

SACS Middle School

Handbook and Policies



Knowledge, Faith, Community

Revised July 2022

Table of Contents:

[RATIONALE](#)

[GOALS AND OBJECTIVES](#)

[PHILOSOPHY](#)

[SUMMARY OF MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS](#)

[PROMOTION POLICY](#)

[ABSENCES](#)

[TARDIES](#)

[ABSENT AND MISSING WORK PROCEDURES](#)

[HOMEWORK](#)

[ACADEMIC HONESTY](#)

[PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS](#)

[ADVISORY](#)

[EXPLORATORIES](#)

[RETREATS](#)

[BATHROOM POLICY AND LOCKER BREAKS](#)

[GENERAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS](#)

[ACCOUNTABILITY CARDS](#)

[UNIFORM POLICY](#)

[CELL PHONES](#)

[CHROMEBOOKS](#)

[LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES](#)

[CONFLICT RESOLUTION](#)

[POSITIVE COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS](#)

Welcome to Saint Andrew Catholic Middle School. The purpose of this handbook is to inform parents and students of the policies and procedures of the middle school, especially any that may differ from the elementary grades. This is an addendum to the basic Saint Andrew Catholic School's parent/student handbook.

RATIONALE

Young people undergo more rapid and profound personal changes during the years between 10 and 15 than during any other period of their lives. The self-contained elementary classroom with one primary teacher is not able to fully address the spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social-emotional needs of the middle school student. For this reason, the middle school model was created as a transitional period between elementary school and high school.

In order to meet their developmental needs, capabilities and talents, grades five through eight have a homeroom, advisory, and several educators teaching core subjects. They are offered a wide variety of exploratory classes. They also have opportunities to participate in student council and other leadership groups.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Saint Andrew Catholic Middle School endeavors to create an atmosphere of rigorous curriculum, academic excellence, and creative freedom within a strong Catholic Identity. We foster the development of self-discipline, personal responsibility, and accountability within the teachings of the Catholic Church and principles of discipleship. We believe that our middle school is an educational community where students, parents, and faculty work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and caring.

PHILOSOPHY

Saint Andrew Middle School strives to create welcoming and inviting classrooms where learners and learning are celebrated. A climate that is safe, warm, inviting, and caring promotes a sense of community.

Our philosophy is that we each need to hold ourselves responsible and accountable for our thoughts, words, actions, and behavior. Students are encouraged to practice self-discipline that is closely monitored by their accountability card.

SUMMARY OF MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Saint Andrew Middle School Students will:

- show respect for self, others, and property
- be present and punctual daily, keeping absences to a minimum
- come to school in a neat, clean, complete school uniform, worn properly
- come to class on time, with a positive attitude to learn
- come to class prepared
- listen and follow directions when given
- follow middle school and class rules regarding behavior
- hold themselves responsible for behavior as to contribute to a positive learning environment
- have their planners/accountability cards with them at all times
- be responsible for recording all assignments in their planners
- have all assignments completed on time, demonstrating quality middle school work
- make-up absent work in a reasonable amount of time
- attend homework club following absences and as necessary
- use in-class free time productively
- communicate to teachers if they are having difficulty in class
- keep lockers clean and organized
- balance school work with other activities

Saint Andrew Middle School Teachers will:

- maintain the dignity of the student when correcting student behavior
- advocate for student needs to ensure student success
- maintain a neat, orderly, welcoming classroom environment
- post classroom rules and expectations
- provide clear expectations to parents and students
- be prepared to teach quality lessons
- post and clearly communicate daily assignments in the classroom and on the middle school website
- assign long term assignments well in advance of the due date
- follow stated middle school homework policy
- record grades on RenWeb in a timely manner
- provide midterm progress reports and quarterly report cards
- be available to help students with confusing or difficult content and assignments
- reply to emails, written notes, and phone calls in a timely manner
- maintain proper communication channels with parents regarding student progress
- answer questions from students and parents with an open mind and positive attitude

