

**STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**

**Saint Veronica Independence Mission School**

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**Facebook:  St. Veronica, An Independence Mission School**

**The Administration of St. Veronica IMS, a Catholic Education system, reserves the right to alter, amend, modify, change, or add any policies to this handbook to provide for an educational and safe environment for all students, faculty and staff.**

**Students and parents must accept and abide by the school policies and procedures for the student to attend St. Veronica Independence Mission School.**

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Rick Auletta President, Independence Mission Schools**

**Sister Eileen Buchanan, IHM Principal**

**Mrs. Diane Muller Assistant Principal**

**Mrs. Vicky Morales      Secretary**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

St. Veronica, an Independence Mission School is a Catholic institution of learning built on the belief that each person is created in the image and likeness of God.  Therefore the diversity of our student body enhances the development of a Christian atmosphere in both Gospel values and academic excellence within each individual student.  Emerging in this faith-filled environment, our students will become catalysts in contributing to a moral society and will recognize the dignity of every person.

**BELIEF STATEMENTS**

As an Independence Mission School, we invite and welcome all

people to join the School Community of Saint Veronica

and share in our beliefs and practices.

 Belief statements are adhered to by the entire school community without reservations.

 Belief statements are the accepted code of reference whereby the school community bases

            decision making.

We believe that:

* Christ is the reason for the existence of our school
* Diversity enriches and strengthens our school community
* Each child is unique and possesses inherent worth
* The teaching of Christian values is essential to the development of the whole child
* All children are capable of learning
* Education is a shared responsibility of the parents, teachers, students and the community
* A safe environment is essential for all learning
* Bullying and discrimination in any form is a personal affront to the uniqueness and dignity of a Child of God
* A relationship with God, through our Savior Jesus Christ, brings peace and joy to all people and diminishes violence
* Our relationship with God creates a community that welcomes, shows reverence, respects and supports all people
* We believe that prayer, worship and the teachings of the Catholic faith deepen our relationship with God and the community
* We believe that all children develop their full potential in a safe atmosphere grounded in faith and Gospel values
* Members of our school community, living lives of service and good citizenship, enrich families, neighborhoods and society

**HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL**

 In the fall of 1872, a lovely wooden framed chapel at the entrance of the New Cathedral Cemetery was completed and designated as a mission church of St. Michael Parish.  The newly erected chapel was the foundation of what we know today as St. Veronica Parish.  Father Maurice Welsh, then pastor of St. Michael Church, and his assistants cared for the spiritual needs of the seventy-five parishioners who lived within its boundaries.  This arrangement lasted for six years until Bishop James Wood appointed a pastor for the new parish, Saint Veronica.

Father William McLoughlin assumed his duties as first pastor of the small flock in August of 1878.  At that time the location of the parish was Second and Butler Streets on the grounds of what is now the New Cathedral Cemetery.  By the year 1889, the physical situation at Saint Veronica’s had not changed much but the population had grown amazingly from seventy-five to almost four thousand.  The little chapel was inadequate for the needs of the growing parish community.

Reverend John Donnelly was appointed pastor in 1889, and it was under his capable guidance that land was purchased on the northeast corner of Sixth and Tioga Streets as a site for the new Saint Veronica Chapel.  On April 22, 1894, the new chapel/school was dedicated by Archbishop Patrick John Ryan.

The school opened its doors for the first time in August of 1894 under the direction of the Sisters of the Holy Child of Jesus.  In 1904 this direction changed and was placed in the hands of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who have remained at the school until the present.  The school has undergone many changes over the years. Originally the school occupied the second and third floors of the chapel building.  By 1909 the new church, which now stands at the corner of Sixth and Tioga Streets had been dedicated and the chapel became an addition to the school.  In 1980, Our Lady of Pompeii School, located at Sixth and Erie Streets closed and the schools combined. The Our Lady of Pompeii site became the St. Veronica Annex where the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students attended class.

Changes in the local population during the 1990’s witnessed a decline in enrollment, resulting in the closing of the annex.

Until 1972, St. Veronica Parish was comprised predominantly of Irish and German immigrant families.  It was evident that the population of the community was changing to one of Hispanic and other ethnic groups.  As time went on, it became clear to the school administration and faculty that the needs of Hispanic students and their families who predominantly spoke Spanish were quite different from those of the students who had attended the school since the early 1900’s.  Currently, 98% of the students are of Hispanic descent.

       In September of 2013 Saint Veronica School opened its doors and heart to an enriching change. It became part of the Independence Mission Schools. The goal is to provide a high quality, cost efficient, Catholic education for all students

**Academic Policies**

1. **Preparation for Class**

The student is responsible for completing all class and homework assignments to the best of their ability and on time.  Failure to do so indicates a lack of serious preparation for class.  Incomplete homework assignments will result in a behavioral annotation and will ultimately affect the student’s effort grade on the report card.

Preparation for the next day’s class begins with a sufficient night’s rest and a nutritional breakfast.

Students need to develop the habit of coming to school prepared with books, pencils, pens and all required materials for the particular grade and properly uniformed.

