

Saint Francis Xavier School

Student/Parent Handbook 2006-2007

September 2006

Dear Parents:

We are happy to welcome you and your family to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School. It is a growing school that has been providing quality Catholic education for over 40 years. Our experienced staff is dedicated to providing each child with the best educational opportunities possible.

By sending your child or children to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, you have made a commitment to share in a growing process. It is important that children have experiences in school that will make them intellectually self-sufficient.

As partners in the students' education process, we endeavor to enable children to acquire the tools, the knowledge and the experience to become independent decision makers in life.

Sincerely in Christ,

**Sister Teresa Vesey, C.S.J., Principal
and the Staff of St. Francis Xavier Catholic School**

Philosophy

The philosophy of Saint Francis Xavier Catholic School is to carry out its mission by calling upon Christian experience and Catholic identity. With the assistance of the Church and the school's families, each student is guided in growth and development. Through awareness of the Christian faith, the self and others, the school strives to achieve this goal. The Gospel Message of Christ illuminates and enriches the students' knowledge of God, life and culture. The school encourages the students to acquire sensitivity, a living consciousness and an active faith life, thus enhancing their abilities to clarify personal values and beliefs.

Since personal growth and development depend upon the recognition of one's level of self-esteem, students will be offered the opportunity to focus on "who they are."

They will be provided with the skills to enable them to recognize their own uniqueness, their gifts and their talents. By sharing these with each person whom they encounter, the students will be cognizant of their responsibility to respect and to appreciate similarities and differences among people.

Because multiculturalism is most effective when infused into the curriculum and reinforced by faith, opportunities for celebrating semblances and diversities will be presented in order to foster pride in cultural heritage. Students also will be provided with the tools and the skills to enable them to acquire the knowledge needed to function within an ever-changing world.

Mission Statement

Saint Francis Xavier School is dedicated to the Catholic education of students from the preschool level through grade eight. Through nurturing the academic, spiritual, social and physical development of each child, the curriculum supports and enhances the Gospel values of Jesus. By embracing Catholic identity throughout all facets of learning, Saint Francis Xavier School strengthens the values that connect family, parish and community.

Goals for Catholic Identity at St. Francis Xavier

Goals for Catholic identity at St. Francis Xavier: To live and share gospel values of Jesus ever more fully in our school community.

Objectives for 2006~2007 are:

- To continue a school-wide Stewardship Program in which students become aware of energy conservation, use of materials, and assume responsibility for tidiness and appearance of specific areas of the school building and grounds.**
- To identify and respond to instances of bullying/harassment, and to teach students strategies for dealing with bullies.**

As a reflection of our Catholic identity we will continue:

- To encourage courtesy and respect for one another as brothers and sisters in God's family.**
- To name and use the Beatitudes and the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy as a focus for good works in the school community.**
- To serve others in the local, national and global community through Operation Christmas Child, Walk for Mercy, Long Island Shelter, Haitian Project, Weymouth Food Pantry and Lenten Gospel Giving.**

Goals for Academic Excellence at St. Francis Xavier

Goals for academic excellence at St. Francis Xavier are to strengthen the academic program by enhancing existing technology and expanding internet capabilities in the school.

- DVD Projection System with speakers has been installed in the McShea Auditorium.**
- In Focus Screen play allowing for Power Point Presentations in the classroom and computer lab.**
- To bring cultural presentations to St. Francis Xavier School that relate to curriculum units and reinforces the themes of stewardship and service.**

Accreditation

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School is accredited by the Archdiocese of Boston and is in the process of obtaining re-accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Admission Policy

St. Francis Xavier accepts students regardless of nationality, race, religion or sex. In accordance with the general laws of Massachusetts, Weymouth has set the mandatory minimum age for school attendance as follows:

- Children entering Pre-Kindergarten must be four yrs old on or before August 31st.**
- Children entering Kindergarten must be five years old on or before August 31st.**
- Children entering Grade One must be six years old on or before August 31st.**

Registration for incoming students takes place during Catholic Schools Week ~ January 29-February 3rd. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration will take place January 31st at 9:30 a.m. and Grades One through Five will take place February 1st at 9:30 a.m.

