

# ST. MARK'S *Classical Academy*

*Small & Academically Rigorous & Joyful*



Student/Parent Handbook 2022-2023



## The Reformed Episcopal Church

In our modern society that seeks change for the sake of change, it is important to remember that God does not change, and that the Way to God has not changed. Only through Jesus Christ can men ever find abiding hope, peace, forgiveness and the acceptable way to know and worship God. In “keeping the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” The Reformed Episcopal Church is:

**BIBLICAL** - holding a faith and practice governed by the whole, unchanging, infallible and inerrant Word of God.

**LITURGICAL** - reverently worshipping God by using the liturgical forms practiced by the early church, restored in the English Reformation of the 16th century, and preserved in the traditional Anglican Book of Common Prayer of 1662.

**HISTORIC** - holding to the historic doctrines of the Christian faith founded upon the Holy Scriptures and summarized in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

Each person and all people need a place along their spiritual journey where they can know and sense the presence of God and truly worship Him, where they can receive spiritual strength and guidance for the week ahead, and where caring fellow Christians can encourage them along the way.

Rediscover the historic worship of the Christian faith —

Find out about the Reformed Episcopal Church!  
*Keeping the faith “once for all delivered to the saints”*

### St. Mark’s Reformed Episcopal Church

1162 Beverly Road, Rydal, Pa 19046  
(215) 884-7660 ☎ [www.stmarksrec.org](http://www.stmarksrec.org)  
Sundays - 10:00 am

Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to another year at Saint Mark's Classical Academy!

We want you to know that we are here to promote each student's growth in "wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." We thank you, parents, for entrusting your children to us and for joining with us in our commitment to a high quality classical and Christian education.

This school year will provide you, the student, with many opportunities, challenges, and decisions. The degree to which you will experience meaningful growth from them will be determined, in great measure, by your goals, work habits, and attitude. Children should remember that at this point in their lives their calling before God is found primarily in school life and obedience to their parents. Fulfilling these responsibilities to the best of their ability is the height of love, pleases God, and brings His blessing.

This handbook is an outline of the objectives, principles, habits, and expectations of our school. For us to serve you best in your parental responsibilities, and for the optimal success of your student, it is essential that school and parents work together to form and educate students. I ask that you keep it in a convenient place so that you may use it for reference throughout the school year, and be familiar with it before school begins. Saint Mark's Classical Academy expects that parents, together with teachers, will support and implement these expectations—for a unified and cohesive education. Familiarity with the contents will eliminate much uncertainty and answer most questions. We wish for each student a rewarding and successful school year.

Sincerely in Christ,



The Revered Dr. Jason S. S. Patterson  
*Head of School*

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge..." Proverbs 1:7

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## What is St. Mark's Classical Academy?

St. Mark's Academy is a classical and Christian school in the Anglican tradition. Founded as an educational ministry of St. Mark's Reformed Episcopal Church, the school offers instruction to students in Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade. We are committed to classical education and employ the time-honored medieval "trivium" as an educational philosophy and teaching methodology to equip pupils for the future with proven tools from the past.

Our Academy is a co-educational classical Christian school providing rigorous academic training in the language arts, history, mathematics, and sciences. Conveniently located in Jenkintown, we serve families from the surrounding suburbs as well as the city of Philadelphia with various church backgrounds who desire a Christian, morally wholesome, and academically enriching environment for their children.

Our purpose above all is to honor God, who made us for Himself. In a school setting we seek to do that by encouraging the children to use the talents and resources God has given each of them to the best of their ability and in a way which always shows love and concern for all of God's creation.

There is no more enduring gift that a parent can give a child than a sound Christian upbringing, including a Christian education. St. Mark's Academy endeavors to assist parents in this awesome calling, by providing an excellent educational foundation for children through utilizing the time-tested method of a classical education. Our ambition is to help parents build strong families, to the greater glory of God and the good of the students.

## **Our Mission**

The mission of St. Mark's Classical Academy is to endow our children with the tools of learning, and the wisdom of the ages, by nourishing their souls with truth, goodness and beauty, so that they may serve God and their fellow man with virtue, dignity, and strength.

## **School Prayers**

*Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who has committed to thy holy Church the care and nurture of thy children; Enlighten with thy wisdom those who teach and those who learn, that, rejoicing in the knowledge of thy truth, they may worship thee and serve thee from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*Almighty God, the Fountain of all wisdom, enlighten by thy Holy Spirit, those who teach and those who learn, that rejoicing in the knowledge of thy truth, we may worship thee and serve thee from generation to generation, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who livest and reignest with thee and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*O Lord, open our eyes to see what is beautiful, our minds to know what is true, and our hearts to love what is good; for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

*O Lord Jesus Christ, who dost embrace children with the arms of thy mercy, and dost make them living members of thy Church; give them grace, we pray thee, to stand fast in thy faith, to obey thy Word, and to abide in thy love; that, being made strong by thy Holy Spirit, they may resist temptation and overcome evil, and may rejoice in the life that now is, and dwell with thee in the life that is to come; through thy merits, O merciful Saviour, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.*

## **Our Goals**

Our school is committed to providing the following to our students:

- A worshipping community in which spiritual formation may flourish
- Superb academics to prepare students to excel in future educational and vocational pursuits
- Continual emphasis on integrity and humility through opportunities to serve our community

- The experience of beauty in art and music to increase understanding of the world we share
- An environment that fosters mutual respect, good manners and self-discipline

## **Educational Philosophy**

### ***Parents and the School***

In the Bible, God declares that parents have the primary responsibility of educating their children. For instance:

*And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.*

The church supports that role by encouraging and facilitating Christian nurture of a new generation in many ways. The church's aid in this endeavor proves successful only as parents assume their primary role. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate.

### ***The Holy Scriptures***

The particular standard by which St. Mark's Classical Academy seeks to structure and govern all that is done is the Bible, the written Word of God. The whole of Scripture provides the perspective from which our curriculum is taught, establishes the guidelines for the teaching methods we use, and is the basis for the discipline and environment maintained in the classroom.

### ***A Holistic & Christian Approach***

St. Mark's Academy has as its goal the development of each student's potential by teaching him/her to use his/her God-given capacities to his/her fullest. This involves character development, meeting social needs through wholesome friendships, training in Christian values and perspectives, developing a love for learning, and above all, encouraging students to serve God and do all things to the glory of

God.

Our motivation is our desire to see a generation trained that will love the Lord God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. Jesus is Himself the example of such self-sacrificing love. We intend for our students and parents to witness this love in the life of our teachers and staff, and pray that each student will learn to love others enough to sacrifice himself for their welfare.

## ***A Classical Approach***

St. Mark's Academy, in following the model of classical education, progressively nurtures its students through the three fundamental stages of learning: Grammar (foundational and informational skills), Logic (thinking and reasoning skills), and Rhetoric (integration and communication skills). Our program is designed to help each child develop spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and physically. We are committed to the following principles:

- *The Classical View of Reality* – Truth is objective and man is responsible to seek the Truth throughout his life.
- *The Nature of Man* – A human being is a physical and spiritual unity, and education must reflect that truth.
- *The Wisdom of the Ages* – Young scholars should be exposed to the finest minds in the history of the world and the great ideas that they discuss.

Because we recognize that the primary responsibility for the training of children belongs to parents, interwoven throughout the academic program are strong Christian family values of moral integrity, respect for self and others, and the cooperative effort of school and home. At St. Mark's our emphasis is not only on the three R's of Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic, but also the three R's of Respect for authority, Responsibility before God and man, and Resourcefulness in the execution of assigned tasks. The St. Mark's Academy motto is from Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge."