2. **Class Participation**

Daily performance of students is assessed by the teacher.  Examination of copybooks and worksheets for neatness and completeness of work, as well as class participation, are part of the overall report card grade.

All students must use copybooks properly.  Students should not tear pages from copybooks, skip pages, or use his/her copybook as a drawing or scribbling pad.

Students are expected to:

* + - be attentive and respectful to the teacher at all times
		- show respect and concern for other students
		- actively participate in class

3. **Homework**

Homework refers to an assignment made by a teacher that will positively reinforce a concept presented in class.  Homework includes both written and study assignments, and should be done by the student independently.  While this does not preclude parental help or interest, the assignments should not require undue parental assistance or supervision.

Ample time will be given for the completion of out-of-class research assignments or projects.

The following time per night is suggested for homework assignments:

Grades 1 and 2       30 minutes

Grades 3 and 4       60 minutes

Grades 5 and 6       90 minutes

Grades 7 and 8       120 minutes

The School realizes that teachers, students and subjects vary.  The objective is not time, but the extension of learning and reinforcing knowledge beyond class time.

Homework is assigned daily and posted on the teacher website.  This website serves as a source of communication between the home and school.

In the event of absence, all homework assignments are to be completed.

4. **Progress Reports**

Midway through each trimester a progress report is sent home.  This is the cumulative marks of a student thus far during a trimester.

At the same time a form is sent home for parents/guardians to choose a time for a conference with the teacher.  This form is to be returned to school promptly.

Communication between the home and school will enable a student to have sufficient help to improve his/her grades.

Parents/Guardians are required to sign and return the Progress Report to school.

**5.  Report Cards**

Report cards are issued three times a year.

Each student is responsible for his/her own report card grade by satisfactorily fulfilling the following requirements:

* tests and quizzes
* oral and written projects
* independent classroom work
* homework
* active participation in classroom lessons and activities
* attendance in class and proper conduct

First Honors**:** (Grades 4-8)  Grades of 90 or above in all subjects and 3 or above in conduct and effort

Second Honors: (Grades 4-8) Grades of 85 or above in all subjects and 3 or above in conduct and effort.

Honorable Mention: (Grades 4-8) Grades of 80 or above in all  subjects and 3 or above in conduct and effort.

6. **Promotion or Retention**

Student progress is monitored throughout the school year.  At each parent conference the parent/guardian is informed of the student’s academic, social and emotional progress.  In March the teacher will contact the parent/guardian of a student who continues to experience difficulty, to discuss the possibility of retention and support services.  By the end of May, the teacher(s) will schedule a follow-up meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s).  If retention is indicated, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive an official notification which must be signed and returned to the school administration. Promotion or retention is at the discretion of the administration in consultation with the teacher.

7.           **Student Recognition**

Once a month after the Friday 8:00 mass students will be recognized for their efforts during the previous month.

Virtue of the Month: a student is recognized for outstanding effort in practicing the Christian

virtue of the month. The virtue is sited on the monthly calendar.

Critic’s Choice Award: a student is recognized for an exceptional literary assignment

presented during the month

Penmanship: a student is recognized for continually showing effort and neatness in all their written assignments.

Attendance:  Students who attended every class day during the previous month, were never late

and did not leave early for any reason receive a Perfect Attendance Certificate for that month.

8. **Standardized Testing**

Terra Nova Test

The Terra Nova Test is administered each year to students in Grades 3 to 7 unless the testing company advises differently. The results are communicated to parents and are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

Performance Series, Web-based Diagnostics

The Performance Series testing is administered to each student in grades 2 to 8 three times a year.  The results are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

DIBELS

The DIBELS testing is administered to students in grades K -2.  DIBELS assesses early literacy skills.  The results are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

9. **Test Grades**

It is important for parents/guardians to be aware of the academic progress of their child.  All tests are to be signed and returned to school.  Tests and assessments will be kept on file in the classroom until the end of the trimester.

10. **Graduation**

Eighth grade students who have completed the prescribed course of study and maintained a suitable discipline record are eligible for graduation if all financial obligations have been met.  Procedures for graduation are determined by the Administration and the eighth grade teacher.  Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right.  The school has the right to deny any student from participating in closing exercises if, in the view of the School, the student’s academic or disciplinary record indicates that the privilege should not be extended.

**Admission**

St. Veronica IMS admits students of any ethnic origin and religion to all of the rights, privileges, programs and activities that are available to its students. The school does not discriminate on the bases of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or religion in the administration of its educational policies, its admission policy, or in any school-administered program.

The School endeavors to accommodate students with special needs, as the School’s resources and capabilities reasonably permit.  The School reserves the right to decline admission or impose reasonable conditions of attendance where indicated under the circumstances.

New students will take an assessment test before being accepted.

The School follows the public school district’s age requirements for admission

Students for Kindergarten must complete 5 years of age by September 1

Students for First Grade must complete 6 years of age by September 1

The necessary forms and certificates for admission are:

**a.** Birth Certificate

**b.** Baptismal Certificate

**c.** Health Forms and a certificate of immunization that must be updated and available for confirmation

**d.** Social Security Card

**e.**   Latest report card from grades 1-8

1. **Registration Procedure**

1. Bring above forms
2. Assessment
3. The secretary will give parents a handout with the instructions to register online and to apply for financial aid through TADS.
4. July 1 the family will receive the tuition agreement via email from TADS
5. Interview with principal
6. Tour

2. **Tuition**

A quality, Catholic education for as little as $50 per week

St. Veronica is a tuition-based school where your family, if qualified, can receive financial assistance. We can provide you with a better idea of what you can expect to pay during your school tour so you won’t have to wait until financial aid is awarded.

