

A Parent's Guide to 1st Grade

Produced by the Faculty of the Lower School



2019-2020
Academic Year

- From the Director of the Lower School -

Dear Parents,

It is with great joy that I welcome you and your child(ren) to the 2019-20 school year at Saint Agnes! The packet of information that you hold is a convenient resource for you, containing important information about your son's or daughter's grade-level. It is our sincere hope that this quick guide will be a valuable resource to you especially when questions arise, as they undoubtedly will.

Before providing a lot of practical information about your child's grade-level, allow me first to reflect with you on our partnership. The Church teaches that parents are the *primary educators of their child(ren)*, and it is our responsibility as a Catholic school to support our parents in that important work. As the primary educator and role model, you, through your words and actions, have a powerful impact on the success of our partnership. When we remain united in purpose, our shared work in cultivating Faith, Reason, and Virtue within your child(ren) has a much greater chance of bearing good fruit.

The faculty, staff, and coaches that work with your child(ren) are deeply committed to their well-being; they are driven by our school's mission, which is to bring young people closer to Christ. They work very hard to ensure that your child(ren) receive the very best spiritual, moral, and intellectual formation, while also providing an authentic witness of faith. That said, they are not perfect or infallible! They need both your prayers and your patience. Please pray for them each day with your child.

Furthermore, I ask that you, when a question or concern arises, offer our faculty, staff, and coaches a presumption of goodwill. In other words, please assume that their actions and words are motivated with the best intentions. Such presumption of goodwill allows the teacher, staff member, or coach an opportunity to offer his/her own account of what happened. If a question or concern arises, I ask that you follow the Biblical principle in Matthew's Gospel to speak directly first with the person with whom you have a question, concern, or dispute; allow him/her to offer an explanation, and be open to another perspective. I also humbly suggest that you take your son's or daughter's version of an incident as one data point; presume goodwill on their part but remember that he/she is a child. Goodwill is something that we - faculty, staff, and coaches - also owe to you and your children. As partners with you, please trust us. If you follow this Gospel principle and you do not receive what you believe to be an adequate explanation, please contact me. As the Director of the Lower School, it is my job to ensure that your questions and concerns are answered and addressed fairly. For me, it's not about sorting out who's right or who's wrong and administering consequences, but rather to find the truth of the matter and see how best we can learn from our challenges and be better in the future - both our students and us as partners with you in helping them mature, learn, and grow.

Thank you again for entrusting Saint Agnes School with your child's academic and spiritual formation. May the Lord bless our school in the 2019-2020 school year and may He abundantly bless you and your family in the coming year!

In Christ,



Michael Adkins

Director of the Lower School | Dean of Academics

madkins@saintagnesschool.org

651-925-8756

Lower School Culture

- **Responsive Classroom**

Our K-6 classrooms employ a program called Responsive Classroom (RC). RC is a classroom management approach to discipline and school culture. While we use RC, we have adapted and adopted it to fit properly within a Catholic Christian environment. The goal of the program is to free the learning environment from distractions so students can focus on:

- Academic studies
- Building positive relationships and community
- Growing in virtue
- Learning to make good choices
- Learning to use freedom for the good
- Learning self-governance and self-sufficiency

Part of RC is an approach of redirecting or “reminding language” in which the teacher will calmly redirect the student on his/her choices; this approach is more direct and involves less emotion and avoids frustration on the part of the adult or yelling. When students abuse freedom or make poor choices, RC employs what are called “Logical Consequences”; these consequences are equitable and fitting for the nature of the poor choice made. Probably the most important element of RC is “Morning Meeting,” a classroom gathering with the homeroom teacher that begins each day and pro-actively weeds-out classroom issues before they arise by cultivating respect and unity. This gathering is infused with prayer, interactive games, conversation, sharing, and community building. Morning Meeting is also the time where faculty will teach about the Virtues.

- **Education in Virtue**

Education in Virtue, or EIV, is a program developed by the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist (the sisters who serve at Saint Agnes School). The program dovetails very well with Responsive Classroom and uses many of the same approaches and reminding language.

