



St. Joseph's Institute Primary Section

Parent Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year!

It is hard to believe that a new academic year is beginning with a new NORMAL. Although we are embarking on our academic journey together in challenging and uncertain times, I am certain that we will share amazing learning experiences and many memorable moments; I look forward to sharing them with you.

Our school website and profile reflects our strengths and beliefs about our education system. We begin this year too, with the same passion and I am pleased to share a number of enhancements in place for the academic year.

The sudden, necessary shift to online teaching has been challenging for parents, the students and the school as well. However, our earlier engagement in technology-based learning (using the tablet while practicing Mathematics concepts on Khan Academy), and learning to teach through google classroom during the Banslattsskolan (Sweden) — St. Joseph's School Teacher Exchange Programme), has stood us in good stead and enabled us to transition seamlessly into the new mode of online learning — both synchronously and asynchronously. This has been wholly possible due to the hard work put in by the teachers during the summer holidays to learn the Learning Management Systems (G Suite) in order to deliver quality instruction and engage students appropriately.

A student's emotional health is also of prime concern in these trying times. This needs to be taken care of both when the students are stuck at home as well as when they return to school. The teachers are keeping this in mind during their interactions with the students.

The School will keep you updated with any relevant information pertaining to reopening of schools. Please be assured that when we reopen, it will be all due precautions. These will be communicated closer to the reopening of the School.

I end this message by reinforcing the fact that every student is special and we will, as always, work towards unlocking their highest potential and preparing them not only for further schooling but also equip them to be responsible, kind and most importantly happy individuals.

I would also like to thank you for your continuous support in helping your child learn.

Asha Keny
(Assistant Headmistress)

School-Home Partnership

The School-Home Partnership is an agreement between parents/guardians, students and teachers to ensure that effective communication between the school and home is established. We expect all parents/guardians and students to read this handbook and follow the school's procedures and policies. All parents/guardians are expected to take an active role in their child's education by attending school meetings, parent consultations and events. We also presume that parents/guardians will speak respectfully about their child's classmates or their parents/guardians as it affects the culture of the whole class and therefore the school. We hope that parents/guardians encourage a positive view of the school and its students.

The school encourages parents/guardians to share their expertise or insight in areas that students are currently exploring in class in order to build a stronger bond between the school and parent fraternity.

About the School

St. Joseph's Institute (STJ) is one of the oldest English medium schools in Goa. The school was founded by the Chowgule Education Society in 1929. The founder of the Society is Mr. Vishwasrao D. Chowgule. It aims to provide the best possible school education to its students. It believes in bringing together its community of management, teachers, staff, parents/guardians and students to operate like a well-oiled machinery.

The School has a robust modern infrastructure, which includes

- individual lockers
- well-stocked library
- well-equipped Science Laboratory
- computer laboratory
- well-ventilated classrooms
- Aryan's Den for snack and lunch
- open play area
- 24x7 power supply

Vision

St. Joseph believes in helping students grow into self-assured and discerning individuals who are empathetic and accepting of individual differences and can adapt to changing times.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a stimulating learning experience, which promotes each student's cognitive, socio-emotional and physical growth.

Philosophy

At its heart, St. Joseph believes in education, which

- creates a sense of belonging and a safe environment, where students can articulate their views and opinions confidently
- incorporates best practices through continuous knowledge and skills development
- encourages students to reach for the impossible

Motto

The school's motto is **Reach for the Impossible, प्रेम, विश्वास, कार्य** or Love, Work, Faith

Our Aim

- Maintain a culture of excellence in terms of teaching, student achievement and innovation
- Provide a safe environment for students to share their views and opinions and to become happy and confident individuals
- Deliver a balanced and holistic educational programme
- Integrate technology as a meaningful and effective resource
- Integrate co-curricular activities into everyday activities
- Provide outstanding facilities and resources
- Hire and retain excellent faculty and staff
- Ensure wise and effective school governance
- Create student awareness through social, environmental and intercultural activities

Faculty and Staff

Teachers and staff at STJ are committed to serving the needs of its community of students and parents/guardians. All the teachers have the appropriate professional qualifications as deemed by the Government of India and the State of Goa. Beyond their qualifications, the teachers are committed to providing the best learning experience in this modern age, and are eager and willing to adopt the best learning practices in order to do so. They serve as an example to their students by working together to achieve, meet and surpass the benchmarks of the best teaching practices in their field.

School Hours

The school office is open between 8:00am and 3.30 pm. The contact phone number is +91 9284811200 and 9284273026

Instructions for students begin at 8:00am and end at 3:00 pm. It is recommended that the students arrive by 7:50am so that they do not miss out on the morning routines and have time to settle down in class. Students will not be allowed to leave school premises unless he/she is sick as recommended by the school nurse.

