

St. Peter's Elementary School



7910 Belair Rd., Nottingham, MD 21236

2020-2021

Parent Handbook

"Inspiring children to live and learn with Christ."

St. Peter's Elementary School History and Purpose

Educating children has long been a tradition at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The church, established in 1862 by a group of German immigrants, offered a German school in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Later, in the 1960's and 1970's, multiple kindergarten classes were offered before it became widely available in public schools.

In 1977, the church once again decided to offer a quality school that also provided a Christian education. Originally named St. Peter's Christian Day School, our school was established as a mission of St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

St. Peter's Elementary School continues to carry on the tradition of a rigorous academic and instructional program steeped in Christian principles. Our goal is to provide our students with a well-rounded education in body, mind, and spirit.

The St. Peter's Church Council and the St. Peter's School Board are the governing bodies which directly oversee the operation and policies of our school.

St. Peter's School Board

The School Board of St. Peter's Lutheran Church is the body that establishes policy, procedure, and curriculum for our school. It closely supervises the operation of the total school program. In turn, its decisions are subject to the discretion and oversight of the congregation's Church Council, the church's representative governing body.

Our principal acts as the executive director of the school. With the help of the faculty and staff, the principal administers the actions and policies of the School Board. The principal may also

suggest policy changes and seek their support in addressing school issues and concerns.

In addition to the School Board members, who must be members of the congregation, a representative of PACE attends each meeting and provides a monthly update of events and a brief written financial statement.

When there is a concern or problem that needs to be addressed, parents should first meet with the teacher to seek help or resolution. If a satisfactory resolution has not been reached, parents may contact the principal.

Parent Participation

The strongest schools are those in which parents are supportive and involved in school activities. In order for the school to carry out a wide range of activities and programs, considered valuable for our students, the school depends on parents to volunteer their time and energy whenever possible. An added incentive offered by our school is our Volunteer Program, which offers up to \$250.00 per family per year toward a tuition discount.

In order to take advantage of this offer, each family will be expected to donate 15 hours per school year. If a family is unable to give the required amount of time, they may choose to "buy out" their hours. The funds paid would be used to subsidize, parties, events, special trips, and wherever we would need to pay for something special that would normally be provided by volunteers.

Volunteer hours are simple to earn. Following are some examples of ways that parents can accumulate volunteer hours. For example,

- Attending a PACE meeting will earn one volunteer hour
- Serving as a room parent
- Helping with specific parties and special events
- Chairing the Box Tops program
- Chairing a fundraiser
- Serving as a PACE officer

Throughout the school year, other opportunities may arise according to the needs of the school. More information will be shared at the September PACE meeting.

P.A.C.E.

The Parents' Association for Christian Education (P.A.C.E.) is a group of parents, teachers' and friends' who work with our school for the benefit and support of our students and families. We encourage all of our families to take an active part in this organization. The P.A.C.E. meetings are generally on the second Tuesday evening of each month.

Our Students

St. Peter's Elementary School is designed to provide a full, well-rounded education for all children who can succeed within the curriculum provided by our school. Our school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

If a child has an IEP, or one is established while they are attending our school, we will work together with the family and the home school to support the child however possible. We do not, however, have special education teachers on our staff and are not equipped to provide for children who need more intensive interventions.

Class Size

Enrollment at every grade level is limited to twenty students per class. At this time, we have one class per grade level, pre-kindergarten (for 4 year olds) through the fifth grade.

Admissions Practices

Our goal at St. Peter's Elementary School is to provide the most appropriate, Christ-centered education we are capable of offering. When a family is interested in registering their child, we ask that they follow these steps.

