

**St. Vincent De Paul Middle School Handbook
2018-2019**

MISSION

St. Vincent de Paul School is a Christ-centered community where each person is a valued child of God. We are dedicated to cultivating the mind and the heart.

SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Students at St. Vincent de Paul Parish School are:

Active Christians who are able to:

- ❖ serve others
- ❖ respect for God, Church, others, self, and property
- ❖ know the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Church
- ❖ participate in sacraments, liturgies, and prayer
- ❖ take responsibility for actions
- ❖ work with others to solve disagreements
- ❖ respect diversity
- ❖ communicate and reflect about personal faith

Effective Communicators who are able to:

- ❖ speak with confidence and poise
- ❖ read and understand well
- ❖ write clearly using correct grammar and mechanics
- ❖ listen and observe well
- ❖ show awareness of social norms and expectations
- ❖ work cooperatively
- ❖ discuss current global issues
- ❖ use technology responsibly

Self-Evaluators who are able to:

- ❖ plan, set, and strive toward appropriate goals
- ❖ use good study and organizational skills
- ❖ review work for quality and correctness
- ❖ show responsibility for their academic progress

Welcome to middle school! The purpose of this handbook is to inform families and students of the policies and procedures of St. Vincent de Paul Parish Middle School. The middle school faculty appreciates constructive feedback regarding this school program.

HISTORY

A pilot middle school program was initiated in three Catholic elementary schools in 1992 following the analysis of a survey distributed in 1989. Included in the survey were questions about creating a centrally located middle school separate from the elementary schools. St. Vincent's was the fourth school to officially adopt the middle school model of education as mandated by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Salt Lake.

RATIONALE

Educators seek to provide schools that are joyful places where learning and learners are celebrated. Young people undergo more rapid and profound personal changes during the years between 10 and 15 than at any other period of their lives. The self-contained elementary structure of a single classroom teacher is not able to optimally address the intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, or emotional needs of these adolescents. Likewise, traditional junior high schools have been patterned after the high school structure, which is too complex and confusing for a young adolescent to face. Therefore, the middle school model was created as a transition period between elementary school and high school.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

St. Vincent Middle School tries to create a warm, inviting atmosphere in its classrooms for the cultivation of the heart and mind. A climate that is safe and caring promotes a sense of community and encourages learning. Human relationships are paramount and all individuals are treated with the dignity and respect due to a child of God. Students and adults recognize and accept one another's differences; curiosity, creativity, and diversity are celebrated. To achieve this end, St. Vincent's Middle School teachers have posted the Schoolwide Learning Expectations in all of the middle school classrooms. All our middle school students and teachers are expected to abide by these values and beliefs.

The Check-in System was designed to allow parents/guardians, teachers, and students to be readily aware of behavior expectations, and when necessary, to reteach and

problem solve so that a student truly embraces the culture of the school. If a student fails to meet the behavior expectations, then a Check-in Report is issued. There are three types of Check-in Reports:

Minor Behavior Check-ins are given for actions within the classroom that fail to meet the school or classroom rules and/or behavior expectations.

Office Behavior Check-ins are given for repeated Minor Behavior Check-in Reports or for behaviors that endanger safety or well-being, or make normal classroom activities difficult or impossible.

Responsibility Check-ins are assigned when a student is unprepared for class or in violation of the uniform policy.

Students begin each quarter with a clean slate. Oftentimes, teachers give a verbal reminder to reteach a classroom expectation that is not being followed. However, if that process is not successful, teachers will fill out a written Check-in. Teachers will also utilize a variety of responses and consequences for first time minor offences. Repeated behavior infractions, or infractions that endanger safety/well-being, or that make classroom activities difficult or impossible will receive an Office Check-in, as noted above.

