

St. Francis International School

Parent Handbook *2010-2011*



PHILOSOPHY

St. Francis believes that the process of learning is as important as the end product. The curriculum focuses not only on the acquisition of knowledge but also on the development of critical thinking skills and problem-solving applications.

We believe in the unique qualities of each child and the importance of sound education from preschool to middle school years in developing the child's positive self-image, establishing English language skills, encouraging creativity and the use of cognitive thinking. We are certain that children learn by being involved in the learning process, and by experiencing the world around them with teachers who are sensitive and qualified to meet their needs.

AIMS

St. Francis aims to create independent learners and develop a love of learning in each child so that he/she is ready and eager to enter each new period of growth from young child to adolescence. The school aims to provide a safe, calm, and positive environment in which each child can attain his or her full potential academically, physically, emotionally, and socially within a small, caring atmosphere. Good behavior is of the utmost importance: St. Francis children are encouraged to be responsible and polite in all activities and on school trips.

School Hours 9:00 am to 3:15 pm

There will be supervision in the playground beginning at 8:00A.M. Please ensure your child is picked up between 3:00P.M. and 3:15P.M. Parents should accompany children to the school door and NOT inside the building, as this encourages independence and responsibility in the students. Only in the case of signing late slips, early dismissal or an appointment should a parent/s be in the building.

LATE ARRIVALS

Please have your child at school no later than 9:00A.M. as he/she will disrupt the morning lesson, both for him/herself and the other students. An arrival after 9:00 is considered late. Parents must go to the principal's office to get a late slip which is then given to the class teacher.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If, in case of emergency, you are picking up your child early, you must go to the principal's office to sign him/her out.

COMMUNICATION

All written communication will be in English. Teachers may write in your child's diary or by formal letter to inform you of specific information regarding your child. If you or the teacher require an appointment please call the office and make an appointment before 9A.M. or after 3:15P.M.

Whole school communication is sent by email or letter. If you haven't left the office your email address, please remember to do so.

BEHAVIOR CODE

Children who disobey the school rules will receive a Behavior Slip appropriate to the Elementary or Middle School. Each behaviour slip results in some form of time out. Three behaviour slips require the school to notify the parents for more serious consequences; depending on seriousness of the misconduct.

*For more specific information see the Behavior Code on the St. Francis website

SNACK TIME

Snack time is at 10:00A.M. for the Elementary and at 10:30A.M. for the Middle School. Please provide children with a healthy and tasty snack. Chocolate, lollies, chips and soft drinks are not allowed on a daily basis, however are permitted at birthday parties. Please notify the teacher a few days before the party is to take place.

SICKNESS POLICY/DAYS OFF

The school does **not** encourage extended holidays, however if taken, the office and teacher needs to be notified one week in advance.

If absence is longer than 3 days, a medical note from your physician **must** be brought in the day your child returns.

If a child becomes sick during the school day, parents will be called by phone to come to collect their child. The child with either an upset stomach or fever will be taken out of class until the parent is able to pick him/her up.

If your child is not fit enough to play outside please keep him/her home as we cannot supervise a child in a classroom at break time.

Please do not send in any medicines of any kind, as the school is not authorised to administer medication.

HEAD LICE

In accordance with the privacy policy, if your child is found to have head lice, you will be called and asked to pick him/her up, so that the treatment can be started immediately. The student will be readmitted only after a 24 hour period of treatment, with a doctor's certificate or "autocertificazione". (Ministero Sanità, circ. n° 4 del 13/03/1998)

The other parents will receive a letter stating that there is a case in the class so that precautions could be taken.

HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is to enable the students to enrich their courses through independent reference, to master basic skills through practice, and to retain classwork through review.

The recommended time that should be allotted to homework each day:

Grades one to four - 30 minutes

Grades five & six - 45 to 60 minutes

Grades seven & eight- 60 to 90 minutes

Even if homework is not assigned, students should spend the recommended time reading for it is an important precursor to writing. Parents are encouraged to support their child and the school by endeavouring to provide a quiet place to study.

If a student is unable to complete assigned homework, the parent should write a note giving reason(s).

*See *Homework Policy* on St. Francis website regarding consequences of incomplete homework in Middle School

STUDENT PROGRESS/CHILDREN AT RISK OF FAILING

Teachers will inform parents when a student is working below level. If your child is not meeting grade standard you will be sent a *Child at Risk form* to advise you of the problem. It is required that you ring the school to make an appointment to discuss and resolve the problem.*See *Academic Policy* regarding Children at Risk on the website

GRADING SYSTEM

Report cards are issued in December, March, and June. The grading scale is as follows:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	50-0
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

*Please see Academic Information on the St. Francis website for more information

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The calendar is available on the *Download* section of our website to allow parents to plan early and avoid undue absences of children from school.

UNIFORMS

School uniform plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethics of a school and setting an appropriate tone. We feel that uniforms support positive behavior and discipline, ensure pupils from all cultures to feel welcome, and protect children from social pressures.

Boys	Girls
Navy blue sweater	Navy blue sweater
White shirt or polo	White blouse or polo
Navy blue trousers	Navy blue trousers or skirt

Jeans, training shoes and clothing with logos or writings are not part of school uniform.

As a safety measure, please make sure your daughter does not wear necklaces, rings and bracelets to school.

The school gym suit must be worn on gym days and on field trips.

To help you, we have made an agreement with a retailer (*Feric –Largo San Godenzo 2 06-3313297*) who furnishes many schools, and offers an excellent quality/price ratio. There, you may be sure to find items that fully meet the dress code.

The purchase can be made directly at the shop or (once the size has been established), through the School.

LUNCH

Meals are provided by “*Happy Catering*” and approved monthly by “La Associazione Etologi e Nutrizionisti Italiani”, A.S.P.E.N.I.,

The menu can be found on our website at the beginning of each month.

We encourage children to eat, but if we see that he/she is not touching his/her lunch, we inform the parents.

Remember, in case of allergies, we need it in writing.

FIELD TRIPS

You will receive a letter with all the information and a permission slip which must be signed and returned to us. As the price of the trip is set according to the number of students participating, if your child is not taking part in the outing, we have to be notified at least one week in advance.

Students are covered by insurance both on school grounds and during school trips.

A catered lunch will be provided for the children who normally have school lunch.

Children must wear their school gym suit.

ACCIDENTS

Minor accidents are reported to the office, and treated by a staff member with knowledge of First Aid.

If a child is seriously injured or ill, he/she will be taken to the nearest hospital- accompanied by a school official who speaks Italian. Parents are notified immediately and told to go directly to the hospital.