

St. Mary
Gate of Heaven
School
Handbook

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www.smgh.org

We at St. Mary Gate of Heaven School are a service to the people of the community. Our goal is to provide the children of Ozone Park and surrounding communities with an environment in which to grow as whole persons spiritually, mentally, and physically in a Catholic context modeled on gospel values.

Children of all faiths are welcome. The diversity of cultures and religions allows for the exploration of and the understanding of the needs of our students. We believe each child is special and unique.

Parents, as the first educators, have laid the foundation upon which the school builds. Together the home and school foster Catholic values and Christlike behavior.

Although our teaching of religious beliefs is systematic we do not simply “teach” our faith, we live it. Prayer, both personal and formal, is presented as an opportunity to express needs, grow closer to Christ, and enrich our lives.

As the children mature, responsibility and participation in the life of the community increase. Our children accept as part of their faith a responsibility to care for the less fortunate by sharing their resources and time.

We strive to provide intellectual opportunities for our students to develop to their full potential. The children in the primary grades are exposed to basic concepts in a logical and concrete manner. These concepts are built upon and added to throughout the intermediate and junior high grades. The students’ abilities to deal with abstract ideas are facilitated through cooperative learning and participation in group projects.

With the view toward educating the whole child, our physical education program strives to develop a healthy body and an understanding of health issues as they relate to youngsters today. It is our hope that our value-based family life program will assist our students in making sound moral decisions as they encounter contemporary issues.

The principal monitors the professional growth and performance of each teacher through observations, evaluations, and conferences. The use of innovative techniques is encouraged. Remedial and enrichment needs are met by teachers and specialists. Time shared with students outside the classroom and the ongoing professional development of our teachers give evidence of their availability and dedication.

School policies are determined by the principal with consideration given to suggestions from staff and parents. Handbooks for students and faculty are presented clearly and concisely.

Service on various faculty committees produces positive results and serves as an example of cooperation and dedication for our students. Through this we aspire to stimulate the respect and acceptance of each other that is so vital to harmony in the community.

The channels of communication between parents and faculty are kept open and teachers are available for parents as needed. Parents are eager to assist with the endless number of tasks involved in the running of a successful school.

The school building is used extensively as a meeting place and base of operations for activities ranging from religious education to sports. Fund-raisers bring members of the parish together and evidence a strong feeling of support of the school as well as providing enjoyment.

In the final analysis, our school serves as a bonding component. Our presence in the academic world permits us to empower our students with the ability to perform the work of the church in the secular world. Given the strong foundation and traditions of the Catholic faith, we send our children forward to work for the common good.

SCHOOL HOURS

Daily 8:20 - 2:30

School Office 8:00 - 3:00

First Friday of the Month – Dismissal at 12 Noon - No Afternoon Session

A monthly calendar is published. This calendar should be consulted for specials events and changes in the regular schedule.

All parents or guardians entering the school are to use the main entrance on 101st. Avenue. Adults are not to use the student entrances. Parents and guardians are to remain outside of the school yards. If a message must be sent to a teacher, please go to the main office and it will be given to the teacher. The teachers are responsible for supervising the students in the yard. This is not the time to speak with the teacher.

PARKING AND TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

Parents and others are asked to observe the parking and traffic regulations surrounding the school. These regulations are for the **protection and safety of all the children**. Illegal parking and double parking on 104th Street, 105th Street, and 101st Avenue create a hazard for everyone. Parking or standing in front of the school obstructs the entrance and dismissal of the children. The area marked by the yellow curb is a **NO STANDING SCHOOL DAYS 7am - 4pm** area. Cars parked or stopped in this area are a danger to the children. 104th Street is closed to vehicular traffic in the morning and at dismissal to protect the children. **Cars backing down the street present a very dangerous hazard**. School parents should never do this. There is ample parking on the surrounding streets. Our children learn from our example and will be more likely to follow regulations if they see adults obeying rules.

All are asked to be respectful to the Crossing Guard and obey the instructions given. Cooperation with the traffic rules will enable the crossing guard to protect the safety of the children.

ENROLLMENT

1. Priority for enrollment in St. Mary Gate of Heaven School is given to the children of active parishioners as space permits.
2. Children of non-parishioners and non-Catholics may be enrolled as space permits.
3. Children of non-Catholics will participate in the regular religion classes and attend school liturgies.

TUITION AND FEES

PLEASE MAKE ALL PAYMENTS BY CHECK OR MONEY ORDER. THIS WILL PROTECT ALL PARTIES.