**3. Financial Aid**

With the help of generous benefactors and local businesses, St. Veronica is able to provide a high-quality Catholic education to prepare your child for the successful future you want for them. Families in need will receive tuition assistance based on the following criteria:

* Annual household income
* Number of children
* Other extenuating factors that affect your family’s finances.

Financial assistance is available through several scholarship programs. Financial aid forms must be filled out online during the enrollment process. Scholarship awards are based on:

* Verification of income
* Completion of necessary forms
* Submission of ALL required documents
* Meeting all deadlines.

The earlier you enroll and apply for financial aid, the better your chances are of securing scholarships for your student.

Parents are also encouraged to apply for scholarships from **Children’s Scholarship Fund — Philadelphia (**[**www.csfphiladelphia.org**](http://www.csfphiladelphia.org/)**)**. There is no application fee, and the lottery form can be filled out on their website. The deadline is March 1st of each year for the following school year.

**4. Re-registration**

Families are required to re-register each year.

An Email will be sent by TADS inviting the families to re-enroll and to apply for financial aid.

The date for this transaction is published in the monthly calendar.

Tuition payments begin in July

**Attendance**

Regular school attendance impacts positively on a student’s academic development.  The total number of days that school is in session is prescribed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**1.** **Absences** - The policies regarding this area are as follows:

* If a student is going to be absent or arrive late to school, parents/guardians are to notify the school.  Please leave a message on the voice mail.  The number to call to report absences or lateness is listed at the front of the handbook.  Please call by 8:00 A.M.
* A student who has been absent from school, even for one day, is required to present a **written note** to his homeroom teacher.
* A doctor’s certificate may be required for absence of an extended nature (3 days).
* In the case of illness, a school official will contact the family whose name has been submitted to the office with an emergency phone number. Parents are then responsible to have the student picked up.
* Any child who stays home without his/her parent’s knowledge is liable to suspension.  Any child who leaves school without permission is liable to suspension.
* Routine doctor appointments are discouraged during the school day so as not to interrupt the child’s academic instruction.
* Perfect Attendance Certificates are awarded to those students who are in school each day, they are never late, and have not left early.  Repeated lateness reflects parental neglect.

**2.**  **Daily Schedule**

Arrival and Breakfast                      7:00 -7:45A.M.

Morning Bell                                   7:45 A.M.

Lunch                                               K and 1     12:00 - 12:30

         2, 3, 4        12:30 -   1:00

         5, 6, 7, 8    1:00 -   1:30

Dismissal                                         K and 1      2:35

                                                                     2, 3, 4        2:40

                                                                     5, 6, 7, 8    2:45

Students must be picked-up promptly at Dismissal.

Students who are not picked-up will have to wait inside school; the parent/guardian must come into the school building to pick up their children.

No child may leave the building prior to dismissal.

**3.   Lateness**

The morning bell rings at 7:50 A.M. A student who arrives late for school must

* report to school office for an admission slip
* present the admission slip to the teacher in the class

Five incidences of lateness warrant a detention.

**4.**   **Early Dismissal - Individual Student**

Students areexcused early only in cases of emergency.

To request an early dismissal, please send a note to the homeroom teacher who will forward it to the School Main Office.  The student will be dismissed from the main office.  The parent/guardian must report to the main office and sign the Sign-out Book” in order to have the child released from school.

**5.**   **Emergency Closings**

Parents/guardians will be contacted regarding emergency school dismissals via the School Reach phone message or using the emergency phone numbers provided to the school by the family.

**6.   Inclement Weather**

In the case of inclement weather please tune into the T.V. news or KYW radio (1060 A.M.).

Listen for the announcement about **“All Philadelphia public and parochial schools.”**

Please do not call the school. The school district and the Archdiocese make this decision not the principal.

**7.**   **Emergency Contact Forms**

The School requires the parent(s) /guardian(s) to complete the emergency contact form provided by the school for each student**.  It is important that the information on this form is accurate and kept current so that the School can contact the parent/guardian in the event of an emergency.**

**8.  Vacation Policy**

The planning of family vacations is strongly discouraged during the school year.      Please contact the Principal directly for permission.

**9**.  **After School Care**

An after school program is provided from dismissal until 6:00 PM. Payment for this program is separate from that of the school tuition.

Afterschool includes a snack from Nutritional Development Services

Parents failing to pick-up their child by 6:00 P.M. will be charged a fee.

**Books And Materials**

Every student must carry his/her books to and from school in a suitable book bag.  All books must be covered to protect and preserve them.  All covers must be neat and clean and free of inappropriate material.  Books, copybooks, and materials are to be properly identified with a child’s name, school, and grade.  All lost or damaged books must be paid for and replaced by the student’s family.

