

ST. JOHN GREEK ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOL

Providing Educational Excellence in a Family Environment for over Thirty Years

St. John Greek Orthodox Day School is a member of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and of the American educational system. Embraced as a ministry of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church and under their jurisdiction, the school is the only Greek Orthodox Day School in the southeastern United States. The school was established in 1967 by a group of dedicated parishioners who believed in the importance of a Christian education. Their love and vision has enabled the Day School to provide academic excellence to thousands of students in the Tampa Bay area for over 30 years. St. John is fully accredited by The Florida Council of Independent Schools and by The Florida Kindergarten Council.

Our mission is to maintain high academic standards while encouraging self-discipline, independence of thought, tenacity of purpose, creativity and spiritual well being. The school strives to instill in students a lifelong love of learning as well as the motivation to look within and beyond themselves so that they become responsible, contributing members of society.

Our curriculum and staff seek to instill the morals and values of the Orthodox Church, while embracing students of all faiths. In keeping with our Christian faith, character development is a primary objective. While acknowledging parents as the primary educators of their children, St. John seeks to provide an environment that cultivates each child's potential, nurturing his or her intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual development. A strong work ethic is built upon year after year.

St. John is proud of its Greek heritage. We celebrate with Greek studies, an impressive library collection of Greek literature and reference materials, and access to the study of the Greek language. Our Christianity is celebrated throughout the year with daily chapel service, and prayer prior to lunch and at the end of our day.

We are grateful for the privilege of educating our students as we embrace our faith, and welcome you to our family.

Student / Parent Policy Guide

This handbook was written as a guide to help parents and students understand the policies of the Day School. It does not address all policies and situations that may come up in the course of the school year. If questions arise concerning policy, do not hesitate to call the office or come in and see the Headmaster. His door is always open.

Enrollment

By enrolling at St. John Greek Orthodox Day School, it is understood that students and parents accept the rules and policies of the school. Students entering kindergarten must be of appropriate age prior to August 1st. Entrance to pre-school, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes is determined by an interview with the parents, student readiness screening and visitation, and availability of space. Entrance to grades 1st through 8th is determined by standardized test scores, past school records, shadowing for a day and an interview with the Director of Admissions. Priority for enrollment is given to siblings of students already enrolled, members in good standing of the Parish of St. John and children of alumni. St. John Greek Orthodox Day School does not discriminate for enrollment based on race, sex, creed, or national origin.

Business and Financial Responsibilities

The yearly tuition cycle begins August 1st and the final payment is due May 1st. All fees and tuition must be paid fully by May 10th (excluding day care charges which are due in full by June 10th). Monthly statements are sent out on the 25th of each month for the following month's fees. Each current month's fees are due by the 10th of the month; if not received by the 10th of the month they will be re-billed on the 15th of the month with a \$25.00 late fee assessment. Past due balances will accrue interest at 1.5% per month, compounded daily. There is a \$30.00 charge for all returned checks. If an account is delinquent after thirty (30) days, all charging privileges (i.e. Day Care, lunches, field trips) will be suspended. St. John also offers direct deposit and credit card usage for account payments. Contact the school office for further details. All accounts must be brought current by December 31st for a student to return in January.

Extended Day (Day Care) hours are from dismissal to 5:30 P.M. There is a \$5.00/15 minute late charge for students picked up after 5:30 P.M..

In order for an eighth grade student to participate in graduation, all accounts must be paid in full, including the graduation fee, no later than the 10th of May. Records of students leaving St. John Greek Orthodox Day School will be retained until all fees and financial obligations have been met.

When a student is withdrawn after the July 1st contract deadline, that student's family is responsible for their financial obligation. Exceptions would include those students who are withdrawn by mutual agreement of the Headmaster and the parent(s). Petitions for exceptions must be sent in written form to the School Board for consideration.

In the event that a student's account becomes seriously in arrears, the student may be asked to leave the school, and/or legal action may ensue.

Building Safety and Security

We ask that parents do not enter the classrooms of students after 8:00 A.M. Preparation is necessary to start the day. If you would like to join your child at Chapel, please meet them at the east side door of the Church to join them and their class.