## ***Our Faculty***

St. Mark's Academy is committed to providing a high-caliber staff of educators who embrace the philosophy and principles of Christian and Classical education and who are committed to the full integration of faith and learning. We maintain a low student-teacher ratio so as to provide an effective, personal learning environment. In this setting our teachers act not only as instructors but also as mentors and Christian role-models.

### **Statement of Faith**

1. We believe the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe in one God, infinitely perfect and eternally co-existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the full deity and humanity of Jesus Christ.
4. We believe in the real, historical fall of man in the Garden of Eden, resulting in mankind being under the wrath and curse of God. Hence, all men are born with a sinful nature, are spiritually dead and under judgment, and are in need of salvation.
5. We believe that justification before God comes by grace through faith in the substitutionary atonement of Christ apart from our own works.
6. We believe in the literal, physical resurrection of Christ in a glorified body and His ascension to the right hand of God the Father, from whence He rules the universe and intercedes for His people.
7. We believe in the Church's obligation to live under the lordship of Christ by obeying the Ten Commandments, upholding godliness as set forth in the Bible, and to evangelize and spread His kingdom by making obedient disciples of all nations.

8. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers within the body of Christ.
9. We believe in the literal second coming of Christ, a final judgment of all men by God, and an actual, eternal heaven and hell.

Below are listed the two most famous of the Church's statements of faith. They summarize the basic teachings of the Bible and what the Church has called, following Jude's lead, the "faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3). These teachings are also commonly referred to in contemporary America as, the "basics of the faith."

### **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting. Amen.

## **The Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man: And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried: And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures: And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: And he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets: And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

## **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

Saint Mark's Classical Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship, and financial assistance programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP & OVERSIGHT**

Saint Mark's Academy is the education ministry of Saint Mark's Church, a parish of The Reformed Episcopal Church (REC). The REC was formed in 1873 to preserve and promote the orthodox witness of the Episcopal church, reflecting the English Reformation. The Reformed Episcopal Church upholds the Bible as the very Word of God and final authority in all matters of faith and life; it is adamant in declaring the Sanctity of Life and traditional Christian morality as rooted in the Ten Commandments and nurtured in the Sanctity of Christian marriage and family.

A Board of Advisors assists the Rector in the administration of the school. The Rector serves as the Head of School and is charged with the general oversight of the school. The Vestry of St. Mark's Church is responsible for the financial oversight of the school.

## **ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS**

The year 2012 was the inaugural year of St. Mark's Classical Academy. Our school is modeled after other classical Christian day schools of the Reformed Episcopal Church. St. Mark's Academy is a member of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS) as well as the Anglican Schools Association (ASA).

# Academic Goals & Curriculum

## *Academic Disciplines and the Bible*

Our goal is to give students the foundational, academic tools necessary to become independent, excellent, and productive citizens in society as well as life-long students of the Holy Scriptures and of God's created works. This necessarily includes instructing students in the knowledge and understanding of both the Holy Scriptures and of God's creation.

*The Christian Faith*—to teach students, by question and answer, the basic doctrines, patterns of worship, and practices of Christ's Church as established by the ministry of the Holy Spirit down through history. The Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, as well as the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Reformed Episcopal Church are our standards for teaching the Christian Faith. In addition, students will be trained to sing the Psalms and hymns of the historic Church.

*Righteous Character*—To cultivate in children the seed of faith, to demonstrate daily total dependence upon God for every blessing they have, and to encourage them to place their faith and hope entirely in Him. This necessarily includes promoting children's love of God, which, by His definition, is the whole-hearted keeping of His commandments (Matthew 22:35–40; Deuteronomy 6:5–7; John 14:15).

*Calling*—To foster in children the desire, ability, and sense of responsibility for developing expertise in some field of God's creation in order to bring that field under the dominion of Christ through their life-long service to Him.

*Glory to God*—To bring glory to God alone in this small but important part of the building of His kingdom.

## ***Rework***

It is an obligation before God to produce excellent work and to do it well. Rework is at the heart of the pedagogy of a classical and Christian education. Rework holds students accountable, and teaches them to take pride in their work, and to pursue excellence by God's example. It also trains them to produce abiding work that has integrity. Grading can therefore never simply be an assessment; it is a call to improvement—which should then happen. Expect much of a student's work to pass through several levels.

## ***Achievement Testing***

St. Mark's administers standardized achievement tests (not a minimum standards test) to all students 2nd grade and above. Parents and students are notified the week before to ensure timeliness and so that students are well-rested. While this testing is not the goal of the entire year's work, it does furnish both the school and the parents with helpful information about a student's progress in various areas. Students enrolled in Grades 3 & 5 are required by the State of Pennsylvania to participate in standardized testing. Students of St. Mark's Academy who fail to attend our testing dates will have to make other arrangements (that do not interfere with regular school hours) to comply with the state's requirements. Faculty at St. Mark's Academy may be available to administer make-up tests after school hours, however, hourly fees (paid to St. Mark's Academy) will be added to the balance of your account.

## ***Athletics***

As opportunities arise, St. Mark's involves its older students in athletic competition, preferring lifetime sports to temporary ones, aiming for development and mastery of individual as well as team coordination. Physical education is taught at school; regular exercise may be required to be accomplished at home, recorded and signed for to receive credit. Students in Grade 1 and above will be instructed in the discipline of Fencing during the course of the regular school day (once weekly).

## ***Curriculum: Grammar, Logic, & Rhetoric***

Although our standards and goals are high, average children happily achieve them each year. Proven teaching methods are used to produce academic excellence, self-discipline, and a sense of accomplishment in our students.

St. Mark's uses the best available material from a number of different curriculum publishers: Rod and Staff; Christian Schools International; Veritas Press; Memoria Press; Classical Academic Press; and Saxon Publishers are among them. The faculty at St. Mark's keep abreast of good, new materials being published, and continually work to improve what they are presently using.

### ***The Arts***

Musical, Visual, and Fine Arts are central to a complete and classical education in the love and fear of God. All students are: taught voice, to read music, to play the Recorder and to sing in the Choir.

Students learn to draw and paint with knowledgeable skill. Art History and the basics of design undergird the program.

### ***Field Trips***

Field trips are an important part of our students' education. All field trips are chosen for their instructional nature in addition to the enjoyment they bring to the students. Notification of a field trip is sent home by the teacher outlining the specifics of the trip. Uniforms are to be worn on field trips. Though students must cover all costs of the trips, it is not our intention that any student be prevented from participating merely because of financial reasons. Be sure to notify the teacher ahead of time if finances are an obstacle, so that provision can be made.

Students are expected to exercise self-control, and respectful, obedient attitudes on all field trips as in any other school activity. Teacher or room mothers will contact drivers for transporting the class. All students will need seat belts.

## ***Grading***

Because St. Mark's maintains high academic standards for its students, it is important for parents and students to realize that while earning high grades may have been easy in a prior school experience, that may not be true for the student here. Inflated grading systems have become the norm in most schools; we have pledged ourselves not to raise grades simply to gain the favor of parents. This is in no one's best interests.

St. Mark's grading scale (below) is identical to many other school systems' scales. In addition, to reflect a student's progress, report cards will also show "S" grades where a number grade is not appropriate for satisfactory: S for satisfactory, I for incomplete, or U for unsatisfactory will be used. It should be remembered that the training is the important thing, and not the grade. Grades simply serve as indicators for improving the educational experience, wherever needed.

