



2024-2025

LOWER SCHOOL

**PARENT/STUDENT
HANDBOOK**



STUART
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
A Profile of Stuart	5
<i>Sacred Heart Goals</i>	6
<i>Mission Statement</i>	8
<i>Diversity and Inclusion</i>	8
The Lower School	9
<i>Our Lower School Mission Statement</i>	9
<i>Why Stuart's Lower School Program?</i>	9
<i>Parent-School Partnership in the Lower School</i>	11
<i>Behavior and Conduct</i>	11
<i>School Life - The Nitty Gritty</i>	13
<i>Attendance Policy</i>	14
<i>A Typical School Day</i>	14
<i>Teacher-Parent Communication</i>	15
<i>Other Important Information</i>	15
<i>Academics in the Lower School</i>	16
<i>Computer Usage</i>	17
<i>Physical Education & Recreation</i>	19
<i>Important Dates</i>	19
<i>Uniform Guidelines for Lower School</i>	20
General School Information	22

Administrative Information 22

Parent Involvement: The Stuart Parent Association 24

Communication with Teachers and Administrators 24

Who to Contact 25

Emergency Closing/Delayed Opening Information 26

Extended Day and Enrichment Programs 27

Dining Services Lunch Program 27

Transportation 27

Health Office 28

General Policies 31

Introduction

This Handbook provides detailed information about Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart (“SCDS” or the “School”), including summaries of school policies, practices, academics, activities, and goals. To stay up to date on any changes or additions to this Handbook, please visit stuartschool.org/parents.

Please take the time to carefully review this Handbook, including reviewing it with your daughter(s). It is important that families understand the School’s expectations and policies, and that families know to whom they can direct their questions or concerns. Students are expected to know and understand all information in this Handbook, as well as any information or regulations issued by the School, including those in the information sheets, and announcements around campus.

Please understand that this Handbook is intended only to highlight current policies, practices, and procedures. The policies and procedures set forth herein are intended as general guidelines—specific situations may call for handling a matter in a manner different from that described herein, depending upon the particular facts and nature of the situation. However, it would be nearly impossible to review every element of every policy, or every possible scenario and outcome. Rather, this Handbook serves as a series of policy summaries to keep your family better informed.

In addition, circumstances will require that the policies, practices, and procedures described in the Handbook may change from time to time. Stuart reserves the right to modify or change any or all such policies, practices, and procedures in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice.

SCDS will make every attempt to give timely notice of substantive changes in policy. Should events which are beyond SCDS’s reasonable control and which occur without its fault or negligence necessitate a closure, delay, or modification of its educational programs and activities, the family's obligations as outlined in this Handbook, as set forth in the Enrollment Agreement, and/or as otherwise established by SCDS shall continue. SCDS shall not be liable for any failure, delay, or modification of its programs or activities. SCDS reserves the right to make modifications to the school year as necessary to account for any time lost due to any closure or delay, including without limitation the following: extending the school year for a period of time; changing schedules; conducting classes via distance-learning; and/or scheduling weekend classes. Possible events which could necessitate closure, delay, or modification as described above include, but are not limited to, acts of nature, fire, pandemic, U.S., state or local government restrictions, wars, and insurrections.

This Handbook supersedes all prior policies (whether written or oral, expressed or implied) which in any way contradict with the policies herein. However, this document is not intended to supersede any individual written agreement between you and SCDS, or any applicable law. If you find that such a conflict or discrepancy exists, please contact Ms. D’Alessandro. This Handbook is not intended to constitute a legal contract of any kind.

A Profile of Stuart

Stuart was founded in 1960, when a group of parents and Sacred Heart alumnae presented a request for a school in Princeton to the Superior of the Washington Province of the Society of the Sacred Heart. The Society of the Sacred Heart is a religious congregation of women founded in France in 1800 by Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat. Its mission is to show forth the love of God through education.

With the help of the Society of the Sacred Heart and of friends in the area, a large tract of woodlands was purchased on Great Road, and Professor Jean Labatut of Princeton University was appointed architect. It was decided to name the school for Mother Janet Erskine Stuart, who was born in England in 1857 and became one of the world's leading and most respected educators of women.

A Roman Catholic school within the Sacred Heart tradition, Stuart is committed to providing an education that is academically strong, value-oriented and faith-centered. This Christian education encourages respect for all religions and celebrates diversity.

Stuart is committed to helping students grow as responsible and active members of the changing Church. Situated in a world struggling with materialism, poverty, injustice, intense competitive pressures, and broadening opportunities for women, Stuart stresses the values of caring, compassion, active social concern and peaceful resolution of conflict. As a unique institution dedicated to the education of women, Stuart has the opportunity to teach young women the skills and responsibilities of leadership; to make it possible for them to enter a greater number of fields than have been traditionally open to women; and in general to increase the self-esteem of each individual as a uniquely gifted person. Since these gifts are emotional and physical as well as intellectual and spiritual, education at Stuart must develop the whole person.

Today, schools and other works of the Society of the Sacred Heart are flourishing in 34 countries throughout the world. Working among the economically advantaged and disadvantaged, in cities and in villages, in universities and dispensaries, the 4,000 members of the Society seek to enrich the lives of others.

Among the many Sacred Heart schools throughout the world, 25 are in the United States. A distinctive spirit marks each of the schools in this country; yet all are similar because of their adherence to the five Goals of Sacred Heart education.

Sacred Heart Goals

As a member of the Sacred Heart Network of 25 schools in North America and a global community of more than 150 schools, Stuart educates to the Sacred Heart Goals and Criteria:

GOAL ONE: A personal and active faith in God.

- 1.** The school identifies itself to the wider community as a Catholic-independent-Sacred Heart School and embodies the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart..
- 2.** The school forms its student and adult members in attitudes of the heart of Jesus, such as gratitude, generosity, compassion and forgiveness.
- 3.** The school community reflects an ethos of joy, hope and celebration and its programs assert that there is meaning and value in life.
- 4.** The school community welcomes and respects persons of all faiths and educates to an understanding of the religions and spiritual traditions of the world.
- 5.** School leadership prioritizes space and time for silence and contemplation for its members to deepen their interior life.
- 6.** Members of the school community, open to the transforming power of the Spirit of God, engage in personal and communal prayer, discernment and reflection which inform their actions.
- 7.** The school community, rooted in the love of Jesus Christ, nurtures the spiritual lives of its members through the exploration of one's relationship to God, to self, to others and to creation.

GOAL TWO: A deep respect for intellectual values.

- 1** Sacred Heart educators and students engage in challenging experiences that inspire intellectual curiosity, a global mindset and a lifelong love of learning.
- 2** Sacred Heart educators develop and implement a dynamic curriculum, effective instructional methodology, current educational research and ongoing evaluation.
- 3** Sacred Heart educators and students utilize a variety of teaching and learning strategies to support their growth and development.
- 4** The school curricular and co-curricular programs integrate innovation and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, the exploration of emerging technologies and critical evaluation of information.
- 5** The school utilizes space and the physical environment in alignment with best pedagogical practices.
- 6** The school cultivates aesthetic values and the creative use of imagination.
- 7** Sacred Heart educators assume responsibility for their professional growth, supported by resources and a culture that promotes lifelong learning.

GOAL THREE: A social awareness which impels to action.

- 1 Sacred Heart educators prepare students to serve the common good in an interdependent world.
- 2 Sacred Heart educators immerse students in diverse global perspectives, developing competencies such as critical consciousness, language facility and cultural literacy.
- 3 The school, drawing from Catholic Social Teaching, educates students to analyze and work to eradicate social structures, practices, systems and values that perpetuate racism and other injustices.
- 4 All members of the school community accept accountability for the care of God's creation, practice effective stewardship of the earth's resources and work to alleviate the climate crisis.
- 5 School programs promote informed active citizenship and civic responsibility on the local, national and global level.
- 6 The school community engages in direct service, advocacy, outreach and partnerships to work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.
- 7 Sacred Heart educators work to develop in the students a lifelong commitment to service.

GOAL FOUR: The building of community as a Christian value.

- 1 The school, affirming that all are created in the image and likeness of God, promotes the inherent dignity of the human person and strives for relationships characterized by inclusion and mutual respect.
- 2 The school implements an ongoing plan for educating all members of the community to the charism, mission and heritage of the Society of the Sacred Heart.
- 3 The school engages with the Network of Sacred Heart Schools in the United States and Canada and Sacred Heart Schools around the world.
- 4 All members of the school community support a clean, healthy and safe environment.
- 5 Members of the school community practice and teach with a spirit of peace and reconciliation the principles of nonviolence and conflict management.
- 6 School leadership demonstrates a conscious effort to recruit students and employ faculty and staff of diverse races, ethnicities and backgrounds.
- 7 School leadership allocates financial resources to support socioeconomic diversity both in the admissions process and in the daily life of students.

GOAL FIVE: Personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom.

- 1 Student and adult members of the school community grow in courage and confidence as they discover new abilities, cultivate strengths, learn from mistakes, develop empathy and exercise resilience in meeting challenges.
- 2 All members of the school community take personal responsibility for health and balance in their lives supported by a school culture that promotes spiritual, intellectual, physical and social-emotional well-being.

- 3** Members of the school community model and teach respectful dialogue in support of clear, direct, open communication.
- 4** All members of the school community endeavor to practice informed, ethical decision-making and accountability.
- 5** Student and adult members of the school community model, practice, and teach safe, ethical and responsible use of technology.
- 6** Sacred Heart educators cultivate in the students life skills, such as initiative, creativity and agility.
- 7** Sacred Heart schools recognize and educate to motivational, inspirational, and transformational leadership.

Mission Statement

Stuart’s mission is to prepare young women for lives of exceptional leadership and service within the framework of the Goals and Criteria of the Schools of the Sacred Heart.

Diversity and Inclusion

Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat called on our Sacred Heart communities to model respect, compassion, forgiveness and generosity.

Therefore, Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart joins other schools in the Sacred Heart Network who are called to live our daily lives promoting universal respect, in which each person is honored, loved and cared for, and where young women are educated to an understanding and deep respect for diversity. We believe a diverse community challenges us to make God's love visible in the world, improves our lives as we learn and grow together and affords each of us a deeper understanding of our collective humanity.