Communication: Whom to Contact?

Teachers are encouraged to pro-actively communicate with parents and respond to inquiries within 48 hours or less; our faculty are happy to address any questions that parents may have. Please feel free to reach out to faculty, while remembering that the bulk of their day is occupied with teaching and supervising students; their opportunities to communicate are often limited to after school (between 2:45 and 3:30) and many faculty also coach our young people. Please be understanding of their time and allow them a couple days to respond to your message.

Generally speaking, we ask that parents/guardians speak with the adult (i.e. the teacher, coach, administrator, etc.) most directly involved with their inquiry first; we also ask that you follow the “chain of command” outlined below in regard to any concern or dispute, trusting that the immediate and direct adult overseeing the situation will address your concern. If you are not satisfied, please speak to the next individual in the “chain of command,” respecting this process.

Please note that there is a wealth of information about the school, the academic calendar, athletic calendars on both our school website and within our weekly Parent Newsletter (emailed to all registered families).

Please call our Main Office if you are not receiving the weekly Parent Newsletter: 651-925-8700.

- **Student absence/illness**

- Attendance Hotline: 651-925-8777 (leave a message if no pick-up)

- **Classroom teachers** (i.e. Homeroom teacher, Specialist Teacher such as PE or Art, etc.):

- Something that happened in class;
- Questions about late work or due dates;
- A lesson, or something shown or discussed in class;
- Questions or concerns about relationships between students;

- Obtaining late or missing work for a student;
- Questions about a grade or information in Educate (online gradebook);
- A question or concern about how a situation was handled;
- You have a concern about something a teacher has said or done (you should speak directly first with him or her, offering the individual an opportunity to address your questions).
- **Director of Lower School / Dean of Academics** (Mr. Michael Adkins) madkins@saintagnesschool.org
 - After you have spoken with the classroom teacher(s) and do not believe you have received the requisite, fair, or adequate explanation or result.
 - You have a question about curriculum or programming.
 - Note: Most matters will ultimately be determined by the Director of the Lower School and need not be directed further to the Headmaster unless there is a major concern or dispute.
- **Headmaster** (Dr. Kevin Ferdinandt) kferdinandt@saintagnesschool.org
 - After you have spoken with the Director of the Lower School and do not believe you have received the requisite, fair, or adequate explanation or result.
- **Pastor / Superintendent** (Fr. Mark Moriarty)
 - After you have spoken with the Headmaster and do not believe you have received the requisite, fair, or adequate explanation or result.
- **Main Office Staff (651-925-8700)**
 - Questions about: schedules, weekly parent newsletter, lunch times, school Mass times, parents at prayer, hot lunch program, calendar, events, Educate access, volunteer opportunities, etc.
- **Athletics**
 - Mr. Mike Streitz: Upper School Athletics mstreitz@saintagnesschool.org
 - Mr. Sam Thompson: Lower School Athletics sthompson@saintagnesschool.org
- **Volunteering & E3/Virtus Certification**
 - Mrs. Annette Beaudry: abeaudry@saintagnesschool.org
If you are interested in being a school volunteer, a chaperone, or helper at recess, please first make sure that you have met the Archdiocesan requirements to work with children, known commonly as “E3” certification or Virtus training. Mrs. Beaudry will look up your name and see if you need to update any information.
- **Business Office Staff**
Mr. Bob Collett bcollett@saintagnesschool.org Sandy Veal sveal@saintagnesschool.org
 - Questions about: fees, tuition, after school care, maintenance/building and facilities concerns, hot lunch accounts, etc.
- **Advancement Office (See website or call Main Office to direct your call)**
 - Questions about: communications, website, social media platforms, marketing, annual Give Day, annual raffle/ticket sales, alumni relations, events, Red & White benefit dinner, donations, Grandparents Day, etc.
- **Parish Office (651-925-8800)**
 - Questions about: parish Mass times, sacramental preparation, parish organizations (e.g. Men’s Club, Altar & Rosary Society), annual parish Fall Festival, donations to the parish, religious art, Latin Mass resources, parish history, etc.