At midterm and the end of each quarter, the homeroom teacher will review the Check-ins, and if applicable, the number of Office Check-ins. The teacher will assess if the student's overall behavior has been Outstanding, Satisfactory, or Needs Intervention. Outstanding behavior would mean that the student has met the behavior expectations and followed the rules of the school. Satisfactory behavior means that the student has met the behavior expectations of the school with some form of intervention, or reteaching. Needs Intervention means that the student may need more structured behavior interventions in order to meet the behavior expectations of the school

Service hours, which are accompanied by a Check-in must be arranged and/or completed within one week of the referral.

The process for Minor Behavior Check-ins as follows:

Minor Behavior Check-in 1:

- The teacher and student dialogue about and reinforce the desired behavior expectation.
- The teacher fills out a check-inform.
- The parent may be contacted if the teacher deems it necessary.

Minor Behavior Check-in 2:

- The teacher and student dialogue about and reinforce the desired behavior expectation.
- The teacher fills out a check-inform.
- If the referral is a repeated behavior, the teacher may choose to contact the parent.

Minor Behavior Check-in 3:

- The teacher and student dialogue about and reinforce the desired behavior expectation.
- The teacher fills out a check-inform.
- If the referral is the same behavior repeated a third time, the teacher will contact the parent.
- The teacher may also choose to consult with parents, colleagues, or administration.

Minor Behavior Check-in 4:

- The teacher and student dialogue about and reinforce the desired behavior expectation.
- If the check-in is the same behavior repeated a fourth time, the teacher will fill out an office check-in.

The administration and faculty believe in utilizing natural consequences. Part of those natural consequences often include some processing with an adult. The administration reserves the right to ask a student to process through their lunch period.

Immediate Office Check-in Behaviors

- Office Managed Behaviors include, but are not limited to:
 - Weapons
 - Fighting or Aggressive Physical Contact
 - Chronic Minor Infractions (MIRs)
 - Aggressive Language
 - Threats

- Harassment of Students or Teachers
- Smoking
- Vandalism
- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Gambling
- Cheating
- Not with Class During Emergency
- Leaving School Grounds
- Foul Language at Student/Staff

Bullying or harassment by a student is defined as a pattern of habitual abuse toward another student or students. As our mission states, all people in our community are valued children of God, and as such, deserve to be treated with dignity. Saint Vincent School recognizes that bullying/harassment of any kind has a negative effect on school climate. Students who are isolated, intimidated, and fearful cannot give their education the single-minded attention they need for success. Every student has the right to an education and to be safe around school.

Because of the Christian climate and Catholic culture in Saint Vincent School, harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Occurrence can be on or off campus, within or outside the school day, during a school activity, or on free time. Immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken whenever it is determined that a violation of this policy has taken place. The intervention and consequences will be according to the nature and severity of the incident(s) or situation(s). However, in every case, the following actions are taken:

1. If the bullying/harassment is unknown to the parents (of all students directly involved), they are notified by the teacher or administration.
2. The teacher or administration interviews the students involved individually.
3. The teacher or administration interviews the main students involved together.
4. The teacher, administration, and possibly the Student Support Director discuss the appropriate actions and consequences.
5. The teacher or administration informs the parents of the victim(s) and the parents of the person(s) doing the bullying/harassing of the events.

6. The teacher or administration provides appropriate follow-up.

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the teacher or administration **immediately** if they suspect a student is being bullied or harassed or is bullying or harassing others. Parents/guardians can do this via email, phone, or by using the Problem Solving Form located on the school website.

Service Hours

Service hours are assigned to students when they receive 5 responsibility warnings or commit one of the behavior infractions below. The vice principal will contact the student and their parent/guardian to schedule the service within one week of the infraction. If the student does not appear for scheduled service time, additional service hours may be assigned. The following infractions are assessed a fine and a warning:

- **Gum Chewing -one hour:** Gum chewing is not allowed anywhere on Saint Vincent de Paul School property at any time.
- **Projectile Throwing -one hour:** For respect of property and safety reasons, throwing snowballs, food, rocks, or any projectile is not tolerated.
- **Uncovered Textbook -one half hour:** Students are required to keep textbooks covered at all times.
- **Full replacement cost** of damaged or lost library books or school textbooks, must be paid by the student responsible for the books.