1. Parents should make an appointment to tour our school during an Open House, which allows them to see the school "in action".
2. After the tour, we require the prospective child to spend a morning in their potential classroom from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Parents will be asked to drop off their child and come back at 11:30 a.m. to meet with our principal. At that time, parents will have an opportunity to share about themselves and have their questions answered. They will pick up their child at 12 noon.
3. If the child is transferring from another school, we ask parents to provide us with a copy of their two most recent report cards, any standardized test results, and to give us the contact information of the current school. This information will be used to send Common Referral Forms to two current or former teachers.
4. If parents decide that St. Peter's is the right fit for their family, they must notify us via email (jjohn@st-peterslutheran.com) and we will send them a comprehensive packet of all paperwork required for their child to begin the school year.
5. We do not formally test new students in order to determine if a child can or cannot be admitted into St. Peter's. However, if we observe behaviors that we feel are "at risk", at any point in the school year, we believe in being pro-active to help find all available resources for a child. Should we conclude that we do not have the resources that a child needs, we will meet with the parents to discuss our

recommendations based on developmentally appropriate best practices per NAEYC, which is the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Admissions Requirements

Age Requirements: Preschool children must be four years old by September 1st of the year they enter pre-kindergarten. Kindergarteners must be five years old by September 1st of the year they enter kindergarten.

Transfer Students: We welcome transfer students at any of the grade levels we offer, providing the grade level is one that has been recommended as appropriate by the previously attended school.

Children entering kindergarten through the fifth grade must bring a copy of their most recent report card from their previous school and any copies of current academic test results. Parents must also arrange for a release of records from the child's previous school. All new parents must also provide a copy of their child's birth certificate with all completed registration paperwork. All health and immunization records must be complete, up-to-date, and in our file prior to their first day of school.

Enrollment

The family of every current student will receive a complete registration packet, including pertinent school information, in January prior to the next school year. Public enrollment begins in February. The family of new students will receive a registration packet upon request following the admissions practices listed earlier. In order to enroll or re-enroll your child, we recommend that the entire registration packet of required forms be completed and returned to the school office with payment of the registration fee and the technology and book fee, (These fees are non-refundable.)



Tuition and Fees

A *registration fee* and *book & technology fee* are required at the time of enrollment. Both of these fees are **nonrefundable**. Tuition is based on a ten-month school year and can be paid monthly from August to May. It can also be paid in quarterly installments or, if preferred, one full payment. Under this option, if the full amount of tuition and fees are paid by July 15, 2020, a \$150.00 discount will be applied. In addition, there is a 10% multiple child discount given for each child after the first. Parents and grandparents who are **active members** of St. Peter's Lutheran Church also qualify their students to receive a 10% reduction of tuition. A form will be provided upon request and should be returned to the church scholarship committee.

A flat tuition reduction of \$1,000.00 will be applied for any family referring a new student who registers, enrolls, and attends in any grade for an entire year. There is a limit of one discount per family per year.

Once the school year begins, parents are responsible for the total payment of tuition for the year, whether their child completes the entire school year or not. Absences of a student will not alter the amount of tuition due to the school.

No report cards will be issued, or records transferred, until all tuition is paid. If a fifth grader's tuition has not been paid in full before graduation, they may not participate in the graduation ceremony.

After August 1st, any *registration fees* and *book & technology fees* for the next school year will be applied to outstanding tuition balances. The fees for the following school year will be forfeited.



Automatic Payment of Tuition and Fees Through FACTS

At St. Peter's Elementary School, we are always seeking ways to make improvements that benefit everyone. One of the ways that we manage our tuition payment program is through the FACTS Management Company. By taking advantage of the security and convenience of payment processing, FACTS has streamlined our bookkeeping and has made access available to parents online 24/7.

- **We recommend that all families enroll in FACTS. This is an easy way to monitor and keep track of your payments. Whether you are setting up your FACTS account to a bank account or are paying by cash or check, this is a great service.**
- **Online FACTS enrollment must be completed before the first tuition payment is due for August 2019.** Your payment schedule can be set up, in advance, as early as April 2020 for the 2020-2021 school year.
- **Setting-Up Your Account:** An initial \$45.00 fee is required by FACTS per year, per family if payments are quarterly or monthly. If you will be making semi-annual payments, the charge is \$10.00. If you are making one payment in full, there is no charge.
- **Payment Dates:** You may choose either the 1st, 5th, 10th, or 15th of each month (beginning in August 2020) as your payment date. Automatic payments can be made from a checking or savings account, or a variety of credit cards.
- **Enrolling in FACTS is easy. Go online to:**
<https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3GDYQ>
 - **To create a FACTS account, click on the "Create a FACTS Account" button.**