We expect all members of the Stuart community, being guided by a spirit of love, to accept individuals’ differences, which include, but are not limited to, ability, age, ethnicity, family structure, gender, learning style, race, religion, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. We believe that all in our community should feel valued and respected, be able to share their knowledge and gifts and be given the opportunity to thrive as equal contributors in enriching life at Stuart.

The Lower School

Stuart is a member of the Sacred Heart Network of Schools that spans six continents with a single guiding philosophy: to develop the complete person and encourage all to develop their potential. The Goals and Criteria of the Sacred Heart are taught in the Lower School Program at Stuart, just as they are throughout each school in the Network.

These goals, in the words of young children, are:

To Love as You Love
To Study and Learn
To Help Those in Need
To Be a Friend to All
To Make Wise Choices

Our Lower School Mission Statement

Lower School awakens and celebrates each child's unique gifts by immersing them in a safe, nurturing atmosphere that fosters their spiritual, intellectual, and social growth.

Why Stuart's Lower School Program?

Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart was founded in 1963 by several Princeton women who sought to establish an all-girls school affiliated with the Society of the Sacred Heart. Three distinctive traits are the bedrock of a Stuart education:

- All Girls
- Sacred Heart Goals, National Network, and Global Community
- Commitment to Innovation

All Girls

- Faculty teach to the girls' strengths, giving them the ability to express themselves freely and the freedom to learn without distraction.
- Girls at Stuart recognize and appreciate the safety they have to explore values and take risks they might not otherwise experience.

Stuart as part of an International Community

Stuart is a member of the national network and international community of Sacred Heart schools with connections to sister/brother schools as close as Princeton Academy, and as far as Tokyo, Japan.

- Sacred Heart schools educate the whole child, inspire academic excellence, develop a strong sense of community and encourage a lifetime commitment to learning and service.
- Stuart educates to the Five Goals of Sacred Heart education.
- Commitment to Innovation
- Stuart founders sought to inspire young women to go out and change the world.
- We continue their charge to this day - not only by inspiring change through social justice, but also by educating girls with 21st century skills and technology to further deepen their ties to the arts, athletics, science and mathematics.
- Whatever path to learning and service they choose, they are well equipped to lead and make a difference.

As a Lower School Community, it is expected that:

We embrace the Five Goals & Criteria of a Sacred Heart education.

Goal 1

We are rooted in deep love, respect, and consideration of ourselves and others. We establish a commitment and trust between home and school. We are guided by shared principles of respect and responsibility.

Goal 2

We foster a lifelong love of learning as we strive to be a community of learning and excellence.

Goal 3

We educate global citizens who are ready and willing to assume their share of responsibility and act for the good of the entire community.

Goal 4

Children come to school with a unique set of experiences, backgrounds, and learning styles.

Goal 5

Practice sound ethical judgment. Children will make mistakes. We help them learn from their mistakes through problem solving, peer mediation, role playing, and conflict resolution skills.

Parent-School Partnership in the Lower School

Parents can expect the following from teachers:

- Embrace the Five Goals & Criteria of a Sacred Heart education.
- Create a climate for active learning and flexibility to empower students to explore and discover.
- Serve as role models to the students by being loving, open, and authentic.
- Accept ownership of moving the school forward. She/He will work together in preparation for teaching, in renewing and enhancing instructional skills.
- Make a commitment to serving the potential of each student by engaging in individualized instruction.
- Focus on the whole child and with service to the potential of each child in all developmental areas including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical.
- Address behavioral concerns in a respectful and nurturing manner.
- Keep parents informed.

Stuart expects the following from parents:

- Embrace the Five Goals & Criteria of a Sacred Heart education.
- Believe in the mission, goals & criteria of the school and partner with the school to impart similar core values.
- Have confidence in the Stuart teachers, understanding that the goal is to continuously keep the interest of all children at the forefront.
- Contact the teacher first in cases of uncertainty or disagreement. They will work together to problem solve and find solutions.
- Make a concerted effort to stay informed and participate in class meetings, special occasions, events, and celebrations.
- Engage in their child's learning - discuss and examine items and work brought home; maintain a dialogue about homework assignments and enrichment, and read together on a regular basis.

Stuart expects the following from students:

- Embrace the Five Goals & Criteria of a Sacred Heart education.
- Work and playfully and actively.
- Interact with other students and adults in a loving and respectful manner.
- Be good role models for younger students.
- Engage with others collaboratively, following school expectations.
- Gradually take on more responsibility for their daily preparation of work and projects.

Behavior and Conduct

As a member of our community:

We are rooted in the Five Goals & Criteria of the Sacred Heart. Our expectation is that all members of our community embrace and live by these essential tenets of moral conduct. We believe the child benefits most in an environment where clear and consistent expectations along with mutual respect and love are the norms. While children will make mistakes, our goal is to help them learn from those mistakes as they grow in self-awareness and self-control.

Discipline in the Lower School is intended to be educational. In deciding upon an appropriate consequence, the classroom teacher and Lower School Head will take into account such factors as the age of the child, intent, frequency and/or severity, and the child's willingness to accept responsibility for her behavior.

In most instances, behavioral expectations are understood and easily met by Lower School students. Teachers are expected to resolve differences within the classroom setting. If the behavior persists and/or is deemed unacceptable, a student may be sent to the Head of the Lower School and/or a parent may be called. Specific behavior modifications and/or discipline protocols may be put in place after consultation with the teacher(s), student(s), school psychologist, and parent(s).

This section is intended to provide a general guideline of Stuart's behavioral expectations of its students, outlining conduct that is considered outside the scope of acceptable behavior as a member of the Stuart community. It is important to remember that the below list of inappropriate conduct should **in no way be considered an exhaustive list of the conduct which may result in disciplinary consequences for Lower School students**. No list is or can be comprehensive; it is possible that a student may act or behave in a manner that is not included in the policies below yet disrupts the school community.

- Verbal and/or physical abuse, bullying, or inappropriate physical touch
- Lying, deceit, or other dishonest conduct
- Destruction of property
- Stealing
- Inappropriate language

Possible consequence for unacceptable behavior may include:

- Verbal warning
- Face-to-face apology; letter of apology
- Phone call to parents
- Loss of gouter or recess time; missing field trip/special events
- Conversation with homeroom teacher and/or Head of Lower School
- Behavioral modifications
- Discipline protocol
- In-school, mid-day, or out of school suspension
- Expulsion
- Non-renewal of contract
- Other options as deemed appropriate

The School administration reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding student behavior and discipline, and may issue alternate discipline as circumstances warrant, in the School's sole discretion. Serious violations, violations which involve violence or threats of violence, or if the student has caused physical harm to another individual may result in expulsion.

School Life - The Nitty Gritty

Orientation Day

Orientation Day is the Tuesday after Labor Day and begins at 9:00 AM for all Lower School families. Please park your car and walk with your child to the main entrance of the school. All drop off and pick up procedures for regular school days will be reviewed during the Orientation Day.

We anticipate that the first morning will be filled with lots of excitement and unforeseen events. The purpose of the morning is to meet and greet, develop a familiarity with the teachers and the classroom setting, and provide a positive first encounter for your child. Each classroom teacher will spend time with the children as they find their cubby/locker, receive school supplies and review the schedule.

Backpacks & Gym Sneakers

Please provide your child with a backpack large enough to include artwork, extra clothing and an 8x11 folder. Remember to check it and empty it out regularly. No rolling backpacks are permitted in grades JK-2, please. Clearly label your daughter's backpack and gym sneakers. Please bring the backpack and gym sneakers to school on Orientation Day.

The School Day

Arrival: All students should be in the building by 7:50 AM. Early care is available for all students EC through grade 4, from 7:30 AM - 8:00 AM.

Dismissal: All children are dismissed at 3:00 PM. At 3:15 PM any student who has not been picked up or has missed her bus will be sent to after-school care. After-school care is offered until 6:00 PM.

An accurate record of how your child goes home is kept in the main Lower School Office. If there is a change in the way your child is getting home, please contact Megan Quick at 609-378-1939 or mquick@stuartschool.org before 2:00 PM that day or your child will be sent to the regular dismissal location. Please know that our priority is to keep all children safe, and it is imperative that we know the location of every child at all times.

Students should be aware of their dismissal plans for the day. Play dates need to be arranged outside of the school day. Unless there is a true emergency, please refrain from making dismissal changes. While we will always accommodate an emergency or unanticipated situation, it is not possible for the Lower School office to handle the volume of daily phone messages. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important safety procedure.

If you are running late, your child will be walked to after-school care. When you arrive, you will need to come into the school and pick up your child in the Lower School. Please note that if your child is not picked up by 3:30 PM you will be charged accordingly.

Attendance Policy

Absence and Late Arrivals

Regular attendance and punctuality are key components to a student's academic success. If your child will be absent or will be arriving after 8:00 AM please contact Megan Quick at 609-378-1939 or mquick@stuartschool.org. Requests for homework assignments are made with the homeroom teacher and will be left at the Lower School's front desk by 3:30 PM. Please plan family vacations and special events during the regular vacation days throughout the school year. It is extremely disruptive for a child to miss more than two consecutive days of school. If a child has more than five unexcused absences, a discussion with the Head of Lower School is required. Consequences may affect student progress and assessment.

A Typical School Day

The Lower School gathers for morning prayer, community time, or assembly bi-weekly on Wednesday mornings. We share special events, presentations, and celebrate with each other. These gatherings may include "intentions" and prayer, and are followed by a regularly scheduled day that includes literacy, math, goûter, lunch, recess, theology, drama, music, art, world language, PE, library/media and STEM. The school day ends at 3:00 PM.

Goûter & Espacio

In keeping with our French roots, the daily snack is referred to as Goûter. Each class enjoys a healthy snack (provided by the school) and recess time outside. Students are permitted to bring a snack from home.

Embracing a Sacred Heart tradition, Espacio, the Spanish word for space, is a time of quiet reflection set aside each day at Sacred Heart schools to allow for God in our increasingly busy lives. The tradition was started by RSCJs at a meeting in 2000 in Amiens, France when they took a break from their agenda to silently pray and reflect. The entire Stuart community celebrates Espacio each day.

Lunch

Lunch is included in tuition for all JK- 4 students. They may bring their own lunch from home if they choose. Please be advised: Flik Food Services provides a nut-free lunch in a nut-free facility. However, food is brought in from time to time - to celebrate birthdays, for example - that may contain nut products and/or that may be manufactured in a facility containing nut products.