Students receive grades as follows:

<u>Superior</u>	<u>90-100</u>	
	97-100	A+
	93-96	A
	90-92	A-
<u>Well-done</u>	<u>80-89</u>	
	87-89	B+
	83-86	B
	80-82	B-
<u>Average</u>	<u>70-79</u>	
	77-79	C+
	73-76	C
	70-72	C-
<u>Must Improve</u>	<u>60-69</u>	D
<u>Failing</u>	<u>0-68</u>	F



*Turning in work late:* For each day an assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 10%. Assignments turned in more than 3 days late will not receive credit. There are 2 exceptions: (1) If a student has an unplanned absence, the due date will be extended by the number of days he/she was absent; (2) If a student had a planned absence of 3 or more days, the due date may be extended by half of the number of days they were absent.

Teachers also share their observation with the parents periodically with written forms or conferences. Term “D’s” or “F’s” initiate a probationary period; final “D’s” or “F’s” must be raised to acceptable work, to the school’s satisfaction. This normally occurs during a Summer Term, and must be completed before advancement and/or graduation from the school. Additional fees (for Summer Term) may apply.

### **Tests**

Tests are scheduled regularly in most subjects. As students advance through the grades, they are being trained to prepare and study for tests. The responsibility to be prepared becomes more and more the student’s own. An assignment to study or read text book material is every bit as important an assignment as written homework. Teachers will schedule major tests (ones for which students must study) so they do not pile up on any one day. Ordinarily, Monday is not used as a test day (math excepted).

Graded tests are reviewed weekly by the Headmaster and then sent home for parents to look over, review with the student, and sign. All tests are then to be returned to the teacher. These Test Packs (or “Friday Folders”) are a primary means for teachers and parents to communicate, and for parents to be informed about their student’s progress.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter. The grades recorded on them represent the student’s objective performance record and the teacher’s best judgment as to the achievement of each

student for that particular marking period. Tests, classwork, participation, and homework performance comprise the basis for the grades.

At any time, of course, parents or teachers are free to arrange conferences to discuss the progress of a particular student.

### ***Honor Roll***

St. Mark's maintains two honor rolls: the High Honor Roll which is achieved by all A's and the Honor Roll which is earned by having all A's and B's.

### ***Homework Assignments***

Homework forms an essential part of the academic program at St. Mark's. Students should expect some form of reinforcement homework most nights, doing the school's work in the home setting, under parental oversight. The amount of time a child needs to complete homework varies from grade to grade and child to child, but the following chart serves as a guideline for how long it should take a typical student at St. Mark's to complete daily work at home. Learning how to do work at home efficiently is another key life skill but can vary significantly. New students and their families will likely face adjustments during the first year, and should communicate closely to effect these skills throughout the first year. We learn by doing— kinesthetically, with our bodies, and in various environments.

K	~20 minutes
1–2	~30 minutes
3–4	~45 minutes
5–6	~60-90 minutes
7–8	~1–2 hours

To promote family attendance at worship, lighter assignments are generally given on Wednesday nights, over weekends and on select feasts/fasts of the Church Year. Homework time may be significantly longer for those new to the school but improve as new work habits, knowledge and skills are acquired. Skills in time-management, efficiency, prioritization may be lacking or deficient, which will also lengthen

work time significantly. Sometimes other problems need to be solved. When Homework is consistently beyond normal levels, parents should always contact the teacher and schedule a conference to identify problems, and to coordinate solutions. Makeup work, remedial work, or supplemental material may be assigned over holidays (and summer book lists will be assigned, with reports due on the first day of school), but otherwise breaks are meant to be periods of refreshment.

Students learn that a full day of work is their primary vocation at this stage in life. With proper time management and organizational skills, they can and should be able to enjoy recreation, friendships, hobbies, and family time together. We love to learn, want to learn as much as we can, and enjoy accomplishing this goal through our work.

Homework is collected daily by the teachers. Parents are not to e-mail or bring homework to school for students. Continued laxity in homework completion will result in disciplinary action, such as loss of lunch recess or, in extreme cases, suspension. Parents can check the progress of these assignments by reviewing the test packets. Missing assignments should be noted by teachers.

Students (Grade 1 and above) will have assignment notebooks or folders with each day's assignments recorded. Parents are asked to sign these folders/notebooks nightly. Important notes for the teachers or school will often be placed in these folders as well. Homework folders and assignment books are a primary means for Home-School communications.

Older students will be expected to write down assignments daily and test schedules weekly. Their assignment books will be checked by the teacher periodically to train them in this responsibility.

Parents can be of great help by establishing a routine homework place and time, free from distraction early in the evening.

## ***Accelerated Reader Program & Summer Reading***

St. Mark's does all it can to produce readers, who love to read as a pastime as well as for work. A classical education is highly verbal in its orientation. The school maintains a growing library. An Accelerated Reader list is provided for each grade level. Students always have an AR book in their desk or on hand, to read in spare moments, or to take home with them.

The Summer Reading Program is designed to encourage continued progress and use of reading skills through the summer. A required book list is sent home with the final report card of the year. Outstanding performances in the Summer Reading Program is recognized in the early Fall. Completed summer reading requirements also give a student an A test grade in English for the first test of the term.

## **Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten**

We strive to maintain a well-structured and also a home-like atmosphere in our kindergarten classes. We want you and your children to be comfortable here. Children of this age blossom and thrive under warm, personal attention. It is our desire to see every one of our kindergartners develop a lasting self-confidence, curiosity, and joy in learning. We hope they will progress all the way to 8th grade, and truly be a graduate!

## ***Faculty & Staff***

The members of our faculty and staff are selected carefully for their Christian commitment, teaching ability, their love for young children, and their desire to accomplish the same goals we have as a school. We put a lot of effort into the training and supervising of our teachers and staff, because they are the key to the effectiveness of our program. They will have a real influence on your children for many years past the students' actual kindergarten experience. We encourage you to get to know our Kindergarten staff. We believe it is essential that you feel

relaxed and able to communicate freely with those caring for your children.

### ***Admission Requirements & Enrollment Procedure***

We welcome all children of any race, color, national or ethnic group. Admission depends upon age, available class space, and the parents' desire for their children to be taught according to the curriculum and methods outlined in this handbook. Parents must keep their financial account with St. Mark's current.

The following papers must be submitted to the school office before enrollment into the Kindergarten program:

- Completed application form
- Completed medical information sheet and an up-to-date immunization record signed by a doctor or health clinic (OR an immunization waiver)
- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Financial agreement & fees paid
- Emergency Information Form

A member of the school's administration will meet with the parents, give them a tour of the facilities, and answer questions regarding admission.

### ***Children's Behavior***

We have found that busy, actively learning children find little time for misbehavior. The focus of our training is on directing and guiding children toward listening and obedience which, in the end, develops in them self-control and self-discipline.

As we guide our students' behavior, we always point them to God's requirements as expressed in the Ten Commandments. Children are taught that it is ultimately God whom they are obeying or disobeying. Education is always about spiritual formation; the question is how they will be shaped and by whom. We wish to work with you, the parent, making use of every opportunity.

Kindergartners follow a structure and a pattern in our school. They do not do things when and if they want. We have a set time, for example, for work and for activities (and where relevant for lunch and naps). This means that the children will enjoy themselves in a safe, predictable, and caring environment.

We try to be very consistent in explaining and enforcing our rules. If a child is asked to do something and ignores what we say, or does what we have asked him/her not to do, then punishment may become necessary. The punishment can be separation from the group for a time, missing a special activity, or a trip to the Office for a serious talk. We always try to make clear, at some point, why the punishment was necessary. We want the children to get the clear message that we are in control, and they are not.

We are here to help the children through their growing years. Our methods of discipline are never meant to humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.

Please stay in close communication with us, as we will with you, the parents. Often, parents can inform us of difficult situations their children are experiencing away from school which will help us prepare for possible behavior problems at school. We will also notify you if your child is showing continued disruptive behavior.