- **To sign into an existing FACTS account**, click on "Sign In to Manage Your FACTS Account".
- **Convenience and Security:** Along with multiple payment plan options, your payments are processed securely through a bank-to-bank transaction.
- **Peace of Mind Insurance:** FACTS offers an optional benefit for only \$20.00 per year per family. In the event of death of the responsible party or spouse, the remaining tuition balance owed for the current school year will be paid to the school.
- **Consumer Account:** You may check your personal account or make payments online (if applicable) from the convenience of your home or office anytime.
- **Parents should be aware that the principal and our administrative assistant have nothing whatsoever to do with tuition and tuition accounts. All financial questions and concerns should be addressed to our financial assistant, Mrs. Karen Yelovich, at stpetersfinancials@gmail.com.**

Parent Communication

The school will use a number of methods to communicate clearly and regularly with parents.

- A school calendar will be provided to every family for the entire school year.
- Every student will receive a St. Peter's Elementary School folder. Each week on Fridays, the principal will distribute her newsletter, "Friday News", which will provide kudos, pertinent information, and a listing of coming events. Other important flyers, graded papers and notes from the teacher will be sent home in this folder. Please be sure to check it daily.

- Teachers will communicate with parents whenever necessary using the "Remind" app.
- The parent-teacher organization, PACE, will regularly send home flyers with information about up-coming events and opportunities to volunteer.
- Emails and phone calls will be used whenever necessary.
- At times, robo-calls will be sent out to phone numbers and email addresses provided by parents using OneCallNow.
- There is a listing of contact information in the back of this handbook. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us whenever necessary.
- **Please be sure to "Like" our Facebook page at www.st-peterslutheran.com.**



Health Services

St. Peter's Elementary School Illness Policy:

Children who exhibit signs of illness are not permitted to come to school. These signs include fever of 100 degrees or higher, severe headache, severe coughing, sore throat, earache, upset stomach, diarrhea or nausea.

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent or designated emergency person will be called by the office to take the child home. If a parent cannot be contacted within 15 minutes, we will call other individuals on the emergency card authorized to pick up your child. We ask that parents arrange for someone to pick up their child within thirty minutes.

In order for the child to return to school, ***they must be symptom and fever free without the use of medication for 24 hours.*** Germs spread very quickly in a school environment so please help us keep everyone healthy by not sending your child back to school until they are well enough to participate in all daily activities.

In addition, please be aware that children who are absent during the school day, because of illness, may not attend any evening school functions.

Please send a doctor's note to your child's teacher the day they return to school for our records. If your child is diagnosed with any type of contagious illness, please call the office to notify us rather than waiting to send a doctor's note in after your child returns. (Examples include influenza, pneumonia, hand/foot/mouth disease, strep throat & pink eye).

The school has two staff members who are trained medication technicians and are certified to give medication and offer limited first aid. Minor cuts and scrapes will be washed with soap and water only, and will be covered with a bandaid. Ice packs will be applied for bumps. No over the counter medications will be given without a pre-existing, current Medication Administration Authorization Form.

As required by MSDE, we are required to have a delegating nurse. Our delegating nurse, Irene Gorsky, R.N., is on-call for the need of our students and to oversee our medical record-keeping and medication oversight.

In the event of a more serious injury, parents will be notified immediately and the school will take the necessary steps for the comfort of the child and to prevent further injury. If a parent cannot be reached, in an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, 911 will be called.



Food Allergies & Medication Requirements:

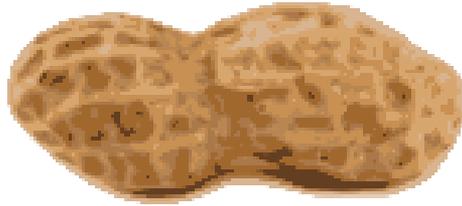
We are very aware that children may have food allergies and do our best to ensure their safety. Please be sure to notify the office and your child's teacher, verbally and in writing, of your child's allergies. This information should also be noted on the parent portion of the Health Inventory (page 2).