Teacher-Parent Communication

Weekly News in CORConnection

All families receive a school-wide weekly newsletter called CORConnection. At the top of each newsletter is a link to the TWILS, “This Week in Lower School,” where Ms. D’Alessandro highlights the week’s events along with reminders for upcoming dates, special occasions, Lower School and all-school events. In addition, each homeroom teacher writes a weekly newsletter through Seesaw to convey important information about the grade.

Seesaw

All classrooms use Seesaw as a digital portfolio to communicate what goes on in the classroom. The Seesaw platform is a user-friendly communication app that will give you a window into your child’s learning, important information and news, and will serve as a vehicle to share regular academic progress with you.

Aspen

Our student information system is in Aspen. All parents are expected to register all relevant information about your child including updated phone numbers, emergency contacts, and medical information.

Other Important Information

Field Trips

From time to time, field trips are scheduled off-campus. Field trips are designed to enrich the children’s experience and enhance the existing curriculum. Details and descriptions of trips will be shared with parents in advance. Children wear their school uniform to all field trips unless otherwise specified. Parents may be asked by their child’s teacher(s) to chaperone and/or drive to local field trips. The Business Office requires that a parent register as a Parent Driver with their office. Volunteer drivers must re-register each school year.

Congé

Congé is derived from the French word *leave (farewell)*. It’s Congé! This announcement is recognized by students at Sacred Heart Schools as signaling a day when they take leave of their regular studies and channel all energy into having fun. Congé comes when they least expect it, since the planning is done in secret. Head of Lower School will send out an email the morning of Congé to alert parents where we will be going.

Lost & Found

Every article of your child's clothing including socks, mittens, sweaters, and shoes must be labeled or marked. Found articles are placed in a bin in the Lower School Office. All unclaimed uniform items will be given to the used uniform store, The Encore Emporium; non-uniform items will be donated to charity. Please encourage your child to be responsible with her belongings and to check the Lost & Found bin when missing an item.

Uniforms and Dress Down Days

Our uniform requirements are listed in this handbook and posted on the school's website. Students are expected to come to school in uniform each day. On occasion, the students will be given a "dress down day" when they can come to school in regular play clothes. Please assist your child in choosing items appropriate and comfortable for school.

Birthdays

If your child wishes to celebrate a birthday (or half-birthday for the summer celebrants), we suggest you send in a small nut-free treat for the homeroom or the whole grade. Please consider a healthy option of fruit kabobs, yogurt cups, granola, or mini muffins. Individual cupcakes are permitted, but no cakes or excessive sugary treats, please.

Because we strive to foster Stuart's community spirit, and we care deeply about each child, invitations to parties held outside of school may not be distributed in school. If you are planning a party outside of school for your child, we ask that you invite the entire homeroom or grade. We fully appreciate that celebrations can be costly, so if the number of guests needs to be limited, please help your child remain discreet and respectful of all members in her class.

Special Events & Holidays

Throughout the year, the classes will celebrate special events and holidays. Parents are encouraged to share traditions, customs, unique foods, etc. with the class or lower school. The classroom teachers and room parents will be in touch with you as we approach these special days. Your support and volunteerism is appreciated and most welcomed!

Academics in the Lower School

Homework Guidelines

The primary objective of homework is to provide the student with an opportunity to practice and strengthen academic skills. Homework is to be reasonable in length, related to classroom work, well defined by the teacher, and understood by the student.

Homework should be a character building experience. Managed properly by teachers and parents, homework can equip a child with emotional and behavioral skills that will be necessary to meet the complex demands of adult life. These include the skills of responsibility, autonomy, perseverance, time management, initiative, self-reliance, and resourcefulness.

First and Second Grade: Homework is assigned each weekday. The time should range from 15-20 minutes. Some assignments require parental involvement while others are an independent assignment to reinforce the day's lesson. In addition, quiet reading is expected for 15-20 minutes every night.

Third and Fourth Grade: Homework is assigned every day. Approximately 25-30 minutes is an expected guideline. Students are expected to work independently on assignments, making note of any questions for the teacher to address for the following day. Many assignments are not due the next day and the students are expected to budget their time appropriately. In addition, quiet reading is expected for 20-30 minutes every night.

During class time, we work with the girls to help them manage their time wisely and to plan for long term assignments. We also give ample notice of tests and encourage the girls to study in advance and over time for all assessments.

Detailed information about homework expectations and a parent's role will be discussed at Back to School Night in September.

Academic and SEL Support

The Lower School is staffed with an Academic and SEL support team who work alongside the teacher to assess student progress, maintain a comprehensive scope and sequence, provide basic skill instruction, differentiate and individualize, and provide an attractive student/teacher ratio.

Internal/external assessments, teacher observations, and parent feedback help us determine the specific academic needs of a particular student. Formal diagnostic testing must be done outside of school at a parent's expense. We maintain a list of evaluators, which is available to those parents seeking these services. Free testing for New Jersey residents by Catapult Regional Educational Services will continue to be available as well.

All students benefit from the expertise of the Lower School learning specialists as they visit each classroom 2-3 times a week during the language arts and math time. If it becomes apparent to the school and/or the family that additional support is required, this must be provided outside of school at the expense of the family.

Computer Usage

Technology is an integral part of 21st century learning. The girls at Stuart are often working with Chromebooks, Smart Boards, laptops, and iPads as valuable tools that enhance their learning. The use of technology comes with an acknowledgement and responsibility.

The use of computers in the Lower School is governed by the following rules:

1. Privacy - the student will not look at anyone else's account, files, or work on the computer.
2. Academic honesty - the student will not present the work of other people as her own. She will give credit to the originator of ideas, text, images, programs, and sounds taken from digital sources.
3. Safety - the student will not give out personal information about others or herself while online and will not engage in any type of cyberbullying.
4. Reliability - the student realizes that the information found on the Internet is not always accurate, current or complete.
5. Sustainability - the student will not be wasteful in printing more than needed.
6. Security - the student will not damage any computer or any part of Stuart's network, will not access anyone else's account, and will not download programs from the internet.
7. Legality - the student will not use the network for any illegal activity. If she has a question as to what an illegal activity is, she will ask a teacher.
8. Privileges - the student understands that any use of Stuart's information resources is a privilege. Students should not have an expectation of privacy when using computers or tablets provided by Stuart, which may be inspected at any time.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Goal Five, criterion five of the Goals of the Sacred Heart reads, "Students and adult members of the community model, practice, and teach safe, ethical, and responsible use of technology." As technology continues to advance it offers new opportunities, capabilities, and challenges. New artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, DALL-E, and others are constantly evolving and being integrated into various websites, apps, and platforms. Our teachers and curriculum will continue to adapt, change, and grow to teach how to ethically use these technologies to enhance our learning objectives and efficiencies. At the same time, the use of these technologies such as online translators or other online resources in the past should only be used for academic work when approved by the teacher. Any student who uses AI without permission and does not properly cite it when turning in their work would be in violation of our plagiarism guidelines by handing in work that is not their own.

Student Use of Third-Party Programs, Apps, and Online Services

All grade levels have access to the Internet. SCDS additionally contracts with a variety of third-party software programs, apps, and online services. These services are governed by their own privacy policies. They are available on devices to support effective communication, collaboration, and creativity while strengthening technology skills. Lower School students use only software and apps that have been approved by faculty and administration.

Recording Classroom Lessons, Meetings, and Conversations with Staff

It is a violation of School policy to record classroom lessons or conversations with any employees, including with the Head of School, with any form of recording device, including a laptop, tablet or smartphone, or using any other recording technology, such as Snapchat, Facebook Live or other such applications, without express consent from the person(s) being recorded. Permission is not required for public events such as athletic competitions or plays. School assemblies are not public events. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

Physical Education & Recreation

All children are expected to participate in physical education classes during the week and outdoor recreation twice a day, weather permitting. It is assumed that if a child is well enough to come to school, she is well enough to go outside and participate in gym class. A note from the doctor is required if this is not the case. For gym class, grades JK-4 will need sneakers (kept in the cubby/locker). On cold days, the children need to dress warmly with hats and gloves. When the ground is wet and/or there is snow, children must wear boots and snow pants.

Important Dates

Lower School JK – 4 Back to School Night

Back to School Night is held each year in September. This evening provides an opportunity to meet your child's teacher, become familiar with the classroom and hear about the year's goals, expectations, highlights, and events. This is a night not to be missed!

Lower School Uniform

School uniforms are worn in Junior Kindergarten through Grade 4. All uniforms must be ordered from Lands' End, the official Stuart uniform supplier.

Lands' End School Uniforms

- Go to: www.landsend.com
- Click on "Uniforms" in the menu bar
- Click on "Find My School" button
- Alternatively, call 1.800.963.4816
- Stuart's preferred-school number is: 9000-2531-3

We recommend you plan ahead as Lands' End often offers discounts through sales and penny-logo promotions.

Note: All uniform clothing must be clearly marked with your child's full name.

Lower School Uniform:

- Hunter/Classic Navy Plaid Jumper (this style only) with white embroidered logo (logo is required)
- Short Sleeve Peter Pan Knit Top – white - with green embroidered logo (logo is required)
Or
- Long Sleeve Peter Pan Knit Top – white - with green embroidered logo (logo required)
- Girls' Solid Bike Shorts – classic navy
- Ankle (above the ankle bone) or knee-high socks – white or navy blue
Or
- Tights – white or navy blue

These additional items may be worn in WINTER = Thanksgiving through Spring Break

- Pleated Front Iron Knee Easy Blend Chino Pants – classic navy
- Solid Color Drifter V-neck Sweater – red or navy blue with white embroidered logo (logo required)
- Solid Color Drifter V-neck 5-button Cardigan – red or navy blue with white embroidered logo (logo required)

SHOES: Shoes must be black. Shoes may be the following styles:

- Girls' Unit Bottom Mary Jane Shoes – (black suede or patent leather)
- All weather Mocs in black suede

Uniform Condition

Uniforms should be in good condition and not be ripped or in obvious disrepair. The length of the jumper must be no shorter than four inches above the back creases of the knee.

Cold Weather

In addition to the uniform pants, students may wear sweatshirts/pants on the playground only, not in the classroom. Snow pants and boots are necessary for winter outdoor play.