If you need to speak to a teacher, speak to your child, or drop off something for your child, you must go to the school office. The office will notify the teacher that you are in the office. The teacher will let the office know whether or not it is a convenient time to meet or send the student to the office. Please do not "pop in" on a teacher; their full attention needs to be on their students.

Many parents like to come and watch and enjoy their children at Day Care. Please understand that even though you are there, as long as your child is on the grounds at Day Care you will be billed the appropriate fees. Our liability for your child does not end until they leave our campus.

Reasons for Dismissal

The following are, but not limited to, reasons for dismissal from St. John Greek Orthodox Day School:

1. Financial – If financial obligations to the school become in arrears over sixty (60) days.
2. Academics – If a student fails to maintain his/her grades at a passing level in two or more core subjects. (see grading scale in Handbook).
3. Discipline – If a student's behavior consistently violates the code of discipline as outlined in the Handbook.
4. School/Home Relationship – If at any time a mutually cooperative relationship between the school and the parent(s) or guardian of the student(s) is unable to be attained.

Divorce/Separation/Custody Issues

When parents are separating, going through a divorce, and/or determining custody of their children, they should keep the school informed of all events in writing.

These events can be very stressful to children. It is essential that the school remain informed but neutral in all situations. Our students need to know that their school is supported and respected by both parents, and that their parents' conflict will not be brought into their school environment. St. John Greek Orthodox Day School strongly objects being involved in any custody disputes. Furthermore, it is unfair to our students and staff to have teachers and staff members taken away from the important work they do with our students to testify in private matters.

All information pertaining to custody matters must be in the form of an official court order. Students will be released to either parent according to law in the absence of a court order.

School Hours

Kindergarten	8:00 – 2:30
Grades 1 – 5	8:00 – 2:45
Grades 6 – 8	8:00 – 3:00
Extended Day	2:30 – 5:30 *

*Earlier closing may occur prior to a holiday or vacation period.

Students not picked up within 15 minutes of their dismissal time, **will be sent to the extended day program and their accounts charged the appropriate fee.

***A school calendar is issued in the registration packet and re-issued in January.

Kindergarten Morning Procedure

As with the upper school, arrival time for kindergarten is 8:00 A.M. At 8:00 A.M. class begins. Structure and routine are something that these young learners need.

We ask that all parents be out of the kindergarten building by 8:00 A.M.

Tardies

Students arriving after the 8:10 bell are considered late and must go to the school office and be signed in by a parent or guardian. Once signed in by a parent or guardian the student will be issued an admission slip to class. If their class is in Chapel, they are to wait in the office until their class returns from Chapel. A detention may be given for excessive tardies. Five tardies is equivalent to one

absence and can prevent a student from receiving the perfect attendance award at the end of the year. We ask that parents help us avoid detentions for tardies by making sure their children get to school on time.

Absences

Regular daily attendance is crucial to a student's positive school experience. A student is considered absent if he/she is not at school, or if he/she leaves school before 11:00 A.M. or comes to school after 11:00 A.M.

Upon returning to school after an absence, students **are required** to present to their teacher a note explaining the reason for their absence.

If a student must be absent, the parents are asked to call the school office before 9:00 A.M. to inform the school that their child will be out. Students will be given two days to complete and turn in work missed during the absence. For extended absences due to illness, special consideration will be given to the student for completing missed assignments. The length of time will be determined by the Headmaster and the classroom teacher.

Assignments for an absent student will be sent to the school office at the end of the school day. Please do not call the school for early assignments.

If a student accumulates 12 or more absences in one year, retention may be considered.

Absences and sports – If a student is absent from school, they are not permitted to participate in any school sports that day. (ie: A student may not be absent from school during the day and then attend soccer practice that afternoon.)

Dress Code

All garments **must** be labeled with student's name and grade.

Young Ladies

Young ladies in grades kindergarten through 5th are not permitted to wear make-up. Ladies in grades 6th through 8th are permitted to wear light make-up and fingernail polish. If any make-up or nail polish is considered by the Headmaster to be excessive, the young lady will be asked to remove it before returning to class. Earrings should be small and unobtrusive.