It is highly important that parents support our views on behavior and discipline. If we do not agree and cannot work together as a team, then we will create a situation that is not good for the children, the family, or the school. The children need to know that we are working together.

### ***Daily Activities***

The basic kindergarten schedule consists of the following daily activities:

*Morning devotions and news.* Each day officially begins with a time of committing ourselves to God in prayer and praise and hearing a portion of His Word either in the classroom (for Pre-K) or in Morn-

ing Prayer (Matins). We also daily pledge our allegiance to the flag, and discuss some news for the day: the weather, the month, the season.

*Class time.* Group instruction in the core curriculum and class seatwork time is scheduled during the morning. Periods are scheduled in which our students learn to concentrate and work hard on their phonics and math skills. The curriculum for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten is described below. At seatwork time, the children do all sorts of enjoyable activities to develop their ability in cutting with scissors, tracing, coloring, drawing, and writing with a pencil. As the year progresses, children learn to form the letters of the alphabet and the numbers correctly.

*Bible class.* Each day, children listen to a Bible story and work on memorizing verses and Christian hymns. In addition to receiving religious training during Bible time, the students also develop good listening comprehension skills and memory skills.

*Unit Study.* Every week brings the chance to study and explore firsthand new and interesting facts of science or social studies, various art media, and music. Teachers plan many of their daily activities and classes around themes for the month such as the four seasons, Thanksgiving and the Puritans and Pilgrims, the Christmas story, community helpers, safety, health habits, plant and animal life, the Easter story, weather, and various historical heroes.

*Restroom time.* Children may go to the bathroom at any time, but set times for restroom are provided for those who get “too busy” and forget. Good restroom manners and cleanliness are emphasized.

*Free play.* Kindergartners have several play periods each day. They play on the playground outside whenever the weather permits. They also use their classrooms for play time which contain many toys, books, puzzles, blocks, and other items to enrich the children’s play.

*Snacks and Lunchtime.* Parents of Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students are asked to send along a daily snack of some healthful food such as crackers, fruit, or raw vegetables. At both snack time

and lunchtime, good manners are encouraged. We teach the children to give thanks to God for their food. (Students who have forgotten a lunch will be fed a packaged “lunchable” and billed).

*Music, poetry, and stories.* Throughout each day, children are taught fun songs, nursery rhymes, poems, and finger plays. The teacher reads stories to the children every day as well. We regard these activities as absolutely essential in helping our kindergartners to become joyful learners, good readers, and articulate adults. Stories, in particular, help form the moral imagination of a child.

*Recess and Motor Skills.* Thinking skills are built upon motor skills. Group play is also important for refreshment, imagination and development. Temperatures can change rapidly in a day, or in an hour. Please check the weather and make sure your child is ready for the day. We will be outside for recess whenever the weather permits.

*Afternoon activities for Kindergarten.* After lunch and a story time, a rest period is scheduled. The length of time shortens somewhat as the year advances and the children mature. All children are required to rest part of the period, and then the non-sleepers are allowed to read a book or do some other quiet activity at the teacher’s discretion. The afternoon schedule also includes a snack, opportunity for individualized instruction and practice, free play, and special enrichment, seasonal, and art projects.

*Clean-up and departure.* Children are encouraged to take responsibility for cleaning up their own play areas and to help in general pick-up. We also help them learn to pack their own bags and put on their wraps by themselves. The class is then led to a designated spot to await the arrival of parents.

## **Curriculum**

Children enrolled in St. Mark’s Pre-Kindergarten are trained in important basic skills including recognition of left and right; critical size, directional, and comparison vocabulary, the correct use of scissors, crayons, and pencils; an introduction to various art media



and to simple music concepts; recognizing and using the basic colors and shapes; and age-appropriate physical education. Each class will be taught many Bible stories, verses, and simple Bible truths about God and His creatures. Each class will also explore a variety of science and history themes throughout the year.

Kindergarten provides a solid readiness foundation laid for future reading and math. Children will vary in their mastery of these subjects for many reasons: age, interest level, and maturity, for instance. However, we strive to help each child in Kindergarten to develop proficiency in the following areas:

- Reciting and printing correctly the letters of the alphabet.
- Learning the sounds of the letters; and then learning to sound out and blending long and short vowel words, and consonants. (a full phonics program)
- Recognizing and printing correctly their own names.
- Writing sentences by dictation as well as short stories (after initial phonics)
- Reading from books aloud in class daily as well as at home
- Recognizing the numbers 1-100.
- Counting up to 100 objects.
- Printing correctly the numbers 1-100.
- Counting by 1's, 10's, and 5's, then by 2's and 3's.
- Adding and subtracting through the 10 family and "twins," before then beginning basic multiplication.
- Understanding a variety of math concepts such as the use of clocks, calendars, thermometers, money, fractions, ordinal numbers, story problems, place value, and measurement.
- Learning by various unit themes (seasons, friends, shapes, animals, helpers, body, machines, etc..).
- Developing fine motor skills, coordination, forms of movement,

- Eye-hand, -foot, -body coordination.
- Developing social skills: self-control, cooperation, trust, feelings, manners, empathy, etc...
- Developing communication skills, imagination, following directions, problem solving skills, listening skills, etc...
- Developing spiritually: prayer, thankfulness, forgiveness, kindness, respect for God and creation, patience, etc...

Each of these skill areas is extended to a greater depth and breadth so that the student develops mastery more fully. New students learn these things quickly in the group-classroom setting. On the foundation of our comprehensive phonics program, children can advance in the reading skills necessary to become strong third and fourth graders, when they encounter more difficult English.

### ***Field Trips***

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes may have several field trips scheduled in the course of the year. These are important times of learning and becoming acquainted with our community. Parents will always be notified in written form of the location, date, time, and purpose of the trip at least two days in advance. Students are supervised carefully, wear name tags, and are seat-belted at all times in vehicles. Some enjoyable trips our students may take are to the pumpkin patch, nature conservatories, museums, the public library, farms, and more. We also invite guests into our classrooms from time to time such as policemen, doctors, farmers, dentists, and weathermen.

## **SCHOOL DAY**

### ***Arrival/Departure***

8:00 am - 8:15 am. Arrival (students must be in class by 8:20)  
 3:15 pm. Dismissal (To avoid late fees, students must be  
 picked up by 3:25)

## **Attendance-Related Policies**

### ***Daily Schedule***

To obtain full benefits from the academic program, and of character development, a student must have a pattern of regular attendance and must arrive on time. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness not only handicaps the individual student, but also has a negative effect on all those who make the effort to be present for school and for those who arrive on time.

It is the responsibility of parents to see that their child arrives for school on time. If a pattern of absenteeism or tardiness develops, the administration will notify the parent and seek to amend the problem.

Teachers make every effort to capture the attention of the students during the opening moments of class. When this opportunity is disrupted, the opportunity may be lost, and the teacher's plans thwarted. Grammar School students who accumulate 3 or more tardies per quarter will have Honor Roll status reduced by one degree, and will be given a detention, with additional duties (including cleaning) to help them amend their habits.

Teachers make every effort to capture the attention of the students during the opening moments of class. When this opportunity is disrupted, the opportunity may be lost, and the teacher's plans thwarted. Consider this: a student five minutes tardy can cost a teacher 45 minutes in lost instructional time when the effect on the class is taken into account. A student who is tardy 5 minutes every day, by the end of the year has lost nearly three days of instructional time (15 hours).

### ***Planned Absences***

Attendance at school provides students with a progressive and sequential classroom experience. It is generally impossible for an absent student to recover fully what he has missed. For this reason, student absences should be kept to a minimum. Absenteeism correlates strong-

ly with poor academic performance in some cases. Special recognition will be given at the end of the year to those students who have achieved perfect or nearly perfect ontime attendance.

