

2019-2020

St. Dennis School



Parent Handbook

MISSION

The Mission of St. Dennis School is to provide the highest quality religious and academic education that will prepare students to work, to live, and to serve others in Christ. Our goal as educators is to guide our youth toward Sainthood.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Dennis Catholic School is a faith community united in the common purpose of nourishing the whole person. As children of God, we are uniquely special, valued, loved and receptive of care. Each of us has the right to develop a positive self-image and a sense of responsibility for respecting the rights of others. Our process of instruction uses a variety of teaching methods suited to individual learning styles and abilities.

EDUCATION

St. Dennis School welcomes children from 4 years old through 8th grade. Our school currently educates near 280 students

GOALS

St. Dennis School strives to:

1. To offer a high-quality Catholic education.
2. To create a Christian atmosphere where students develop a love of learning, the power to think constructively and independently.
3. To create a Christian atmosphere where all needs of the students are met.
4. To create an environment where students are physically, mentally, and emotionally safe.
5. To create an environment that teaches respect and responsibility
6. To create an environment where students are challenged to be better

SCHOOL HOURS

Four-Year-Old Kindergarten AM 8:10 – 11:15
PM 12:30 – 2:20 (Mondays)
12:30 – 3:15 (Tues-Fri)

Grades 5K-8 8:10 – 2:20 (Mondays)
8:10 – 3:15 (Tues-Fri)

Lunch/Recess

Gr. 4K-3 11:30 - 12:25

Gr. 4 - 5 11:50 – 12:35

Recess/Lunch

Gr. 5-8 12:00 – 12:35

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION/CURRICULUM

The Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Association accredit St. Dennis School. Annual reports on “The School Improvement Plan” are submitted to this association in order to meet Association Standards. St. Dennis curriculum is a standards based curriculum using the ten Diocesan Standards aligned with the Wisconsin State Standards. A copy of these may be seen on the Diocesan website as well as available on request to the school office.

PARENTAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Guardians are informed of the programs, regulations, and policies of the school. In assisting your child, we require the following:

1. Inform the school by phone (246-5121) by 9:00 a.m. if your child will be absent with the reason.
Inform the school in writing of:
 - a. Student illness or absence (Required by Section 118.16 of WI Statutes)
 - b. Parental status and custodial restraints
 - c. Change in transportation routine
 - d. Change in address, phone, emergency contact, etc.
 - e. Arrangement that might affect communication with school
2. Meet financial obligation tuition, fees, lunch accounts, or other fees that apply
3. Meet admissions regulations
4. Comply with:
 - a. Policies and regulations
 - b. Goals and objectives of St. Dennis School as outlined in this handbook
5. No student may leave the premises of school at any time for any purpose without written request from a parent/guardian and approved by the principal
6. Parent/Guardian must sign child out and back in at the office if the child is leaving school during school hours. Sign out book is in the school office.

7. All parents/guardians must sign in as a visitor in the school office upon entering the school at any time during school hours.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

The school's office hours are 8:00 am – 3:30 pm

After hours the answering machine is available for any messages.

Someone will contact you as soon as possible.

WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSING

School closing will be announced via the TV/Radio/Website. TV will be posted on channel 3, 15, and 27. No announcement means it is regular school as usual. In the case of an emergency cancellation an attempt will be made to contact all families through classroom calling tree. Of course it is impossible to guarantee 100% notification during an emergency.

ATTENDANCE

It is the policy of St. Dennis School that all work missed by students who were absent must be made up as soon as possible after returning to school. State law allows a child to have 80 hours of parent excused absence. Beyond those 80 hours, all absences will be considered unexcused unless excused by a doctor.

When absence is necessary these steps are to be followed.

1. Parent/Guardian will call the school each morning of a student's absence by 9:00 a.m.
2. Parent/Guardian will write an excuse giving name, date, days of absence, and reason for absence, which student will present to the office on return to school.
3. Students will make immediate plans to do all make-up work due to absence upon return to school.
4. All homework should be requested in the morning before class begins.
5. If absence is due to work, travel, or some other reason, parent/guardian should notify the school prior to the absence.