Students are expected to take care of their personal belongings, their books and their clothing.  They are also asked to help care for the school building and property.

Damage to neighborhood property reflects upon both school and home training and will necessitate compensation.

**Cellular Telephones and all electronic devices**

Cellular telephones, handheld electronic games, and other electronic devices that, in the view of the School, may be distracting or disruptive to the learning environment, are not permitted within the classroom and the School cannot be held responsible for them being lost or taken.  These items must be given to the teacher in the morning to be kept in the main office during the day.  Each grade will have a marked container for said items.

Any electronic devices found in the classroom will be sent to the principal’s office and the parent/guardian must come to claim the item.

**Discipline Code**

We believe that discipline is fundamental to life.  Self-discipline is a necessary reflection of the Philosophy of a Catholic School, which attempts to develop a fully committed Christian – a Christian committed to the observance of just rules and regulations, which will assist the individual in responding to his/her responsibilities and obligations to himself/herself and others.

Correct training in discipline means that a child learns to accept rules and regulations presented by lawful authority.  Students are expected to act in such fashion that their behavior will reflect favorably on themselves and the school.  They are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students and teachers, thus creating a harmonious atmosphere within the school.  All students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations.  Children who fail to comply with school policies and regulations must accept the consequences.

The discipline code applies to students and parents/guardians in school and at school-sponsored events, as well as outside the school community.

The entire school uses a calendar system to track student behavior.  The calendars vary with the grade level.  Behavior infractions will result in a calendar mark. Five calendar marks in one month will result in an after-school detention.

**Harassment**

The School follows the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Policy prohibiting harassment, including sexual harassment.  Sexual Harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual attention, sexual advances, and requests for sexual favors or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Sexual Harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated.**  Any student or parent/guardian who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action including dismissal of the student and the fulfillment of the mandatory reporting to legal authorities.

**Violent/Threatening/Harassing and Inappropriate Conduct**

It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility and offensive and inappropriate behavior.  Such improper conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct, verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, and behavior not otherwise conducive to the educational and religious mission of the school.  Unacceptable conduct, either by a student or a parent or guardian includes, but is not limited to, the following:

**a.**   disrespectful behavior in word or action toward or about any staff, student, volunteer,

           parent or guardian or visitor

**b.** insubordination

**c.** fighting verbally or physically

**d.** bomb scares or triggering other false alarms

**e.** cheating or plagiarism

**f.** use or possession of drugs or alcohol

**g.** smoking

**h.** stealing

**i.** intimidation, harassment or threats of any kind; bullying or cyber bullying

These categories do not cover every possible situation.  The school will determine which behavior is inappropriate.

This policy applies both in and out of the classroom, in the school community generally and outside the school community, where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the School.

Conduct by students or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to the immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment, in any form, including oral, written or electronic, by a student against any member of the school community, the student, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school.

**Detentions**

The following chart is only a guideline for the classroom teacher in the issuance of calendar marks / detentions.  It is not an all-inclusive list of conduct that violates the Discipline Code.  The number of demerits may be adjusted accordingly by the teacher and principal.  Five demerits warrant a detention.

The following infractions may warrant a calendar mark, marks or an immediate detention depending on the gravity of the incident:

**a.** **Not prepared for class** – not having proper supplies or books for class repeatedly.  Calendar mark will be issued after the first warning.

**b.** **Improper behavior** – including, but not limited to disturbances in class/ playground/lunchroom; *i.e.* note passing, slamming books, unnecessary noises, talking to self or others, throwing food, loud, boisterous sounds, any disruption deemed by the classroom teacher to interrupt the educational process.

**c.** **Cheating** – the taking or giving of schoolwork that is not one’s own – or if the teacher has probable cause to suspect such an action.

**d.** **Disrespect** – any improper attitude displayed towards a teacher, staff member, volunteer parent, and administrator or fellow student.

**e.** **Abusive language** – any inappropriate language used on school premises.

**f.** **Forgery** – any school paper or handing in any paper signed by anyone other than a parent or guardian or handing in a paper written by someone else.

**g.** **Invading the privacy of another’s desk** – teacher or student.

**h.** **Gum chewing/eating in class** – gum is not permitted on campus, including the school/church/parking lot; snacks may be eaten only at the designated time.

**i.** **Dress code violation** – any infraction of the uniform dress code.

**j.** **Damaging any school, church or personal property**.

**k.** **Failure to return a signed detention slip** – detentions slips must be returned the next school day.

**l.** **Unsigned test papers/conduct calendars** – tests and conduct calendars must be returned the next school day.

**m.** **Out of bounds** – any student who is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

**n.** **Other** – any other behavior that warrants attention not specified on the above list.

**o.**   **Devices** - Use of Cell phone on school property.

**Serious Infractions may result in an immediate suspension or dismissal and apply when students are on campus, on a bus, or at a school-sponsored function.  Examples of Serious Infractions include the following:**