Responsibility Check-in

Responsibility check-ins include wearing nail polish, forgetting to wear the correct Mass uniform, violating the hair policy, not wearing the correct socks, and others. (See the parent handbook for more details.) A student will give one hour of service to the school for every five responsibility check-ins in a quarter. The student will have one week to complete the service hour.

Positive Reinforcement

Positive Behavior Check-ins

These Check-ins are called “St. Vincent’s HEART” forms. Teachers will recognize a student for following schoolwide and classroom expectations and rules. They will also recognize students who practice the charism of charity, as modeled by Christ and St. Vincent de Paul. When a teacher recognizes a student for these behaviors, the teacher will fill out a “St. Vincent’s HEART”. This form will be displayed in the hallway near the Library and Gym intersection.

Conduct Party: The middle school will have a quarterly party for those students who receive an “O,” “S+” or “S” on their citizenship grade.

Eighth Grade Honors: Students who receive an “O” all four quarters of their eighth grade year will wear the white cord at graduation.

Victorious Viking Award: The school also recognizes positive behaviors with the Victorious Viking Award.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is critical to student success. If parents/guardians have a compliment or concern, please feel free to contact the teacher. Teachers will respond to you within 24 hours of any communication sent between Monday 8:00 am through Friday 12:30 pm. (Teachers are not expected to check their e-mail or phone messages over the weekend. Communication sent over the weekend will be responded to by the end of the day Monday.) The tone in which you contact the teacher has a direct impact on the student. If dissatisfaction is conveyed openly in front of students, it can exacerbate an already difficult situation. If parents/guardians have a serious concern, we recommend that they set up a face-to-face meeting with the teacher, or the administration and the teacher if they have already met with the teacher and the concern has not been solved. Less serious concerns such as logistical, procedural, or homework questions or may be conveyed via e-mail, phone, or note.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Parents/guardians will be formally notified in writing about student progress eight times during the school year; progress reports will be sent home at midterm and report cards will be issued following each quarter. Check the school calendar for these dates. If a teacher is concerned about a student’s performance, s/he will notify the parent/guardian by phone or meeting within a reasonable amount of time.

HOMEWORK

Homework is designed to enrich and refine the material taught during the school day. Students are expected to put forth their personal best on all assignments. When students do not complete their homework, they fall behind in their academic success.

To ensure that all students have an opportunity to be successful academically as well as to develop the life skill of responsibility, the middle school faculty will follow these procedures concerning late or unacceptable homework:

1. Assignments will be posted to the RenWeb grading program. Within 24 hours of collection, all missing assignments will be posted with the code "M." However, teachers are not required to assign a grade, other than M, to a class or homework assignment for up to a week after collection.
2. All late assignments will receive a reduction of 10% per day up to a 50% maximum from the earned grade. If an assignment is more than two weeks late, no credit may be earned. (Due to the sequential nature of math, students have only 5 days in which to turn in math assignments for credit.) Late penalties do not accrue over the weekend, but teachers may charge the late penalty on school days that the class does not meet.
3. If a student will not have a particular class one day and needs to turn in late work, s/he should turn the work into one of the secretaries who will put the work into the teacher's mailbox.
4. A zero grade will be recorded for work not received.
5. Chronic inability to turn in homework, study for tests, or produce adequate work will result in the student being placed on an academic plan or contract.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to check grades on RenWeb regularly. Teachers will record test and assignment scores within one week of the due date, two weeks for projects. Please contact Mrs. Sloan if you have a problem accessing your child's RenWeb grades.