Jewelry, Makeup and Hair

- Hair accessories should remain in keeping with the uniform – no color restrictions on headbands or bows.
- No jewelry is to be worn with the uniform or brought to school.
- Only watches and small, stud earrings for pierced ears are permitted.
- Makeup, hair color, and nail polish are not to be worn to school.

Physical Education (P.E.)

Sneakers are required for all PE classes – Velcro or lace up sneakers are permitted. It is best to have a pair that can be kept in the locker.

Dress Down Days

On occasion, the students will be given a dress down day. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for school and outdoor play. Shoes must have closed toes, and preferably no shoelaces.

Logo Required

The Stuart Logo is required on the jumper, tops and sweaters. We will only be using the logo emblem with the Society of the Sacred Heart “Heart” in the middle. If you have an item that is embroidered with the logo of our building in its center – your child may wear it until she needs to order a new item. Please note that when ordering items, you will need to allow an extra 7-10 business days for logo application. Any current jumpers or white tops that your child has may be worn until they no longer fit. We ask that you apply the logo to any new item.

Encore Emporium

The Stuart Parent Association offers a second-hand, gently used uniform collection. These uniforms may be purchased for a nominal fee at the Encore Emporium, located on the first floor in the “C” Corridor. The front desk will be able to direct you to the Encore Emporium.

General School Information

Administrative Information

Admissions Office

Student Enrollment and Re-enrollment Agreements

Agreements to enroll or reenroll students are released to parents through the MySTUART portal.

Re-enrolling families must sign and submit their agreements with a non-refundable deposit by the date indicated. If an agreement is not received by the due date, a student risks forfeiting her place. Difficulties arise in scheduling and teacher assignments if contracts are returned late.

The Head of School, upon recommendation of the respective Division Head, may withhold an agreement for a re-enrolling student. When this occurs, the Head of School will inform parents either verbally or in writing and an appropriate date will be set to make a final determination regarding reenrollment.

As set forth in the agreement, student withdrawals must be made in writing prior to May 1. After May 1, the entire tuition is required to be paid, regardless of whether the student matriculates.

Financial Aid - Stuart commits a percentage of its operating budget to financial aid for qualified applicants who provide documentation of need.

Parents wishing to apply for financial aid may do so through TADS or School and Students Services by January 31. Specifics regarding the financial aid application process can be found on the Admissions portion of the school's website.

Business Office

Tuition Payment - The payment plan is elected as a part of the enrollment agreement. Non-compliance with this provision may result in the student being denied admission to class. In accordance with the terms of the enrollment agreement, transcripts and records will not be released until all financial obligations are paid in full.

Tuition Refund Insurance -The Tuition Refund Insurance option is offered at the beginning of each year. Information concerning this plan will be enclosed with the enrollment contract.

Parking - Please park only in the parking lots. Do not park in areas designated as fire zones or no parking zones or in spaces specifically marked. Drivers must be sure not to leave their cars in such a way as to impede the access of fire trucks or emergency vehicles at any time or to block the passage of school buses. You may take any available space with the exception of ones that are specially marked. For the safety of

each child, please follow these directions.

Office of Development

The Office of Development seeks to further Stuart's mission of preparing girls for lives of exceptional leadership and service by engendering constituent engagement and support through effective programs in fundraising, alumnae and family engagement, and communications.

Gifts to Stuart provide the margin of excellence that makes our school so special. As with all independent schools, tuition alone does not cover our costs. Stuart relies on contributions made to The Stuart Fund for budgetary relief so that Stuart can provide all girls with an exemplary education. We encourage every family and all faculty and staff to support The Stuart Fund and to serve as advocates and ambassadors for the school. Participation is celebrated with various incentives and donor names are listed in the Annual Report.

Gifts for specific projects and to the endowment are also necessary to maintain and enhance the campus, academics, athletics, the arts and special educational initiatives. Stuart receives no financial support from the Diocese of Trenton, the Society of the Sacred Heart, or federal or local government agencies. Contributions left to Stuart through a bequest and other planned gifts have provided significant support through the years. *The Mater Legacy Society* was formed to recognize those who make such plans. Please contact the director of development or see the "Planned Giving" section of the Stuart website for further information.

Alumnae Relations: Stuart alumnae are enthusiastic supporters of their school, giving back through gifts of time, talent, and treasure. They graciously return to speak with students at career panels, the Women in Leadership Symposia, Women We Admire Day, and other special events. They provide internships and other career support. The alumnae enjoy the personal and professional support they receive through their Stuart connections, returning to Alumnae Day each spring and staying in touch through social media and regional events.

These activities are organized by the assistant director of alumnae engagement and governed by The Stuart Alumnae Association. The president of the Association is an ex-officio member of the Stuart Board of Trustees. The coordinator helps identify and organize initiatives that involve our alumnae in the life of the school.

Stuart Memorial League: On the occasion of our 30th Anniversary, Stuart established the Stuart Memorial League. The purpose of the Memorial League is to pray for those people near and dear to the Stuart community on the occasion of a birth, baptism, wedding, anniversary, graduation, or death, or to send a special thank you, get well wish, or congratulatory message. After a person is enrolled in the Memorial League, that person's name will be inscribed in the Memorial League Book. The book remains on the

altar in the chapel and that person will then be prayed for whenever Mass is celebrated at Stuart.

Office of Marketing & Communications

The Office of Marketing & Communications is the storyteller of the school and the steward of the Stuart brand. The office provides strategic communications services for all divisions, departments, programs, and events including, but not limited to, official school communications, email marketing, social media, public relations, website management, printed and digital design, and event management.

How We Communicate: News and information to the internal and external communities are distributed through a variety of channels.

This includes:

- Weekly newsletter, CORConnection, with news, events, announcements, and links to weekly division news. This goes out to families, faculty, staff, trustees, and Middle & Upper School students.
- Emails from Stuart: While CORConnection is the primary source of information sent by the school, there are occasional purposes to send emails from the school or other members of the leadership teams. This may include division heads, director of development, director of enrollment, director of athletics, director of college counseling, and the director of summer programs.
- Social media: Stuart has a presence on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn. Other social media sources affiliated with Stuart include Stuart Athletics on Instagram, Stuart Student Life on Instagram, and the Stuart Parent Association Facebook group.
- Other forms of news and announcements are distributed through press releases, advertising, print and digital publications, and the Stuart website.

Photography: All major events at Stuart are photographed and some are captured on video. The photographs are available, typically within a few days, and can be viewed and downloaded from Stuart's online photo gallery. The permission to photograph release is included with the yearly enrollment contract signed by each family. This release serves as permission to release your child's photograph to the media, post on the school website or print in school publications.

Parent Involvement: The Stuart Parent Association

The Stuart Parent Association (SPA), organized in 1971, serves to encourage the interest of parents in the school and to further communication among parents, students, faculty and administration. Its intent is to enhance the quality of our children's lives by providing opportunities for enrichment and support for both students and parents. SPA provides workshops for parents on issues facing children and family life, and sponsors social activities, coffees, orientation gatherings and seasonal parties. New ideas for events are always welcome.

The work of SPA is led by an executive committee, consisting of SPA's elected officers and the Head of School. The Executive Committee, which meets monthly, coordinates the general meetings for all parents and supports the school in many areas where needed.

SPA organizes parent-student socials such as:

- StuartFest/Homecoming
- Teacher/Staff Appreciation Day
- Princeton Common Ground, an association of local independent school parent groups
- Cookies with Santa

SPA also manages The Book Bag (our school store), and assists the Offices of Admission and Institutional Advancement to coordinate the many other activities involving parent support.

Parents are encouraged to attend the SPA annual meeting and participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Communication with Teachers and Administrators

Stuart holds effective communication with parents as essential. It is key to building community and educating your child. Specific Communication Guidelines can be found at the end of this handbook.

Telephone – The school phone number is (609) 921-2330. It is an automated phone system, but you can reach an operator at any time during school days from 7:50 AM – 4:00 PM and during the summer from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Parents are asked to contact faculty, staff and administrators during these times. If they are not available, the call will be directed to their voice mailbox and the calls will be returned as soon as possible. A list of voice mail extensions is available on the school's telephone system, and in the directory.

E-mail is the main communication vehicle with parents. All school, as well as division, information is communicated by e-mail and on the Stuart website. All personnel at Stuart may be contacted directly by their personal e-mail address using first initial, last name@stuartschool.org. For example, jdoe@stuartschool.org.

Website – Stuart's website is a valuable source of information for everyone. Calendar information, special news, school closing, sports news, etc. are all posted on the Web. Stuart's web address is: www.stuartschool.org.

Parent Information Pages on the Stuart website contain news and information and are broken down by division for Early Childhood, Lower School, Middle School, and Upper School. To get to the Parent Information Pages, use the “Parent” link at the top right of the Stuart website. Division-specific news as well as links to school calendars, parent enrichment, the SPA (Stuart Parent Association) page, the Health Office, and the school store: The Bookbag online. Visit the Stuart website at www.stuartschool.org

Aspen Portal – All student information is kept in Aspen, the student information system, and can be accessed through the parent/student portal. Use the Aspen Portal to access your child’s academic records, attendance, class schedule, homework, class pages, and school calendars. The portal is password protected. Login information will be sent to parents and students.

Who to Contact

Please contact those responsible for the individual programs of the school for the most effective communication.

We encourage direct contact between you and the individual adult responsible for your child’s education in both academic and extracurricular activities. Each faculty member works within a department and is supervised by a Department Head (see Directory).

The Division Head is responsible for the daily operation of their school, including faculty in relation to their classes, schedule and all academic concerns. Contact the Division Head with questions about the academic program or curriculum.

The Business Office can be contacted directly for billing and payment information

Julia Wall works closely with the school’s administrative team and with the Board of Trustees to further the mission of the school. She encourages direct contact between parents and those responsible for the individual programs of the school for the most effective communication.

School Area	Who to Contact	Extension
Your daughter’s class	Your daughter’s teacher	See Directory
Lower School Head	Christine D’Alessandro	4102
Middle School Head	Robert Missonis	4114
Upper School Head	Dr. Marissa Muoio	4250
Counseling Office	Hayes Honer	4117
Nurse’s Office	Tine Boss, RN	4122
Academic Support	Amanda Rivenburgh	4151

Gifts to Stuart	Beth Marks	4101
Volunteering	Alma Eisenacher	4180
Business Office	Michelle Evaul, CFOO	4116
Diversity Office	Monique Jones	4103
Head Office	Julia Wall, Head of School	4111

Emergency Closing/Delayed Opening Information

Stuart follows the Princeton Regional School System regarding school closing. If the Princeton Police directs the school system to close early, we must follow their direction. We do our best to work together with the other independent schools in the area in order to help families who have children in several schools.