**a.** **Truancy** – unexcused absences.

**b.** **Violent behavior** – any fighting or behavior that causes physical injury.

**c.** **Blatant disrespect for authority** – to any adult in the building.

**d.** **Possession and/or use of drugs, narcotics, tobacco or alcoholic beverages on campus or on bus.**

**e.** **Irreverence -** including **bullying or cyber bullying**

**f.** **Vandalism** – destruction or defacing of parish or school property.

**g.** **Profane/obscene language or gestures or engaging in immoral conduct.**

**h.** **Possession of any item which may present a danger to others in school or out: any sort of weapon or sharp instrument**

**i.** **Cutting class.**

**j.** **Leaving campus without permission from a school authority.**

**Procedure for Detention**

When a student receives a detention slip, the parent/guardian must sign it on the date issued.  It must be returned the following day to the issuing school official.  Detentions for students in grades K-8 are on Thursdays until 3:45.  The principal or teacher may alter this usual procedure as they deem necessary.  **A parent/guardian’s signature indicates that the parent/guardian has seen the detention.**

**Suspensions**

Just and appropriate disciplinary policies are essential educational processes. These include procedures that are more remedial than punitive, yet include the necessary provisions that protect the common good of the school community.

Suspension may lead to dismissal.  The Principal will inform the parents/guardians of the seriousness of the suspension and seek their immediate cooperation in a corrective program designed to resolve the student’s conduct.

**Procedures for student suspensions:**

**a.** Infractions of a serious nature, including bullying or cyberbullying, as determined by the School, may warrant a suspension.

**b.** Four detentions for conduct will warrant a suspension warning.  Five detentions for conduct warrant a suspension.

**c.** Parents/Guardians of the student will be informed. A conference will be held. The suspension papers will be signed.

**d.**   Suspensions will be implemented [in-School or out of School], at the discretion of the Principal.

**e.** Following suspension, parents or guardians may be interviewed by the appropriate school official.  Students removed from the school community will not be readmitted before all conditions for re-admittance have been satisfied.

When necessary, a student may be referred for counseling.

A written report of the suspension will be filed in the student’s record.

**h.** Suspension records are not a part of the student’s permanent or cumulative record.  Ordinarily, suspension records will be made available only to authorized school personnel and parents.

**Dismissal/Expulsion**

**a.** After two (2) formal suspensions, a student may be dismissed.

**b.** In certain instances the infraction may warrant immediate dismissal.  The School reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time where the School considers the conduct of the student or parent/guardian to be inconsistent with School policy, the good of the School community or Catholic teachings.

**c.**   Parents/Guardians of the student will be informed in writing of the dismissal.

**Communications/Student Records/Release of Students**

* 1. **Legal Custody Issues**

Parents are asked to inform school personnel when legal custody of the child(ren) resides with one parent.  It is important for the school to have a copy of the custody decree.  This will help school personnel to make effective decisions.  Custodial parents are likewise asked to supply the school with copies of restraining orders if the need arises.

Those individuals who have legal custody of the student may attend school meetings, participate in educational decisions and review educational records regarding that student.  Persons who do not have legal custody (including those with visitation rights but not legal custody) have no such educational rights and may not participate in these matters.

**b**. **Conferences**

Parent-teacher Conferences are scheduled at the progress report periods. Parents are expected to be present at each meeting.

Arrangements for parent-teacher conferences at other times can be made through written note or email to suit the convenience of both parties whenever deemed necessary for the benefit of the child.  When requesting a conference, please state the nature of the concern, so that the teacher can be better prepared to address it.  Should a problem arise concerning any child, parents should feel free to discuss it with the proper school authority - the teacher or the principal.  Good communication makes it easier to direct your child in his/her educational endeavors.

**Teachers may not be interrupted during the school day**:  lunches, messages, forgotten books, etc. should be left at the office with the child’s name and grade.

**c**. **Family Communication**

Effective communication is the single, most important factor that assures a positive relationship between the home and school.  Several modes of communication exist at our school to help keep parents informed of policies, activities, upcoming events, and student progress.  Regular forms of communications include this handbook, a monthly calendar of events, the weekly family envelope, and notices from the office, teacher and school websites, progress reports, report cards, official school email and School Reach.

**It is the responsibility of each child enrolled at the school to provide the parents with all written communications**.  **Parents are asked to check book bags and folders regularly for such communications**.  Any communications, forms, money, etc. that are brought to school are forwarded to the school office through the homeroom teacher.  Students should not be instructed to deliver items directly to the office.  All money needs to be in an envelope marked with the student’s name, grade, and purpose.

**d.      Student Records**

Unless a court or custody agreement specifies otherwise, each parent/guardian with legal custody is entitled to access all school records of their child.

Official school records of a student are confidential; they may be accessed only by the legal parent or guardian.

In any other case, there must be a subpoena or court order or legal written consent of the parent/guardian before records may be disclosed.

**e.      Release of a Child**

A child will not be released to a parent/guardian who does not have physical custody, without the written consent of the custodial parent/guardian.  To determine the custodial parent/guardian, all separated or divorced parents of children enrolled in the school must provide the school with a copy of the court order or custodial agreement adjudicating that determination of custody.

This Court Order/Custodial Agreement is placed in a confidential file.

**f.  Photo Release**

During the yearly enrollment, through TADS, parents are required to grant or deny permission for photos of their child to be taken and published.