Saint Andrew Parents will:

- if Catholic, attend Mass with their children on weekends
- bring students to school on time
- ensure that students come to school in proper uniform
- ensure that school is a priority and help students balance outside activities
- show an active interest in your child's work and encourage them to do their best
- encourage your child's growth and improvement
- provide a quiet study environment
- ensure responsible technology use according to our acceptable use policy
- direct any concerns to the specific teacher
- check RenWeb grades, planner, and accountability card regularly
- attend student-led conferences, Back to School Night, and parent informational nights
- encourage students to direct concerns to the appropriate teacher in a respectful manner
- follow through on recommendations made by the school

PROMOTION POLICY

All middle school students in the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades must earn **36 points** in the five basic academic subject areas each year to be eligible for promotion and/or graduation. Students should attain at least 9 points per quarter, but must attain 36 points per year to pass to the next grade or graduate.

The five basic academic subject areas include Religion, Math, Science, English/Language Arts (ELA), and Social Studies. Points will be allotted in the following manner:

A = 4 B = 3 C = 2 D = 1 F = 0

Additionally, students **cannot fail the same subject for two quarters** in a given year to be eligible for promotion/graduation, regardless of point accumulation. Students are expected to maintain their quarterly point total throughout the year. Failure to do so will result in academic probation for the student and parents/guardians will be notified.

ABSENCES

It is important for students to be in school except for illnesses and emergencies. There is a direct correlation between regular attendance and student success. When absent, students miss both class work and homework. Missed instruction time, class lectures, and class discussion can negatively affect student learning. Teachers are not required to provide tutoring to catch a student up on missed class work or homework. However, homework club is available to assist students.

TARDIES

Being on time for morning prayer and each class is important for two reasons. First, students begin their day with procedures, announcements, and other important reminders that set the tone for the day. Secondly, entering the classroom after class has started is disruptive to other students.

Teachers take attendance at the beginning of each class period. Students will be marked tardy if they are not in class with all of their materials at the start of each period.

ABSENT AND MISSING WORK PROCEDURES

Absent Work

Absent work is work missed for an excused absence such as sickness or family emergency. Students have **2 days for every day absent** to turn in work for full credit. If that date passes, the assignment will be treated as missing work. If the student and/or parents know of an impending absence, teachers must be contacted well in advance.

Students returning from an absence have the following responsibilities:
fill out the missing assignment tracker

- fill out the absent form and return to the office in a timely manner
- attend homework club to get help with assignments and make up assessments
- submit absent work within the designated time frame according to middle school policy
- check RenWeb to track missing assignments
- stay up to date on current classwork in addition to absent work

Missing Work

Assignments that are not turned in on the due date are classified as missing work. Reasons for missing an assignment include losing it, forgetting it, not completing it, etc. Students must accept responsibility for tracking and submitting their missing work.

Missing work that is turned in will be graded as follows:

- **One day late:** maximum percentage possible is **75%**
- **Two days late:** maximum percentage possible is **50%**
- **More than two days late:** **0%**

HOMEWORK

Homework is designed to enrich and reinforce concepts learned during class time. Educational research shows that homework completion helps the student:

- Practice skills

- Review key concepts
- Prepare for assessments
- Build responsibility
- Develop a work ethic from an early age
- Improve time management
- Gain confidence
- Build self-esteem
- Learn study habits
- Receive valuable feedback
- Improve standardized test achievement
- Prepare for higher education and professional careers

As a general guideline, middle school students should complete 1-2 hours of homework each day. This may vary according to students' individual work and study habits. Good time management habits will decrease the amount of stress a student experiences in completing homework.

Weekend work may be necessary to prepare for assessments or to complete long-term assignments. Long-term assignments and projects will be assigned well in advance of their due dates. Students are responsible for writing down all assignment due dates and test dates in their planners.