St. Francis Xavier reserves the right to recommend alternate school settings when students would be better served in another environment.

Attendance

Absence:

There is no substitute for classroom instruction. Absence from school interferes with expected progress. We do not, however, expect students who are ill to attend school.

Parents must contact the school office by 8:15 a.m. if a child is going to be absent. Please phone 781-335-6868 or by email, saintfrancisx@comcast.net. A note from the parents must accompany the student on his/her return to school. These notes are kept on file in the school office.

Two requirements regarding absence:

- **Notification to the school via phone or email.**
- **Written note when student returns.**

Massachusetts law requires a doctor's certificate if a child has been absent due to a contagious disease or is absent for five consecutive days. Students may not miss more than seven days per term or twenty days in a year. Absences totaling twenty days in the year may jeopardize promotion and will be reviewed by administration and classroom teachers. Excessive absenteeism will be reported to the proper authorities for legal action. Students must be present in school a minimum of three hours to be counted present for the day. Work will not be provided in advance of absence. Students are responsible for getting missed work upon their return; should instructions become necessary, it is the sole responsibility of the parent to provide tutoring.

Family vacations during the school year, there are three scheduled vacations:

- **Christmas ~ December 23 - January 1**
- **Winter ~ February 19 - 23**
- **Spring ~ April 16 – 20**

Vacations scheduled for other times are not encouraged. If it is necessary for a student to be absent from school due to a family trip, please notify the student's teacher in writing. A note explaining the absence must accompany the student on the day of return.

Students are required to make up work they have missed. Students will receive the missed assignments when they return to school. The work will be distributed and collected at a date set by the teacher. Make up work is the responsibility of the student.

Dismissal:

No student will be released from school without a written parental request. Phone calls do not suffice. These notes are dated and kept on file. Any unexpected change necessitating an early dismissal requires a call before 2:00 p.m. A student must be picked up before 2:30 p.m. at the school office.

Tardiness:

Students are considered tardy if they do not file in with their class at 8:30 a.m. For the safety of our students, per State Regulations, doors will be locked after the students file into the building. Tardiness is not acceptable. Incidences of tardiness will warrant detention assigned by the classroom teacher. This detention includes students Grades One through Eight.

School Hours Grade One through Eight:

Arrival Time: 8:15 a.m.

First Bell: 8:25 a.m.

Formal Filing: 8:30 a.m.
Tardy 8:35 a.m.
Opening Prayer 8:45 a.m.
Closing Prayer 2:50 p.m.
Formal Filing 2:55 p.m.
Closing Time 3:00 p.m.

School Hours Pre Kindergarten :

Pre Kindergarten AM Classes – Monday-Friday

9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Pre Kindergarten PM Classes – Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

12:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

School Hours Kindergarten

Kindergarten AM Classes ~ 8:30 a.m. – 11:15 p.m.

Kindergarten PM Classes ~ 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Arrival and Dismissal

Students should not arrive earlier than 8:15 a.m. A faculty member will be on duty at 8:15 a.m. Parents must assume responsibility for students who arrive before the designated time.

Buses and cars enter the driveway off Park Avenue. ONE WAY TRAFFIC - Exit onto Pleasant Street. Cars coming out from the Kindergarten must follow the flow of traffic heading up the driveway onto Pleasant Street. Absolutely no cars in the school yard in the morning. Absolutely no parking allowed on either side of driveway or in front of the Parish Center or by the flagpole.

Inclement Weather ~ rain, snow, freezing temperatures: cars enter the yard single file along the outskirts leading to front stairs (the stairs close to the bus line). Students exit the car and approach the porch and walk along the porch and enter the main entrance. Grades One through Five go directly to cafeteria and Grades Six, Seven and Eight go directly to the classrooms.

