

PREFACE

Nothing contained herein is intended to, or shall create any contractual obligations, express or implied, on the part of the Saint Martin de Porres School. The contents of this handbook are subject to alteration or modification by Saint Martin de Porres School, as circumstances may require.

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MISSION STATEMENT

At Saint Martin de Porres School we are strongly rooted in our Catholic Christian identity. We seek to educate our students to fulfill their potential spiritually, emotionally, morally, and academically.

We endeavor to build strong Christian character and cultural pride as we prepare our students to strive for the highest levels of education: high school, college, and beyond.

We aim to form partnerships among individuals and groups who will support our mission of education in North Philadelphia.

FOREWORD

This handbook has been designed to acquaint our school families with the necessary rules, regulations, and procedures of Saint Martin de Porres School. Students, families, and school staff can contribute much to the students' education when all are properly informed.

Some information in this handbook is subject to change. If there are any necessary changes, families will be informed through the Thursday communication during the school year.

Please read the entire handbook, keep it in a safe place, and consult it whenever a question arises.

Hopefully, the information presented in this handbook is a valuable resource for all involved in our children's education.

INTRODUCTION

The root of the word, education, means to lead or to bring forth. True education leads students to awareness of truth in their personal lives.

Saint Martin de Porres School exists to teach the truth about God's great love for each and every person. With this purpose, the school also promotes a curriculum, which develops the mind, body, and spirit of the individual to grow toward full potential. We respect and accept all children, just as they are, while challenging all to become their best.

Our parish school admits students of all races and nationalities to all programs and activities of the school.

ADMINISTRATION

The pastor is the president of Saint Martin de Porres Catholic School because the school is a work and mission of the church. He is responsible for the religious instruction and the establishment and maintenance of high academic school standards. This is carried out under the direction of Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia.

The principal is the leader of the school and is responsible to the pastor, the Office of Catholic Education, the Board of Directors, and to the community for all school matters. She is assisted by the vice-principal.

STAFFING

Our staff consists of the Sisters of St. Joseph, lay Christian teachers, an administrative assistant, aides, lunch program personnel, school secretary, a maintenance engineer, volunteers, Title I staff, and Elwyn staff.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN SUPPORT

In the work of education, we seek the cooperation of parents and students. Good order and a healthy learning environment demand that there be rules and regulations, so that all can work toward the children's benefit.

PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS

Three formal conferences are scheduled and are **mandatory** during the year: Back-to-School Night in September and the report card conferences in December and in March. Other conferences may be scheduled through an appointment arranged between the parent and teacher as the need arises. No conferences may be scheduled during class time.

COMMUNICATION

Each Thursday, information is sent home via your child in a communication folder, which **must** be signed and returned to school the following day. This folder might consist of a school letter, a calendar, or church information, etc. **Please see that your child gives you this information each week.**

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The focus of our work and activity is on God, Scripture, values, and morals – all from the Catholic Christian perspective. Students participate in religion classes daily, and they worship monthly as a school family.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Our children are encouraged to worship on Sundays with their own families in their respective churches. All, of course, **always** are invited and welcome to attend Saint Martin de Porres Church at the 10:00 Mass. Students who are baptized Catholics are **expected** to attend Mass at their parish churches on Sundays and Holydays; they also are encouraged to be involved in the activities of their parish.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

BOYS

K-8 gray pants, white, pink, or maroon dress shirt with maroon tie, and maroon sweater. A belt must be worn at all times. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

white, pink, or maroon knit polo

shirts, or turtlenecks

Shoes: **Black oxfords, which should be purchased through Cramer's.**

GIRLS

K-8 pink or white Peter Pan collar blouse or turtle-neck, maroon sweater, maroon knee socks or tights.

K-5 maroon & gray plaid jumper

6-8 maroon & gray plaid skirt

K-8 winter: (optional) gray dress slacks from Cramer's

Skirts or jumpers must be knee length.

During winter when tights are insufficiently warm, girls may wear the maroon uniform gym pants (NO JEANS). They may be worn under the uniform to and from school ONLY.

Shoes: **Black saddle shoes, which should be purchased through Cramer's.**

Please note: Blouses or shirts, regardless of style must be tucked in. Oversized shirts are unacceptable attire.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS- CONTINUED

Also prohibited are:

- Thermal undershirts worn visibly under blouses or shirts
- Hair color, dye, or dyed extensions, spray
- Mohawks or shaved symbols in hair, etc.
- Nail polish, tips, lipstick or lip gloss
- Rings, pins, bracelet, necklaces, or pocketbooks
- Tattoos

A watch and one pair of small post style earring are permitted.

Persistent violations will result in a school suspension.

GYM UNIFORM

REGULATION maroon sweat suit in winter, and

REGULATION gray tees and shorts in the spring and fall.

The uniform is the same for both boys and girls.

No other gray or maroon sets will be acceptable.

DISCIPLINE

Our goal in developing a strong discipline is:

- To create an orderly and safe Christian environment for students and staff,
- To maximize the quality of students' religious and academic education, and
- To enable students to grow in self-esteem and self-discipline

DISCIPLINE POLICY

General Regulations

- After three referrals the office is notified and a one day out of school suspension may be issued.
- A parent or guardian must accompany the child for readmission.
- Three "out of school" suspensions equal **expulsion**.

