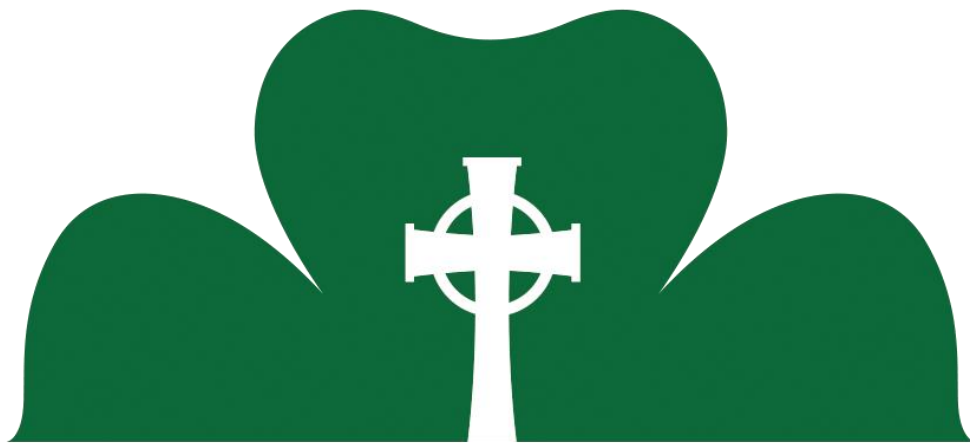


# **Saint Patrick Catholic School**



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## **Student/Family Handbook**

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## Student/ Family Handbook

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide for working towards a better realization of the philosophy, goal, and objectives of St. Patrick's Catholic School by providing the students and parents with a common understanding of the spirit and general regulations of the school. The following provisions of this handbook address only the specific areas referenced. New situations may arise during the school year that require the implementation of additional policies and disciplinary actions as well as adjustment of existing policies and procedures. The administration expressly reserves their right to draft, institute and enforce any new policies and to adjust existing policies in order to improve the school atmosphere and education of our students. The students and their parents expressly waive any right to contest the administrations right to adopt new policies, approve additional disciplinary actions, and change existing policies.

St. Patrick's is a pre-kindergarten through eighth grade Catholic School operated by St. Patrick's Catholic Church, under the direction of the Bishop of the Diocese of Lincoln and the Pastor of St. Patrick's parish. As a state approved school with degreed and certified teachers, St. Patrick's School abides by all state requirements and regulations. The classrooms are self-contained with specialty teachers in band, vocal music, computer, and physical education.

### Educational Philosophy

Saint Patrick's Catholic School seeks to provide opportunities for the students and staff to participate in the practice of their faith and to create an atmosphere supportive of religious values. St. Patrick's recognizes that God has entrusted the parents of our students as the primary educators of their children and works to assist them with this task.

**Mission Statement:** The mission of Saint Patrick's Catholic School family is to form students who possess strong religious values, academic integrity, individual responsibility, and a clear sense of citizenship.

### **Goals:**

- To create strong Catholic children who understand their faith and can live it out daily.
- To impart knowledge, develop understanding, and cultivate an appreciation for the basic academic subjects.
- To emphasize respect for and recognition of the dignity of all human beings.
- To assist along the path of the ultimate goal which is salvation of immortal souls and knowledge of their responsibility to God.

**Admission:** St. Patrick's Catholic School exists primarily to assist faithful, practicing Catholic parents in the education of their children. Parents are the primary educators of their children and should work closely with the school to provide a high-quality education for their children. St. Patrick's School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin and promotes an atmosphere of inclusion and diversity.

Attending St. Patrick's School is a privilege and requires the communication, stewardship, and positive support from parents and the entire school family. An annual registration will be conducted in the spring of every school year for currently enrolled students. Parents will be allowed to register their children provided tuition and fees are paid and the payment form has been completed. If students are registered in another parish a verification form must be filled out by the pastor of that parish and returned to the school to qualify for the Parish Stewardship Scholarship rate. According to Nebraska State Law, to begin Kindergarten the child must be five years old on or before July 31<sup>st</sup>. Preschool students must be three or four years old by July 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

A physical examination as prescribed by the State Department of Education is required of all pupils before entrance into school, and when beginning the seventh grade, or transferring from out of state. In addition, prior to entering school, every pupil shall be immunized against measles, rubella, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, hepatitis B, chicken pox (two vaccinations), and tetanus.