Parents are ***strongly requested*** to schedule doctor or dental appointments and other necessary activities after school hours or during school breaks.

When a student will be out of school for another reason, and the time of the absence is known, it is the responsibility of the parents to contact the teacher, and secure the class assignments for that period of time. Please give teachers sufficient lead time to prepare these materials (2 weeks). If a student has an unplanned absence, the due date will be extended by the number of days he/she was absent. If a student had a planned absence of 3 or more days, the due date may be extended by half of the number of days they were absent. Makeup exams must be scheduled by the teacher within three (3) school days after the student returns.

Some absences—due to personal illness or to death in the family, for example— cannot be prepared for in advance. In such cases the student will be given as many days as he missed to make up his work, with no penalty. For such absences, parents should 1) notify the teacher as soon as possible, and 2) arrange to pick up homework from school so the student does not fall further behind than needed. (Please remember, teachers will not ordinarily have opportunity to assemble books and assignments until 3:30 p.m.) Upon returning to school the student is to bring a signed note from the parents detailing the cause of the absence.

If a student must leave school during the day, he/she must check out through the school office. This is for the protection of the child. A student who returns to school during the day must also check in through the office. (When picking up students during the school day, parents should report to the church office, rather than proceeding to classrooms.)

## **Chapel**

Education is about spiritual formation in all its disciplines. At the very heart of Christian education is the effort to direct our minds, hearts, wills, and loves to our chief purpose in life: glorifying God. As a part of this concern, daily prayer by the whole school begins and closes each day. Students learn that all work is offered to Him in prayer, as bookends of our daily calling, and acquire the virtue of habitual prayer.

In Chapel, as in the Bible classes, the focus is on the basic teachings of historic and Biblical Christianity. As a summary of the faith, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are used, while students learn the Grammar of traditional worship through praying the historic English Prayer services of Morning and Evening Prayer. Students hear the Bible read, pray the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer, and learn Proverbs, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and more.

Students will learn many of the historic hymns of the faith, and also develop a rich and varied musical repertoire, singing psalms and canticles. The calendar of the Christian Year is observed, teaching students that God not only has created time, but that He owns it and uses it to sanctify His people. Together, these all mold and shape the souls of students.

## **Lunch/Snack Time**

Children should bring a nutritious lunch from home. Neither refrigeration nor microwaves are available to students, so please pack accordingly. Students should also bring a water bottle daily (glass bottles are not permitted).

Students need food in order to study. Students therefore who do not have a lunch will be provided with a simple lunch and billed by the office at the cost of \$7.00.

During lunchtime, the supervising teachers train students in considerate table manners. Quiet conversational tones are encouraged. Students remain seated unless excused by a teacher. Students are responsible for their own cleanup and, on a rotating basis, for general cleanup.

Students may not share each other's lunches, and should not ask teachers to supply missing napkins, spoons, etc. from the school kitchen.

If a parent must bring a child's lunch to the school, it should be left in the office so as not to disturb classes. Special lunches brought by parents should arrive promptly by (or before) the beginning of the student's lunch period. Parents (or others) are welcome to join their children for lunch, but parents are requested to notify the teacher in advance, and all visitors should check in with the school office. Although we enjoy the benefits of being small and personal, building security is important to us all day long.

Students may bring a nutritious, low sugar snack for the mid-morning break. This should be individually wrapped, and should not require any preparation by the teacher. Candy is not permitted as a snack and soda is not permitted as a beverage for lunch.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE**

All policies should receive complete reinforcement at home. When there is an issue, parents are expected to discuss the matter with the teacher or administration, not with their children. The benefits to you, your child, and the teacher are well worth it!

### ***Policies/Miscellaneous***

- GUM chewing is not allowed on campus anywhere, at any time.
- LOST AND FOUND items will be kept for a limited amount of time, and efforts will be made to identify the owners. Items will be disposed of thereafter.
- CELL PHONES, IPODS, GAMING DEVICES, OR INTERNET ACCESS are not allowed during school, and are confiscated when seen. If parents desire their student to carry a cell phone, it must be labeled and left in the office (or in the classroom) upon arrival and retrieved upon dismissal. Any device confiscated may

be held until the end of the term.

- ARRANGEMENTS TO GO TO A FRIEND'S HOUSE should not be made at school. The telephone may not be used for this purpose, nor should these arrangements be last minute, made in the after-school pick-up line of cars. Teachers must be informed previously in writing (by parents) if a student is permitted to go home or leave the property with anyone else after school.
- TOYS are not to be brought to the school, with the exception of show-and-tell items approved by kindergarten and first grade teachers.
- CLASS TRIPS are considered part of the curriculum, although the privilege to participate may be lost through misbehavior or irresponsibility.
- VISITORS are welcome to our school. We ask, however, that visitors to classrooms arrange their visit the day beforehand with the Headmaster who will arrange a time in the teacher's schedule so as to minimize class disruption.
- FORGOTTEN LUNCHES, GLASSES, BOOKS, HOME-WORK, etc. should be left by the parents with the school office. Please avoid disturbing classrooms or teachers to handle these matters.
- BREAK TIME is simply that: a break from work, generally to handle bathroom and drink needs of the class. It is not for a time of frenzied and sweaty play. That type of play is reserved for P.E. class. Recess allows for group play or sport.
- BIRTHDAYS may be celebrated by the class with a treat at lunch-time. Invitations to parties should not be given out at school unless all the students in the class are invited. This will help avoid awkward situations.
- HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS—Parents will be given the opportunity to volunteer to bring snacks and supplies as necessary.

- PARTIES must be pre-approved by the Headmaster. All food and entertainment should be arranged ahead of time with the teacher.
- NO WEAPONS of any kind (including pocket knives) are allowed on campus, without teacher and parental permission. Retrieval of such may result in a suspension or permanent dismissal.
- SCHOOL PICTURES of the students may be taken individually soon after the beginning of the school year by an approved photographer. If so, parents will be notified of the date and costs prior to the arranged session.
- RELATIONSHIPS are the richness of life. Students grow and learn. By the time they graduate they are ready to enter the world as formed young adults. During school, however, students do not couple off, nor do they engage in physical relationships. All students learn to respect one another by “keeping their hands to themselves.”

### ***Textbooks***

Textbooks are the property of St. Mark's Classical Academy, unless purchased by the student for specific classes, and should be cared for properly by the students. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by any student responsible for the mishap.

### ***Tutoring***

Should a child need additional tutoring after school, St. Mark's teachers may be contacted for their availability. Times and duration of tutoring should be arranged with the teacher. If a tutor other than the teacher is used, work should be coordinated by the student's teacher initially. The fee for any tutoring provided at St. Mark's Academy is set by the school.

### ***Conduct and Discipline***

Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as



to bring honor to the name of Christ. Respect and obedience to faculty and staff are the foundations of the disciplinary code. Cheerful compliance is encouraged, when needed, with counseling, extra assignments, in-school or after-school detention, or other punishment. In cases where cooperation cannot be otherwise achieved, or in flagrant violations of the Ten Commandments, a student may be suspended from school by the Headmaster. Dismissal from school may be the final action the administration takes.

Teachers are expected to maintain standards of student behavior that are based upon God's Word, conducive to learning, and consistent with school policies. The teacher's responsibility and authority extends to classroom and non-classroom activities, and includes any student in the school. The Head of School and teachers explain classroom and school standards at the beginning of the year and as needed.