**Computers: Acceptable Use Policy**

Computers are a valuable and necessary tool for education. The school encourages the proper use of computer related technology, including the Internet, Ipads, and SmartBoards.  Students and all users of computer technology have a responsibility to use these tools properly and in accordance with the policy set forth below:

1. **Responsibilities of User**

With the right of access comes the responsibility to use the technology both correctly and wisely.  Access to the Internet may mean that some material found will not meet guidelines set in our Acceptable Use Policy.  Safeguards are in place to block inappropriate content.  The School will make every effort to discourage the appearance of such material; however, the opportunities and information made available by the Internet make it necessary to provide access in order that our students can take advantage of the many resources on the information superhighway.  Students are taught to use integrity and prudence when using the internet.

**General Requirements for Use of the Internet**

* + All users are required to take simple Internet training from the computer coordinator.
	+ All users and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign a student access contract governing use of computer resources, which is provided by TADS..
	+ Use of internet is limited to those with assigned research, practice activity, or other assignment.
	+ Transferring copyrighted material to or from the School without express permission of the owner may be a violation of federal law.
	+ Use of electronic mail and other Internet facilities to harass, offend, bully or annoy other users is forbidden.
	+ E-mail accounts through the School require parent permission forms.
	+ Any attempt to circumvent system security, guess passwords, or in any way gain access to secured resources is forbidden.
	+ Use of the Internet for commercial gain or profit is not allowed from an educational site.
	+ Users will not move, repair, reconfigure, modify or attach external devices, or load software on the system without the express, prior written consent of the School.
	+ The system operator has the right to monitor all computer activity without prior notice to the user.
	+ The School may impose additional rules and restrictions at any time.
1. **Discipline**

Violations of these rules will be handled by the computer education coordinator and the School administration.

1. **Student Rules**
	* For reasons of personal safety, students must never post or transmit personal information about themselves or other people.  This includes name, address, telephone/fax number, school address, social security number, etc.
	* Students must not access material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography) or that advocates illegal acts, violence, harassment or discrimination toward other people.
	* Students must not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.  Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of another and presenting them as if they were one’s own.
	* Students must not use obscene or threatening language,  nor may they, through means of the Internet, harass or annoy other users.
	* Students must not knowingly or recklessly post or transmit information about persons or organizations that is false or private.
	* Students must not make deliberate attempts to disrupt computer systems or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by other means.  These actions are illegal.
	* The illegal downloading of copyrighted software or other written works for use on home or School computers is prohibited.
	* Violations of any of these rules may result in any or all of the following, at the discretion of the School:
		+ - **Loss of Internet access privileges.**
			- **Disciplinary and/or legal action by the School, law enforcement or other involved parties**.

**Dress Code**

Neatness and cleanliness in personal attire are part of a child’s education and the responsibility of the parents.  When a child looks and feels good about him /herself, he/she acts and works accordingly.

**Any student not in compliance with the dress code will receive a calendar mark.**

Personal appearance that constitutes a distraction is not permitted. Final approval or disapproval is at the discretion of the Principal.

**a. Uniforms**

**Boys**:  Navy blue pants; light blue short or long sleeved knit shirt monogrammed with the school name; black or dark blue belt; monogrammed navy blue v-neck sweater; sturdy solid black  school shoes. (No boots, sandals, blue jeans, or corduroy pants are permitted.)  Boys are expected to keep shirts buttoned at all times, and tucked neatly and completely into their pants.  Pants must be worn at the waist and secured with a belt.

**Girls**:  Blue plaid uniform, light blue short or long sleeved blouse with a peter pan collar; navy blue knee socks or navy blue leotards in cold weather; sturdy solid black or blue school shoes with laces, buckle, or velcro strap.. (No boots, heels, nylon stockings, sandals, or fancy dress shoes are permitted.)  Girls are not permitted to wear slacks under their uniform in class. During extremely cold weather, girls may wear their gym sweat pants under the uniform to and from school but not in class.

**Gym** uniform for all students is a monogrammed light blue tee shirt, monogrammed navy blue sweatshirt, navy blue sweatpants, and sneakers.

**All students must wear the regulation gym uniform on their designated gym day.**

**b. Hair Styles/Grooming**

Student’s hair is to be neat, clean, and groomed conservatively.  **No** extreme or fad hairstyles such as partially shaved hair, tails of any kind, shaved lines/designs, sideburns, or coloring of any part of the hair (other than natural hair colors) are permitted.

Boys’ hair must be cut above the shirt collar. Students may not wear bandanas, or sweat bands in school.

Girls’ hair must be secured away from the face (ponytail, braids, buns, etc.).  They may use a simple headband or barrettes.  Students are expected to come to school in a state of cleanliness.

**c. Jewelry**

Jewelry is not a part of the school uniform. A watch may be worn but will not be the responsibility of the school.

Girls may wear post earrings of a small and conservative style (one earring only in each ear).

Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.

Bracelets, both ankle and wrist, and pins are not part of the school uniform. Religious or school-related pins may be worn.

A religious medal or cross on a chain is permitted to be worn UNDER the shirt or blouse.

No make-up, nail polish, or acrylic fingernails are permitted.