Homework assignments aren't all written - students are expected to spend time studying for tests, developing reading comprehension (reading logs), and memorizing prayers.

Homework assignments are expected to be turned in on time and demonstrate quality middle school work. Homework will be graded as follows:

- **On time:** maximum percent possible is **100%**
- **One day late:** maximum percent possible is **75%**
- **Two days late:** maximum percent possible is **50%**
- **More than two days late:** **0%**

ACADEMIC HONESTY

It is our desire to see Saint Andrew middle school students become honest, self-motivated, life-long learners who ultimately take responsibility for their own learning. Dishonesty hurts others, prevents a fair education, limits a student's recognition of their own self worth, and reduces a student's ability to learn.

What is considered dishonest:

- looking at another student's paper during an exam
- talking to or communicating with another student during an assessment

- using any items that were not specifically allowed and approved by the teachers (notes, calculator, etc.)
- copying another student's assignment and turning it in as your own
- allowing a student to copy your assignment or exam
- plagiarism - copying from published material, including copying and pasting from a website
- not giving proper citation to a source

This is not an exhaustive list, but rather the most common examples of academic dishonesty. Any of these behaviors will result in an automatic 0% on the assignment and a discussion with parents or guardians.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Progress reports will be sent home at midterms. Report cards will be issued following each quarter. When report cards are sent home, parents or guardians need to discuss the report cards' contents with their students and sign each report card envelope. Students must return the envelope to homeroom teachers the next day. In addition, check RenWeb regularly for current information regarding scores on tests, quizzes, and assignments and current point total.

Ten absences in a quarter will result in the withholding of a report card for the quarter and a mandatory meeting where an action plan will be formed with all parties to ensure that the chronic absenteeism does not continue.

ADVISORY

The purpose of this class is to create positive relationships between students and teachers. Each student is assigned an advisor from the middle school team. An attempt can be made to deal with real issues that affect students such as conflict resolution, organizational techniques, and friendship skills. Students use this time to check their grade progress and current point total, planner usage, knowledge of the SLEs, and to voice individual concerns. Students are given the opportunity to journal about different topics each week.

EXPLORATORIES

Each quarter, students are given the opportunity to choose an elective class to promote exploration of new topics. Each teacher chooses a new topic every quarter to present to the students. These weekly classes are meant to cover subjects that range from the humanities and arts, to the sciences.

RETREATS

Students have the opportunity to participate in middle school retreats. We use activities designed to explore Catholic teachings, do service projects, develop interpersonal skills, and build our middle school community. There are usually reflection questions assigned the next week to extend the learning and make it more personal for each student. Retreat opportunities are essential to our Saint Andrew mission of forming the whole student and part of middle school curriculum. Attendance on retreat days is mandatory.

BATHROOM POLICY AND LOCKER BREAKS

In order for students to not miss instructional time, there are three scheduled locker and bathroom breaks throughout the day. Students should make their best effort to use the facilities and gather classroom materials as scheduled. Students are expected to respect these spaces during locker and bathroom breaks by keeping the areas neat and clean and noise levels to a minimum.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

All students, faculty, staff, and parents are expected to exhibit a Christian spirit by respecting self, others, and property, contribute positively to the learning environment, and follow school and classroom procedures. Students and adults recognize, accept, and celebrate one another's differences and diversity with a spirit of inclusiveness. These actions and attitudes support our school SLEs of knowledge, faith, and community.

ACCOUNTABILITY CARDS

Our discipline system was designed to allow parents, teachers, and students to be readily aware of positive behaviors, rule infractions, and to provide a concrete way to assess students' citizenship grades.

At the beginning of each quarter, students are issued an accountability card in their planner. The accountability card has places for teachers to give signatures that denote different student behaviors. The top section of the card denotes positive actions of the students that build the St. Andrew community. The middle portion of the card denotes areas of needed growth. The final portion of the card denotes more serious behavioral infractions that require immediate attention from both students and parents/guardians. Follow up action is discussed on a case-by-case basis.