When there is a school closing, delayed opening or early dismissal, notification is made as follows:

- Automated alert phone message sent to the phone number you indicated in Magnus on your MyStuart portal.
- An alert email will be sent to the email addresses in Magnus.
- Stuart website homepage: an alert will be posted at www.stuartschool.org

It is important that the contact information we have in Magnus is current. If you need to update your family information in Magnus, please visit <https://stuartschool.myschoolapp.com/app/parent#login>.

It is necessary that you be alert to current weather conditions and inform your child of what will be expected in the case of an early dismissal. There are two early dismissal options:

1. The bus or private transportation system may be taken home at whatever time it arrives even if we have NOT been able to contact you.
2. A student may remain at school until picked up - no later than 3:00 PM - as we are concerned with everyone's safety, and do not want to delay departure for anyone.

All after school programs and activities are canceled in the event of an early closing. All students must be picked up by 3:30 PM.

Extended Day and Enrichment Programs

Extended Care Extended Care is available on a per semester or per diem basis. Lower School Children who are not picked up at dismissal will be brought to the Extended Day Program. A drop in fee will be charged to the parent after 3:30 PM.

The **Enrichment Programs** at Stuart offer students an opportunity to try something new, develop new

talents, take a homework break and learn with an experienced teacher and have fun! An exciting line-up of programs is available each semester including creative movement, ballet, Lego Robotics, art, math and more! Open to students in Early Childhood through Grade 4, courses are taught by Stuart faculty and selected subject-matter experts. Minimum numbers of students are required to run these programs.

Vacation Camp is available during our parent conference and faculty in-service days and some of our Vacation Breaks, Stuart will offer **Vacation Camp** from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Our wonderful Extended Day staff will provide lots of fun and relaxation with arts, crafts and projects for the Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen. Siblings are welcome! Snack will be provided but please send your child with their own lunch. Per-diem registration is \$65 per day. Registration will be available one month before the Vacation and minimum numbers of students will be required in order to run the program

Dining Services Lunch Program

FLIK Independent School Dining serves our Stuart community. Please visit Stuart's website for a link to the details of dining options.

Transportation

By Bus

Transportation forms are mailed to parents with re-enrollment forms and must be returned to the admission office when requested. Transportation is provided by the state of New Jersey; failure to apply on time can result in loss of transportation or reimbursement. Routes are set up by school districts; Stuart does not control their decisions. Questions may be directed to the admission office or the school board of the district where the student resides. Private transportation (car pools, buses and taxis) exists for those students who are not eligible for public transportation. If inappropriate behavior is reported to Stuart from a bus company the student's parent or guardian will be notified.

Students are permitted to ride only on *their assigned buses* as insurance policies cover the assigned buses only. Often, students bring in notes indicating they will be going home with a friend on her bus. Officially, this can only be cleared with the transportation office of the student's school district. Bus drivers can (and have in the past) refused to take a student not on their list.

By Car

Cars dropping off or picking up students in all grades should follow current school drop-off procedures. School buses will use the drive immediately in front of the school. There will be a crossing guard on duty to help students cross at the flagpole area. For the students' safety, please follow directions at all times.

When you are waiting for your daughter, it is important to follow established procedures. Please do not

obstruct the flow of traffic. Drivers must be sure not to leave their cars in such a way as to impede the access of fire trucks: the striped area in front of the school must not be used for parking and the rear driveway and connecting driveway by the Preschool must never be blocked. Please be sure to respect the handicapped parking areas. We appreciate your cooperation in this important matter.

Volunteer Drivers

When using your car to transport students on field trips or other school sponsored activity trips:

- Complete a Volunteer Driver Registration Form which can be found on the Stuart website.
- Be sure that you have a valid driver's license and current automobile collision and liability insurance.
- Check the safety of your vehicle.
- Carry only the number of passengers for which your vehicle was designed and has safety belts.
- Children must be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint (safety seat or booster seat) until they are at least 8 years old or weigh at least 80 pounds.

Health Office

Annual requirements exist for physicals and immunizations which are communicated during the annual registration process. It is essential that all requirements are met by the stated deadline.

The Health Office is staffed by a registered school nurse from 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM. There is a physician on call in case of an emergency when the student's own doctor or parents cannot be reached. The Health Office has facilities for students to be treated for minor illnesses. In case of more serious illnesses students are referred to their own doctors or, in case of an accident, are taken to the Emergency Room at the University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro. In order to be treated by the nurse, a medical examination form and an emergency release slip are required. If an emergency should occur after regular school hours, the faculty or staff member in charge will call the police, who will then dispatch the rescue squad.

If a student feels ill during the school day, she should report to the Health Office. If, because of a visit to the Health Office, a student is late or misses a class, she should obtain a note from the school nurse before leaving the Health Office. The school's policy is that if a student is too ill to attend class she should be sent home by the nurse.

All drugs prescribed for medical reasons must be registered with the nurse. Ordinarily, they will be kept in the Health Office and will be dispensed by the nurse at the appropriate times. This applies to all students Preschool - 12.

Medical Information

SCDS requires that parents submit certain medical information and proof of an annual physical before the student may begin attending classes. All students must have an electronic health record completed in Magnus before school begins.

Any changes in the students' health situation during the school year, for example, any illness, medication change, surgery needed, etc. should be communicated to the school nurse. The school nurse is the first to respond to an emergency situation; therefore, the nurse needs to be aware of each student's complete and current medical history. This information is kept strictly confidential and only shared with school administration and faculty on a need-to-know basis.

Immunizations

SCDS complies with New Jersey State law regarding immunization requirements for students. A record of immunization is required on the medical information form. Parents agree to comply with SCDS's policies and instructions regarding required immunizations, vaccinations, testing for communicable diseases, possible exemptions, and provide SCDS with required health records and documentation.

Medications

If your child will require prescription medication to be administered during the school day or at school-related activities, SCDS requires parents submit written authorization for the school nurse to administer such medications. This information must be filled in on the medical form submitted prior to the first day of classes. The school nurse cannot give your student medication of any kind without written permission. Ordinarily, prescription medicines will be kept in the Health Office and will be dispensed by the nurse at the appropriate times. This applies to all students Early Childhood - 12th grade.

Parents who would like their daughter to be able to receive over the counter medication during school hours must provide the school with written authorization. Students are not permitted to carry over-the-counter medications with them during the school day.

Emergencies

The School Nurse will attempt to contact parents regarding serious illness or injury, but in circumstances that warrant immediate attention or when the School is unable to reach the parents/guardians, designated emergency contacts, or the student's physician, the school nurses will determine appropriate management. In the event of a serious emergency, an ambulance will be called, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital emergency room, and at least one parent will be notified immediately.

Parents are expected to keep emergency information up-to-date. Please remember, it is most important that the School have current home, work, and cell phone numbers for parents/guardians, or others (relatives,

friends, or neighbors) who routinely assume temporary care of the student if the student's parent(s) cannot be reached.

Parents will be notified of an illness or injury that may require follow-up medical care. A Permission for Emergency Care form must be on file for every student, allowing the School to render treatment and obtain outside medical assistance when necessary.

Communicable Diseases

Every season brings various contagious illnesses. The circulating and more common viruses in school are colds, conjunctivitis, influenza, stomach bugs, and strep throat. A student must be kept home from school under the following circumstances:

- A fever of 100°F or higher. When your child has been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and has no other symptoms, they may return to school
- Diarrhea or vomiting (that is not from motion sickness or gag-reflex induced) in the past 24 hours
- Influenza – children who have been diagnosed with the flu should stay home and return as ordered by their Pediatrician. Please report cases of the influenza virus to the nurse's office, as we keep track of the number of cases.

This policy is to protect the health of your daughter as well as the SCDS community. A student with a fever, vomiting, diarrhea and/or chills who comes in to take a test, attend a rehearsal or participate in athletics is doing a disservice to herself, her peers and teachers and/or coaches.

If a student contracts a communicable disease, the school nurse notifies the parents of the children who are in that class, informing them of the nature of the disease, its symptoms and incubation period. The school shall also comply with all applicable statutes and regulations regarding the reporting of communicable diseases. Under applicable statutes and regulations, the school may require medical evidence certifying that the danger of communication of the disease has passed to allow a return to school. The school has the right to prohibit the attendance of students as it deems necessary to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

Community Health and Safety

SCDS reserves the right, in its sole and exclusive discretion, to implement any and all policies or procedures which it deems necessary to protect the health and safety of the School community. Examples of such policies or procedures may include, but are not necessarily limited to, modifying the method of delivery of its program, restricting or limiting access to campus, and/or requiring additional health screenings or immunizations. Parents specifically agree to comply with any and all such policies or procedures as SCDS may implement.

General Policies

Medical Leave

Stuart reserves the right to require a medical leave of absence if a student's own health may be at risk or the health or safety of the community may be at risk, and it is deemed by Stuart, in its sole discretion, to be in the best interest of the student or community for the student to seek treatment from an outside physician, psychiatrist or appropriate healthcare provider. This decision will be made after a consultation with the Division Head, counselor, and Head of School. If a medical leave of absence is required the student's parent or guardian must come in for a meeting, and will be asked to provide proof of medical or psychological treatment in order for the student to return to Stuart. The length of the leave and the plan for making up academic work will be dependent on the circumstances.

To return to School from a medical leave, a student must provide a thorough, written professional evaluation of the student's current mental health and/or medical condition from the physician, psychiatrist, or other licensed professional who treated the student during the medical leave. The School may require additional evaluation by a physician or mental health consultant of its choosing.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

SCDS is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided with equal access to SCDS's programs and services, in accordance with applicable law. SCDS may require medical documentation regarding the student's condition, and will make reasonable accommodations to enable a student to participate in the program where doing so does not pose an undue burden to SCDS, or a threat to the safety of its students

For students who need additional support or curricular adjustments, the School will require medical documentation regarding the student's condition. Extended time and other accommodations constitute adjustments in the learning environment (e.g., instruction and assessment conditions) that are intended to support a student in acquiring and then demonstrating course content knowledge and skills. Academic accommodations will be granted only in those cases where there is specific, descriptive documentation that the onset, duration, and severity of the condition or impairment creates a significant functional limitation for the student. Accommodations are not designed to change course content, what assessments are intended to measure, or the meaning of a student's performance. Moreover, they are developed neither to guarantee a particular result nor to maximize potential. So, while grades may improve once obstacles created by the impairment are accommodated, extended time or other accommodations with the sole intent of raising grades would be a misuse of the provision.