As part of the initial registration, parents should provide a copy of the students' birth certificate as well as certificates from the reception of sacraments. If the student is transferring from another school; academic and health records will be requested.

## **Illness and Vaccination Policy**

We are not allowed to have students at the school if they have had an illness associated with fever or orally communicable condition such as vomiting, diarrhea, ringworm, impetigo, head lice, pink eye, etc. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. As with anytime your child is not going to be at school, we ask that you call and notify us before 9:00am.

Students must be vaccinated according to state requirements in order to be enrolled in the Lincoln Catholic Schools. The only exceptions acknowledged by the diocese are those for medical reasons and for which a physician has signed a waiver form. Personal Conscience forms may be submitted as a sworn and notarized affidavit listing which required immunizations have not been received. Although an exemption may not be claimed on the basis that use of current immunizations directly violates Catholic religious-moral teaching, parents may discern the issues in accord with their well-formed consciences. However, key elements of the Church's teaching on immunization must be read and parents/guardians must sign an affidavit affirming that these are ecclesial teachings to which Catholics must offer "a religious submission of the intellect and will." The school is to receive an assurance from parents/guardians that they understand and accept the risks associated with the omission of immunization. If a disease for which the child is not immunized breaks out in the community (or if the child contracts the disease), then the child will not be allowed to attend school until the outbreak is contained (or the child recovers and presents a release from a medical professional or physician's note assuring recovery). The school is not obligated to modify services during this time.

## **Tuition**

The tuition charged by St. Patrick School represents only a small portion of the cost to educate a student. Therefore, parents who enroll their children at St. Patrick School are expected to fulfill their duty to faithfully tithe to the Church through Stewardship and read the Parish Stewardship Scholarship Information handout).

## **FACTS Tuition Management**

FACTS Tuition Management Company will exclusively manage the collection of all tuition at St. Patrick.

## **Lunch**

All students are welcome and encouraged to apply for Free and/or Reduced Lunch through the form sent out in the summer. All forms must be turned in to the school by 30 full school days after the first day of school. All students who attend school for a full day are served lunch including the Preschool students.

## **Schedule and Attendance:**

It is important to a student's success at St. Patrick Catholic School that the habit of regular and punctual attendance is formed.

**Regular School Day:** A regular school day for students in 4 year old preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade at St. Patrick's School begins at 8:00a.m. The tardy bell rings at 8:00a.m. We begin the day with Holy Mass for all the students at 8:05a.m. Students who arrive between 7:00 and 7:40a.m. will be required to go to Extended Care. Upon entering the building or coming from Extended Care, students will wait in the atrium until dismissed to their classroom at 7:45a.m when the bell rings. All students are dismissed at 3:20p.m. At dismissal time students are to leave the building from the south door and go directly home. All students will exit the school at 3:20p.m. and those who are still at school at 3:30pm will be required to go to Extended Care. If a student is to report somewhere other than home, we ask that the office be notified. Extended Care is available until 6:00p.m. each day including early dismissal days.

**Early Dismissal:** All of our early dismissal days will be a 1:00p.m. dismissal. The first Friday of each month will be an early dismissal for staff meetings. You can see all of the early dismissal dates on the calendar for the school year. After School Care will be available on these days until 6:00p.m.