The student's citizenship grade is assessed based off of the accountability card as follows:

- O 10 or more positive marks, no more than 3 negative signatures, no more than 3 tardies
- S+ Between 5 and 9 positive marks, no more than 3 negative signatures, no more than 5 tardies
- S No more than 3 negative signatures
- S- No more than 4 negative signatures
- N 5 or more negative signatures or 3 negative signatures in an area, any suspensions

Students are required to have their planners with accountability cards at all times. If students cannot produce accountability cards as requested, they will receive an ‘unprepared’ signature. If students *lose* their planner, they will receive a ‘non-compliance’ signature and will be charged \$20 for their planner’s replacement.

UNIFORM POLICY

Uniforms must be worn appropriately at all times. Students will be given a negative signature on the accountability for uniform infractions.

Uniform Requirement	Girls	Boys
Hair	Natural (original) hair color only Neat, clean, and tasteful Hair out of the eyes Extremes not permitted Hair accessories must be modest and in school colors	Natural (original) hair color only Neat, clean, well groomed Hair out of eyes Length to bottom of shirt collar Extremes not permitted
Shoes	Brown, black, navy blue Boots allowed for inclement weather (not to be worn in PE) No platforms, sandals, heels	Brown, black, navy blue
Socks	Knee high, tights, crew or ankle style- white, gray, navy	Solid crew or ankle socks that cover ankle- white, gray, navy
PE Shoes	Predominantly navy blue, black, or white	Predominantly navy blue, black, or white
Navy blue twill pants	√	√ Required for formal dress and Mass days
Navy blue twill shorts	√ (Q1 and Q4 only)	√ (Q1 and Q4 only)

Navy blue twill/plaid skorts	√	
Polo shirt - white or light blue, short or long sleeves	√	√
Oxford shirt- white long or short sleeves	√ Required for formal dress and Mass days	√ Required for formal dress and Mass days
SACS PE gym uniform	√	√
Cardigan or Sweater vest-navy blue	√	√
Tie- navy blue or school plaid		√ Required for formal dress and Mass days
Belt-plain brown, black, navy	√	√
Jewelry	Post earrings No hoops or dangly earrings, No bracelets (including scrunchies) Only flat band rings (no raised elements) No Smart watches	No earrings No bracelets (including scrunchies) Only flat band rings (no raised elements) No Smart watches
Nail polish	Clear or light pink polish No artificial nails	
Sweatshirts, etc.	Must be St. Andrew in class	Must be St. Andrew in class

Formal uniforms are worn on Mass days. Formal uniform for girls includes a skirt, white shirt, vest or sweater, and appropriate socks and shoes. Formal uniform for boys includes long pants, white oxford shirt, sweater or vest, plain blue or uniform plaid tie, and appropriate socks and shoes. No shorts.

Eighth grade students have the privilege of changing their footwear options. They must still wear socks and closed-toed shoes, but may choose the colors and patterns. Socks must adhere to the school dress code on formal uniform days.

Some examples of common middle school uniform infractions include:

- hair length and color
- not wearing a belt (or wearing a belt that is not plain black, brown, or navy blue)
- earrings, jewelry, and hair accessories
- untucked shirts
- non-Saint Andrew's jackets
- artificial nails
- nail polish colors other than light pink or clear
- writing on skin
- scrunchies worn as jewelry
- leggings with cut outs or designs

During the winter months students will continue to go outside for recess. They are responsible for bringing jackets and other gear appropriate for the cold weather. Middle school students are not required to wear snowsuits or snow pants, but should wear appropriate footwear. Students will not be allowed to walk in snowy areas without winter boots.

CELL PHONES

Saint Andrew strives to make a positive learning environment by limiting the use of cell phones in the school building. This includes other devices that link up to cell phones such as Apple watches. As soon as students enter the building, cell phones should be put away in student backpacks. This includes during EDP in the morning, in the gym when gathering for morning prayer, and in the hallways before school starts.