Parents who are seeking academic accommodations for their child must submit a neuropsychological evaluation conducted by a professional experienced in conducting evaluations of this nature to the Learning Center. Outside evaluators are expected to conduct diagnostic evaluations using research-based and evidence-based practice, always following best practices for assessing areas of concern. Evaluators should hold appropriate, current certification or licensure and be qualified to evaluate the condition(s) diagnosed. Outside neuropsychological evaluations should include following:

- Diagnosis of a disability with a DSM-5 code or the equivalent;
- Description of the functional impairments which are related to the disability diagnosis;
- Impact of the disability over time in multiple areas; and
- If a specific accommodation is recommended, a description of objective evidence that is related to the accommodation recommended.

Because the decision of whether to grant an accommodation is an individualized assessment and because the need for an accommodation can change over time, evidence of a student having received testing accommodations by a previous school or on a previous standardized test is not a sufficient basis for the student to be granted accommodations at SCDS. SCDS will review the evaluations, as well as other information provided when determining the need for accommodations.

It is customary for evaluators to make a variety of recommendations for the student and family to follow outside of the school environment and beyond specific testing accommodations. Examples would be psychotherapy, working with a learning specialist, vision therapy, etc. In addition to evaluating the report and the student's real-world performance, SCDS will look for evidence that the family and student are following those recommendations outside of school, in addition to seeking testing accommodations at school.

Student in Crisis

A comprehensive counseling program that focuses on prevention and support is available for students. A student is in crisis when they are at risk of self harm, harming others or experiencing high levels of distress. Students in crisis would be assessed by a school counselor/ school administrator to determine risk level and appropriate recommendations. Parents will be contacted, informed, and invited to meet with a member of the school's administration and the school counselor, if available. In collaboration with the parents a plan of support would be developed. Using the [Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale \(C-SSRS\)](#) as a guide, the following tier levels will inform appropriate level of care.

Tier 1- Low Risk To Self and Others

- Parents and division heads are informed.

Tier 2 - Mid-level Risk To Self or Others

- Parents and division head informed
- Outside counseling requested
- Student meets with school counselor to complete a safety plan
- Parent meet with counselor to review safety plan
- Student placed on care observation

Tier 3 - Moderate Risk

- Parents notified and student need to be picked by authorized parent/caregiver and needs to be monitored for safety
- Student will be off campus for a minimum of 24 hours to allow for outside psychiatric evaluation which states student is cleared to return to school
- Outside counseling required
- Student placed on care observation
- Collaboration of care is placed between parents, outside provider, and Stuart school counseling
- Student meets with school counselor to complete or review safety plan
- Student placed on care observation

Tier 4 Severe Risk

- Student is placed on medical leave when it is determined they are not safe to be in school.

Non suicidal self harming behaviors These are *deliberately injuring one's own body tissue without suicidal intent. This is a significant mental health problem among adolescents.** The school will offer positive and primary support during the school day, when episodes may arise or precursors to episodes become apparent such as environmental or communal triggers, psychic distress, or tiny traumas of daily living. If such episodes occur either at school or the school is made aware that the student has had an episode within 72 hours - even when it occurred off campus - the student will be placed on care observation by the school counselor. *Care observation* will entail meeting with the student twice every 7 days for up to 14 days. A safety plan will be created in collaboration with the student. Collaboration of care will be placed between parents, outside providers, and Stuart school counseling.

*Nock MK. Self-injury. *Annu Rev Clin Psychol* (2010) 6:339–63. doi: 10.1146/annurev.clinpsy.121208.131258

Self-harm incidents that occur on campus, the student will be privately screened by the school nurse to assess the need for treatment of the wound. If medical care is deemed necessary, the nurse would recommend further observation and treatment of the wounds. Parents will be contacted and required to seek a mental health professional who can treat the student and provide administration and the school counselor with a **“school-based mental health plan.”** Collaboration of care would be placed between parents, outside providers, and Stuart school counseling to ensure the student is practicing healthy coping strategies and is safe to be in school.

Mandating reporting:

All school employees are considered mandatory reporters and are under a legal obligation to report suspected abuse and neglect to state agencies. Reports can be made by calling 911 as well as 1-877 NJ ABUSE (1-877-652-2873).

Statutory Citation: N.J. Stat. Ann. §§ 9:6-8.9, 9:6-8.10, 9:6-8.13, 9:6-8.14, 2C:43-3.1.a(2)(a)

Counselor Confidentiality

SCDS prioritizes the developmental needs of the children we serve at our school. Working closely with our faculty and staff, we partner with parents in the delivery of our educational and co-curricular programs. The partnership between parents and the school involves trust and an expectation for a free flow of communication between parents/guardians and the school, as this is essential to ensure that both are aware of the significant events and issues that impact a student's life.

In keeping with this partnership, there are limits to the confidential nature of students' relationships with SCDS counselors. When possible, counselors will notify students of the limitations of their confidentiality obligations at the beginning of each meeting. Similarly, counselors may first encourage a student to speak with their parents/guardians on their own or together with the counselor, depending on the urgency of the matter and the best interest of the student. SCDS counselors may notify a student's parents/guardians without the consent of the student or over the student's objections if the student is in imminent danger of harming themselves or others, or for other compelling reasons, in the counselor's professional judgment.

Visitors

Students may not have visitors to Stuart without specific permission from their Division Head. The Division Head may grant permission for a student to have a visitor in consultation with the student's parents. At no time may students invite other students to come to Stuart during the school day or after school without specific permission. If a visitor is granted permission to be in school during the day, the school requires an emergency contact form for the visitor to be kept on file for the duration of the visit. The visitor must sign in and sign out at the front desk and the division office. Confirmation of adult supervision must take place at that time. Please consult your Division Head for divisional requirements for visitors.

Honesty

An academic community can exist successfully only if there is respect and trust among its members. Lying, stealing, cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable.

Drugs and Alcohol

Stuart, as part of a larger community, adheres to the laws of our society. Illegal drugs are not to be used by Stuart students. In New Jersey, it is unlawful for anyone under 21 to buy or have delivered or served to her any alcoholic beverage. No student may possess, consume or be under the influence of drugs, seek to make them available, or condone any of the above actions by her presence, either on campus, within 1,000 feet surrounding the campus or at any Stuart-sponsored function. Any student selling or giving an illegal substance to anyone at Stuart may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Illegal drugs are not to be used by Stuart students. If a student possesses, consumes or is under the influence of drugs, or seeks to make them available, or condones any of the above actions by her presence, either on campus, 1,000 feet surrounding the campus or at any Stuart-sponsored function, she will be referred to the Head of Lower School for potential discipline.

Whenever it shall appear to any teaching staff member or any official of the school that any student is under the influence of alcohol, or under the influence of any substance as defined by Title 18A:40A-9, the laws of the State of New Jersey will apply.

The Head of School, Division Head or their designated representative, may, at any time, open and inspect students' person, personal belongings, motor vehicles, lockers or other storage facilities provided by the school.

Smoking and Vaping

By state law and because of our commitment to health, there is no smoking or vaping allowed in any part of our school or on our property.

Policy on Reporting Child Abuse

Student safety is Stuart's number one priority. As an educational institution, Stuart employees are mandated by the State of New Jersey to report to the appropriate law enforcement agency suspected cases of child abuse or neglect as soon as possible. Reporting does NOT require proof that child abuse or neglect has occurred. Incidents are reported as soon as they are suspected.

Appropriate Interactions between Adults and Students

About this Policy

As employees of an educational institution, SCDS employees are held to a high standard by the School, parents, students, colleagues, and members of the public. SCDS supports and endorses a strict policy of respect toward students and expects all employees to remember their responsibility to serve as role models to the students, at all times. Similarly, SCDS is committed to ensuring the well-being, safety, and protection of each of the students entrusted to its care. SCDS employees are expected not only to refrain from engaging in impropriety, but to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

In order to ensure that SCDS is a safe environment for all students, SCDS has developed these guidelines

regarding appropriate interactions between adults on campus and SCDS students. While this policy addresses the conduct of the School's employees, it is important to be aware of its application to other adults (volunteers and independent contractors) spending time in our community.

All SCDS employees are familiar with and are expected to comply with this Policy.

Nonetheless, to help ensure the safety of all SCDS students, it is imperative that students, their parents/guardians, and other members of the School community similarly understand the standards for appropriate interactions between adults on SCDS's campus and its students so that they can identify and report to the School when inappropriate conduct occurs. Families who are aware of conduct which violates the standards outlined below are expected to report such instances to the Head of School, so that appropriate action may be taken. Further still, families are expected to help support the School and its employees in maintaining these boundaries by refraining from requesting that an employee engage in any of the conduct outlined below.

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships with Students

Employees who foster positive relationships with students create a School environment which is more conducive to learning and meet students' developmental, emotional and academic needs.

Healthy relationships are generally those where:

- Relationships where adults serve as mentors, and the student's growth and development are the central focus of interactions;
- Where adults recognize their responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries, even when the student pushes or challenges those boundaries; and .
- Relationships that are professionally connected, but not personal or intimate.

Guidelines for Interactions with Students

Be Observable and/or Interruptible. Employees should never be alone with a student in a non-public space, or behind a closed door. Similarly, coaches and other athletic staff should not be alone with a student when engaging in otherwise permitted physical contact, such as when teaching a skill.

It is understood that teachers may meet with their students for educational purposes outside of classroom time and that some of those meetings will involve one-on-one meetings. Any such private meeting with a student should, whenever possible, occur with the door open. If the circumstances require the door to be closed because additional privacy is needed, the meeting should be in a room with a window in the door that should remain uncovered and the door to the room should remain unlocked. Any electronic meeting, such as Zoom or Google Meets, should also be observable and interruptible. A supervisor or parent should be included on the calendar invite so they may stop in at any time.

Be a Professional, Not a Peer. As professionals, employees should avoid both treating students as though they are adults and behaving as though they are peers with students. While employees may be friendly with

students, they are not the student's "friend."