Communication

Class Teachers will keep parents/guardians informed of class/school happenings on a regular basis. If you need to contact your child's class teacher you may email (preferred), Whatsapp or leave a message (if it is urgent) at the school reception. Please avoid calling the teacher directly as he/she might be teaching at the time. The teacher will get in touch as soon as possible to sort out your queries.

Teachers will periodically send emails addressed to the class or individuals to update parents/guardians regarding any class/school happenings or concerns about your child. To ensure that this avenue of communication functions smoothly during the school year, please ensure that you update your contact details with the school including your address, phone number (primary and alternative) and email addresses at the beginning of the year or whenever there is a change.

Parent-Teacher Conferences/Report Cards

Parent-Teacher Conferences take place twice a year, followed by the student's progress report. Additional conferences may be arranged as needed by sending a note to the teacher or by calling the school as mentioned earlier. All parents/guardians/guardians are strongly encouraged to take part in conferences with your child's teacher(s).

Class teachers typically meet the parents/guardians informally on Fridays at the end of school to share student feedback, if any. This is a good opportunity for parents/guardians to share their concerns with the teachers as well.

Attendance

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. All students must be present on the reopening day and closing day before and after Ganesh Chaturthi, Diwali, Christmas and Summer vacation.

In case of absence, the school or the class teachers must be informed by sending in a note stating the reason for the absence.

The child's name will be stuck off the role if the child does not report to school for one week.

Admission

Applications for admission are accepted as and when notified on the school website.

Withdrawal

Parents/guardians wishing to withdraw their child from school at the end of the academic year must inform the Principal in writing two months before the date of withdrawal, failing which the transfer certificate will be issued only after the school reopens. The certificate will not be issued until all the dues are fully paid and all school/library books have either been returned/paid for.

Transportation(when school reopens)

Students can travel to and from school either by using the bus services through a contractor or using private means, including parent pick ups or asking someone else to pick the student up.

Please make sure that you inform your transport choice at the beginning of the academic year.

Bus Rules

Students can commute to school using the bus services provided by the school contractor. Bus rules and regulations are intended for the safety and security of all riders. While using the services, students are expected to adhere to the following:

1. Students will arrive at their bus stops 5 to 10 minutes before the scheduled arrival of the bus. The bus will not wait for students to arrive at the bus stop.
2. Students will wait in an orderly manner at the bus stop. It is a parent's responsibility to monitor behavior at the bus stops while waiting.
3. Students should use appropriate language and "inside" voices in the bus to avoid distracting the driver.
4. Students must not open and close the windows or doors without permission from the driver/bus conductor/bus incharge, except in an emergency.
5. Head, arms and hands must remain inside the bus at all times.
6. Bullying of any kind is strictly prohibited. This includes teasing, verbally or physically threatening anyone, or any type of physical contact.
7. Students must ride the bus that they have been assigned to and from the school. In case of a change in the bus route or other means of transport for a particular day, a signed, written note with the proper authorisation should be sent with the student.
8. When returning from school, a designated adult must pick the student up from the bus stop. If such an adult is not present, the student will be brought back to school and the parent will then need to pick the student up from school.
9. Students are responsible for any damage that they cause to bus equipment.
10. Students are not allowed to eat on the bus.

Students who do not obey the bus rules and/or cause disciplinary problems on the bus may be denied the privilege of riding the bus. If a bus contractor/driver refers a student to the Headmistress for misconduct on the bus, the following consequences will apply.

1. On the first offence, the Class Teachers will be notified and they will have a chat with the student.
2. On the second offence, the Class Teachers will inform the Principal and the Principal have a chat with the student.
3. On the third offence, after a meeting between the Principal and the parents/guardians the student will not be allowed to take the bus to and from school.
4. Once the student is allowed back on the bus and he/she misbehaves, he/she will not be allowed to travel on the bus.
5. Parents/guardians will be responsible for the travel arrangements of the student to and from school if they are removed from the bus for disciplinary reasons.

Using Own Transport

In case a student is picked up from school by the parent on a regular basis, please inform the school at the beginning of the year.

In case a person other than a parent is designated to pick the student up from school, an authorization letter with the person's identity proof needs to be submitted to the school. Only after completion of this formality will the student be allowed to leave the school premises with that person. Any changes in personnel will need to be updated immediately with the school, in order to avoid any delays in the student leaving the school.

Parents/guardians/guardians are expected to cooperate and support the school administration in promoting a safe school leaving procedure for the students.

Visitors

Parents/guardians are welcome and encouraged to visit St. Joseph throughout the year. However, please make an appointment with the office to ensure availability of the concerned people.

School visits by prospective parents/guardians by appointment are also welcome.