Discipline Area	Consequences
Possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons	IMMEDIATE EXPLUSION
Physical fighting	School suspension
Stealing	1. Referral or phone contact 2. Seriousness of the offense may result in immediate dismissal
Lateness (five times per trimester)	Equals a referral and detention
Homework Must be completed and signed by parent/guardian each night indicating completed work.	Failure to comply warrants a disciplinary action at the discretion of the teacher and possible failures in particular subjects.

DISCIPLINE POLICY—CONT'D.

Disrespectful attitude to teachers, classmates or staff which includes: cursing, profane language or gestures, talking back, argumentative attitude, or refusal to follow school regulations.

Home contact via referral and / or phone contact

No headphones, radios, handheld games or any kind of "toys" are permitted anywhere on school property.

These items will be confiscated and will be returned ONLY to a parent/guardian.

Cell phone use is not permitted in school or school yard at any time. This also includes texting. *Grades 6-7-8 must turn in their cell phones each day. They will be returned at dismissal.

Out of uniform – this includes any and all levels of being out of uniform.

Referral by teacher or staff member.

In the area of discipline, situations may arise which are not specifically mentioned. These may be handled on a "case by case" basis under the supervision of the principal or her designee. Offenses deemed more serious could result in a severe consequence including immediate suspension or expulsion.

VIOLENT/THREATENING/ HARASSING AND/OR INAPPROPRIATE ACTS BY STUDENTS AND PARENTS

It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidations, hostility, and offensive and inappropriate behavior.

Such improper conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct, verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, and behavior otherwise not conducive to the educational and religious mission of the school.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Disrespectful behavior of any kind toward or about any staff, student, or other parent of students,
- Insubordination,
- Fighting,
- Bomb scares or triggering other false alarms,
- Cheating or plagiarism,
- Use or possession of drugs or alcohol
- Smoking,
- Stealing,
- Intimidation, harassment, or threats of any kind
- Weapons

These categories do not cover every possible situation.

The school is responsible for determining what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior, both in and out of the classroom, in the school community generally, and outside the school where such improper behavior affects the school community.

Conduct by students or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment, in any form, including oral, written, or electronic by a student against any member of the school community, the student, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school.

SCHOOL BUS

We are serviced through the Philadelphia Public School District and are subject to their rules and regulations.

Children must be in grades 1-8 **ONLY** and **MUST** live 1½ miles from school.

Contracts will be sent home outlining School District Bus Rules and Parent Responsibilities.

SOME STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students and their parents are responsible for all books issued. You will be assessed for all lost and/or damaged books.

Students may not write, scribble, or in any way deface the book covers or pages. Copybooks are also to be kept clean without defacing-type marks.

All textbooks are to be covered. Books are to be carried to and from school in a book bag. No books may be taken from school without a book bag.

HOMEWORK AND HOME STUDY

Study is a vital part of a student's life. It stresses and reinforces the work taught in the classroom. Study time at home should be spent away from the radio, television, and other distractions. The amount of time for homework, both written and study, increases through the grades. The following is the recommended amount of time per grade for homework by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office of Education.

- Grades 1 & 2 30 minutes
- Grades 3 & 4 60 minutes
- Grades 5 & 6 90 minutes
- Grades 7 & 8 120 minutes

MARKING SYSTEM

Report cards are issued three times a year: December, March, and June.

- **Kindergarten**

Kindergarten students are graded on basic concepts and tasks, the specifics of which will be explained at the time of the first conference by the teacher.

- **Grades 1 – 3** Students receive letter grades of:

O	Outstanding
VG	Very Good
G	Good
S	Satisfactory
I	Improvement Needed
U	Unsatisfactory

- **Grades 4 – 8** Students receive numerical grades. The average mark for work on grade level is 80.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are issued three times a year to students who are failing or near failing. These usually are issued three to four weeks before report cards are distributed. Parents must sign these reports and return them to the child's teacher. This allows the child, the family, and the school staff to work together to improve the child's standing in his or her classes.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00	Bell rings in schoolyard
11:00 – 1:25	Lunch served by grade
2:30	Dismissal
	Grades 1-3 on Lehigh Avenue
	Grades 4-8 on Oakdale Street
Consult monthly calendar for any variations.	

SUPERVISION

Supervision is provided in the schoolyard beginning at 7:45 a.m, and it also is provided at lunch recess time. Once a student enters the school grounds (building or yard), he/she becomes the responsibility of the school; therefore no student may leave school property without permission. At dismissal, **if, for any reason, you are not able to pick up your child by 2:30, you must call the school office no later than 2 pm to make arrangements. Failure to do so will result in a mandatory late fee.**

LATENESS

Students are expected to be on time. A student is late if he or she is not present when the class line enters the classroom after the morning bell.

Lateness disrupts the learning atmosphere and routine in the classroom. The late student, the teacher, and the other students are disturbed.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is expected of every student. On the day of the absence, the parent must notify the school at 215-223-6872 before 9:00 a.m. After an absence, the student **MUST** present a note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to make up all missed work. If a child is expected to be absent for several days, the parent/guardian should contact the child's teacher for assignments to complete at home.