First thing in the morning, teachers collect student cell phones (and all other devices that link up to cell phones) during homeroom class. Teachers keep them in a secure place within their room. This collection policy ensures that no students have their phones with them during the day in their backpacks. It also allows for a secure location since student lockers do not have locks.

At the end of the day, teachers pass out student cell phones, however they are still not to be used until students have been picked up. This ensures students' safety as they walk through the hallways and interact with their peers at the end of the day.

If students need to contact their parents during the day, they may ask their teacher for permission to use their phones or go to the office to call home. If family members need to contact a student, they should call the front office and leave a message through the school secretary.

CHROMEBOOKS

Middle school students have the unique opportunity to enhance their learning through the use of Chromebooks. Students in 6th-8th grade each receive their own Chromebook for use during the year at school and at home. Students in 5th grade are issued Chromebooks that are used only at school. Every student is expected to bring their Chromebook to school fully charged each day and to each class throughout the day.

Computers serve as an excellent tool to enhance the learning experience, however they are expected to be used for academic purposes only. Students are expected to abide by the Chromebook Agreement that is signed at the beginning of the year. This includes but is not limited to topics such as appropriate content use, appropriate care for the machine, and responsibility to have it charged and ready for each day. Students are never allowed to play games on their Chromebooks in the school building, including before and after school hours.

All students are required to purchase insurance for their Chromebooks at the beginning of each school year. If damages or problems occur, students are expected to bring the Chromebooks to the office so that they can be evaluated. Inappropriate use or care for the Chromebooks can result in loss of Chromebook privileges. Students are still expected to do all required classwork if this occurs.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

As part of student growth, Saint Andrew encourages students to participate in leadership opportunities. All middle school students are seen as leaders for the younger grades and each other.

Our two main leadership groups are Student Council and National Junior Honor Society. These groups focus on service within the Saint Andrew and local communities, advocate for students' needs, and organize school events. Both organizations require their applicants to be in good academic standing, to demonstrate exemplary citizenship, to have recommendations from staff members, and to exhibit leadership qualities among their peers.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts are a normal part of everyday life of the middle school student. The middle school team is dedicated to helping your student understand conflicts and how to manage them, so that they can learn to solve problems independently. When handled in a respectful and positive way, conflict provides an opportunity for growth, ultimately strengthening the bonds within the community. Through instruction, intervention and practice, we hope to help students develop the 5 necessary skills of conflict resolution: communication, team work, problem-solving, stress management, and emotional awareness.

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

The Saint Andrew Middle School team promotes positive communication with parents and guardians. We encourage parental involvement and invite parents to work toward solutions for issues that will arise throughout the year.

Please know that we have chosen to be teachers, and middle school teachers in particular, because we feel called to a ministry working with young people and believe we have an

understanding of the uniqueness of the middle school student. We are committed to do our best to make this year a positive and successful experience for your student. We strongly encourage you to contact us with any concerns you might have. You can contact us through email, a phone call, or you may set up an appointment to meet in person.

We have middle school policies in place but realize that extenuating circumstances may arise and that students may need reasonable accommodations to our general procedures. These accommodations can be made with proactive, timely communication from parents and students. The middle school team hopes to collaborate with parents to support student success and we welcome constructive feedback about our middle school program.

Mrs. Vicky Simpson

Principal
Math, Science

Mr. Christopher Roy

Math, Religion

Ms. Natalie Benson

Social Studies, Religion

Mr. Ben Brockbank

ELA

I have read and I understand the policies and practices of Saint Andrew Catholic Middle School. I understand that the principal or Middle School Team reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time during the school year and that parents and students will be given prompt notification of such changes. We agree to support and comply with these policies and practices. We also agree to adhere to and support the policies in the basic school handbook and the acceptable use policy.

Student

Parent

Parent

Date