Dismissal is at 3:00 p.m. Students riding the bus are dismissed first. Buses park by the flagpole in the church parking lot. Students riding individual cars are dismissed from the main entrance facing the school yard. Students are instructed to meet their cars in the school yard.

ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING in the driveway, flagpole area or Pleasant Street. Students will be waiting for drivers at the main entrance.

Behavior

According to St. Francis Xavier School's mission and philosophy, students are expected to conform to the rules and regulations that instill the importance of respect for self, authority and others. Also showing respect for property belonging

to themselves and others. Students have the responsibility to reflect the Gospel values in word and action and to uphold the reputation of St. Francis Xavier Catholic School.

Any display of disrespect by a student for authority is subject to discipline. Consequences following improper behavior are related to the infraction and will be dealt with on an individual basis. Because tolerance for others is central to our school's goal, any display of disrespect by a student for another student is also subject to discipline. Under no conditions will bullying be tolerated at school, during a school function or on the buses. Whether of a physical or psychological nature, any form of bullying will be dealt with severely.

Books

All textbooks and workbooks are the property of the school. Students who lose or damage books are required to pay for them. Books must be covered. Books will not be allowed to go home uncovered.

Book Bags

Every student is required to have a book bag.

Bus Regulations

The Weymouth School Committee policy addressing bus service for Weymouth students is outlined below:

- Free transportation will be provided to all students in grades kindergarten through six who live more than two miles from their district school.
- There is no free transportation for students in grades seven and eight.
- All students who are not eligible for free transportation will be offered a Pay Rider Transportation Program on a space-available basis.

The fees for the Pay Rider Program are as follows: \$235 for the first child, \$120 for the second child, and \$60 for each additional child. All fees are to be paid in advance.

Children must go home on the bus to which they are assigned and leave the bus at their designated stop.

******STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE BUS MAY NOT RIDE HOME ON THE BUS WITH THEIR FRIENDS. Any changes must be authorized by the Bus Company. THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE.**

Students are to wait for the bus in an orderly manner. Students must stay in their seats. Students do not touch the windows. Improper treatment of the bus is not acceptable. Students reported for misconduct on the bus may lose the privilege of riding on the bus for a period to be determined by the Principal. Bus drivers have complete charge of the buses and are expected to insist on the complete cooperation of the students. Buses stop only at regularly planned stops.

Cancellations ~ No School Announcements

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School complies with the decisions of the Weymouth Public Schools on snow days. Announcements are carried by several radio and television stations as early in the morning as possible, normally by 6:45 a.m. Parents and students are urged to listen to radio stations WJDA, WEEL, WHDH, WRKO, WEZE, WATD, WBZ and T.V. Channels 4, 5 and 7, Weymouth Cable Channel 22. Please do not call the rectory or school.

Unexpected Early Dismissal: Students should know what they are to do and where they are to go in the event that the school should be dismissed unexpectedly. This announcement would also be made over the same radio and T.V. stations listed in the “No School Announcements.”

Delayed Openings: If opening of school is delayed, Kindergarten and Pre-K morning sessions are cancelled. In the event the day is scheduled for early dismissal, school will be cancelled.

Court Order Restraint

Unless the school has a court order restraint on file, a student may be released to either parent.

Crisis Plan

In case of an external crisis, city, state or national, we will follow the Safety Procedures prepared by the City of Weymouth. A copy of the plan is on file in the office.

Detention

Students who have not followed school rules or have displayed disrespectful behavior towards teachers, other students, or any person in any capacity involved in the school will be given a detention slip. Parents will sign the detention slip prior to the student's serving. Time of detention is determined by the teacher.

Discipline

Any student who shows disrespect for authority is subject to disciplinary action. Consequences for improper behavior will be in direct relationship to the infraction, and will be dealt with on an individual basis. Because tolerance for others is central to our school's philosophy and mission, any display of disrespect by a student for another student is also subject to discipline.

Bullying and Harassment

This behavior is viewed as being in direct opposition to the Mission and Philosophy of St. Francis Xavier Catholic School and in conflict with the teachings of the Church.