1. A fee of \$50 is required for application to be admitted as a student. This fee is non-refundable.
2. Tuition

	Active Parishioner	Non-affiliated
One Child	\$ 3550.00	\$ 3850.00
Two Children	\$ 5700.00	\$ 6000.00
Three Children	\$ 7100.00	\$ 7400.00

Active parishioners are those who are participating in the liturgical life of the parish by regularly attending the Sunday masses and other sacramental celebrations. Active parishioners use the Church envelopes to support the work of the parish. A minimum yearly donation of \$ 250.00 is expected of active parishioners Your CHURCH ENVELOPE NUMBER must be provided to be listed as an active parishioner. Other Catholics and non-Catholics are charged the non-affiliated tuition

The tuition is divided into ten payments. Payment one is due on June 15th and each subsequent payment is due on the first of the month starting in September. Partial refunds will be made for children who transfer before the start of a school month. See section 8 of the Tuition Contract.

3. Returned Checks - a service charge of \$25.00 will be charged for checks returned for insufficient funds or other reasons. After two returned checks the payments must be made in cash or money order.
4. Late Fee - a tuition payment received after the 25th day of the month will incur a \$ 15.00 late charge for each month it is overdue.
5. The family tuition rate applies to siblings residing in the same household with the same custodial parent.
6. Field Trips - money will be collected to defer the cost of the buses and entrance fees. A signed permission form is required for all field trips.
7. Each school family is required to sell one box of candy in the annual Candy Sale in January and two chance books for the June Drawing.
8. After School - \$ 9.00 per day or \$ 40 per week for one child - \$ 65 per week for two children
9. Early Morning Drop Off – starting at 7:30 am - \$ 1 per day

TUITION BOARD

The Tuition Board is a group of parishioners who serve at the request of the pastor to deal with problems regarding tuition. All problems regarding tuition and fees are in the jurisdiction of the board. Requests for special arrangements in the payment of tuition and fees must be made in writing to the Tuition Board. Letters should be sent to the Tuition Board in care of the school. Families who are more than two months behind in payments will need to meet with the board to explain the problem and arrange a payment schedule.

MEDICAL

1. All children entering school in the City of New York must have a physical examination. (Forms are available from the school office) The examination must include a lead screening. **The results of the lead test and blood tests must be reported on the medical form.**

2. Immunizations - All children must have the following immunizations:

Polio - three doses

Diphtheria (TDAP) four doses – booster within two years of entering grade six

Measles - one dose after the age of 12 months and a second dose before starting school.

Rubella - one dose after the age of 12 months

Mumps - one dose after the age of 12 months

Hepatitis B – three doses

Chicken Pox (Varicella) – one dose

The law requires that children lacking the above immunizations be excluded from school.

3. Vision and hearing screening is done periodically in school. The school nurse will contact you if further evaluation is needed.

4. Dispensing Medication - the school will not administer or supervise the administration of any medication in school. Children should not be sent with medication to school. Students needing asthma medication or other essential medicine must complete and file a Form 504. The form is available from the school nurse.

5. Chicken Pox is a communicable disease. It is contagious for one week following the outbreak of the rash. Children with chicken pox must be kept home for a period of one week following the appearance of the rash. 6. Reyes Syndrome - Children with chicken pox, influenza, and other viral conditions should not be administered aspirin because of the danger of Reyes Syndrome. Check with your doctor to be sure.

HEAD LICE

Head lice are a common problem among school age children. The presence of head lice is not an indication of a lack of cleanliness. To prevent a serious problem please check your child's hair regularly. If the condition is found, there are a number of products available from your drug store to treat the problem. Children who are found to have the problem will be sent home until the problem is remedied. The problem can reoccur if clothing and bedding of the child are not treated. It is extremely important to be thorough in treating the problem. Recent studies have indicated that some lice problems persist because the lice have developed a resistance to the medication in the shampoo. The only guaranteed method to prevent a reinfestation is to diligently remove every nit from the child's head.

The school has a "no nit" policy. Children with nits (the eggs of the louse) in their hair will not be allowed in school.

ATTENDANCE-LATENESS

State law requires students to be in regular attendance at school except when excused for illness or other legal reason. Excessive absenteeism may have an adverse effect on a child's academic performance and progress, and must be reported to the Bureau of Attendance. **Students with excessive absences may be required to repeat the grade. Students that have more than ten illegal absences per trimester may receive a failing grade for the trimester.**

1. Please call the school office when your child is absent.

2. A written note stating the reason for the absence is required when a child returns to school.

3. To receive work or books for a child who is absent, please call the school in the morning to have the work ready for the afternoon dismissal. If a sibling is going to pick up the work, he/she should let the teacher know in the morning so that the work will be ready at dismissal.