## **Attendance**

- Students may not leave the school grounds without permission from the principal.
- It is highly recommended that students do not have appointments during school hours. Also, Absences due to vacation are highly discouraged. Anytime a parent or parents are out of town, the office is to be notified of whom to contact.
- If your child is going to be absent for any reason, parents must call or email ([st.patricklincolnschool@cdolinc.net](mailto:st.patricklincolnschool@cdolinc.net)) to inform the school of this absence before 9:00a.m. We will need to know the reason for the absence in order to complete the state requirement of reporting our schools absences report.
- All students coming or leaving during the school day must be checked in and out of the office.
- If you have a planned or sick absent you must notify the office. If you would like homework it is the responsibility of the parent to request it. If the parent requests the homework it can be sent home with a sibling or be in the office at the end of the school day for pick up by the parent at the teacher/principals discretion.
- Truancy is an absence from school or class without the knowledge and consent of the parents and/or the school authority. Every truancy will be dealt with on an individual basis.
- Students who are absent during the school day, for any reason, will not be allowed to participate in school sponsored activities that same evening.

## **Absences Policy:**

**Stage 1:** When a student accumulates 5 unexcused absences a letter will be sent home to notify the parents.

**Stage 2:** When a student accumulates 10 unexcused absences a letter will be sent home to notify the parents.

**Stage 3:** When a student accumulates 15 unexcused absences, a letter will be sent home in which the the student and his/her parent(s) will be required to meet with administration to discuss concerns and develop a plan of action to avoid any more absences or tardies. If disciplinary action is warranted, it will be determined at the meeting.

**Stage 4:** Should a student reach 20 unexcused absences then the students and his parents will be required to meet with the principal and pastor. More disciplinary action may be required. Possible disciplinary actions may include suspension, expulsion, retention in current grade, report to Child Protective Services. A student who misses more than 20 school days for the entire year has failed to meet the attendance requirement for the school and for the state of Nebraska.

**Tardiness:** Students are considered tardy if they are not in the building by the 8:00a.m bell. Tardy students should go to the office to leave backpacks and coats before heading to Mass. Students who arrive late due to an early morning appointment will receive an excused tardy if they have a note from the doctor's office. Students who do not have a doctor's note or administration determined valid excuse will be considered unexcused. If you know your child is going to be late for an appointment it is essential you notify the office.

**Tardy Policy:** In accordance with diocesan policy that "class time must be made up if there is no valid reason for tardiness", the following stages will be followed in regards to tardies.

**Stage 1:** When a student accumulates 10 unexcused tardies, a letter will be sent home to notify the parents.

**Stage 2:** When a student accumulates 20 unexcused tardies, the student and his/her parent(s) will be required to meet with the principal to discuss concerns and develop a plan of action to avoid any more absences or tardies.

**Stage 3:** Should a student reach 30 unexcused tardies then the students and his parents will be required to meet with the principal and pastor. If a change of the pattern of tardies cannot be agreed upon and implemented then the family may be required to find an alternative educational institution.

The administration reserved the right to address unique circumstances as needed.

## **Discipline and Conduct**

An effective system of discipline allows teachers, students, staff, and administration to work together in a positive environment so learning can take place. All members of the school community should be respectful, courteous, and should reflect our Catholic values and virtues. Each member of the school community is expected to follow these guidelines. It is understood that individual classroom teachers may have differing classroom rules and expectations. Students are expected to adhere to the expectations outlined by their teachers as well as the school-wide expectations listed below.

### **Basic Rules:**

- Students will show respect for people in authority, and follow their directions immediately.
- Student will show respect for fellow students, school property, and their property.
- No students may have in his/her possession, on or near school property, any item that may potentially be dangerous.
- Students will use appropriate language in accordance with Catholic morals and values.
- Students are expected to play safely, be kind to others, and keep hands and feet to themselves.
- Students may NOT throw snowballs, or chew gum.

Violations of any of the above rules or classroom rules will result in consequences which may include but are not limited to: detention, loss of privileges, a telephone call home, missed recess time, staying after school, or restitution for damages. If necessary, a student will receive an in or out of school suspension or expulsion.