All visitors will need to sign the log book at the entrance of the school stating their purpose for visiting the school. They will then be issued with a visitor's pass, which will need to be returned when leaving the school premises.

Security Cameras

As per the guidelines issued by the Education Ministry, there are security cameras placed in all rooms, corridors, the play field and canteen to ensure the safety of the students.

Fire Drills

There will be fire drills conducted periodically during the school year. The procedures will be taught to the students and practiced.

Health Services

The school nurse collaborates with the other members of the school team and parents/guardians to support students. She seeks to prevent or identify student health-related concerns and intervenes to modify or remedy these issues.

It is essential that you or an emergency contact person can be reached during school hours in case of illness or emergency.

Please make sure that you complete and return your child's emergency health card at the beginning of the school year. In addition, do ensure that your emergency contacts are aware that you are listing them as emergency contacts. It is imperative that telephone numbers are correct and that the people you list can be reached during the day. Please make sure your emergency contact numbers are updated as necessary.

Inform the school if your child is under the care of a doctor or if there are any changes in his or her health status. Information will be shared with faculty and staff on a need to know basis to maintain the health and safety of your child.

Parents/guardians of students with medical concerns (asthma, life-threatening allergies or any other medical conditions) should contact the class teacher and nurse to discuss their concerns and procedures to be followed in case of an emergency.

In case of a fracture or sprain, a written note regarding the injury and limitations or restrictions is required. The school will try to develop appropriate accommodations so that the student can attend school.

In case of a student hurting himself in school, he will be accompanied by a school personnel and taken to the nearest hospital. The parent/emergency contact person will be called and asked to be met there immediately.

Health Card

The School will provide a Student Health Card to be filled out by the parent/guardian. It must be completed and submitted to the Administration office at the beginning of every school year.

Medication Policy

Students requiring prescription medicine, including inhalers, during the school day must have a signed consent from both the health care provider and the parent/guardian on file in the health office before medications can be administered. This must include stepwise procedures for administration. Medication must be delivered to the school in a pouch with the student's name on it by the parent/guardian or responsible adult.

Please do not send pills or medicine to school in lunch boxes, pockets, etc. as other children may accidentally ingest them and potentially have a serious reaction.

Non-Prescription Medication like Calpol and other common over-the-counter medications including homeopathic medicines will be administered to students only with parental permission.

Head Lice

Head Lice are a common occurrence in children in the primary section. If a case of head lice is discovered in a class, a letter will be sent out by the Class Teachers to all the parents of the class to take care of the problem.

Illness

The most important thing you can do to keep illnesses from spreading in the school community is to keep your child home when he or she is sick. If your child shows symptoms of being ill, please do not send him/her to school. Children should be "fever free" for 24 hours before returning to school. Children who are sent home from school with a fever or vomiting should stay out of school for 24 hours.

Covid-19 Precautions

A few recommendations for reopening schools by the World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF are listed below. Parents/guardians must abide by them while sending their children to school.

For Parents

1. Monitor your child's health and keep them home from school if they are ill or have a specific medical condition that may make them more at risk
2. Teach and model good health practices for your children
 - *wash hands with soap and water frequently. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if they are visibly dirty*
 - *ensure that safe drinking water is available and toilets are clean and available at home*
 - *ensure waste is safely collected, stored and disposed off*

- *cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth and nose*
- 3. Encourage your children to ask questions and express their feelings with you and their teachers. Remember that your child may have different reactions to stress; be patient and understanding.
- 4. Prevent stigma by using facts and reminding your child to be considerate of one another
- 5. Coordinate with the school to receive information and ask how you can support school safety efforts
- 6. Be aware of fake information/myths that may circulate by word-of-mouth or online

For Students

1. In a situation like this it is normal to feel sad, worried, confused, scared or angry. Know that you are not alone and talk to someone you trust, like your parents or teacher so that you can help keep yourself and your school safe and healthy.
 - *ask questions, educate yourself and get information from reliable sources*
2. Protect yourself and others
 - *wash your hands frequently, always with soap and water for at least 20 seconds*
 - *remember to not touch your face*
 - *do not share cups, eating utensils, food or drinks with others*
3. Be a leader in keeping yourself, your school, family and community healthy
 - *share what you learn about preventing disease with your family and friends, especially younger children*
 - *model good practices such as sneezing or coughing into your elbow and washing your hands, especially for younger family members*
4. Don't stigmatize your peers or tease anyone about being sick; remember that the virus doesn't follow any geographical boundaries, ethnicities, age, ability or gender.
5. Tell your parents, another family member, or a caregiver if you feel sick, and ask to stay at home.