4. Parents/ guardians will be called to pick up children who are nauseous or have a fever.

5. A student sent to school, whose parents expect him/her to be in school, but does not attend, is truant. A truant student will serve five after-school detentions to make up the work.

6. Students are required to be in school at 8:20 a.m. Habitual lateness will result in after school detention.
The school will contact the parent or guardian of any student with excessive absences or lateness.

EARLY RELEASE

Children will not be released from school before dismissal time unless a written note from the parent or legal guardian is presented. A parent/legal guardian or an adult, designated by the parent/legal guardian, must pick the child up at the school office. Early release from school should only be for pressing reasons. Please try to arrange dental and medical appointments outside of school time.

SUPERVISION

Supervision of the children on school grounds is not provided before 8:20 in the morning. Please do not send children to school before this time.

SCHOOL CLOSING

In cases of severe weather or other emergencies, the closing of school will be announced on the radio. WINS and WCBS carry the announcements of the closing. The closing will also be on the WINS and NewsRadio88 websites. If NYC Public Schools or the schools of the Diocese of Brooklyn are closed, St. Mary Gate of Heaven will be closed.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE RECTORY FOR INFORMATION.

LUNCH PROGRAM

All students will have lunch in school. Students will not be dismissed for lunch. Students are to bring their lunch to school. No glass bottles are to be brought into school.

On Thursdays pizza, Subway, or burgers will be sold. Please check the monthly calendar.
Students are expected to follow instructions given by the supervising adult.

UNIFORMS

The Flynn and O'Hara Uniform Company is the school's supplier. 1(800) 441-4122 is the company's toll free number. The uniform company has a store at 8000 Cooper Avenue (Atlas Park Mall) in Glendale. 718 894-6561

Pride in one's appearance is important to the development of a child. The complete uniform is to be worn at all times. The uniform is to be worn to and from school.

Girls: Grades 1 - 4

White uniform blouse or turtle neck with the plaid uniform jumper
Uniform Blue knee socks
Black shoes (Flat shoes with non-slip soles)*

Girls: Grades 5 - 8

White uniform blouse / knit shirt with monogram and navy blue uniform skirt
Uniform blue knee socks
Black shoes (Flat shoes with non-slip soles)*

Blue uniform slacks may be worn by all girls from November 1 to April 15th

Boys

Light Blue Uniform Shirt - Dress shirt or knit shirt with monogram
School tie – November 1 to April 15 – Grades 7 and 8 must wear a dress shirt with tie during these months.
Blue uniform slacks (Dockers or other styles are not acceptable)
Black shoes (Non-slip soles required)*

* The solid black sneaker like walking shoe is allowed. Black sneakers with lightning stripes or colored logos are not permitted. Shoes with logos are not acceptable.

For all children the blue uniform sweaters or uniform sweatshirts may be worn from November 1st to April 15th. Non-uniform sweaters or sweatshirts may not be substituted for the uniform sweater.

Optional Warm Weather Uniform for All Students

Khaki shorts
Uniform Knit Shirt: Light Blue for boys, white for girls
White Sneakers

Kindergarten

Children in this grade wear the gym uniform every day.

Gym Uniform

Uniform Shorts
Uniform T-shirt (the heather blue or gold is acceptable)
Sneakers

To facilitate the program students may wear their gym uniforms with uniform sweatpants and sweatshirt to school on their gym day. Substitutions for the gym uniform are not permitted. The regular uniform is to be worn if these guidelines are not followed.

Make up, dyed hair, large dangling, and multiple earrings, fad haircuts, or fad shoes are not appropriate dress for school and are not permitted for students in St. Mary Gate of Heaven School.

CURRICULUM

The course of studies at St. Mary Gate of Heaven School follows the guidelines of the Diocese of Brooklyn and the Standards established by the New York State Education Department. The program in religion follows the curriculum guidelines of the Diocese. The school religion program assists the parish in the catechesis of children for the sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Confirmation. The religion program at the school makes our school a special one. For the complete education of the child in religious programs it is essential that the lessons and values be reinforced in the home and that the family practice their faith.