Employees who are not trained to provide emotional counseling to students (exclusions being school clinicians, health educators) are prohibited from conversing with students about their sexual lives. No employee – regardless of whether they are trained to provide emotional counseling to students - , nor should they discuss their own romantic relationships or sexual encounters with students. Similarly, employees should refrain from discussing details about their personal lives, such as their social lives or health status, to students.

Only Use Authorized Communication Platforms. Employees may only use their School-assigned email addresses to communicate with students and similarly, should only use the student's School-assigned email address. Employees may not email SCDS students from any personal email address that the employee maintains.

Employees are similarly prohibited from calling or texting students on their cell phones, and may not provide students with the employee's personal cell phone number. There may be limited instances in extracurriculars or travel that call for the use of text as a means of communication. Such use of cell phones should be the exception, and not the rule, and should be limited to communicating logistical information or in the event of an emergency. If at all possible, such use should only occur during school or school sponsored activity hours.

SCDS employees may not interact with students on any non-School account social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat or from other similar social media connections. To avoid confusion, "interact" includes liking, following, messaging and otherwise "connecting" with the student.

Inappropriate Physical Contact is Prohibited. Employees may never touch a student in a manner that is sexually explicit, for purposes of sexual gratification or that may otherwise constitute abuse (sexual or otherwise). Further, employees may never physically move, grab, or touch a student, or take something from a student, with aggression or because of frustration. This includes, but is by no means limited to, a complete prohibition on corporal punishment of any kind.

While dealing with young children who may require physical assistance in their daily endeavors (e.g., hand-holding), employees are instructed to be extremely thoughtful about personal space, boundaries, and appropriate contact. When engaging in physical contact with a child, employees are instructed to consider how they can adjust the situation to avoid any negative impingement on boundaries—or even the appearance of same. Even minor tweaks in physical conduct can have a major impact on both the feeling and appearance of safety, which protects both the employee and the student (e.g., consider the position of respective bodies during a hug and consider front-to-front hug alternatives, such as "side hugs," pats on the back, high fives, and fist bumps). Refrain, where possible, from touching areas of the child's body that would otherwise be covered by a bathing suit or undergarments; this includes a prohibition on patting a child's bottom.

In addition to an employee's own self-awareness, employees must be aware that the needs of children may differ—if a child indicates, through words or otherwise, that an employee's presence or touch is imposing or uncomfortable, respect that student's needs and find a way to provide space, adjust the physical circumstances, and reinforce the feeling of safety and security and physical comfort for the child.

Avoid Engaging in Conduct which Demonstrates Favoritism. Employees are instructed to avoid favoritism and the appearance of same by avoiding such individualized attention [e.g., gifts, favors, nicknames, or other actions which may single a child out as preferred (or, which may also run the risk of making that child feel uncomfortable)]. If there is any question about the appropriateness of a gift, the employee should seek guidance from their supervisor.

Prohibition on Drugs, Alcohol and Sexual Materials. SCDS employees may not provide alcohol or drugs, or any sexually explicit material to students, nor permit students to drink or use drugs in their presence, except when medications have been prescribed. In addition to being a violation of this policy, such conduct may also constitute a violation of the law.

Do Not Direct Students to Keep Secrets. Employees may not direct a student to keep a secret from or withhold information from their parents or any other employee. Similarly, employees should not agree to keep student secrets, especially regarding high-risk behaviors. Employees are not permitted to keep information the student discloses confidential. Any report of alcohol or drug use, harm to self or others, or other behavior that could result in unhealthy outcomes for the child, will be referred to our trained health professionals.

Off Campus Contact. All after-school and away from campus contact with students (including transporting students in an employee’s vehicle where there is no familial relationship with the employee, babysitting, going to dinner, etc.), unless in connection with a School-sponsored activity, must first be cleared with an employee’s supervisor or the Head of School in each specific instance. (“Contact” is not intended to include unplanned and ordinary community encounters, such as seeing a student and her/his family at the grocery store.). Students are not permitted to babysit, pet-sit, house-sit, or perform any other types of work at employees’ homes.

Similarly, SCDS employees may not tutor, babysit, or escort to and/or from home any currently enrolled students at SCDS. Employees are also prohibited from housesitting, pet sitting, or providing any other types of services for SCDS families in their homes.

Conduct on School-Sponsored Trips. During School-sponsored overnights, service-related trips, and retreats, employees are not permitted to be alone with a student in their room, must sleep in a separate room, must not invite a student to sleep in their room and should not be inside a student’s room when the student is changing or sleeping. If a situation arises during which it becomes necessary for an employee to be in a student’s room, such as when a student is sick, the employee should ensure that another employee is made aware of the situation.

Often, chaperones who are not SCDS employees will accompany students on such trips. Such chaperones are responsible for adhering to these guidelines.

Appropriate Interactions Between Adults and Students

About this Policy

As employees of an educational institution, SCDS employees are held to a high standard by the School, parents, students, colleagues, and members of the public. SCDS supports and endorses a strict policy of respect toward students and expects all employees to remember their responsibility to serve as role models to the students, at all times. Similarly, SCDS is committed to ensuring the well-being, safety, and protection of each of the students entrusted to its care. SCDS employees are expected not only to refrain from engaging in impropriety, but to avoid *even the appearance* of impropriety.

In order to ensure that SCDS is a safe environment for all students, SCDS has developed these guidelines regarding appropriate interactions between adults on campus and SCDS students. While this policy addresses the conduct of the School's *employees*, it is important to be aware of its application to other adults (volunteers and independent contractors) spending time in our community.

All SCDS employees are familiar with and are expected to comply with this Policy.

Nonetheless, to help ensure the safety of all SCDS students, it is imperative that students, their parents/guardians, and other members of the School community similarly understand the standards for appropriate interactions between adults on SCDS's campus and its students so that they can identify and report to the School when inappropriate conduct occurs. **Families who are aware of conduct which violates the standards outlined below are expected to report such instances to the Head of School, so that appropriate action may be taken. Further still, families are expected to help support the School and its employees in maintaining these boundaries by refraining from requesting that an employee engage in any of the conduct outlined below.**

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships with Students

Employees who foster positive relationships with students create a School environment which is more conducive to learning and meet students' developmental, emotional and academic needs.

Healthy relationships are generally those where:

- Relationships where adults serve as mentors, and the student's growth and development are the central focus of interactions;
- Where adults recognize their responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries, even when the student pushes or challenges those boundaries; and .
- Relationships that are professionally connected, but not personal or intimate.

Guidelines for Interactions with Students

Be Observable and/or Interruptible. Employees should never be alone with a student in a non-public space, or behind a closed door. Similarly, coaches and other athletic staff should not be alone with a student when engaging in otherwise permitted physical contact, such as when teaching a skill.

It is understood that teachers may meet with their students for educational purposes outside of classroom time and that some of those meetings will involve one-on-one meetings. Any such private meeting with a student should, whenever possible, occur with the door open. If the circumstances require the door to be closed because additional privacy is needed, the meeting should be in a room with a window in the door that should remain uncovered and the door to the room should remain unlocked. Any electronic meeting,

such as Zoom or Google Meets, should also be observable and interruptible. A supervisor or parent should be included on the calendar invite so they may stop in at any time.

Be a Professional, Not a Peer. As professionals, employees should avoid both treating students as though they are adults and behaving as if they are peers with students. While employees may be friendly with students, they are not the student's "friend."

Employees who are not trained to provide emotional counseling to students (exclusions being school clinicians, health educators) are prohibited from conversing with students about their sexual lives. No employee – regardless of whether they are trained to provide emotional counseling to students - should discuss their own romantic relationships or sexual encounters with students. Similarly, employees should refrain from discussing details about their personal lives, such as their social lives or health status, to students.

Only Use Authorized Communication Platforms. Employees may only use their School-assigned email addresses to communicate with students and similarly, should only use the student's School-assigned email address. Employees may not email SCDS students from any personal email address that the employee maintains.

Employees are similarly prohibited from calling or texting students on their cell phones, and may not provide students with the employee's personal cell phone number. There may be limited instances in extracurriculars or travel that call for the use of text as a means of communication. Such use of cell phones should be the exception, and not the rule, and should be limited to communicating logistical information or in the event of an emergency. If at all possible, such use should only occur during school or school sponsored activity hours.

SCDS employees may not interact with students on any non-School account social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat or from other similar social media connections. To avoid confusion, "interact" includes liking, following, messaging and otherwise "connecting" with the student.

Inappropriate Physical Contact is Prohibited. Employees may never touch a student in a manner that is sexually explicit, for purposes of sexual gratification or that may otherwise constitute abuse (sexual or otherwise). Further, employees may never physically move, grab, or touch a student, or take something from a student, with aggression or because of frustration. This includes, but is by no means limited to, a complete prohibition on corporal punishment of any kind.

While dealing with young children who may require physical assistance in their daily endeavors (e.g., hand-holding), employees are instructed to be extremely thoughtful about personal space, boundaries, and appropriate contact. When engaging in physical contact with a child, employees are instructed to consider how they can adjust the situation to avoid any negative impingement on boundaries—or even the appearance of same. Even minor tweaks in physical conduct can have a major impact on both the feeling and appearance of safety, which protects both the employee and the student (e.g., consider the position of respective bodies during a hug and consider front-to-front hug alternatives, such as "side hugs," pats on the back, high fives, and fist bumps). Refrain, where possible, from touching areas of the child's body that would otherwise be covered by a bathing suit or undergarments; this includes a prohibition on patting a child's bottom.

In addition to an employee's own self-awareness, employees must be aware that the needs of children may differ—if a child indicates, through words or otherwise, that an employee's presence or touch is imposing or uncomfortable, respect that student's needs and find a way to provide space, adjust the physical circumstances, and reinforce the feeling of safety and security and physical comfort for the child.

Avoid Engaging in Conduct which Demonstrates Favoritism. Employees are instructed to avoid favoritism and the appearance of same by avoiding such individualized attention [e.g., gifts, favors, nicknames, or other actions which may single a child out as preferred (or, which may also run the risk of making that child feel uncomfortable)]. If there is any question about the appropriateness of a gift, the employee should seek guidance from their supervisor.

Prohibition on Drugs, Alcohol and Sexual Materials. SCDS employees may not provide alcohol or drugs, or any sexually explicit material to students, nor permit students to drink or use drugs in their presence, except when medications have been prescribed. In addition to being a violation of this policy, such conduct may also constitute a violation of the law.