Wisconsin Truancy Law states "*Truancy means any absence of one or more days from school during which the principal or teacher has not been notified in writing of the legal cause of such an absence by the parent or guardian of the absent pupil...*"

Any student absent from school is ineligible to participate in any school related activity (sports, play, variety show, etc.) that night.

Tardiness

A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives after the 8:25 bell. Students arriving late must report to the school office. When buses arrive late, children will not be marked tardy.

Illness During the School Day

The principal or the school secretary under the direction of the principal dismisses or approves the dismissal of a student who becomes ill or hurt during the school day. St. Dennis does not have a school nurse. Parent/guardians are notified when the illness is reported. It is responsibility of the parent/guardian to make arrangements for the student to be picked up in the school office. Students must be signed out at the school office.

CONTROLLED ACCESS MONITORING SYSTEM

For safety purposes, all school doors will be locked during school hours. Parents may apply for a key card that gives access to the front door during school hours. All parents must sign in at the school office. Extended day parents must pick up their children at Mr. Dave's room door.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

A.M.

Buses arrive between 8:10-8:20

All students must enter through the north doors until 8:30. No student will be allowed to enter through the office doors unless accompanied by a parent or after 8:30.

Students arriving by car must be dropped off at the north end of the front circle. Parents are asked to enter the front circle drive and follow the car line to the end near the north door. Students are asked to exit the car on the passenger side only. Please stay in line until the end even if your child exits before the end to avoid safety issues.

First bell rings at 8:10 for the students to enter the school

Second bell rings at 8:20. All students are expected to be in their seats at this time.

Due to the drop off line before school and the bus pick up after school, there will be no parking at all in the front circle between the hours of 8-9 and 1-3:30 on school days.

P.M.

At the 3:15 bell all students will be released to get ready to go home. Students will then proceed either to the car line, bus pick up, or front pick-up when 3:15 bell rings. If you choose to park across the street and wait for your child, please have your child cross at the designated crosswalk. We continue to work with the Madison Police Department and our Safety Patrol to make this as safe as possible.

VISITORS

Visitors are always welcome at St. Dennis School; however, doors are locked during the school hours. Please use the doorbell at the front entrance to enter the school. All visitors must sign in at the office, no exceptions. A visitor includes; salesperson, **parent**, guardian, mail man, relative, etc...

MONEY

When money is sent to the school, it should be placed in an envelope and labeled with the child's name on it and the purpose of the money. Tuition payment must include the invoice number. Lunch money should always be paid in a separate envelope due to the separate accounting system.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost items will be kept in the cupboard near the Kindergarten room. Please check this frequently as we will be donating unwanted items to charity and the end of each semester.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Parents/Guardians will provide school supplies for their child(ren). A list of needed supplies will be provided each year.

EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION

Eighth grade graduation is a culmination of the strong academic program offered here at St. Dennis School. Students are eligible for graduation if:

1. They have passing grades for two or more quarters in each core subject.
2. All tuition fees must be fully paid. Report cards and diplomas will not be issued until all accounts are paid in full. At the discretion of the principal, students with outstanding tuition may be prohibited from participating in the graduation ceremony as well. Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible if their child is in danger of not graduating. The school will work with the child and parent/guardian in an effort to achieve graduation status.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Promotion/retention will be based on academic achievement and physical, emotional, psychological, and developmental maturity. In the case of retention, parents/guardian will be notified of their child's retention as soon as possible. It is the right of the parent/guardian to reject this recommendation. It is also the right of the school to deny admittance into school the following year based on the inability to meet the child's needs.

HONOR ROLL

The honor roll is published each quarter to recognize students in grade 6,7,and 8 for their academic achievement. A student with an F in any subject does not qualify for the honor roll.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

Students are tested for achievement through the STAR achievement test adopted by the Diocese of Madison. Gr. 5 and 8 will also take the ACRE religion test.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The school has established ways of communication with parents/guardians in order to increase the understanding and awareness of what is going on at St. Dennis School on a continuous basis.

Parent/Student Handbook

This handbook outlines procedural guidelines and expectations of St. Dennis School.