**Junior high Policy (6, 7, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade):** At St. Patrick's School we want to help middle school students develop skills in successful study habits, discipleship, responsibility, and appropriate behavior to help them prepare to be successful now and in high school. Students who do not follow expectations set forth for their behavior and academic work may receive demerits/ detentions any time they are on school property. Students must carry their demerit cards around with them during the school day. Demerits are given for the following reasons: dress code, tardy, inappropriate behavior, minor disturbance, dishonesty, food in classroom, not following directions, disagreeing inappropriately or not accepting consequences/criticism, offensive language/gestures; excessive talking; disrespect; other. Demerits are given at the teacher's discretion. If a circumstance warrants, an automatic detention or another consequence may be given.

Once a student receives five demerits, a detention will be served. Detentions will be served during the lunch and recess of the student on that day or the day to follow. The student will be given a job card to complete while in from recess. The jobs vary from cleaning to helping teachers throughout the school. If a student loses a demerit card, they will receive an automatic detention and letter home. If a student is given a detention the student will be required to call home and notify the parent as well as an email will be sent notifying the parents including the scan of the document showing the reasoning for the detention.

### **Discipline Policy:**

**Stage 1:** After a student has 5 detentions a letter will be sent home indicating concern and requesting a meeting to be set up with the student, parents, and teachers to discuss the reasons for the infractions and what can be done to help the student become more successful in following the expectations.

**Stage 2:** After a student has 8 detentions another letter will be sent home indicating concern and requesting a meeting to be set up with the student, parents, teachers, and principal to discuss the reasons for the infractions and what can be done to help the student become more successful in following the expectations. The student will then be put on a discipline contract in which specific needs will be discussed and agreed upon. Once this student reaches this discipline stage, the student will serve an in school suspension in place of detention.

**Stage 3:** After a student has 11 detentions a meeting will be set up with the pastor and principal to discuss the discipline contract infractions and the action the school will take. Possible disciplinary actions may include suspension, expulsion, or retention in current grade. The student will be issued an out of school suspension with direct consequences should the actions continue.

The administration of the school reserves the right to review the discipline policy and adjust stages as necessary.

## **Liturgy and Sacraments:**

**Mass:** St. Patrick's students and teachers attend Holy Mass daily at 8:05a.m. Students participate in the Mass through prayerful participation as well as grade appropriate functions such as reading, serving, and taking up the collections. Students are expected to actively participate in the Mass. Through our reverent participation in the Holy Mass, we give glory to God. Parents are welcome to join the student body in worship whenever possible.

**Holy Communion:** Catholic students who are able and spiritually prepared to receive Communion are encouraged to do so. Those students who are unable to receive Holy Communion (in grades 3-8) are expected to receive a blessing.

**Confession:** Student will be given the opportunity once a month to go to Confession during the school day.

**Adoration/ Benediction:** All students will attend an Adoration period with their class as well as Benediction at 1:30p.m. on the First Friday of the month. Families are welcome to attend.

**Stations of the Cross:** All students will pray the Stations of the Cross on Fridays during the season of Lent.

**Sacramental Preparation:** St. Patrick's school will assist parents of children in the second grade in preparation necessary to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. We will assist parents of children in the fifth grade with the sacrament of Confirmation. Children will receive instruction at school prior to the reception of the Sacrament. The dates will be posted in the newsletter and be on the calendar that is sent home.

## **Academics**

### **Late Work Policy:**

When a student is not prepared for class due to any missing or incomplete assignment, the following procedure is in place:  
-The student will be sent to the office to contact parent. They are to notify the parent that the assignment is missing or incomplete.

\*Students can earn consequence as listed below:

-1 late/missing assignment, long-term projects such as book reports, papers, etc. not turned in or are incomplete on due date requires a call home day of event.

-5 late/missing assignments requires a call home and a consequence of missing recess to stay inside and work on homework.

\*Grades on late or missing assignments will still be subject to "Late Work" policies in the student handbook. A demerit will not be earned for late/missing work.

\*A meeting with parents and staff will be set up for any student earning six or more working lunch referrals.

**Report Cards:** Report cards are issued each quarter in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The student is evaluated according to his/her progress and effort. Grades on report cards are final. Preschool students will receive report cards at Parent/Teacher Conferences. All students in grades four through eight will receive a progress report towards the middle of each quarter.