Classroom rules are simple:

1. Obtain permission to speak.
2. Obtain permission to get up.
3. Give your attention to the teacher.

Saint Mark's believes that each student should overtly demonstrate self-discipline and responsibility through:

1. Cheerful obedience to authority (even when the authority figure is not present).
2. Responsibility in doing assigned and expected tasks.
3. Co-operation with others in play and work.
4. Courtesy and good manners.
5. Cleanliness in person and property.
6. Honesty.
7. Respect for the property of the school and of classmates.
8. Promptness in attendance and assignments.
9. Morally upright conduct.

While the teacher stands "in loco parentis," and will deal with all ordinary infractions, defiant and rebellious behavior warrants punishment. Children are the image of God, and all instruction seeks to form

and solidify virtue, but they are also sinners. “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of the child; the rod of discipline will drive it far from him” (Proverbs 22:15). When discipline must be administered, a Blue or Green Slip is sent home to the parents to explain the infraction and the corrective measure used. Examples of these slips may be found in the appendix to this handbook.

Cheerful compliance with regulations is secured, when needed, with counseling. A teacher may simply remind or reprimand the student for an offense, but may also take away break and/or lunch privileges; assign an after-school detention; or assign a Saturday work detention in consultation with the Headmaster. On the occasion of such Saturday work detention, the family will be billed for faculty/staff time at \$30 per hour. It is strongly suggested that the student earn this money back and reimburse the parents in full. Parents are expected to support the faculty and administration in disciplinary action taken.

Uniform violations may be met with a loss of break and lunch time recess (not food). A consistent lack of part of a uniform for three days will result in the uniform piece being ordered by the school for the student. The family will be billed for uniforms items purchased, or for textbook replacements.

Coming to school without homework or assignment book may also cause the student to lose break and lunch time recess, where he/she will work on his/her missed assignments. The third occurrence will cause him/her to have after school detention (either a work detail or a difficult physical workout). The fifth occurrence will be met with a Saturday work day (for which families are billed \$30 per hour) and a parent teacher conference. Continued problems will cause more Saturday work days, and may result in yet further discipline, if not productive toward the goal. Infractions are reset each quarter. Parents are expected to support the faculty and administration in disciplinary action taken.

## **Appearance & Dress**

Saint Mark's Academy strives to set the highest possible standards in academic and moral conduct. An important aspect of achiev-

ing that goal is for students to view their educational duties as their calling before God. Uniforms are worn by all the students to foster a serious attitude toward their responsibilities. Detailed descriptions of the uniform requirements are included as an appendix to this handbook.

Neatness and personal hygiene are encouraged at all times. Uniforms must be clean, tears mended, buttons replaced. Shoes should be clean and in good repair.

Purses may be brought by girls from Grade 5 on up. Unsafe (e.g. dangling earrings) or distracting jewelry may be confiscated at the discretion of the teacher and sent home at the end of the day.

Girls in Grade 5 and above should wear uniform skirts in keeping with the following guideline: when they kneel on the floor, the bottom edge of the hem of their skirt should be no more than four (4) inches from the floor.

Non uniform sweaters will not be permitted in the classroom. Outdoor wear (fleeces, jackets, etc) is never appropriate attire while in the classroom. Any style of wraps is permissible outside. Shorts must be worn by all girls underneath skirts and jumpers. All P.E. shorts should extend at least to the length of fingertips.

Students who come to school improperly groomed or attired will be notified of their infraction and are expected to come properly dressed the next day, or if suitable, remain in the office until proper attire is brought from home. A student may be sent home by the administration until the infraction is corrected.

Hairstyles for boys and girls should be simple and neat, conducive to study. Boy's hair must not be so long as to obscure their eyes (in front) or cover their collars (in back). It must be off of the ears. Moderation in appearance and length is the rule, avoiding distractions to the self and to others.

### ***General Uniform Standards – BOYS***

- Hair—Neat, clean, natural, and generally off of ears, eyes, and collars.
- Facial Hair—Clean-shaven.
- Jewelry—Limited to small rings, watches, and moderate neckwear (worn under the shirt). No ear jewelry, wrist bands, chokers, or other faddish accessories are allowed. Teachers may remove distracting jewelry for the day.
- Cosmetics—None is allowed for boys, except for medical reasons.
- Skin Markings—No tattoos allowed. Students are not to mark themselves with pens or markers.
- Clothing—Other than for P.E., shirts remain tucked. Do not wear long-sleeved shirts under short-sleeved shirts.

### ***General Uniform Standards – GIRLS***

- Hats—No hats, including headscarves, are allowed inside the school.
- Hair—Neat, clean, and natural. Cuts must be age appropriate and conservative.
- Jewelry—Limited to small rings, earrings, bracelets, watches, and moderately-sized necklaces. No chokers or other faddish accessories allowed. Earrings will not exceed two per ear. Teachers may require removal of distracting jewelry for the day.
- Cosmetics—None allowed through Grammar School. Moderate/conservative cosmetics allowed for Grade 7 and up.
- Skin Markings—No tattoos. Students are not to mark themselves with pens or markers.

### ***Health/Safety***

A health form, including up-to-date immunization record, must be admitted to the school upon admittance. If the parents have chosen for religious (or other) reasons not to comply with the Department of Health requirements, they must submit an affidavit (notarized statement) signed by the parent indicating the basis for noncompliance.

Children must not be sent to school if ill. We do not have the facilities nor the staff to care for them. Other school children must be protected from exposure to illness. Children should be fever-free, without medication, for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

If a child becomes ill at school, his temperature will be taken. If the child vomits, or a fever of 100+ is present, or the teacher considers it necessary, a parent will be contacted immediately to come for the child. Otherwise, it is up to the discretion of the teacher whether or not the child should be sent home. After an illness, a child may resume class attendance if readmission criteria for that illness have been met.

Please send children to school properly dressed according to weather. Bear in mind that temperatures in this area can change drastically within the course of the day. Noting the morning weather report, particularly in fall and early spring, should help you prepare your child adequately.

### ***Medications***

Medications should be administered to students by the parents at home. If the doctor's instructions for administration indicate that the medication must be given while the child is at school, the parent must bring the medication in the original container to the school office with the pharmacist's instructions intact. The appropriate forms must be completed at the office.

### ***School's Rights Reserved***

All members of St. Mark's Classical Academy consent to the rules and regulations of the School as stated in the current handbook and published literature. It is further understood that the School reserves the right to insist upon immediate withdrawal of any student who in conduct, industry, or progress proves not to be in harmony with St. Mark's Academy's standards or policies.

## **Parent/School Relations**

### ***Records***

Please notify the office of any changes in address, phone number, place of employment, health status of your child (allergies etc.) or individuals approved for the pick-up of your child(ren). This notification should be submitted in writing to ensure its proper recording.

### ***Parent-Teacher Conferences***

Open communication between parents and staff is vital for a positive, well-ordered school experience. St. Mark's encourages its families and teachers to share information whenever needed regarding a student's progress at all times of the year. To share information or ask questions about specific classes, tests, grades, or projects, parents are asked to use the following procedure:

1. Call the school office and leave your name, number, and the name of the teacher with whom you wish to speak. The teacher will contact you within one day.
2. If a telephone conversation is not sufficient to discuss your concerns, the teacher will make an appointment with you at school.
3. If a further communication is necessary for the resolution of a problem, make an appointment with the Headmaster and the teacher by calling the school office.
4. Please do not call a teacher at home or on his/her cellphone unless an emergency arises that will have an immediate effect on the student's coming school day.

Our teachers carefully plan each day's class activities. In order that they might educate our students in the most effective manner, the school asks that parents avoid dropping by their child's classroom to talk with the teacher immediately before, during, or after the school day. These seemingly minor interruptions can add up to a substantial reduction in class time. The interruption may also prevent our teachers from supervising students adequately at these times. Please use the

communication system outlined above; you will find our teachers responsive and eager to help in every way.