**d. Out of Uniform**

If at any time during the year an exception in uniform is necessary, a note of explanation must be sent to the child’s teacher who will forward it to the principal.  This note should indicate the reason and the expected date by which the uniform will be complete. Any student whose uniform has been altered to a point unacceptable to school standards may be asked to leave school.  The student may return after the uniform has been returned to an acceptable state, or a new uniform has been purchased.

**Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities are sponsored for the enrichment and enjoyment of our students.  Students must have written permission to participate.  The following programs are offered at school:

Student Council

First in Math

Science Club

Chess Club

Book Club

Creative Writers

Drum Line

**Field Trips/Class Trips**

The purpose of a class trip is to broaden the intellectual, cultural, and social experiences of each child.  There will be no field trips or activities that the school deems to be high risk.  Each student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide written permission for each trip in order for the student to participate.  A field trip parent consent form must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student.  Forms are sent home for each specific trip.  **Verbal permission over the phone is NOT sufficient to allow student participation in the trip**.

A class trip is a privilege, which can be taken away if a teacher deems it appropriate.

If a parent/guardian does not wish a child to attend the trip for any reasons, he/she should notify the School.  A student not attending the class trip will be marked absent.

**Gym**

Gym classes are held every week. The Gym uniform must be worn. Every student is expected to show good sportsmanship in gym.  Any student displaying conduct that could bring about harm to self or another or which reflects poor sportsmanship will be dealt with in a manner considered appropriate by the instructor and/or the Principal.

**Health**

**a. Medical Records**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has mandated that all children entering the Kindergarten or First Grade present documented proof that the following immunizations have been received:

**Grades K - 8**

DPT:   4 doses at least one after 4th birthday        Polio:  3 doses                                                      MMR:  2 doses after 1st birthday                           Hepatitis B:  3 doses properly spaced               Varicella:  1 dose after 1st birthday and 2nd routine dose at 4 -6 years of age

TB - Each child is required to have a Tuberculin Tine test within a three-month period prior to entering school.

**Grades 6 – 8**

Meningitis:  1 dose Meningococcal Conjugate routine at 11-12 year visit, with catch up at 13-18 years of age

Pertussis:  1 dose Tdap – routine at 11 – 12 year visit, with catch up at 13-18 years of age.

**b. Nurse**

A registered nurse is provided by the public school district according to the school’s enrollment, on days selected by the public school district.

The nurse is responsible for checking the height, weight, hearing and vision of every child and for making referrals to parents when problems are found.  The nurse maintains all health records.  Care given in the school is limited to first aid in accidents or illness until the parents can be reached to take the child home, to the doctor, or to the hospital.  In an emergency, the nurse will arrange to have the student transported to the hospital.

All students are screened yearly under the State-mandated program.  Student physical examinations are required within three months of entry into school and the sixth grade.  Student dental examinations are required within three months of entry into school and in the third and seventh grades.  The sixth and seventh grade students are also screened for scoliosis.

If your child has a specific medical issue, please notify the homeroom teacher and the nurse of the problem.  Medic-Alert bracelets are strongly recommended for any child with a medical problem.  Emergency cards are kept on file for each student.  Please be sure that we have an up-to-date emergency number on file in case of an emergency during the school day.

**c. Accident/Illness At School**

Accidents or illness occurring at school are reported immediately to the principal or main office personnel.  When a student becomes ill or meets with an accident, the parent or guardian is contacted.  If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called.  **Only Tylenol/Motrin may be given to the student with the parents’ consent.**  Only basic first aid may be administered.  Parents must be contacted immediately if there is any question regarding an injury.

**d. Medications**

It is generally recommended that prescription medicines be given to the student before and/or after school in accordance with the physician’s directions.  In those rare instances when the medication must be given during the school day, it should be taken by the student in the presence of the school nurse, secretary or principal.

Prescription medications, including inhalers,  must be in the original container with a note from the parent and physician to include:  name of medicine, dosage, time of administration, dates to be given, and reason for medication.

Medications may be sent in by the day or week.  It is not recommended that students carry a full prescription bottle to be taken back and forth daily.

Students requiring medical attention must report to the nurse.  No medications should be placed in lunch boxes or school bags for students to self-administer.  All medications must be taken in the school office, in front of school personnel, so they are recorded correctly.  .

**Library**

The school library is staffed by a librarian and is available to the students during the school day.  Books may be taken out on a weekly basis.  A fine will be levied on overdue books.  Parent(s)/guardians are responsible for the replacement cost of damaged or lost books.  Appropriate conduct is expected at all times in the library.

**Lunch, Snacks, And Birthdays**

All students of St. Veronica IMS are eligible for the free government breakfast, hot lunch and snack during the school year.  This eligibility is confirmed by the parent/guardian signing the prepared form.

Breakfast is served in the morning before the 7:45 bell.

Hot lunch is served to the students at their prescribed lunch time.

Students may bring lunch from home. This should be a nutritious meal with a napkin included. Students are expected to clean their places after eating, pick up papers, dispose of them in the trash containers, and carry their tray to the indicated station.                                                  Respect and courtesy are to be shown to the adults who supervise and assist during this time.