### **Grade Marking Scale: Grade 1-8:**

A+	99-100%	B+	91-92%	C+	83-84%	D+	71-70%
A	95-98%	B	87-90%	C	79-82%	D	72-74%
A-	93-94%	B-	85-86%	C-	77-78%	D-	70-71%

Failing is anything below 70%

### **Kindergarten:**

H-High Satisfactory      S-Satisfactory      D-Doing Well      N-Needs Improvement

**Standardized Testing:** The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is administered every spring in grades 3-8. These tests are standardized tests that can measure learning, but are not the only indicators of academic achievement. Score reports will be distributed prior to the end of the school year.

**Honor Roll:** The Honor Roll is published at the end of each quarter in grades 4-8. The Honor Roll will include those students who maintain at least a B in each of their academic classes: English, math, science, social studies, and religion as well as specialty classes: music, art, computer, and Physical Education.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Parent-Teacher conferences serve as an excellent opportunity for communication with teachers regarding the progress of your child. Conferences allow teachers and parents to share successes of each student as well as concerns. Parent/guardians are expected to attend scheduled conferences. Scheduled parent-teacher conferences will be held in the fall and spring. Please consult the calendar for conference dates and times. The school office will be in communication with you about these times and dates.

**Library:** The library and library books are a vital part of a student's education. Books are checked out for a period of two weeks. Children with overdue books will not be allowed to check out other books until the overdue books are returned. A fine will be assessed for damaged books. If a book cannot be repaired, the student will be required to pay for a replacement book.

**Band:** Instrumental music is offered to students at St. Patrick's in grades 5-8. The lessons are free, but the students are required to provide their own instruments. Lessons are given both privately and in groups. There are band performances twice a year.

**Textbook/Supplies:** It is the responsibility of each student to give proper care to all instructional equipment and supplies. The school furnishes textbooks and a daily planner for each student. Other school supplies such as crayons, pencils, paper, etc. must be provided by the student. St. Patrick's school may obtain textbooks furnished by Lincoln Public Schools through the Textbook Loan program. To receive these books, parents will be asked to complete forms and return to school in a timely manner to receive these books.

**Field Trips:** Educational trips will be planned during the school day throughout the year. Parents will be given sufficient advance notices to parents/guardians prior to planned trips. Permission slips must be signed and returned to each individual field trip in order for your child to participate. Since St. Patrick's school does not have a bus, volunteer drivers will be taking the students on trips, or the students may walk if the point of interest is near the school. Any volunteer driver must provide the necessary assurance of insurance and have a background check.

**Athletics:** In physical education classes the children are taught games, team play, cooperation, and sportsmanship. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes may play team sports through the Catholic Athletic League (6<sup>th</sup> graders may be allowed to play when combined enrollment for seventh and eighth grade becomes fewer than 12 boys or 12 girls). St. Patrick's athletes will observe the guidelines established by the league. Students who wish to participate in the sport league are to present a permission slip from the parent/guardian, a physical form from the family doctor, and are expected to maintain positive academic standing and appropriate behavior. If a student has a D or F in any class, they will not be allowed to practice or play in games until the grade is raised. If a student's behavior in class is inappropriate, they may be removed from the team. Transportation to and from games and practice is the responsibility of the parents.

## **Other Policies:**

**Visitors:** For security reasons, the doors remain locked to the school during the school day. Visitors and parents are asked to ring the bell to be admitted in the building. All visitors must report to the office, sign in, and wear a visitor badge while in the building. To ensure that learning is not interrupted, parents should make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher before visiting the classroom. Appointments with teachers should be scheduled for before or after school.

**Alumni:** St. Patrick alumni are welcome to visit the school when the following conditions are met:

- Visit has been announced in advance by a parent/guardian
- Visit takes place during recess / lunch ONLY. Classroom visits are only allowed when the student has been asked to assist/ speak in the classroom by the supervising teacher.
- Alumni who are current high school students should be supervised by a staff member at all times. If no staff is available, visiting students will be asked to wait in the office.

