Be a Rule Follower

We follow the rules and make good choices.

## Be a Role Model

Just as we have role models to look to for inspiration we should be good examples to others.

## Be on Time

We can only learn when we are here and prepared to learn.

## Be a Hard Worker

We all should always do our very best, and not waste the gifts and talents God has given us.

## Be Respectful of Others and their Property

We follow the Golden Rule, treating others the way we would like to be treated