Middle school students should complete about 10 minutes of homework per grade level (i.e. 60 minutes for 6th grade, 70 minutes for 7th grade, 80 minutes for 8th grade), Monday through Thursday. Homework may be mental (studying) or written. According to the Administrative Policy #4100, regular homework assignments will not ordinarily be given on Fridays and during holiday breaks. Occasionally there may be an exception to this policy. Weekend work may be necessary to complete long term assignments such as reading books for book reports, editing compositions, memorizing poems or prayers, or gathering research. Good time management habits will decrease the amount of stress a student experiences in completing homework. Students are responsible for writing assignments down in their assignment notebooks.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

St. Vincent de Paul Parish School wants to educate a community of learners that create original work and content. To achieve this, we reflect upon the mission of the school and encourage a policy of academic honesty. Academic honesty creates a climate of learning and integrity. It prepares students to cultivate their mind and relationships. It reflects positively on its learners and the school. To achieve this, the school has adopted the following policies and procedures:

Academic dishonesty is considered to be a serious offence, as it has serious outcomes and consequences for the student and the school

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is any type of cheating or fraud that occurs in relation to a formal academic exercise. (Webster's' On-line Dictionary, 2018) It can include, but is not limited to plagiarism, fabrication, deception or cheating.

To help our learners, we will provide instruction on the types of academic dishonesty that can occur, and how to avoid them. Listed below are a few of the types of academic dishonesty we have identified

- **Plagiarism:** "To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source. (Webster's Online Dictionary, 2018)
- **Cheating:** to use unfair or dishonest methods to gain advantage, for example on a quiz or test.
- **Copying:** passing off another student's work, or answers, as one's own.

Penalties

Appropriate penalties for acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

Reduction in the grade for the work

No credit for the assignment, quiz, test, or other work

Teacher's request for the student to resubmit the work for reduced credit

Office Referral.

Record Retention

In cases of academic dishonesty, a record will be retained for the remainder of Middle School. Further instances of academic dishonesty will be considered on an individual basis, and may result in further interventions and/or suspension.

Academic Honesty Procedures

When academic dishonesty is suspected the teacher and student may expect the following steps to be followed:

- As soon as academic dishonesty is suspected, the teacher should approach the student and discuss the allegation and possible penalty, in person. The teacher should weigh the evidence and determine an appropriate penalty ahead of this meeting.
- The teacher notifies the administration of the allegation.
- The teacher notifies the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the allegation
- The teacher may request a meeting with the student and administration.
- The teacher imposes the penalty, and informs the student, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the administration.

Outcomes

If, after discussing the incident with the student, the teacher determines that there was no violation, the incident is dropped without further action.

If the student admits to academic dishonesty, the rest of the procedure will be followed.

MIDDLE SCHOOL RETENTION/PROMOTION

Students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades at Saint Vincent de Paul School must demonstrate effort and performance appropriate to their individual abilities and academic levels in order to be eligible for promotion and/or graduation. A middle school student may be retained or not allowed to graduate if the administration and middle school teachers believe that s/he has not satisfied this requirement.

Any student who fails the same subject for both semesters in a given year may be required to complete a summer course in a related subject and/or complete work assigned by the middle school staff and administration before promotion to the next grade or graduation.

HIGH HONOR ROLL & HONOR ROLL

Middle school students are recognized for their overall academic and behavioral achievement with our High Honor Roll and Honor Roll.

To make High Honor Roll, students must satisfy the following requirements:

- 3.5 grade point average in the six core subjects (math, religion, social studies, science, literature, and English)

- A “B” or above in all core and non-core subjects
- An “O” or “S+” citizenship grade

To make Honor Roll, students must satisfy the following requirements:

- 3.0 grade point average in the six core subjects
- A “B-” or above in all core and non-core subjects
- An “O” or “S+” citizenship grade

Students have the opportunity every quarter to earn a place on High Honor Roll or Honor Roll. So, if a student has one lower-performing quarter, s/he can still earn the honor the next quarter. Once students are on one of the honor rolls, they must maintain their high performance to stay on. Students who make High Honor Roll or Honor Roll each quarter during their eighth grade year will wear the gold cord at graduation.