Website

St. Dennis website offers up to date information. Teacher/classroom notes, updates from Mr. Beisser, Athletics, and H & S are also posted on this website.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards are issued at the end of each quarter. Progress reports are available at any and all times by using the school SIS system access

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Mandatory conferences are held in fall. Requested conferences are held in the spring. A parent, teacher, or principal conference may be held at anytime on request.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The formal study of the Catholic Religion, as well as an integrated curriculum which reflects the Catholic values and traditions, are integral parts of our total education. At St Dennis School, we completely understand that some of our students are not Catholic. Our policy here is that all students will attend religious education class and mass no matter what religion. We do not ask those of other Religious affiliations to participate in liturgy. We do ask that students are respectful.

SCHOOL FAMILIES PROGRAM

Each student is assigned to one family (4K-7) who meet 2-3 times a month with one 8th grader as the family leader. The families work together developing virtues; performing service projects and plan activities to have fun together as they grow into a community of caring young Christian believers.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

St. Dennis, under the direction of Ms. Christy Stutz, has an excellent before and after school extended day program. It is open to St. Dennis students in grades 4K through grade 5. Hours for Extended Day are 7:00 am to 8:10 a.m. and 3:15-5:45 p.m. on school days. Extended 4K care is available from 11:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Call the school office for more information.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Athletics

St. Dennis School follows Diocesan regulations with regard to athletic programs and rules. Opportunities are available for students to participate in a variety of sports activities such as volleyball, basketball, football, and softball. The mission of the program is to reflect the mission and philosophy of the school, cooperation not competition, as well as the following values:

1. Fair play

2. Team Work
3. Responsibility
4. Respect
5. Accountability
6. Ways of improvement
7. FUN

Father Schmitt Sportsmanship Award

Sportsmanship holds the strongest values in sports. It holds more value than strength, endurance or any other physical attribute that comes with sports. Sportsmanship is having the mental power to stay composed in a situation that could lead to a conflict. Sportsmanship is being able to endure a loss and not retaliate against the other team or act out in a way that would cause shame to your team. Sportsmanship is being able to uphold your integrity as an athlete and not resort to ways that would be considered cheating. Holding sportsmanship above all other values that come with sports is important and key to maintaining a respectable image in the world of sports. The Father Schmitt Sportsmanship award recognizes outstanding individuals who display outstanding sportsmanship and exemplify the spirit of team play. This athlete exemplifies respect for him/her-self, teammates, and opponents, graciously whether win or lose. Father Schmitt, as our spiritual, leader stands for all of these. This award was created to honor an athlete from each team who continuously displays these characteristics of excellence.

Student eligibility and rules are outlined in the St. Dennis Athletic Handbook.

School Band

St. Dennis School provides an opportunity for students to participate in band through the Overture Band Program who offer lessons on site for a separate cost.

Safety Patrol

6-8th graders are in charge of maintaining our safety patrol program to help students cross the street after school at our crosswalks.

Student Council

The St. Dennis Student Council program consists of an elected board of middle school students with the assistance of class representatives. This student government program provides services from dances to fundraisers for St. Dennis School.

School Newspaper

The Knightly News works during electives classes to design and edit a school newspaper.

Morning Prayer

Classes rotate on a weekly basis to read the Morning Prayer and Pledge over the P.A. system to the school.

Friday Fitness

Every Friday morning the entire school assembles in the gym from 8:45-9:00 for a fun activity of movement to get our day off to a great start as one St. Dennis Family. Activities range from jump rope to dance.

SERVICES OFFERED**Nutrition Policy**

This policy contains the government requirements mandating from our lunch program to the snacks served in the classrooms.

School Lunch and Milk Program

A nutritious hot lunch is available daily. Free and reduced meals and milk are available to all who are eligible.

Title I

Title I is assistance from the local and state government to meet the needs of children with needs in the areas of Math, Reading, and Language. The Madison Public School District at St. Dennis School offers this service.

Speech and Language

Speech and Language is assistance from local and state government to meet the needs of children with needs in the area of verbal communication. The Madison Public School District at St. Dennis School offers this service.

School Counseling Program

Counseling services by a certified counselor are provided.

Special Education

The special needs of students at St. Dennis School are addressed in direct consultation with the Madison School District.

Yearbook

The school publishes a book of memories. Students work to design the cover.