Kindergarten through 5th Grade

Plaid Jumper or Plaid Skort

Kindergarten girls may wear the plaid school shorts.

School Shirt (Optional white blouse under jumper.)

Red, Blue or White Socks (Socks must be able to be seen.)

Navy Blue or Black Shoes (see shoe policy)

Solid Red or Solid Navy Sweater

School Sweatshirt

6th Grade through 8th Grade

Plaid Skorts

White Blouse or School Shirts

Navy Blue **Dress Slacks** (Cold weather only, below 72 degrees.)

Navy Blue Blazer w/ School Emblem (Oct. – April)

Solid Navy Blue or Solid Red Sweater

Navy Blue or White Socks (Socks must be able to be seen.)

Navy Blue or Black Shoes (see shoe policy)

School Sweatshirts

Young Men

Hair should be neatly groomed and above the collar; eyes need to be seen. No tails, fad cuts or facial hair are permitted. Earrings are not allowed for young men. Shirt tails should be tucked in properly at all times.

Kindergarten through 5th Grade

Navy Blue Slacks or Navy Blue Camp Shorts

Navy Belt (if needed)

Red, White or Blue School Shirt

Red or Navy Sweater

School Sweatshirt

Solid Navy or Solid Black Low Top Shoes (see shoe policy)

Socks must be seen (ankle or above)

Grades 6th through 8th

Khaki Slacks

Brown Belt

White Shirt (short or long sleeves)
School Shirt (Aug., Sept. & May only)
Navy Tie (solid)
Navy Blazer w/ School Emblem (October – April)
Dark Socks (Socks must be able to be seen.)
Brown Shoes
Navy or Red Sweat
School Sweatshirt

Shoe Policy

All young ladies and young men must wear navy or black leather shoes. Middle school boys must have brown shoes. Suede, patent leather, vinyl and/or high top shoes are not acceptable. Shoes must be solid navy or black with no white or other colors; shoe laces must match the color of the shoes.

Kindergarten students may wear any type of tennis shoe.

Additional Dress Code Information

In extreme cold temperatures when sweaters are not quite enough, jackets may be worn.

****Please dress appropriately for chapel. (This includes visiting parents.)**

We expect parents to help us set the tone for dressing respectfully when attending Chapel services. This includes not bringing and drinking coffee or other beverages in Chapel.

Academics

Grading System

A - 95-100	S - Satisfactory (A-B level)
B - 86-94	I - Improvement Needed (C level)
C - 76-85	U - Unsatisfactory (D/F level)
D - 70-75	
F - 69-Below	

Headmaster's List (Grades 4th – 8th)

“A” in all academic areas
“S” in all other categories

Honor Roll (Grades 4th – 8th)

“A’s” and “B’s” in all academic areas

“S” in all other categories

Most Improved (Grades 1st – 8th)

The award of most improved may be given by the teacher to a student or students who have shown most improvement during an academic quarter.

First and Second Honors (Grades 1st – 8th)

First and Second Honors are given to the students with the highest grade point average at the end of the year.

Valedictorian / Salutatorian (Graduating 8th graders only)

In order to be considered for Valedictorian a student must have completed three academic years at St. John Greek Orthodox Day School (6th, 7th and 8th grades). The Valedictorian must have the highest cumulative total average for the three years.* The Salutatorian must have the second highest cumulative total average for three years.*

*In the event that the averages are extremely close, prior year grades will be taken into consideration.

If there is a time that St. John has more than one class at a grade level, then first and second honors will be awarded to a student from each class at that grade level. This does not include 8th grade Valedictorian/Salutatorian, in which case only one of each will be chosen from the entire 8th grade.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of your student’s academic training. We believe that homework should be a reinforcement of materials covered or discussed in class. Parents should help their child find a quiet place in which to study. We ask that parents further help their child by making sure their homework is complete and neat.