EXTRA CREDIT

Extra credit is given at the discretion of the teachers. Students must complete all regular assignments in order to be eligible for extra credit. The teachers will inform parents/guardians of their extra credit policies in writing on Back to School Night. Oftentimes, students and/or parents/guardians contact teachers at a time when extra credit may not be available such as near the end of a quarter. Please familiarize yourself with the teachers’ policies before asking for extra credit.

TARDINESS

Middle school students may enter the school from the south doors at 8:10 to retrieve items from their lockers and prepare for their day. Students are marked tardy if they are not in their homerooms when the 8:20 bell rings. Teachers will send an e-mail after 3 and 4 tardies in one quarter. For every 5 tardies in a quarter, the student will give one hour of service to the school.

ABSENCES

Excused Absences: On the day a student returns to school, **a written note or e-mail of explanation from the parent/guardian should be sent to the teacher.** Illness and family emergencies are considered excused absences. All other absences are usually considered unexcused absences. Each classroom in the middle school has an organized, systematic method to assist students in getting their missed work assignments. Class lectures and discussions will not be redone by the teachers. Upon

their return students need to check with their teachers for any handouts, worksheets, tests or quizzes to complete. For excused absences students will be allowed two days to complete and return assignments if they are absent one day. (i.e. The student is absent on a Tuesday, so the homework is due the following Thursday. The student is absent Friday, so the homework is due Monday.) For any other length of absence, a reasonable amount of time (as determined by each teacher) will be given to complete the work.

Please Note: It is the student's responsibility to retrieve and complete all necessary make-up work.

Unexcused Absences: Students should fill out a make-up work request form **prior to taking an unexcused absence**. It is left to the discretion of the teachers to provide work either before or after the absence occurs. The teachers will set a due date for all missed work. If the work is not returned on or before the due date, the student may receive a zero on all missed work. Teachers are not required to allow make-up work or provide make-up tests for unexcused absences, nor are they required to provide tutoring to catch a student up on missed class work or homework.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

In order for students to participate in student council, they must meet the following criteria:

- be in the sixth or seventh grade at the time of elections
- earn no grades below a C-
- maintain regular and punctual attendance
- maintain an **S or higher** in conduct
- abide by the requirements on the student leadership council sheet that all members signed

Please note: If a student council member's grades or conduct fall below the above requirements, they will be placed on probation. If there is no improvement, they will be replaced by an alternate chosen by the principal.

BOOKS

In order to keep textbooks in good condition and cut down on unnecessary replacement costs, students are expected to keep their textbooks covered all year. Book covers are available for purchase at the school office. Book socks are not allowed. Students will be

given a verbal reminder to cover an uncovered book. There will be one half hour of service assigned to the student if the book is not covered by the next time the teacher checks with the student. The only writing that should be on the book covers is the student's name, grade and subject. Also, students are asked to bring a free reading book with them to each class.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms must be worn appropriately at all times. See the parent handbook for the uniform regulations. Failure to comply with the uniform standards will result in a responsibility check-in.

HOMEWORK LAB

Homework Lab is held Monday through Thursdays from 3:20-3:50 PM. (A schedule is posted on the middle school information board.) The purpose of homework lab is to provide a place where students may complete their homework and ask a teacher for help if necessary. It is not intended to be free after-school care. The homework lab is a privilege, so students who are inactive, disruptive or otherwise violate the directions of the supervising teacher will not be allowed to return.

Students may be dismissed early from homework lab if the parent/guardian calls or sends a note or e-mail giving the student permission. Unless a student has parent/guardian permission to leave before 3:50, s/he will be dismissed at 3:50. Students not picked up by 4:00 will be escorted to Extended Day Program and parent/guardian will be charged the applicable fees.

EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION ATTIRE

Students should wear modest and appropriate attire for graduation. Baggy clothes, mini-skirts, and dresses or blouses showing midriffs and cleavage are not appropriate attire for graduation mass. Boys should wear a shirt and a tie with dress pants. Dresses, blouses, and shirts must have sleeves. Dress shoes are required.