Other Common / Important Lower School Policies:

DROP-OFF / PICK-UP

Please make sure to have your son or daughter to school on time; the day begins promptly at 7:55 a.m. Students may arrive any time after 7:00 a.m., but Lower School students (grades K-6) must remain in the cafeteria in Before School Care until 7:30; at that time, students may then head to their classrooms.

The day ends at 2:45 and all K-6 students are out the door by 2:45 and ready to be picked up; we dismiss students in waves starting at 2:40 to ensure safe and orderly departure from the building. 6th grade classrooms are on a rotating schedule to serve as school patrol, helping to pause traffic on Lafond Avenue. Students not picked up by 2:50 are brought down to the cafeteria to be picked up by parents and guardians. The After School Care program (for a fee) officially begins at 3:05 p.m. and ends at 5:00.

NOTE: At drop-off and pick-up, we ask that you please travel eastbound on Lafond Avenue; this immensely helps the traffic flow and moves everyone quicker and is much safer for students and parents crossing the street.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Upon entering the building students are not allowed to use electronic devices (e.g., laptops, tablets, cellular phones, smartwatches, MP3 players, gaming devices, etc.). Electronic devices may be used after 2:45 p.m. Electronic devices, including smartwatches, are not to be worn or carried on the person of any student during the school day. This policy applies to all devices capable of sending or receiving signals between devices via cellular data, wireless data, Bluetooth, or other means, as well as those capable of capturing digital images or video. Student lockers are equipped with locks to safeguard electronic devices and other valuables. If a student is found with or is using an electronic device during school hours, an automatic 45-minute detention is imposed and the items may be confiscated. Refusal to hand over the device may result in suspension. The school's wireless network is reserved for use by faculty, staff and guests to the building conducting business. Student devices are not permitted on the wireless network at any time.

BIRTHDAYS/PARTIES - INVITATIONS

Unless all of the children in your child's homeroom are invited, invitations for birthday parties planned to take place outside of school should be sent by mail. Birthday snacks may be brought to school for the whole class. It is best to send store-bought snacks that are wholesome and promote healthy food choices.

CHARITABLE SPEECH

Saint Agnes School is a community of learners and a community of faith. Everyone is expected to speak charitably to and about one another. Every individual has a right to his/her good name. If a dispute arises, an individual ought to speak charitably and forthrightly to the individual with whom he/she has a disagreement. Gossip, slander, and teasing are not permitted as they create division and destroy the harmony of the social and learning environment. Saint Agnes employees and students are to respect: the Catholic Church, the teachings of the Faith, other Christian denominations, other religions, the mission of the school, and school administration, faculty, and staff. This includes statements made in person as well as on the internet (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.) and other modes of communication (e.g., text messaging, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.).

UNIFORM DRESS CODE (K-6)

Unless prior school permission is obtained, students are to dress in the regulation school uniform, which may be purchased at Donald's Uniform Store, 972 Payne Avenue in St. Paul, or 6407 City West Parkway in Eden Prairie. Please follow both the uniform and non-uniform code as outlined in the *Parent & Student Handbook*.



“Like stars, we will shine for all Eternity.”

First Grade – Parent’s Guide 2019-2020

Welcome to First Grade! We are excited to continue to build upon the foundations learned in Kindergarten and strengthen our students reading skills, mathematical knowledge, understanding of God’s creation, and their faith!

Religion & Latin: The children learn about God and His great love for them. They experience listening to stories from the Old and New Testament, learn about the Sacraments, especially Baptism, Reconciliation, and Holy Communion. The children also learn about the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ, His death, and Resurrection. They experience the liturgical seasons, learn about many Saints, are introduced to the Ten Commandments and relate to them at their age level. The children also learn the various ways and forms of prayer, attend Holy Mass on Tuesdays and participate in Eucharistic adoration one day each week. They also pray a decade of the rosary each day. The children learn about our Lord and the principles of Christian living through a variety of learning modalities and experiences. Our Catholic Faith permeates the entire day and our Faith is practiced/ applied in all the other subjects of the day. Our students are highly encouraged to have a very close relationship with Jesus throughout the day at home, school, and always. Mrs. O’Hern will teach first grade Religion this year. Some more logistical information from Mrs. O’Hern below...