**Volunteers:** Volunteers are a tremendous asset to the school community. Volunteers should contact the principal to find ways to best utilize their time and talents in our school. If a volunteer will have contact with students, they are to receive a background check and complete the Safe Environment training. Volunteers to the school must be adults unless the principal gives special permission.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters:** St. Patrick's is fortunate to have many mentoring matches with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. These young adults have received background checks and program facilitators monitor the matches. Please inquire in the office if you would like your student to participate in this program.

**Teammates:** St. Patrick's is fortunate to have many mentoring matches with the Teammates program. These young adults have received background checks and program facilitators monitor the matches. Please inquire in the office if you would like your student to participate in this program

**Communication:** Effective communication between the home and school is crucial to the success of students. Parents may leave messages for teachers by calling or emailing (st.patricklincolnschool@cdolinc.net) the school office (402) 466-3710 between 7:30a.m. and 3:30p.m. Calls will be returned at the earliest convenience. Parents may communicate by e-mail using the teacher's first and last name@cdolinc.net. (For example: [first-last@cdolinc.net](mailto:first-last@cdolinc.net)) If there are classroom concerns about a student, please contact the classroom teacher directly before contacting the administration. Written communication from the office and lunch notices will be sent home on Fridays with the oldest child in the family. Each Thursday a newsletter from the office will be sent home electronically through email. The email address(es) used will be those on file for the family.

**Electronic Devices and Cell phones:** Cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic or musical devices are not to be used in school during regular school hours. All such items are to be turned into either the homeroom teacher or the school office until student has left the property. There is a phone in the school office for emergency student use. Violation of this policy will result in the watch or electronic device being confiscated and taken to the main office. A parent or legal guardian must then come to school to retrieve the item.

**Toys:** Students are not to bring toys to school unless they are part of a "show and tell" activity in the student's classroom. Items should be kept in a student's backpack. St. Patrick's School does not accept responsibility for lost or stolen items.

**Vandalism and Damage:** Student may be assessed the cost of repair or replacement of school property if they have been guilty of destroying, marring, or losing it, whether through their carelessness or deliberate actions. School books must be covered at all times to help protect them from damage. Worn covers should be replaced. Student will be fined, in whole or part, for damaged books at the end of the year.

**Treats and Snacks:** Children may bring treats for birthdays provided there are enough for each child in the class. Treats should be individual, easy to distribute, and not messy. Invitations to private parties should not be handed out on school



property unless there is an invitation for every child in the classroom. Healthy snacks are encouraged. No TREE NUTS are allowed in St. Patrick Catholic School for any reason.

**Health and Safety Policies:** The teachers and other school personnel safeguard the children while they are at school. The security system enables us to be extra vigilant with locked doors and cameras. Supervision and normal precautions are taken to aid in the safety of all students. Injured and ill students are brought to the school office. Office personnel will decide if the parents need to be informed or if the injured student is to be sent home.

**Treatment of Injuries/ Medication:** The office personnel may administer first-aid for minor injuries. In case of illness the office personnel may take temperatures of students. Parents will be notified if the injury or illness needs further attention. All non-prescription drugs must be brought to the office in the container in which they were sold. The bottle or box must be labeled with the student's name. All prescription drugs must be brought to the office in the original prescription bottle. A medication form (which can be picked up in the office or found online) must be filled out and signed by the parent of the student.

**Tobacco Use Prohibited:** No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product or any electronic device which may resemble smoking, at any time, including non-school hours (24/7):

- in any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by the St. Patrick Catholic Church and School;
- on any school grounds and property – including sidewalks and parking lots – owned by St. Patrick Catholic Church and School; or
- at any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.

**School Closing Procedure:** St. Patrick's School follows the Lincoln Public Schools regarding weather closings. If the Lincoln Public Schools are closed, St. Patrick's School will also be closed for the day. In the event St. Patrick's school has school on a day when Lincoln Public Schools are not in session, watch/listen to television Channels 10/11 or 8, and radio stations KFOR or KLIN. Parents will also be notified by email if the school is closed or has an early dismissal that was not expected.