For Schools

- 1. Work with local authorities and health officials to ensure educational facilities are not used as health treatment or quarantine centers or shelters or for any other non-educational purposes even on a temporary basis**
- 2. Promote and demonstrate regular hand washing and positive hygiene behaviors and monitor their uptake. Ensure adequate clean and separate toilet for girls and boys**
 - ***ensure soap and water is available at age-appropriate hand washing stations***
 - ***encourage frequent and thorough washing (at least 20 seconds)***

- *place hand sanitisers in toilets, classrooms, halls (corridors), and near exits where possible*
 - *ensure adequate, clean and separate toilets for girls and boys that are within a safe distance*
 - *post signs encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene practices*
3. **Clean and disinfect school buildings, classrooms, kitchens and dining facilities and especially water and sanitation facilities at least once a day, particularly surfaces that are touched by many people (railings, lunch tables, sports equipment, door and window handles, toys, teaching and learning aids etc.)**
 4. **Increase airflow and ventilation where climate allows (open windows, etc.)**
 5. **Ensure safe preparation and service of food**
 - *stagger meal times to diminish crowds and allow time for cleaning and disinfecting between shift*
 6. **Ensure trash is removed daily and disposed of safely**

At St. Joseph's Institute – Additional Steps(When School reopens)

- *students will attend school in batches (details will be communicated closer to the time of reopening)*
- *school will be decontaminated/sanitized after each batch*
- *thermal screening of students, teachers and staff as they enter the school*
- *hand sanitisers will be provided as students, teachers and staff enter and leave the school premises*
- *visitors to school will be prioritized in order of importance of the issue and area where they are coming from*

Child Safety

St. Joseph's Institute affirms its responsibility to provide for the safety and well-being of the students while they are in the school premises and on school transport. School personnel, having responsibilities of school children, are by law required to be vetted by the police. We also have the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) and the Anti-bullying policy in place to protect the rights of the students.

Snack and Lunch

With regard to food, St. Joseph's Institute believes in the fact that the more you fill up on healthy food the less space you'll have for unhealthy food. Therefore, no junk food is permitted in school.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's clothing and the materials he or she brings to school. Encourage him/her to check the Lost and Found (located near the reception) for misplaced items.

During Parent-Teacher Conferences, the lost and found items will be displayed in the corridors to remind students and parents to check for their lost possessions. At the end of the year the unclaimed items are donated at the end of the year

Dress Code

Although the School does not have a formal uniform, it does expect the students to follow the following rules:

1. students should not wear clothing that are too flashy and distracting for other students
2. simple footwear, which can be easily taken off and worn again
3. on days that students have football, they are expected to bring their sneakers in a bag

Use of Information Technology and Electronic Gadgets

Students are permitted to use the computers and tablets at school for any purpose pertaining to the requirements of the school syllabus as specified by the computer faculty or for any school activity only.

Students are not permitted to carry mobile phones, iPods, cameras or any other electronic equipment to school. If they do so, it will be confiscated. Students are permitted to use the office telephone to contact their parents in times of emergency.

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves well in school, on the bus and when they go out to represent the School. They are required to:

1. take care of school materials including furniture, building or materials
2. take proper care of library books
3. behave respectfully with peers, teachers and staff
4. maintain regular attendance
5. avoid bullying.

Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

1. Encourage your child to take a balanced interest in studies, co-curricular activities and sports.
2. Ensure that your child does not bring expensive things, electronic items, cell phones, smart watches, etc. or large sums of money to school.
3. Give minimal pocket money.

4. Elaborate celebration of birthdays in school and on the bus are not allowed. Flashy arrangements, distribution of expensive chocolates, cutting of cake and partying in school is not allowed.
5. Inculcate the habit of being responsible for their belongings in your child. The school does not accept any responsibility for any item lost in school. All articles belonging to the child should be labeled with the child's name and class.
6. No fancy accessories/gold should be worn to school.
7. Support and cooperate with the school in maintaining discipline by making sure that students attend school regularly, devote sufficient time for reading and take an interest in all the activities conducted in school.
8. Leave for half a day should be avoided except in the case of an emergency. Written permission must be obtained from the class teacher and the bus-in-charge should also be informed about the same.
9. Catch-up work when your child has missed school for any reason other than being sick will be the responsibility of the child.
10. Provide a supportive environment at home. Using discretion and parental judgment, keep track of your child's mental health and emotional well-being.
11. Monitor the internet sites being visited by your child and limit television viewing to appropriate programmes and duration. Install programmes like Net Nanny that help control the websites that your child visits.
12. Avoid any kind of criticism of your child's teacher or the school in his/her presence as they may lose respect for their teachers and fail to learn from them.
13. Cell phones are strictly prohibited within the school premises. However, in case carrying it is considered necessary for the security of your child, then a written request giving a reason should be forwarded to the school. If granted permission, your child will be required to deposit the mobile with the office in the morning and collect it as he/she leaves school.