Field Trips

Field trips are a part of the educational program. These trips are designed to support the curriculum and introduce the students to community resources. Students are expected to attend and participate in school field trips. All students must ride the bus to a field trip. If a parent chooses to take their child with them after the trip they may. No parent may transport any child but his or her own. No exceptions.

CODE OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE POLICY

St. Dennis School Community works together to create a safe productive learning environment. Please see discipline plan

Electronic Devices

Possessing, concealing, or storing unauthorized electronic devices before or during school is prohibited. (See discipline policy for exact consequences) Electronic Readers such as IPAD, NOOK, Tablet, etc. are allowed. No internet use. Inappropriate use will result in loss of privilege. Phones, Gaming systems, IPOD, etc. must be turned off and in bag during school hours for 4K-Gr. 4. Gr. 5-8 must turn in at the beginning of the day. St. Dennis School is not responsible for lost or stolen electronic devices.

Fix-It Plans

Students struggling to stay on task, follow rules in class, etc. will be asked to leave the classroom and complete a fix-it plan. This plan is directed at re-directing the student back on task. This should only take about 5 minutes. This may occur on the bench or any other quiet place determined by the teacher.

Playground Behavior

St. Dennis School follows the policy that all hands and feet should be kept to themselves at all times. All sticks, rocks, ice, snow, etc. should be kept on the ground at all times. No tackle or rough playing games. St. Dennis School currently hires 2 playground supervisors to be outside for lunch recess. Supervisors are to enforce these rules. Students not following these rules will be sent to the bench for the remainder of the recess. The supervisor will then fill out an incident report for Mr. Beisser to investigate and deal with appropriately. Consequences are at the discretion of the principal and may include loss of recess.

HEALTH/SAFETY

Emergency Information

An emergency card on each student is sent home at the beginning of the year to be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian. This card is kept on file in the office for use by the secretary/principal/teacher for contact with the parent.

Health Records

Health records are required for each student. The State of Wisconsin requires immunizations to be up-to-date.

Medication During the School Day

A consent form must be filled out by the parent/guardian as well as signed by a physician in order to have any type of medication administered by the office personnel during the school day. Drugs or prescriptions must be in a container with a label prepared by a pharmacist. Inhalers are to be carried with the student. Notification of a student's need for an inhaler must be on file in the school office prior to use.

Illness/Injury During School

If a student becomes ill or is injured during school hours, a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian to come pick that student up. No student will be sent home without a parent's/guardian's permission.

Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect

It is the policy of the Diocese of Madison that employees of the Diocesan Schools comply with the reporting procedures mandated by Wisconsin's Child Abuse and Neglect Act and the Virtus Program.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of St. Dennis School to comply with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, to the end that no child shall be denied or excluded from enrollment or participation in any educational program or activity operated by the school on the basis of color, race, national or ethnic origin, gender, or physical disability.

LETTERS OF INTENT

In order to provide equal opportunity for all parishioners, parents are to call the office and request a Letter of Intent form to be mailed to their home. Once a Letter of Intent is on file, a spot will be held until registration and screening. For grades other than 4K, priority will be given to parishioners, students and or siblings already enrolled into St. Dennis School. Please see registration policy for full expectations and guidelines.

TUITION CONTRACT

Tuition contracts are to be signed and returned to the school office. No child will be accepted into St. Dennis School without a signed contract on file with the St. Dennis financial office. Families not adhering to the tuition agreement may be denied re-registration.

ENTRANCE TO 4K

St. Dennis requires children who enter Four-Year-Old Kindergarten to be four years old by September 1st of the year in which they will enroll.

CLASS SIZE

The number of students in each grade level is limited to 32 students. All classroom size decisions are made at the discretion of the school principal.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Transfer students will be accepted up to the end of the first quarter at any time. After the end of the first quarter, students will only be accepted at the end of a quarter unless the school principal determines an exception. All students transferring to St. Dennis are to be considered probationary for 6 weeks. At any time during or at the end of the 6 weeks, the principal and teacher may terminate or extend enrollment.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus arrangements are handled with the Madison School District. Bus transportation is available for grades 4K-5th. Grades 6-8 use the Madison Metro Bus unless there is no route in the vicinity of the child's home. Denial to ride the bus may be given for misconduct on the bus.