Grade 1 – Religion

Text: **God is Love** (*Spirit of Truth series* – Sophia Institute Press)

Students begin to develop an awareness of God as our Father in Heaven, the Creator of Heaven and earth, who is all good, who created them in His image and likeness, and who loves them unconditionally.

- The reality of sin
- The lives of saints
- The basics of prayer as a conversation with God

Students complete assignments in the workbook during class. No homework is given.

Grade 1 – Latin

Students learn basic Latin prayers and Mass responses. There is no textbook. Printed materials are used.

Education in Virtue : Is a program designed by the Dominican order and will help shape our students lives in Virtue. And Each class will lead a virtue assembly.

Presentations: First Graders will also participate in two auditorium presentations. First our Saint presentations. Every student will be assigned a saint and given a written report from the teacher to read on stage. Parents will only help with practicing reading at home and costumes. Second, students will participate in an Ancient Egypt Day that will go along with what they are learning in History. Students again will be given a script from the teachers and parents will help with at home practice and dress in Ancient Egyptian costumes.

Reading/ Language Arts: It is very beneficial for incoming First Graders to have a variety of early literacy experiences at home each day as well as in previous school experiences. The experiences with being read to at home each day cannot be emphasized enough. Language is literacy! The more experience children have with language each day, the more successful and enjoyable learning to read will be for them. It is also helpful for incoming First Graders to know their letters, beginning and end letter sounds, and perhaps a minimal experience with short vowels.

We are very excited to continue with our reading series *Superkids* by Pleasant Rowland. The *Superkids* program is a comprehensive program, which emphasizes phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, creative writing and printing. Please check out <http://www.superkidsreading.org> for more information about our new reading and writing program.

Students will also participate in a monthly home reading goal program starting in October. Children's progress in school is significantly higher when they do participate and weekly "Take Home Readers" will be given to starting at the end of September.

Grammar: Shurley Grammar is based on the proven methods of rhythm, repetition, and student-teacher interactions. Students will learn many "jingles" to help them remember key grammatical terms and definitions. Students will be evaluated every lesson through their work books and chapter check-ups. Students will begin this curriculum starting in January.

Math: We implement the *Saxon Math Program* and *Singapore Math* strategies in Grades K-6! The comprehensive Saxon program will assist our students in learning math facts, developing number sense, problem solving, measuring, telling time, learning geometric shapes and patterns, graphing, counting money, etc. The lessons are carefully crafted and scaffolded, so that *throughout the year*, students will be learning and practicing all of these various math skills and strategies. Students are also learning Singapore Math strategies in addition to the Saxon Math program. Singapore Math promotes concrete, pictorial methods to help students build number sense in first grade as well as prepare for the model drawing process in the following grades. Please expect that your child will have one side of a page of homework most days in First Grade (except for every 10th lesson which entails a formal assessment). Formal assessment is given every five lessons. Oral Assessments are completed about every ten lessons.

History: This year we are using the Core Knowledge Sequence for instruction. Students will learn about Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, Early Civilizations of the Americas, Mexico Today, Early Explorers and Explorers, From Colonies to Independence, and Exploring the West. Sr. Gabriella will teach History to first graders this year.

Science: (piloting new science curriculum) Mrs. Loch will teach science this year.

Handwriting: This subject will be systematically taught through the *Superkids Reading Program*. Students will work on their handwriting in the classroom and be expected to write neatly on ALL homework that is given.