### ***Grievance Guidelines***

If the occasion arises where a parent is unhappy about a particular situation or circumstance, proper steps shall be taken to clarify or correct the perceived problem. If the remedy is not satisfactory, under no circumstance may the parent conduct their own “friendly investigation” with other parents, unsettling the peace of the school community. Rather, the principles of Matthew 18 shall be followed in reporting their concern to the proper school officials first of all, using the procedure below.

The following biblical guidelines are to be followed for bringing resolution whenever there is a dispute or grievance concerning any aspect of St. Mark’s Academy’s operations between any two parties connected in a direct way to the school. This includes students, parents, staff, volunteers, administration, and trustees.

### ***Student or Classroom Concerns***

1. All concerns about the student or classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents or, if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. If the student presents the concern, a respectful demeanor is required at all times.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may then bring the concern to the Headmaster.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, appeal of the decision may be brought to the Head of School.

### ***Concerns over General Operation of the School***

1. If the concern is about the general operation of the school, it should be brought to the Head of School directly.
2. If a satisfactory settlement of the matter is still not reached, a written summary of the complaint, signed by the Head of School and the aggrieved party, is submitted to the Trustees, who finding

merit to the matter, forward this document(s) to the designated Reformed Episcopal Bishop for final resolution. If the Trustees do not find sufficient merit in their review, the ruling of the Head of School shall stand.

These policies and procedures are meant to guide students and their families toward a happy, productive, and well-run academic and spiritual environment, not to bind the school administration with un-addressed details, or interpretations. Administration reserves all rights of interpretation, for it best to fulfill its mission. Thank you parents and students for your cheerful cooperation!

## **Finances**

### ***Contributions***

The cost of education is high, but worth it, and civil nations, especially Christian ones, have always placed a high value upon it. Every tuition dollar you spend goes directly to the education of your child. Of course, there are more costs to operating the school: expenses related to occupancy, scholarships, or capital improvement. The additional funds needed for these come from donations, fundraising, or other sources. All donations to Saint Mark's Academy or Saint Mark's Church, a 501(c)3 organization, are tax-deductible. If you would be interested in making regular contributions to the Saint Mark's Academy Annual Fund, or to our Scholarship Fund, or designate a donation for a special project, we would be happy to speak with you and make the necessary arrangements.

### ***Tax-Deductible Ways to Give to Saint Mark's Academy***

Tax laws intentionally encourage charitable giving. Here are some of the ways families and individuals can make a gift to St. Mark's and enjoy tax benefits. Please remember, every person's tax situation is different and St. Mark's is not advocating a specific tax position. Please consult with your individual tax advisor to determine the deductibility of your contribution.

*Gifts of Cash:* Many families choose to write us a check. Such gifts are fully deductible, for federal income tax purposes. Please consider mak-



ing a monthly commitment.

*Gifts of Stock:* Gifts of appreciated stock represent a two-fold savings opportunity. You avoid paying any capital gains tax on the increased value of the stock, and you receive a tax deduction for the full market value of the stock as of the day of the gift.

*Bequests:* These may be earmarked for a specific use or left to the discretion of the school trustees. A bequest of funds or property is exempt from federal estate tax and inheritance tax in most states.

*Designated Gifts:* Make a contribution to one of Saint Mark's funds:

- Annual Fund—Gifts to the Annual Fund are used to sustain and enrich the overall educational program, improve and expand facilities, and ensure the financial stability of the school.
- The Scholarship Fund—Saint Mark's is committed to helping any family that desires a classical and Christian education to overcome difficult financial obstacles.

*Gifts-in-Kind:* Contributions in the form of material goods or services for which the school would otherwise have to pay, help reduce the school's expenses and thereby strengthen the overall financial structure.

*Matching Contributions:* Many employers have a matching gift program in which they will match your contribution to an approved non-profit organization. It provides them with a tax benefit and "doubles" the significance of your gift.

Please check with your accountant, tax attorney, or tax advisor to discuss the gift method that best suits your situation.

## **Financial Assistance**

Saint Mark's Academy desires that all parents who want a Christian education for their children might receive it regardless of family finances. The cost of private education is high, but we believe

a Christian education is priceless. Therefore, St. Mark's endeavors to offer tuition assistance to those families who have had their children enrolled for one year and have a proven need. Financial aid may be awarded to new enrollees; preference, however, is given to returning families.

Requests for financial assistance are brought to the Head of School who will issue applications and an evaluation form.

Families on scholarship are expected to contribute in some form (time or work toward their child's education).

Contributions to the Scholarship Fund are tax-deductible. But more than that, they are an investment in the future. We are training the mind and building the character that will lead tomorrow's generation. One child can make a difference. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to the Scholarship Fund.

### ***Fund-Raising***

St. Mark's Academy engages in several fund-raisers each year. In order to purchase additional materials and resources to enrich our students' educational experience through things such as music, playground equipment, trips, sports equipment, library books, and reference materials. Parent involvement in fund-raisers has been invaluable and very appreciated. Fundraising projects may not be undertaken for the school without the knowledge and consent of the Head of School.

### ***Tuition/Miscellaneous Payments***

Monthly invoices are sent home in the student's homework folder. Invoices will reflect outstanding balance, including any additional charges or fees accrued since the last statement. Students enrolling midyear may have their tuition prorated monthly or quarterly.

Please make every effort to make payments on time. The school office will not accept postdated checks, nor will it hold them so as to avoid a late charge. Alternative financial payment plans must be arranged with the Head of School.

Students cannot be enrolled in the following year's classes or have transcripts issued until financial obligations are fulfilled.

## **Annual Participation Contract & Financial Terms**

A parent or guardian of the student(s) enrolled must sign the *Participation Contract* for each year of the student(s) enrollment at St. Mark's Academy.

### ***Delinquent Account***

Timely payment of tuition and school fees is vital to the operating budget of the school. Therefore:

1. If payment is not received by the 8th of the month (or the next business day), the account will be charged a late fee.
2. If a check is returned for insufficient funds, a returned check charge (\$50) will be applied in addition to any applicable late charge.
3. Dismissal for failure to pay the tuition will not relieve the parent or guardian from remaining tuition due. Saint Mark's Academy may withhold all grades and transcripts for any student until the delinquency on the student's account and penalties have been paid in full.

### ***Full Year Obligation for Tuition***

Saint Mark's Academy incurs expenses of a continuing nature, including year-long financial commitments to faculty, staff, vendors, facilities, maintenance, and others on behalf of students. Thus, in order for the school to plan and maintain these services over the entire academic year, it is essential that the total annual income from tuition and fees be ensured. For this reason, it is understood and agreed that the obligation to pay tuition and fees for the full academic year is unconditional and takes effect upon the date specified in the annual Participation Contract. No portion of any tuition and/or fees, paid or payable, for the above student(s) will be automatically refunded or canceled for any reason, other than for those exceptions listed below. The School

shall have the right to legal action for collection of all school fees, and the parent/guardian agrees to be responsible for all costs of collection, including court expenses and reasonable attorney fees.

Exceptions for refunding or cancellation of this obligation are:

1. The student's permanent place of residence changes during the term of this agreement to a location that is more than 40 miles from the campus and is more distant than the student's place of residence on the date of this agreement, which change could not have been reasonably anticipated on the date of this agreement. Satisfactory evidence of such change may be required.

2. A change in the student's health necessitates withdrawal from the school for medical reasons. The school may require a written opinion from the student's attending physician stating that the student's withdrawal from the school is necessary for medical reasons.