DRESS CODE

It is important to dress in a manner that is appropriate and shows respect for self and others in such a way that allows students to focus on the learning at hand. The following guidelines should be kept in mind:

4K- Gr. 3

We completely understand the change in style for children and how hard it is to find longer shorts and skirts. Please as parents remember to use discretion when purchasing school clothing

- Hats may not be worn in school at anytime. This includes after hours events
- All clothes should be neat, clean, and in good shape (no holes)
- Shorts may be worn at anytime except in the months of December, January, and February. No child will be allowed to stay inside for recess due to wearing shorts in cold weather. Please use discretion when wearing shorts on cold days.
- Underwear should never be visible
- Pants should be worn at appropriate height—No sagging.
- No inappropriate writing on any clothing (alcohol, gang, swears, etc.)
- No hats/caps may be worn at anytime in the school building.
- Field Trips- Special guidelines will be determined by the teacher for each trip.
- Uniforms must be worn on all Wednesday's and field trip days.

Uniform Consequences

K-3rd grade

1st, 2nd, 3rd time - Reminder

4th time – Loss of shorts privilege for remainder of year

Gr. 4-8

- Hats may not be worn in school at anytime. This includes after hours events
- All clothes should be neat, clean, and in good shape (no holes)
- Shorts may be worn at anytime except in the months of December, January, and February. No child will be allowed to stay inside for recess due to wearing shorts in cold weather. Please use discretion when wearing shorts on cold days.
- Length of Shorts/Skirts: Shorts/Skirts must reach the end of the student's fingers when standing straight with hands at side.
- No midriff or tight fitting shirts or sweaters.
- Underwear should never be visible
- Pants should be worn at appropriate height—No sagging.
- No tube tops, muscle shirts, or apron back shirts.
- All necklines must go no lower than 2 inches below the clavicle

- No inappropriate writing on any clothing (alcohol, gang, swears, etc.)
- No hats/caps may be worn at anytime in the school building.
- No Spaghetti Strap Shirts may be worn
- Field Trips- Special guidelines will be determined by the teacher for each trip.
- Uniforms must be worn on all Wednesday's and field trip days.
 - School uniform includes school polo, tan or black pants, skirt or shirts.
 - If leggings worn under skirt, there can be no writing on them

Uniform Consequences

K-3rd grade

1st, 2nd, 3rd time - Reminder

4th time – Loss of shorts privilege for remainder of year

4th – 8th grade

1st time – Reminder

2nd time – Loss of Shorts privilege for remainder of year.

It is at the discretion of the principal at any time to request a child to call his/her parent/guardian for a change of clothes.

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's progress through school is updated and maintained in the school office. Transferring of records must be in written request from the parent/guardian and will only be transferred from school to school.

TUITION

Monthly tuition statements are sent out to families to help aid in the payment process. Families who are delinquent in their tuition payments will not be allowed to register for the following school year unless arrangements have been made with the school principal and take the chance of losing the child's spot. St. Dennis School reserves the right to suspend the student indefinitely and not allow readmission until such time as all past due accounts have been paid in full. Report card will not be issued until delinquent accounts are current or acceptable arrangements have been made with the principal. Student accounts are currently being transitioned to an online program through mystudentsprogress.com. Parents are able to manage and pay their accounts through this program. ACH payments may also be set up through this program

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/ SPONSOR-A-STUDENT FUND

Tuition assistance is available to families who are registered. Applications are available at contract time. Distribution of funds is based on need and availability of funds. The funds in this account come directly from parishioner donations and may be distributed by the principal at his discretion. Full policies are included in the application

PARISH INVESTMENT

Although parish enrollment is not a requirement, it is strongly suggested. Since the entire parish benefits from Catholic educational programs, the entire parish shares in financial responsibility for the education of the children. Parish subsidy is the amount contributed by the parish annually to the school. Although parish tithing is also not required, it is strongly urged, as again, the parish helps the school.

FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

St. Dennis School takes an active role in not just combating bullying but also working with all students to develop skills to be able to give of resentment and move forward eliminating animosity.