Bullying and harassment can take the form of, but are not limited to, verbal, written remarks, gestures or physical contact. Students who feel they are victimized by such behavior should inform the teacher, principal or parents. Parents are encouraged to notify the school immediately.

Drugs and Alcohol

No drugs (other than prescription drugs kept in the office) or alcohol are allowed on school property.

Weapons

Guns and weapons, whether real or facsimiles, are strictly forbidden in school, buses, school property. Games that can harm an individual or that present a danger to an individual's health are also forbidden. Any violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, and, if the seriousness of the action warrants, may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from school after assessment of the situation by the Principal.

Dress Code

All students are to be in full uniform at all times unless permission has been granted by the Principal to do otherwise.

Pre Kindergarten:

Students wear the gym uniform and sneakers.

Boy's Uniform: Grades K-6:

Navy dress pants with a belt (NO CARGO PANTS)

Light blue knit shirt with logo (long sleeved or short sleeved).

Shirts completely tucked into pants.

Navy or White socks (above ankle height)

Leather Dress School Shoes (NO BOOTS, NO SNEAKERS)

Boy's Uniform: Grades 7 & 8:

Khaki Dress Pants with a belt (NO CARGO PANTS)

White/Navy Polo knit shirt with logo (long sleeved or short sleeved).

Shirts completely tucked into pants.

Navy or White socks (above ankle height)

Leather Dress School Shoes (NO BOOTS, NO SNEAKERS)

Girls' Uniform: Grades K-6:

Plaid Jumper

White/Navy turtleneck with logo

White Short/Long Sleeved Blouse with collar

Navy knee socks or navy tights

Variation: Sept, Oct, May and June ~ White/Navy ankle socks above ankle height may be worn.

Flat Leather Dress School Shoes (NO BOOTS, NO FLIP FLOPS, NO CLOGS, NO SNEAKERS)

Girl's Uniform: Grades 7 & 8:

Khaki Skirt/Navy Skirt

Skirts may be NO SHORTER than two inches above the middle of the knee

White/Navy Polo knit shirt with logo (long sleeved or short sleeved)

Shirts are to be tucked under to meet the waist of the skirt

Navy knee socks or navy tights

Variation: Sept, Oct, May and June ~ White/Navy ankle socks above ankle height may be worn.

Flat Leather Dress School Shoes (NO BOOTS, NO FLIP FLOPS, NO CLOGS, NO SNEAKERS)

Sweatshirts:

Navy with logo

Worn with dress uniform when temperature warrants another layer.

Not worn for gym.

Gym Uniform:

Boys and Girls – Pre-K-8:

September – October Uniform Sweatshorts & Uniform T-Shirts

November – April Uniform Sweatpants & Uniform Sweatshirt

May – June Uniform Sweatshorts & Uniform T-Shirts

All students wear sneakers (NO WHEEL STYLE TYPE SNEAKERS ALLOWED)

Students wear gym uniforms to school. No changing before or after school is allowed.

Birthdays:

Students may wear casual but appropriate clothes to celebrate their birthdays. Play or Beach attire is not to be worn.

General Information:

Make up and nail polish is not to be worn at any time.

Jewelry is limited to watch, simple cross or holy medal on a narrow chain.

No bracelets, thick chains or cords.

Electrical Devices

Cell Phones, iPods, CD Players, etc. are not permitted. Cell phones and other devices turned on or used at any time during school hours will be confiscated and turned into the school office. The item will be returned to the parent and the student will serve detention in his or her classroom. Messages to students or from students to a parent are handled in the school office.

Final Exams

Dates for final exams will be posted in the May Newsletter. Final exams will count 10% toward final average of the course grade. Final exams are the property of the school. They are not sent home.

Homework

Value of homework ~ seven hidden values ~ Grades 4 through 8:

- Responsibility**
- Independence**
- Perseverance**
- Time Management**
- Initiative**
- Self-Reliance**
- Resourcefulness**

In primary grades homework is a connecting link between school and home. Parents are encouraged to assist their child with homework and reinforce the skills that were taught during the day.