Appeal for partial relief of this obligation due to extraordinary circumstances, may be submitted in written form for consideration to the School Board, understanding that such appeal carries no assurance that any relief will be granted, given the primary responsibility of the Board to guard the financial stability of the school.

## ***School's Rights Reserved***

All members of Saint Mark's Academy consent to the rules and regulations of the Academy as stated in the current handbook and published literature. It is further understood that the Academy reserves the right to insist upon immediate withdrawal of any student who in conduct, industry, or progress proves not to be in harmony with Saint Mark's Academy standards or policies.

## ***Release of Liability***

Saint Mark's Academy members agree to release and hold harmless the Academy, its agents and employees from all claims, damages, or other liabilities for injuries to his child which are not the result of gross negligence by this school, its agents, or employees. A Member of Saint Mark's Academy also agrees to indemnify the school for all damages caused by his child.

## **Inclement Weather**

School closings due to bad weather will correspond to the decisions of the Abington School District. There is no need to call the Head of School or teachers for this information if it has been posted publicly.

Please send children to school properly dressed according to weather. Noting the morning weather report, particularly in fall and early spring, should help you prepare your child adequately.

## **Fire Drills**

Fire drills shall be held regularly and recorded in the office.

## **Appendix 1: Twenty Ways Parents Can Help:**

1. Bring students to school on time.
2. See that students receive proper amounts of sleep on school nights.
3. Schedule some no-TV hours after school for homework completion and extracurricular reading.
4. Make reading your own habit. Encourage students to read by giving them books and trips to the library.
5. Do not discuss differences you have with teachers in front of your children (even at home). Nothing makes it harder for a child to give a teacher the respectful obedience the Lord requires of him than to overhear, or take part in, a dressing-down of his teacher. We are very careful at school not to speak of you, the parent, disrespectfully or to diminish your authority in the mind of your child. We ask that you return the courtesy for the sake of your child. Please talk to the teacher directly and privately.
6. Offer to be a room mother. Room mothers are invaluable aides by arranging field trips and classroom parties, and assisting the teacher in other ways as needed.
7. Send treats or beverages for scheduled class parties or celebrations. Room mothers will call you when this is desired.
8. Volunteer to help out in special events throughout the year.
9. Talk about Saint Mark's School to your friends. Word-of-mouth is our best advertisement.
10. Chat with your child about what he does at school.
11. Encourage politeness and good manners in your child. Teach him that this is merely being thoughtful of the other person.
12. Make tuition payments on time.
13. Sponsor another child to attend Saint Mark's School by making a contribution to the financial aid fund.
14. Attend PTF (Parent-Teacher Fellowship) meetings. Informed parents and teachers make better parents and teachers.

15. PRAY FOR US. This is God's work, and He is faithful in answering the prayers of His people as they seek to build His kingdom.

16. Cultivate a healthy marriage and attend church regularly with your child.

17. Understand that all children are sinful and will need corrections at times.

18. Help your children start the school day out right by resolving parent-child conflicts before bringing them to class.

19. Remember to thank and encourage your child's teacher for the work and care they invest in your child.

20. Look at Saint Mark's as assisting, not replacing, you and your responsibility to train your children.

## Appendix 2: Uniforms

*Please see the school's site at Flynn O'Hara for updated options for the school uniform (this is accessible via the school website).*

*The following addresses the specifics of our school uniform. For further information about dress and appearance, please see page 35 of this book.*

### **Girl's Uniform Guidelines (for Kindergarten and above):**

- girls in Kindergarten - Grade 3 are to wear a jumper in the school plaid and a white "peter pan" collar blouse from Flynn O'Hara. Sweater are navy blue cardigan style from Flynn O'Hara. (Sweaters are not required to be worn, however, it is recommended that the student have at least 1 sweater to wear when it is cool outside). Other aspects of the uniform are outlined in the "for all girls" section below.
- girls in Grade 4 and above are to wear a skirt from Flynn O'Hara with the school plaid. Jumpers are not permitted. White shirts are "oxford style" and may be long or short sleeved. A navy blue blazer must be worn daily (boy's blazers are not permitted, the blazer must be a "girls" cut). V-neck sweaters in navy from Flynn O'Hara (Sweaters are not required to be worn, however, it is recommended that the student have at least 1 sweater to wear when it is cool outside). A cross tie is to be worn daily. Other aspects of the uniform are outlined in the "for all girls" section below.

### **For All Girls:**

- navy tights are permitted (not required but encouraged in the winter).
- shoes must be black Mary Jane style. Boots of any kind are not permitted.
- knee-hi socks in white or navy
- hands and fingernails must be clean and well trimmed
- hair must be neat and clean
- hairbands (etc) are permissible
- rings are not permitted



### ***Boy's Regular Uniform Guidelines for Grades 1 and above:***

- all boys in grade 1 and above must wear a navy blue blazer for chapel and when arriving/departing school daily
- shirts in white only, with a button down collar (short sleeves are permissible)
- pants must be tan khaki, no pleats or cuff
- sweaters - navy, from Flynn O'Hara (see the website for styles allowed). (Sweaters are not required to be worn, however, it is recommended that the student have at least 1 sweater to wear when it is cool outside)
- the tie must be the uniform tie from Flynn O'Hara
- belts must be brown (no designs)
- socks must be black or dark blue (no designs)
- shoes must be the "dirty buc oxford shoe" from Flynn O'Hara
- hands and fingernails must be clean and well trimmed
- hair must be neat and clean
- boys are not permitted to wear any necklaces outside of their shirt
- rings are not permitted

### ***Warm Weather Uniform Guidelines for boys & girls:***

- at certain times of the year, students are permitted to wear a warm weather uniform (the regular uniform may always be worn, even when the warm weather uniform is allowed)
- blazers must be worn to and from school and also during Matins and Evensong
- the uniform is the same as above, with the following exceptions:
- khaki shorts are permitted
- a white short sleeve (or long sleeve) white oxford shirt may be worn

- ties and cross-ties do not need to worn
- sweaters are permitted but not required

***Fencing Uniform for boys and girls:***

- For apparel: please see the Flynn O'Hara website and/or flyer
- Shoes: students must wear athletic shoes (sneakers) with soles that are not black. Failure to wear athletic shoes or wearing athletic shoes with black soles will result in that student being unable to participate in fencing that day.
- Optional (recommended in the winter): sweatshirt in dark navy blue (may be crew style or hooded). No logos, markings or words permitted (school logo is permitted).

***Dress Down Days:*** At certain times of the year students will be able to participate in dress down days. Dress down uniform consists of a polo shirt from Flynn O-Hara and either khaki pants or shorts. On these days, a student is permitted to wear their regular uniform if they would prefer.

***Optional:*** All of the fleece jackets or vests are optional.

# Appendix 3a: Green Slip for Academic Discipline



## ST. MARK'S *Classical Academy*

### Academic Discipline Notification

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Issue	Discipline	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete Homework <input type="checkbox"/> Not Prepared for Class: <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment Book Problem  <input type="checkbox"/> Pen, Pencil, Paper, etc.  <input type="checkbox"/> Books, Material, etc.                 </div>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Break or Recess <input type="checkbox"/> After School Detention <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday School (\$30/hr) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ (please sign & return)

# Appendix 3b: Blue Slip for Behavioral Discipline



## ST. MARK'S *Classical Academy*

### Behavior Discipline Notification

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavioral Issue	Discipline	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Disrespect <input type="checkbox"/> Talking out of turn <input type="checkbox"/> Disobedience	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Break or Recess <input type="checkbox"/> After School Detention <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday School (\$30/hr) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Not in Uniform <input type="checkbox"/> Tardies <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ (please sign & return)