St. John does not have a policy on the amount of homework a child receives each night; however, the following may be used as guidelines:

Grades 1 – 3	30-45 minutes
Grades 4 – 5	45 minutes – 1 hour
Grades 6 – 8	1-2 hours

Progress Reports

Progress reports are a reflection of your child’s progress, both academically and behaviorally, for a three week period. They are sent home to be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher the next day. They are

not a cumulative total, but a three week review of your child's progress. Music, P.E., Computer, Art, Religion and Spanish are recorded at the bottom of the progress report. Progress reports are issued to help keep parents informed about class participation, completing assignments, dressing out for P.E., etc.

Report Cards

Report cards and kindergarten progress reports reflect your child's quarterly progress. They are to be signed and returned the following day.

Sports

Team Sports Policy

St. John offers a middle school team sports program. The sports included in this program are as follows: Basketball (boys and girls); Volleyball (girls); Soccer (boys and girls); Softball (girls); Baseball (boys); Cross-country (boys and girls); and track and field (boys and girls).

Being in a middle school sports league limits participation to those students in grades 6th, 7th and 8th. When enrollment is low in the middle grades as to affect fielding a team, 5th graders and younger may be invited to play. Junior varsity participation is offered for some sports. There is a tennis club available, however membership is limited.

St. John has a "no-cut" policy regarding the participation on sports teams. It is to be understood that being on a team does not dictate a starting position. Though efforts will be made, there is no guarantee that **every** team member will participate or play in **every** game.

All sports team participants must maintain a minimum over-all grade point average of 2.0 or higher. If during a season a team member's GPA drops below a 2.0, that student will be allowed to practice, but will not be allowed to play in a game until their GPA is at or above a 2.0. If, after three weeks, the student has not brought his GPA to a 2.0 or higher, he will be asked to resign from the team. Sports team participants must refrain from outside activities that would otherwise bring embarrassment to the team and/or the school.

If at any time during a season, in the coach's opinion, a student exhibits a poor attitude, misses practices or generally misbehaves, that student will be asked to leave the team.

Extra-Curricular Activities

In addition to our extensive sports program, St. John offers Yearbook, Mad Science, Scouting (Tigers, Cubs, Daisies, Brownies and Girl Scouts), Art, and Music lessons for a variety of instruments.

The Lee Uiterwyk Library

The Lee Uiterwyk Library at St. John Greek Orthodox Day School maintains an active and current collection of materials for use by students, faculty and St. John families. Borrowing privileges are set according to need and age of borrower. St. John does not charge its borrowers for overdue materials. It does charge responsible parties (faculty and parents) for lost material that must be replaced. Materials are considered lost after the borrower has been notified in writing, given ample time to locate the missing item(s) and the librarian has ascertained that the item(s) cannot be found in the library. Those materials include reading bags, books, videos, audio tapes, CD's, DVD's and other material borrowed from the library. Replacement value for the lost item(s) will be included on the borrower's St. John account.

Students participating in St. John Book Clubs may be asked to purchase the book needed for the club.

School Notes

School Newsletter

The "Intouch" newsletter is distributed to students to take home every Wednesday. This is the school's way of keeping parents informed of school happenings on a weekly basis (calendar changes, special events, etc.) Please read the "Intouch" to stay current with events at the school.

It is important that parents respond to notes sent home by the teacher. At times, the teachers may ask that these notes be signed. In this way, teachers can be sure that parents have received and read the note.

Any note that a parent may want to send out to their child's class (i.e. Christmas party, Gala info. etc.) must be approved by the Headmaster before being sent.

Telephone Calls and Messages

In the event you need to speak to a teacher, please call the school office and leave a message to that effect. Your call will be returned at the teacher's earliest

convenience. Students are not permitted to make calls home during the day to request forgotten school work, personal items, or to make social plans, etc. Students need to learn to be responsible and plan ahead. Dismissal times are very hectic: please do not call during dismissal to give a message to your child.

Cell Phones

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to school. If a cell phone is brought to school it may not be turned on during the school day (7:30am – 3:00pm). This includes the vibrate mode. The first time a student is found using or having a cell phone on during the school day, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parent of the student. The second infraction will lead to confiscation. The phone will be returned to the parent of the student at the end of the academic quarter. The school will at no time accept any liability/responsibility for a cell phone on the school campus with respect to, but not limited to, loss, damage or theft. **Parents are also asked not to use cell phones while in their cars during drop-off and pick-up of students to alleviate distractions.**

Field Trips

Parents will be notified of all school sponsored field trips. Permission slips are sent out for all field trips and must be signed. Chaperones will often be needed to help transport and supervise students. It must be clearly understood by parents that, during field trips, the teachers are in charge of their classes. Chaperones, however, must **supervise carefully** their group. If a student does not have a signed permission slip, he will not be able to go on the field trip.