Specialist Schedule: **Art** (1 class/week), **Physical Education** (2 classes/week), and **Music** (2 classes/week), **Library** (1 class/ week), **Religion/Latin** (4 classes/week), and **Catechesis of the Good Shepard** (1 class/week)

Classroom Behavior Management: Saint Agnes School embraces the *Responsive Classroom* management approach in the elementary school. Every day we begin with a morning meeting where students greet each other, share briefly, participate in an activity, and read the morning message together. This routine builds community in the classroom while teaching students basic social skills. The Responsive Classroom approach also encourages student accountability and logical consequences for any misbehavior. Classroom rules will be determined by the teacher as well as the students. Students will sign an agreement to follow the rules.

Students may receive a consequence if a school rule is not followed. Notes or phone calls home explaining misbehaviors may also be necessary at times. The main goal is for our students to respect self, classmates and adults. The practice of Christian virtue is introduced and emphasized.

Snack: Please send a snack to school with your child each day. **To ensure the safety of students with nut allergies, please DO NOT send snacks with any peanuts or peanut butter.** Please remind your child of the difference between their lunch and their snack (for the afternoon)! Your child may also bring a water bottle with their name on it. Please instruct your child on how to use the bottle before they bring it to school.

Communication slip is sent home each day to keep open communication between home and school. Daily communication and collaboration between home and school are more than essential; both are very necessary in order to provide a rich and meaningful learning experience for our children at school. **Any homework will be written in bold and underlined** so you know what is homework and what we did in class. **Homework** is given every day. The primary subjects for homework are Math, Spelling, and Reading. Parents and family members are asked to provide assistance as needed on each task given. Parent involvement is expected and very much appreciated!

Homework: **Students are expected to read 10-15 minutes each night.** Some reading homework will be sent home by the teacher and other nights the expected homework is reading a book at home.

Students will participate in a monthly home reading goal program starting in October. Children's progress in school is significantly higher when they do participate and weekly "Take Home Readers" will be given to starting at the end of September.

Math homework is sent home Monday-Wednesday unless students have an assessment.

Spelling practice is advised every night. Spelling homework is required on Thursdays before the test on Fridays.

Missing Work: If a student consistently misses homework assignments, a note will be sent home to parents to notify them of their child's responsibilities in first grade.

Absent/Make-up Work: The teacher will send home any make-up work with directions if a student misses class.

Grading Policies:

Math

- Written Assessments: 50%
- Fact Assessments: 20%
- Oral Assessments: 30%

Reading

- Written Assessments: 50%
- Oral Assessments: 30%
- Guided Reading: 20%

Spelling

- Assessments on Fridays

Writing

- Superkids Written Assessments: 50%
- Writing Assignments: 50%

History

- Assessments: 75%
- Activities/Participation: 25%

Science

- Assessments
- Experiments
- Participation

Grammar (Beginning in second semester)

- Assessments
- Participation

Handwriting

- Letter formation
- Neatness

Dismissal Policy: At the end of the day students will either be walked outside for pick up or will go downstairs to be checked in to After School Care. A parent, designated carpool adult, or 7-12 sibling must pick up and supervise student outside. For students checked into After School Care, a parent, designated carpool adult, or 7-12 sibling must sign out and supervise student upon pick up. For outside dismissal, parent, designated carpool adult, or 7-12 sibling must physically collect K-6 student or be visible to teacher/student from the sidewalk. Students who are not picked up outside by 2:50pm will be checked into After School Care and will need to be signed out by a parent, designated carpool adult, or 7-12 sibling.

Field Trips: First grade typically attends a field trip to the Pumpkin Patch or Apple Orchard in the fall. We go to Como Zoo in the spring. If you're interested in chaperoning a field trip, please contact Annette Beaudry (Volunteer Coordinator) to check your Virtus and "E3" compliance.

GOD BLESS YOU!