The following table provides guidelines for the amount of time a student should spend on homework:

Time Table:

Grade 1 20 Minutes

Grades 2 and 3 20-30 Minutes

Grade 4 1 Hour

Grade 5 1 ½ Hours

Grade 6 1 ½ to 2 Hours

Grades 7 and 8 2 to 3 Hours

Medication

In compliance with state regulations, any student who has to take medicine during the school day must have written authorization from his/her doctor. This rule applies to all medications both over the counter (i.e. Tylenol) and prescription (i.e. inhalers). The medication must be in its original container with the child's name and directions clearly printed. Prescription medications must be in its original container from the pharmacy. Students are not allowed to keep any medications with them. All medications must be sent to the office with the proper paperwork completed.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences with teachers or the Principal are by appointment only. Either call or write a note requesting an appointment.

Scheduled appointments for the First Term will be on Thursday, December 7, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Progress Reports

- **Pre-Kindergarten** - one report will be issued in the Spring.
- **Kindergarten** - reports will be issued twice a year.
- **Grades 4-8** - reports issued week of October 16 and week of January 22.
- **Grades 1-3** teachers communicate progress in age appropriate manner.
- **Individual progress reports** are both time consuming and tend to lessen pupil responsibility. Therefore, only on rare occasions will these reports be issued.

Protecting God's Children

The Archdiocese has mandated all volunteers involved with children in any capacity, including driving or chaperoning dances, to attend the workshops provided by the parish. The title of the workshop is: Virtus. Virtus is a registered trademark of the National Catholic Risk Retention Group. Protecting God's Children, A Time to Protect God's Children, and a Plan to Protect God's Children are trademarks of the National Catholic Risk Retention Group, Inc.

Release Day

On the first Friday of each month, students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. for Faculty In-Service Day.

Report Cards

Report Cards are distributed three times a year:

- **Week of December 4**
- **Week of March 12**
- **Mailed home week after school closes**
- **Parents' signatures are required.**
- **Parents wishing for more information, please make an appointment with the teacher involved.**
- **Please put a postage stamp on the Report Card Envelope.**

Testing

Archdiocesan Standardized Tests are given to students in Grades Two through Eighth. Testing will take place the week of October 16th. A standardized test of knowledge of Catholic faith will be administered the week of March 19 to students in Grade Five.

Tuition

St. Francis Xavier School depends on prompt payment of tuition in order to operate efficiently.

Total Tuition for 2006-2007

Tuition Rates Annual* Ten Payments

KINDERGARTEN \$2,875.00* \$262.50

K & 1 Child \$5,000.00* \$450.00

K & 2 Children \$7,050.00* \$630.00

GRAMMAR SCHOOL GRADES 1-8

1 Child \$3,150.00* \$290.00

2 Children \$5,250.00* \$475.00

3 or More \$7,300.00* \$655.00

***NON-ENVELOPE USERS & OUT OF PARISH ADD \$300.00 PER YEAR OR \$30.00 PER PAYMENT.**

Pre-Kindergarten: Annual

Five Days \$2,225.00

Three Days \$1,625.00

Vacations

Christmas Vacation ~ December 23 – January 1

Winter Vacation ~ February 19 – February 25

Spring Vacation ~ April 16 ~ April 22

Visitors

Visitors or parents must report to the office. The secretary will answer the door and take any messages for teachers or students. Students have been instructed not to answer the door. These instructions are for their safety.

Water Bottles

Water bottles will not be allowed in class. Besides being a distraction, they are unnecessary. Teachers are most accommodating in having the students get drinks during the day. There is not enough room on desks for bottles of water, textbooks, workbooks, notebooks, pen/pencil cases. When water is spilled, books, paper and clothes are damaged. Accommodations will be made if it is a directive from a doctor.

**St. Francis Xavier Catholic School
234 Pleasant Street
South Weymouth, MA 02190**