Parents driving on the field trip must have adequate seat belts for the number of students they are taking. They must also provide proof of insurance to the school in order to drive. **For insurance purposes, drivers are requested to drive directly to and from the function, not stopping for side trips, errands, or special treats for their passengers.** When chaperoning, we ask that younger siblings be left at home so that full attention can be given to the students under your supervision. Your child's safety is of the utmost importance to us.

Medication

At no time should a student have any form of medication in their possession. This includes aspirin, vitamins or stronger medications and applies to all age levels. We acknowledge that some students are mature and able to take medication by themselves at home, however, at school and for the child's safety, no student is

permitted to have medication in their possession. If a student is found to have medication in his possession, it will be taken and returned only to the parent.

If a student is required to take medication at school, the parent must bring the medication to the school office and give it to the school secretary. They will be asked at that time to complete and sign a medication dosage form. The school will not assume responsibility for dispensing medication to students who refuse to take it. The parent will have to make arrangements to come to the school and dispense their child's medication.

Contagious Diseases

Parents are required to inform the school if their child has contracted a contagious disease. Anyone contracting a contagious (communicable) disease – student or employee - will not be allowed to work or attend school during its contagious stages. This policy also pertains to head-lice, pink eye and impetigo. In certain cases the school may require a doctor's release before the child is allowed to return to school.

Lunches

St. John offers an optional hot lunch program provided by the eighth grade. Lunches are ordered on the school website under "Student Info" (www.stjohngreekorthodox.com). Students may also bring their lunches in a paper or insulated cloth sack. Because of limited space, large Igloo type lunch boxes are not permitted.

Drinks are provided for purchase at lunch by the Boosters Club.

Please make sure that your child comes to school with his/her lunch each morning. Forgotten lunches must be taken to the school office. They will be distributed to students before lunch begins.

Tag Days

Tag days are special days that occur throughout the school year. On these days the students do not have to wear their school uniforms. "Tag Days" are decided randomly by the Headmaster. Students are expected to dress respectfully: shorts of the appropriate length, and shirts that do not advertise drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products; also, muscle shirts, midriffs, and/or shirts with inappropriate words, pictures or gestures are not permitted. If a student does come to school inappropriately dressed, he will be sent to the school office until a parent brings the appropriate clothes.

Parties

Class

For the safety of the students we ask that all class parties (ie. Halloween, Christmas, Easter, etc.) be held on campus. The format for classroom parties is at the discretion of the teacher.

Birthday/Other

Nothing is sadder for a child than not receiving an invitation to a class member's birthday party. Unless **everyone** in the class is invited, birthday and other occasion party invitations should not be distributed at school.

School Support

Parent Teacher Support Organization (PTSO)

The PTSO is committed to the improvement and enhancement of the educational and social environment of the school by providing support to the faculty and students through effective action and fundraising efforts. The PTSO adds the special extras which enhance our curriculum. The PTSO is in charge of our Gala, Field Day, and many other family events throughout the year. Parents are notified of PTSO planning meetings through our school newsletter the "Intouch". All parents are encouraged to join and participate in the activities of the PTSO.

Homerom Parent (HP)

The "Homerom Parent" is the major link between the PTSO, the teacher and class parents. The HP helps with items brought in for special projects and class parties. They help in the organization of drivers for field trips. They are the right arm of the teacher. It is important that when parents accept this position, they understand the responsibilities that come with it.

St. John Greek Orthodox School Board

Established in 1998, the St. John Greek Orthodox Day School Board seeks to create an exceptional moral and professional atmosphere at the Day School. The Board strives to offer the highest quality education in a Christian, family environment, thereby providing the best possible service to the Tampa Bay Community and to St. John Greek Orthodox Church. The Board will serve as a vehicle for the resolution of issues between parents and the school.