Homework

The education of children involves both the classroom work and work at home. The reinforcement of lessons with home assignments is a proven way for children to master lessons. Homework is the responsibility of the child. It includes reading assignments and study, as well as written assignments.

Homework will be assigned on a regular basis according to the age and development of the children. All students in grades 3 to 8 will use the school assignment book. (Replacement during the year will be made at a cost of \$ 3.00.)

The importance of reading is paramount to the growth of a child. All children should be encouraged to read on a daily basis. Parents should take time to monitor the reading activity of their children. Children in the primary grades will profit greatly from having stories read to them.

It is also strongly recommended that parents/guardians monitor the amount of time and quality of their children's watching of television.

SCHOOL HEADING

The following is the required heading to be used by the children of the school on their work:

Name	Date
SMGH	Class

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Each year students in grades 3 - 8 will take a battery of tests to evaluate their progress in school. These tests are administered to all students in the Diocese of Brooklyn. The results of these tests are given to the parents in a Home Report.

Students in grades 4, 6, and 8 will take the tests required by the New York State Education Department. The tests are in the areas of English Language Arts, Science, , and Mathematics. The parents of children who fall below the state reference point are notified by the school.

SPECIAL TESTING

Some children experience difficulty in learning. The causes of the learning problem may be difficult to identify. For this reason some children will need the services of special testing to determine the best possible educational program. This testing is available through the Board of Education's Committee on Special Education. It will administer the proper tests and report the results to the parents. The school may require this special testing for some students.

REPORT CARDS

Student progress is reported to parents three times a year. The grades on the report card are an average of the classwork, tests, and home assignments for the trimester. The final report card in June reports the marks for the third trimester and an average of the year's work. Mid-semester progress reports are issued to those students who are not performing up to their capacity in certain subjects.

The parent will receive a copy of the report card for each trimester. The report cards will be distributed in December and March at parent/teacher conferences. The June report card will be sent home with the student on the last day of school.

HONOR ROLL

Grades Five - Eight

Principal's List - 95 in all subjects

First Honors - 90 in all subjects

Second Honors - 85 in all subjects

**Unsatisfactory or Needs Improvement marks in Personal Growth and Progress exclude a student from Honors.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Students are promoted annually in June. A student may be required to repeat a grade when in the judgment of the principal and teacher it would be an educational advantage for the child to repeat the course of work. This evaluation is based on a careful examination of classwork, tests, homework, and standardized tests. Parents will be informed of the possibility of retention after the March report card.

Some children may be required to attend a summer program to improve skills in order to be promoted to the next grade.

APPOINTMENTS BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians who desire to meet with teachers should call the school office or send a note to the teacher requesting a meeting. Please do not discuss items with the teachers when they are supervising the children on line in the schoolyard.

BOOKS

Textbooks are purchased through the New York State Textbook Program. A request to use state books is included in the Tuition Contract. The books are loaned to the children on a yearly basis. Students are responsible for the care of the books. The books are not to be written in and must be covered at all times. Lost or damaged books must be replaced by the responsible student. The June report card will not be issued until the cost of the missing or damaged book has been paid.

DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS

The goal of the disciplinary code is to have children develop Christian values that will form their lives. Obedience, authority, courtesy, respect of others and property, and trustworthiness are values which are being developed. Students must learn that they are responsible for their actions and must accept the consequences of those actions.

Teachers establish their own programs for discipline in their classrooms. The program of discipline is based on the age and maturity of the children.

The following guidelines will assist the parents and students in understanding expected behavior:

1. Students are to be respectful at all times. They are expected to use courteous and proper language. Obscene gestures or language toward teachers, administrators, staff, or fellow students will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

2. Students are not to be disruptive in class, halls, on school grounds, or on the school bus

3. Cheating is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action and a zero on the test, project, or assignment. Honors will be withheld from any student involved in cheating.

4. All students are expected to complete homework and other assignments promptly.

5. Students are expected to be in proper uniform.

6. Throwing snowballs or other objects on school property at any time is not permitted.

7. Students are to follow established classroom procedures.

8. Students are not permitted to have permanent markers in school.

9. Personal items such as radios, Walkman, CD players, video games, electronic toys, baseball or other cards are not to be brought to school. These items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent.

10. Gum is not permitted in the school building at any time.

11. Any student who does not attend an assigned detention will receive two days detention. Further failure to attend an assigned detention may result in suspension.

12. Participation in field trips and other school activities (dances) is contingent on good behavior during the school year.