Fruits and vegetables are provided three day a week during the morning recess.

Soft Pretzels are sold on a weekly basis. The students pay on Friday for the following week.

Children may also bring a snack for recess. A snack refers to a single nutritious food item.

On a Student’s birthday, families may send a single food item such as cupcakes or a piece of fruit. No liquids, cake or pizza are permitted.

**Parents/Guardians Involvement**

Parents and guardians must weigh seriously their obligation to educate their children in an atmosphere of love and respect for God and others.  The home is the first school of the social virtues essential to any well-ordered society.

Active cooperation of parents and guardians is expected and required as follows:

Sending their child to school physically fit, clean, properly dressed and fed.

Assisting their child’s spiritual, academic, and moral development through careful attention to his/her report card, supervision of home study and behavior, and cooperation with the School in matters of activities, recreation, academics and discipline.

Discovering their child’s special interests and talents so that they may be developed to the fullest.

Sending a written explanation each time their child is absent from school.

Setting a good example by personally refraining from any activity that would violate School policy, Catholic teachings, or the law.

Attending Back to School Meeting in September and Progress Report Meetings during the school year

Taking an active role in the school fundraisers.

The failure of a parent/guardian to take seriously his/her responsibilities in this area are grounds for action by the School, including dismissal of the student.  Any form of abuse will be reported to ChildLine and other legal authority.

**SACRAMENTS**

First Communion and Reconciliation (Penance) are received in grade 3 each year.

Confirmation is received every year in grade 6.

New students whose parents request Baptism will need one full year of preparation, and will be baptized at the Easter Vigil with the approval of the Pastor of the Parish.

New students who have not received First Communion, Reconciliation, or Confirmation must complete religious instruction before receiving the sacrament.

**SAFETY**

**a. Fire Drills**

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis.  The students are instructed to leave the building quickly and in silence when the alarm rings.  Exit routes are posted in all areas. Failure to cooperate is considered a serious behavior infraction and threat to general safety.

**b. Lock-down**

The school will have an immediate Lock-down in the event of an emergency.  All doors will be locked and no one, including parents, will be permitted to enter. Practice will take place during the school year.  Failure to cooperate is considered a serious behavior infraction and threat to general safety.

**c. Regulations**

The following regulations have been established to insure safety.  They must be adhered to by each student.

* Running is not permitted at any time within the school building or in moving from one place to another on the school premises.
	+ A student may never be inside the school building alone.
	+ No student may leave the school premises at any time without permission.  A violation of this regulation will result in automatic suspension.
	+ Students may not open an exit door to allow someone to enter.
	+ All visitors must report to the school office. No visitors, including parents / guardians, may walk through the school building, nor into a classroom.

**d.       Volunteers**

* + Any Parent / Guardian volunteer in school or for a field trip is obliged by law to have full safety clearances.
		- FBI Fingerpring
		- Criminal Record
		- Child Abuse Record
		- Mandated Reporter training
		- Protecting God’s Children Seminar

**e.  Smoking**

The school is a smoke-free environment.  No smoking is allowed in the school building or yard.  Violations will result in suspension from school and school-related activities until a conference can be arranged with the parents and the principal. Adults must adhere to this regulation as well.

**Telephone - School Office**

The telephone in the school office is for business only.  A student may use the phone only in the case of an emergency with the permission of the Principal.  **Permission will not be given to a student to call home for forgotten supplies, homework or to communicate social plans.  Please do not request that a child phone home during or after school for any reason**.

If a child is detained at school for any reason without prior notification, permission will be granted to use the phone.  Urgent messages for students will be relayed to them from the school office.  During class time, neither student nor teacher may be called to the phone.  Messages can be given to the school secretary when necessary, and they will be given to the appropriate teacher.

**Transfer Of Students**

If a student is transferring to another school, parents are requested to arrange a meeting with the principal to obtain the official transfer form.  **In the event of an outstanding balance no records, report cards, transfers, etc. will be given to the family or to the new school until all amounts are paid in full**.  School records will be forwarded to the child’s new school upon request from that school.  Every change of address, phone number, or family name must be reported to the principal as soon as possible.  Up-to-date records are needed in case of an emergency.

**Transportation**

**a. Bus**

The Philadelphia public school district provides bus passes for students in grades K - 8 who reside at a distance greater than two miles from the school.

**b. Car Pick-up**

Parents must pick up and drop off students on Randolph Street. Absolutely NO car is permitted to enter the schoolyard at any time with the exception of official school personnel.   Teachers will oversee student pick-up procedures daily.

**Visitors**

Visitors are always welcome by appointment.  To arrange for a visit, visitors should contact the school office.

Parents coming to school to bring forgotten articles or to relay messages should come to the school office.  Classes may not be disturbed for these reasons.  Parents may not confer with a teacher or visit a classroom between the hours of 7:50 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., unless the Principal gives permission for such a visit.

All visitors must report to the school office and sign in the Visitor’s Log when entering the building.  An atmosphere of quiet respect for the learning rights of others should prevail throughout the school building.

Saint Veronica, An Independence Mission School

Transforming Young Lives and Communities



Student - Parent Handbook



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