Do Not Direct Students to Keep Secrets. Employees may not direct a student to keep a secret from or withhold information from their parents or any other employee. Similarly, employees should not agree to keep student secrets, especially regarding high-risk behaviors. Employees are not permitted to keep information the student discloses confidential. Any report of alcohol or drug use, harm to self or others, or other behavior that could result in unhealthy outcomes for the child, will be referred to our trained health professionals.

Off Campus Contact. All after-school and away from campus contact with students (including transporting students in an employee's vehicle where there is no familial relationship with the employee, babysitting, going to dinner, etc.), unless in connection with a School-sponsored activity, must first be cleared with an employee's supervisor or the Head of School in each specific instance. ("Contact" is not intended to include unplanned and ordinary community encounters, such as seeing a student and her/his family at the grocery store.). Students are not permitted to babysit, pet-sit, house-sit, or perform any other types of work at employees' homes.

Similarly, SCDS employees may not tutor, babysit, or escort to and/or from home any currently enrolled students at SCDS. Employees are also prohibited from housesitting, pet sitting, or providing any other types of services for SCDS families in their homes.

Conduct on School-Sponsored Trips. During School-sponsored overnights, service-related trips, and retreats, employees are not permitted to be alone with a student in their room, must sleep in a separate room, must not invite a student to sleep in their room and should not be inside a student's room when the student is changing or sleeping. If a situation arises during which it becomes necessary for an employee to be in a student's room, such as when a student is sick, the employee should ensure that another employee is made aware of the situation.

Often, chaperones who are not SCDS employees will accompany students on such trips. Such chaperones are responsible for adhering to these guidelines.

Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

Schools of the Sacred Heart educate to the building of community as a Christian value and to personal growth in an atmosphere of wise freedom. It is with this commitment that Stuart has developed the following harassment policy: Harassment/taunting/bullying may consist of one action or a repeated pattern of behavior of a physical or psychological nature that is either unwelcome or which creates an uncomfortable or hostile environment for an individual.

Definition of Bullying, Harassment, Bias, or Intimidation

Bullying: exposing a student to intentional negative actions on the part of one or more other students which adversely affect the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the School's educational programs or activities.

Bullying refers to conduct that:

- Adversely affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities;
- Is a result of repeated negative actions (intentional, aggressive behavior) by one or more other students over time; or
- Occurs in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power.

Cyber-bullying: any act of bullying conducted through the use of the Internet, social media, networks, and other electronic communications. In certain jurisdictions, cyber-bullying is a crime, and the guilty individual may be imprisoned and fined. There are many types of cyberbullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common.

- **Text messages** – that are threatening or cause discomfort – also included here is “Bluejacking” (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using “Bluetooth” wireless technology).
- **Picture/video-clips** via mobile phone cameras – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
- **Mobile phone calls** – silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
- **E-mails** – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
- **Chat room bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chat room.
- **Instant messaging (IM)** – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time

conversations online using – although there are others.

- **Bullying via websites** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites, and online personal “own web space” sites such as Bebo (which works by signing on in one’s school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) – although there are others.

Harassment: perceived or actual experiences of discomfort with identity issues in regard to race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other identifying characteristics by a student which adversely affects that student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the School’s educational programs or activities.

A student is harassed when she perceives or actually experiences discomfort with identity issues in regard to race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other protected characteristics, and whose ability to participate in and benefit from the school’s educational programs or activities is adversely affected. Harassment causes harm when it is pervasive or severe.

Bias: conscious or unconscious conduct or behavior (verbal, nonverbal, or written) that is threatening, harassing, intimidating, discriminatory, or hostile in nature and is based upon a person’s identity or group affiliation, including (but not limited to) such things as race, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other identifying characteristics.

Intimidation: the subjection of a student to intentional action that seriously threatens and induces a sense of fear and/or inferiority which adversely affects that student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the School’s educational programs or activities.

Retaliation: an act of reprisal or getting back at a person for an act that she committed.

Sexual harassment is not social or courting behavior. It is sometimes more difficult to identify and understand than other forms of harassment because it is not harassment based on one of the qualities of the person being harassed. Instead, it is the use of gender or physical characteristics to harass and is best seen as an assertion of power. Because sexual harassment is the least understood of the most common forms of harassment, it is worthwhile to spell it out here.

Federal law prohibits the sexual harassment of all employees and students at schools. The term sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual attention, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and similar conduct, reasonably considered offensive, when

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unduly interfering with an individual’s work or education; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, threatening adverse actions if sexual favors are not granted; promising preferential treatment in return for sexual favors; unwanted and unnecessary physical contact; unwelcome and inappropriate use of offensive, sexually explicit or sexually suggestive language, gestures or humor; and inappropriate display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Sexual harassment may include the following:

- Physical assault, including rape, or any coerced sexual relations;
- Pressure exerted on either an adult or a student for sexual activity or for a relationship that takes on a sexual or romantic tone, which exceeds the limits of healthy adult-student friendship;
- Any demeaning sexual propositions;
- Unwelcome touching;
- Leering at or ogling a person's body;
- Sexually explicit or suggestive remarks about a person's physical attributes, clothing or behavior;
- Inappropriate personal questions.

School Response to Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation: Prevention, Intervention, Remediation, and Consequences

SCDS focuses on strategies such as prevention, intervention, remediation, and consequences to address and prevent instances of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and retaliation. As part of its preventive efforts, SCDS works to increase faculty and staff awareness of the prevalence, causes, and consequences of bullying. The School promotes student involvement in anti-bullying efforts, peer support, mutual respect, and a culture that encourages students to report incidents of bullying to adults.

SCDS strives to educate and intervene when students exhibit bullying behaviors, and to teaching replacement behaviors, empathy, tolerance and sensitivity to diversity of all students. When bullying, harassment, or intimidation do occur, SCDS will employ remedial measures designed to correct the bullying behavior, prevent another occurrence, and protect the affected parties and may offer support/counseling for involved students. Additionally, SCDS has the discretion to engage in a continuum of interventions to address the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students who bully in order to prevent further incidents, while taking great care to ensure the safety of the victim.

Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart has been and is committed to providing an educational atmosphere that is free of any conduct that can be considered harassing, abusive, disorderly or disruptive. The school recognizes and will endeavor to protect the rights of all students, faculty and staff members to be treated with respect, courtesy and tact. Actions or comments by instructors, administrators, supervisors, colleagues or students, whether intentional or unintentional, that result in unlawful harassment of students or other faculty or staff members will not be tolerated. Such conduct, where reported and substantiated, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment and attendance at Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart.

A member of the Stuart community who believes that he or she has experienced any form of harassment should do the following:

- Report the incident immediately to someone who is trusted, such as the Head of School, Division Head, Advisor, Teacher, Campus Minister, School Chaplain, Counselor, or Nurse. The Head of School must then be informed.
- Whenever possible, speak up at the time. Tell the individual that the behavior is unwelcome and must cease immediately. If speaking up seems too difficult or not safe, students should walk away.
- Immediately write down what happened to you. Be as specific as possible, recording direct quotations, actions, and witnesses.

- All members of the community are obligated to take these complaints seriously. Students who witness bullying, harassment, or intimidation may choose to either tell the student to stop or assist the student being bullied, harassed, or hazed in reporting, consistent with the policies outlined below. Parents or guardians who have relevant information concerning prohibited conduct are urged to immediately notify the appropriate Division Director or the Head of School.

The following process will be followed:

Students - Cases of harassment involving Lower, Middle and Upper School students should be directed to the Division Head or Head of School.

Adults in the Stuart Community - Cases of sexual harassment involving adults should be directed to the Head of School. The Head of School will make the final decision with regard to any disciplinary action.

The School cannot promise absolute confidentiality to those reporting prohibited conduct, as there may be a need to share information during an investigation or otherwise; however, the school will disclose such information with discretion, on a strict need-to-know basis.

False Complaints

All persons involved in a complaint or investigation should understand that false or exaggerated accusations can be extremely damaging to innocent persons; therefore, the school expects and requires the honest and full disclosure of facts by all involved. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation of misconduct or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action.

Responding to Complaints

Any report that provides sufficient information about a possible incident of misconduct will result in follow-up. If the information provided in the report is insufficient to allow for meaningful and productive follow-up, an attempt will be made to learn more. Throughout, the School's goals are to ensure a safe and supportive school environment, to prevent repetition of misconduct, and to support all students involved.

If the initial report provides sufficient information, or if the Academy learns of sufficient information in its subsequent follow up, the Division Head of School, together with an administrator, will promptly investigate a reported incident of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation, and claims of false accusations or designate another individual to do so. Such individual may be another SCDS employee or, when necessary or appropriate, may be a third-party. The investigation may include, but is not limited to, interviews with the complainant(s), respondent(s), reporting person(s), and any other persons who may have relevant information, as well as gathering any documents, emails, text messages or other information. Investigations will be as prompt and thorough as possible. In keeping with SCDS's values and guiding principles, investigators are committed to working with students and others in a respectful, compassionate manner. Throughout an investigation, efforts will be made to keep all parties informed, to the extent that confidentiality, impartiality and the integrity of the investigation will allow.

The School, in its discretion, will determine whether inappropriate conduct has occurred, and if so, the appropriate consequences and remedial action based on the conduct.

Depending on the circumstances and severity or repetition of the offense, the consequences may range from reprimand up to and including dismissal for a student, or termination of employment for an adult. Any person who directs any form of retaliation towards someone making a complaint about bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary sanctions. The Head of School and Division Heads of School exercise authority in circumstances of discipline and determine necessary responses to violations.

In certain situations, the School may take swift action to prevent possible harm to a community member or the community, including harm to self. The School's action will be as limited in scope and time as practicable to ensure that the rights, safety, and privacy of all involved are protected to the greatest extent possible. Such steps may include temporarily withdrawing particular students from school and/or school activities while conducting the investigation or requiring a mental health evaluation for a particular student.

Notification to Parents/Guardians

The school will generally notify the parents/guardians of student complainant(s) and respondent(s) after a complaint has been filed, upon completion of the investigation, and when consequences have been determined. In all situations, the amount of information shared by the school to the general community shall be limited by confidentiality or privacy considerations, and/or concerns regarding the integrity of the investigatory processes.