There are several actions that are more serious in nature and will result in possible suspension from class or school, or expulsion.

1. Gross disrespect of school personnel, other children, or school rules

2. Possession, attempted sale and/or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or other controlled substances (including cigarettes) on the school premises or when in school uniform

3. The possession or use of objects that may result in injury to other students or school staff.

4. Vandalism - willful destruction of school property. Parents will be held financially responsible.

5. Fighting on the school grounds or in school uniform - **Physical violence is not a solution to problems and can jeopardize the safety of students. Therefore those fighting (the aggressor and the retaliator) are subject to disciplinary action. Students in grades 5 through 8 who are fighting may be suspended.**

6. Outside of school – behavior by students or parents that brings scandal or damages the school's reputation.

Violations of the above are serious and some may result in legal action. Each of these offenses will be evaluated by the principal. Depending on the factors involved, the principal may choose from the following alternatives:

1. Referral to an outside agency for professional assistance with the provision that evidence of continued assistance be provided to the school.

2. Suspension - Students on suspension are not allowed on the school grounds and may not take part in school activities for the duration of the suspension.

3. Immediate expulsion

ANTI-BULLYING /HARASSMENT POLICY

Purpose:

The school communities within the Brooklyn Diocese believe in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Research shows that students who learn in a safe and supportive environment succeed academically. Students have a right to learn in an environment free of any harassment that substantially interferes with their education.

Definition:

Bullying, bias-based harassment /intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons. It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal.

If not addressed, bullying can lead to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student's educational opportunities.

The behaviors include but are not limited to:

- **Physical:** physical violence, stalking, threats, aggressive or menacing gestures, exclusion from peer groups which is intended to humiliate or isolate the target (relational bullying)
- **Verbal:** taunts, teasing, derogatory language, derogatory jokes, name calling, slurs, spreading rumors
- **Written:** written or graphic material including graffiti containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically written and transmitted via internet, social messaging sites, blogs, instant messaging, text messages, cell phone, webcams,. This would also include forwarding such messages if received. This generally constitutes cyberbullying

Reporting Procedures:

- The targeted student, parent/guardian of a student or other students in the school (bystanders), or any school staff who believe that bullying has occurred should report the incident to the principal.
- The principal needs to conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties separately.
- The parents of all involved students should be notified.
- If it is determined that bullying has occurred the child who bullied is to be subject to consequences per the school's disciplinary code.
- Parents should be advised to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if the situation warrants such a report.
- Referral to counseling should be made for all parties if deemed necessary.
- The principal must follow up to see that the offending conduct has stopped.
- All students should be notified that retaliation against anyone who makes a report will not be tolerated and those that retaliate will be subject to disciplinary actions.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones may be brought to school by students in case of emergency. During school hours the phone must be off. *Phones that are used during the school day will be confiscated.*

TECHNOLOGY

Use of the school's computer network and access to the Internet will be afforded only to students who have submitted a completed "Acceptable Use Agreement." (Grades 5 – 8)

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION LAW

The Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law becomes effective July 1, 2001. A form will be sent home at the start of the school year to compile a list of parents and guardians who wish to receive 48 hour notice of a pending pesticide application. Please return the form to the school if you wish to be included on the list.

Where possible any applications will be made during the school vacations and with products deemed safe by the EPA. Notification regarding applications will be made three times during the year.

EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

The school has developed a crisis management plan to address situations that may involve the safety and welfare of students. Our plan is in place and addresses many situations that may occur. During the course of the school year

drills will be conducted to practice evacuation of the building and relocation to a safe area. Other drills will address actions to be taken in event of an intruder in the building. The purpose of the program is to provide a plan to be followed in event of a serious crisis, not to create fear in our students. Practice drills will enable everyone to act calmly in the event of an emergency.

In the event of an emergency, information will be provided to you as soon as possible through our school phone or another means. It is essential that a current listing of an emergency contact person and telephone numbers be provided to the school. Notify the school of any changes in phone numbers.

In the event of an emergency that requires the school to close prior to our regular time, **only the parent or the person named as the emergency contact will be permitted to pick up the student.** Authorization by phone will not be accepted in an emergency. The person that picks up the student will be required to provide identification.

NONDISCRIMINATION

St. Mary Gate of Heaven admits students of any race, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded and made available to the students at the school.

RIGHT TO AMEND

St. Mary Gate of Heaven School and the principal retain the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Prompt notification will be given if changes are made.

Revised: 9/1/2011