Policy On Sexual Harassment

St. John Greek Orthodox Day School is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. The school prohibits such conduct by its students on school premises and off school premises at school-sponsored activities, including transportation to and from such activities.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature that includes, but is not limited to the following:

- *Physical contacts of a sexual nature, but not limited to, touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, poking, or brushing up against another individual.

- *Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, comments

- *Display of sexually-oriented pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, or publications

- *Any other conduct that is inappropriate

Any student who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment should immediately report the incident to one of the following:

- *Any Teacher

- *Assistant Headmaster

- *Headmaster

Complaints will be handled in a confidential manner. Individuals will be advised of this matter on need-to-know basis. A prompt and thorough investigation will be undertaken by the Headmaster. Students found to have violated this policy will be subject to the appropriate discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion, as determined by the Headmaster.

Discipline

- 1. A positive and constructive working relationship between the School and a student's parent/guardian is essential to the accomplishment of the School's mission.**

The School accordingly reserves the right to terminate or not renew a student's enrollment contract if the School reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise seriously interfere with the school's accomplishment of its purposes. There will be no response from St. John Greek Orthodox Day School to unsigned letters or anonymous phone calls.

- 2. Personal Injury**

Intentional injury inflicted by a student upon another student or faculty member will be dealt with immediately. Depending on the severity of the

altercation, the punishment shall include suspension and/or expulsion, both of which will be determined by the Headmaster.

3. Inappropriate Language/Gestures

The use of inappropriate language or gestures on School property or at School sponsored functions is not permitted. If at recess, inappropriate language or gestures directed to a fellow student will result in an automatic time out of not less than 15 minutes. If the incident occurs in the classroom, the student will be sent to the office for a 15 minute time out. If directed toward a faculty member it will result in an automatic detention. Two or more incidents directed toward a faculty member will result in an automatic suspension; the length of which will be determined by the Headmaster. Two suspensions in this manner will result in expulsion.

4. Dress

Our goal is to teach our students responsibility. Students are required to come to school in complete uniform. This includes blouses and shirts being tucked in properly. Where belts are required, they should be worn. Abuse of this policy may result in a detention or time out at recess. A parent may be called to bring the appropriate clothing. Parents need to inform the teacher if there are extenuating circumstances that affect their child's dress.

5. Destruction/Damaging of School or Personal Property

The purposeful and malicious destruction of school or personal property by any student will result in an automatic detention or suspension. That student and/or his parents will be held financially responsible for the refurbishing or replacement of that which was damaged.

6. Fighting

There are many times when students do not see eye-to-eye with their classmates. This can result in a verbal confrontation. When students move beyond verbal to physical confrontations, it is considered a fight. Depending on the severity of the altercation, the punishment shall include but not be limited to one of the following: time out at recess; detention; suspension or expulsion. The determination of the punishment rests with the Headmaster.

7. Cheating

Cheating is defined as any intentional deception by which a student passes off another student's academic work as their own, or gives answers to work

to another student. Examples of cheating include homework copied from another student, research papers turned in with false documentation and/or copying during a test/exam (whether from notes or another student's paper). Cheating is to be considered a serious violation of School policy. A student caught cheating will receive a detention or suspension, and no credit for the work. Cheating may affect academic and conduct grades. Parents will be notified if such an incident occurs.

8. Substance Abuse

If a student is found to be in possession of, or under the influence of, a controlled substance at school or at a school sponsored function, the result will be immediate suspension or expulsion. If suspended, the student will be asked to have a substance abuse screening from a physician, the results of which will be given to the school. If the results of the aforementioned screening are positive, depending on the substance and the severity, the Headmaster may insist the student receive abuse counseling or the student may face expulsion.

Detentions

Disciplinary or academic detention is served in the afternoon from 3:00 to 4:00. Parents are given one day's notice to arrange for pick up. In certain instances, the School reserves the right to notify the parent at work or at home that their child will be staying the same afternoon as the occurrence. Any student not picked up after detention will be sent to our extended day program and charged accordingly.