REQUEST FOR EARLY DISMISSAL

No student is permitted to leave the school grounds before the regular hour of dismissal unless accompanied by a parent, guardian, or another designated adult. A written request for an early dismissal is to be submitted to the principal's office for approval. Should the need for such a request arise, please include the following information in your request.

- Name of student
- Date and time of dismissal
- Reason for early dismissal request
- Name and relationship of adult picking up child

Please try to schedule routine medical and dental appointments during after-school hours. Early dismissals inevitably interrupt the normal flow of academics for your child.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

The Archdiocesan Office of Nutritional Development, following the guidelines set up by the Federal Government, sponsors the hot lunch program.

All children are entitled to participate in this program, but not all are eligible for the free or reduced price lunches.

In September of each year, lunch applications are sent home to be completely and accurately filled out. When they are returned to school, forms are forwarded to the Nutritional Development Office for the financial status of each family to be determined. The applicants fall into three categories: free, reduced-price, and full-price lunches.

If children receive reduced – or full-price lunches, payment **MUST** be made each week. Otherwise, the school is billed for the lunch. This is a financial responsibility the school cannot assume. If there is no payment from the family, then the child must discontinue the Hot Lunch Program and bring a lunch from home.

NUTRITION

Nutrition – None of the following may be brought to school at any time. This includes in the school yard, at recess, or at lunch.

**GUM, CANDY, SODA, BAGGED SNACKS, SUCH AS
CHIPS, SEEDS, NACHOS, DOODLES, ETC.**

Glass bottled drinks are prohibited for safety reasons.
Banned items will be confiscated by staff and not returned.
Persistent violations could result in a school clean up assignment to be determined by the principal or her designee.

SNACK PROGRAM

Students may buy soft pretzels daily at a cost of \$.30-\$.35 per day.
Students may also bring a nutritional snack from home.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

This “cold” breakfast is free every day and is available from 7:20 am – 7:50 am.

ALL STUDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A child entering kindergarten must be five years old by September 1st. St. Martin de Porres requires the following documents for students entering any grade.

- Birth certificate
- Immunization record
- Previous year's report card, if applicable
- Baptismal certificate (Catholics only)
- A non-refundable registration fee per family **after** the child is accepted into the school

RE-REGISTRATION

Parents with children already enrolled in school have the first opportunity to re-register. To reserve a place, a student must re-register in April with a re-registration fee per family. No re-registration is valid until all school bills, such as tuition and service fee, are paid.

HEALTH CARE

The State of Pennsylvania governs the school health laws and regulates the duties of the school nurse. Your cooperation is essential with regard to doctors' reports, immunizations, physicals, scoliosis examinations, vision and hearing screenings, etc. Failure to provide these documents could result in your child's suspension from school. If your child is very ill or contagious, he/she **MUST** be kept at home.

FINANCES

Each spring, the financial schedule for the following school year is published; this schedule consists of the registration fee, tuition, and service fee. Payments must be made monthly. Payments are to be sent to:

St. Martin de Porres School
P.O. Box 49140
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19141

If payments are late:

- A late charge of \$25.00 will be assessed to your account after 10 days, and
- A charge of \$35.00 will be assessed to your account for bounced checks

Out of school suspensions will be issued to students of families who fall behind by two or more months.

Questions concerning your account can be answered by calling 215-223-6475.

FUNDRAISING

Each year, the students participate in three (3) major fundraisers. **It is MANDATORY that every family participate by meeting the stated goals of each drive.** This is essential to the life of our school. **Your participation is not optional.** This is mentioned in the yearly contract signed at the time of registration.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Children who cannot be picked up at the regular dismissal time may participate in the After School Program. This program, located in our school, is run by the City of Philadelphia not Saint Martin de Porres. Each day the program begins at dismissal time and ends at 6:00 p.m.

Parents/Guardians should contact the Beacon office in late August/early September to enroll your child. You may call **215-923-0928**.

Children MUST be picked up by 6:00 p.m. This is essential for your child to remain in the After School Program. Failure to comply with this time frame will be addressed by the office with loss of privileges, monetary fines, or both.

Specific information about payment is sent home at the beginning of each school year.

VISITORS

All persons entering the building must report first to the school office.

Family members may not stop in during class time to see a teacher. A conference time can be scheduled by the teacher for another time.

WEATHER NEWS

In case of snowstorms or other types of inclement weather, school delays or closings will be listed on KYW 1060 AM radio. Our school closes when the radio station announces that **“ALL PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC AND ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED.” OR (schools are opening 2 hours late)**

Closings also are posted on the KYW website. The address is:
<http://kyw1060.com>

Please do not call the school or the convent because the school administration also receives news of closings from the KYW station.

CONCLUSION

You, our families, have entrusted the faculty and staff of St. Martin de Porres School with a serious responsibility in being co-educators of your children.

We ask God’s grace to be faithful to this task.

Jesus’ values are our values. Unless you agree with these values, this is not the school for you.

Thank you, parents and guardians, for allowing us to share in this great work.