DANCE DRESS CODE

Jackets, backpacks, inappropriate messages on clothing, hats, bandanas, bulky chains, skin tight clothing, and earrings on boys are not allowed. Modest attire must be worn. (i.e. Skirts must be an appropriate length, no more than 3 inches above the knee;

midriffs must be covered; no backless, strapless, or sleeveless clothing; no spaghetti straps; no hoodies). Pants should be comfortable but not excessively baggy and must be worn at the waist. Shorts are allowed 1st and 4th quarter and must be no more than 3” above the knee. The administration of the host school will determine if a student is inappropriately dressed. If a student is inappropriately dressed the student will be sent home and the principal of the school will be notified.

CELL PHONES/SMART DEVICES

Cell phones/ Smart Devices must remain in students’ lockers during school hours, always be in the off position, and may not be used inside the school building or other school/parish facilities at any time. Students may use cell phones/smart devices outside on school grounds after school is finished. If a student violates this policy, the device will be taken and given to the assistant principal. Only the student’s parent/guardian may retrieve the device. If the device is taken a second time, only the student’s parent/guardian may retrieve it and the student is no longer allowed to bring the device to school. A third infraction could result in suspension. Inappropriate/illegal use of cell phones/smart devices will be dealt with in the same manner as other serious discipline issues.

This rule also applies to off-campus school functions and diocesan functions. With regard to dances, students leave their devices in a designated spot, such as a coat room, before entering the dance area. Students may retrieve their devices when the dance is over.

MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Students will:

- set reasonable and attainable goals
- be responsible for recording all assignments in their planner
- turn assignments in on time
- come to class prepared
- check grades on RenWeb weekly
- file papers and organize their portfolio
- follow class rules regarding behavior
- always be in the proper school uniform
- keep lockers neat and organized
- come to class on time
- communicate to teachers if they are having difficulty in class
- call a parent/guardian if homework is not completed on time
- keep textbooks covered at all times

Teachers will:

- be prepared and teach quality lessons
- maintain and post assignments daily in the classroom
- record grades on RenWeb within one week from turn in date (two weeks for projects)
- post classroom expectations and rules
- provide a place for students to file work
- maintain a monthly calendar for long term assignments
- provide parents/guardians and students with course outline and expectations
- provide midterm progress reports
- follow stated homework policy
- reply to parent communication within 24 hours (Monday 8:00am-Friday 12:30pm)
- maintain a neat and orderly classroom
- be respectful when correcting student behavior

Families will:

- if Catholic, attend Mass with their children on weekends
- bring students to school on time
- ensure that students come to school in proper uniform
- help students balance outside activities and ensure that school is a priority
- show an active interest in your child's work and insist that they always do their best

- focus on improvement rather than only on letter grades
- provide a quiet study environment
- direct any concerns to the specific teacher
- check grades online regularly
- help students direct concerns to a teacher and discourage gossip or disrespectful conversations about administrators, teachers or students

St. Vincent Middle School asks for your support. We encourage involvement and invite families to work toward finding solutions to issues that will undoubtedly arise throughout the year. Please know that we chose the teaching profession, and middle school ages in particular, because we love children, feel called to a ministry working with the young, and believe we have an understanding of the uniqueness of a middle school student. We will do our best to make this year a positive and successful experience for your son or daughter.

Sincerely,

Mr. Gary Green

Principal

Mrs. Sarah Lambert

Assistant Principal

Mrs. Monica Howa-Johnson, Ms. Alexandra Hustiu, Mr. Scott Larrabee, Mrs. Kari McMullin, Mrs. Terry Musci, Mrs. Christina Eischeid, Mr. Radu Noaghiu, Mrs. Alicia Sloan, Mrs. Anna Zanmarini

Middle School Faculty

Please read and discuss this handbook with your middle school student(s), then sign and return this acknowledgement page by August 22, 2018.

I have read and I understand the policies and practices of the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Middle School. I understand that the principal reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time during the school year and that parents/guardians and students will be given prompt notification of such changes. We agree to support and comply with these policies and practices.

Student

Parent/Guardian

Date