Mrs. Jenny Loch
651-925-8722
jloch@saintagnesschool.org

Sr. Gabriella, O.P
651-925-8723
sgabriella@saintagnesschool.org

Lower School Mass Schedule 2019-2020

Grades K-6

K-6 WEDNESDAYS 8:45AM

K-12 All-School Masses also at 8:45AM *Red/Italics = Mass in Latin*

2019 SEPTEMBER

No Masses the first week of School

September 4 Wednesday	K-6	English	22 nd Week of Ordinary Time
September 11 Wednesday	K-6	English	23 rd Week of Ordinary Time
September 12 Thursday	K-12	English	Most Holy Name of Mary
September 13	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
September 18 Wednesday	K-6	English	24 th Week of Ordinary Time
September 25 Wednesday	K-6	English	25 th Week of Ordinary Time

OCTOBER

October 2	K-12	English	Holy Guardian Angels
October 9 Wednesday	K-6	English	27 th Week in Ordinary Time
October 11	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
October 15 Tuesday	K-6	English	**Grandparent's Day
October 16 Wednesday	NO SCHOOL for K-6 only		
October 23 Wednesday	K-6	English	29 th Week in Ordinary Time
<i>October 28 Monday</i>	<i>K-12</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Sts. Simon and Jude</i>

NOVEMBER

November 1 Friday	K-12	English	All Saints Day
November 6 Wednesday	K-6	English	31 st Week in Ordinary Time
November 8	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
November 13 Wednesday	K-6	English	St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
November 20 Wednesday	K-6	English	33 th Week in Ordinary Time
<i>November 21, Thursday</i>	<i>K-12</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>
November 27, 28, 29 Wednesday	NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break		

DECEMBER

<i>December 4 Wednesday</i>	<i>K-6</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>1st Week of Advent</i>
December 9 Monday	K-12	English	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
December 18 Wednesday	NO MASS for K-6		
<i>December 12 Thursday</i>	<i>K-12</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i>
December 13	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
December 18 Wednesday	K-6	English	3 rd Week of Advent

2020 JANUARY

January 8 Wednesday	K-6	English	Christmas Season – Wednesday after Epiphany
January 15 Wednesday	K-6	English	1 st Week in Ordinary Time
January 17	3-6		Lower School Third Friday Confessions
<i>January 21 Tuesday</i>	<i>K-12</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Feast of St. Agnes</i>
January 22 Wednesday	K-6	English	2 nd Week in Ordinary Time
January 29 Wednesday	K-6	English	3 rd Week in Ordinary Time

FEBRUARY

February 3 Monday	K-12	English	Feast of St. Blaise (Blessing of throats)
February 5 Wednesday	K-6	English	St. Agatha
February 12 Wednesday	K-6	English	5 th Week in Ordinary Time
February 14	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
February 19 Wednesday	K-6	English	6 th Week in Ordinary Time
February 26 Wednesday	K-12	English	Ash Wednesday
February 27	2 nd Gr.	8:05am	First Confessions

MARCH

<i>March 4 Wednesday</i>	<i>K-6</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>1st Week in Lent</i>
March 11 Wednesday	K-6	English	2 nd Week in Lent
March 13	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
March 18 Wednesday	Note: No K-6 Mass		(due to Masses on 19 th and 20 th)
March 19 Thursday	K-12	English	Solemnity of St. Joseph
<i>March 20 Friday</i>	<i>K-12</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Opening of 40 Hours</i>

Please note that 40 Hours will conclude at the Sunday, March 22, 10am OF Latin High Mass
March 23 - 27 NO SCHOOL - SPRING BREAK

APRIL

April 1 Wednesday	K-6	English	5 th Week in Lent
April 8 Wednesday	K-6	English	Wednesday of Holy Week
April 15 Wednesday	K-6	English	Wednesday in the Octave of Easter
April 17 Friday	3-6		Lower School Third Friday Confessions
April 22 Wednesday	K-6	English	2 nd Week of Easter
April 29 Wednesday	K-6	English	St. Catherine of Siena

MAY

<i>May 1 Friday</i>	<i>K-12</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>May Crowning & Feast of St. Joseph the Worker</i>
May 6 Wednesday	K-6	English	4 th Week of Easter
May 8	3-6		Lower School Second Friday Confessions
May 13 Wednesday	K-6	English	5 th Week of Easter
May 14 Thursday	K-12	English	Scapular Enrollment & Feast of St. Matthias
May 20 Wednesday	K-6	English	6 th Week of Easter (Final Mass of Year)