If your child requires an EpiPen, asthma inhalers, or any other doctor-ordered medication (over the counter or prescription medication) to be kept, and administered in school, you will need a Maryland State Dept. of Education Office of Child Care Medication Administration Authorization Form to be completed by your child's doctor and an adult must deliver it to school with the medication. We have strict guidelines which we must follow to safeguard the medication in locked storage. Our delegating nurse regularly inspects our paperwork and medication so that we are in compliance with state law.

Children may never transport any type of medication to and from home. They are also prohibited from bringing cough drops, supplements, or any over the counter medications to school.

In addition, please do not bring any products containing nuts (peanuts or tree nuts) into our school. We are a **NUT-FREE ZONE!** Even if your child is not allergic to nuts, some children are extremely sensitive and can become sick or seriously endangered should they come into contact in even the slightest form.





Common Tree Nut Names (FDA List) Include:

Almonds	Beechnut	Brazil nut
Bush nut	Butternut	Cashew
Chestnut	Coconut*	Filbert
Ginko nut	Hazelnut	Hickory nut
Lichee nut	Macadamia nut	Nangi nut
Peanut	Pecan	Pine nut
Pistachio	Shea nut	Walnut

*Coconut: The FDA lists coconut as a tree nut. In fact, coconut is a seed of a drupaceous fruit. Most people allergic to tree nuts can safely eat coconut. Coconut allergy is reasonably rare. If you or your child is allergic to tree nuts, talk to your allergist before adding coconut to or eliminating coconut from your diet.

To be safe, coconut is prohibited.

***St. Peter's Elementary School is a
NUT-FREE Zone!***

St. Peter's Christian Day School UNIFORM POLICY 2020 - 2021

Rationale for School Uniforms

- **School Uniforms have a positive effect on students and teachers.** They promote a single standard of dress. Therefore, school environment become less competitive and more focused on learning. Similarly, research has shown that there is a link between a student's appearance and their teacher's expectations. High expectations mean high achievement!
- **School uniforms boost school spirit!** Helping to build a sense of community within the school, uniforms create an atmosphere of belonging. This essence of unity can positively affect a child's attitude toward school and can lead to better learning and improved attendance. A child who is excited about school is a child ready to learn!
- **School uniforms promote a safe, healthy, learning environment.** Educational professionals agree that a safe school environment is essential for learning to take place. The safer the environment, the more children will attend. Uniforms make it easier for school officials to identify non-students while promoting a safe and comfortable atmosphere.
- **School uniforms encourage individual self-expression.** With uniforms, students find ways to express themselves creatively, rather than through their clothes -through the arts, music, sports, personality, and academic achievement.

BOYS:

- Long or short sleeved, plain white, light blue or Navy blue polo shirt with collar
- Plain white or Navy blue turtleneck shirt
- Navy blue **or white** cardigan, vest or pullover sweater
- Navy blue Land's End sweatshirt with embroidered logo (must have logo)
- Khaki or Navy blue twill knee-length shorts; Khaki or navy blue twill trousers - no corduroy or denim
- **Tied or zipped tennis shoes should be worn every day, provided they are mostly solid white, black, brown, or Navy. (No lighted shoes or roller wheels) Pre-K, Kindergarten, and First Grade students may wear Velcro shoes.**
- Solid-color white, Navy, or tan socks - **not required to cover the ankles**

GIRLS:

- Long or short sleeved white, light blue or navy polo shirt with collar
- Plain white or light blue uniform blouse with long or short sleeves and round collar (no lace, ruffles, fancy buttons, etc.)
- Plain white or navy turtleneck shirt
- Navy blue **or white** cardigan, vest or pullover sweater
- Navy blue Land's End sweatshirt with embroidered logo (must have logo)
- Khaki or navy twill, knee-length jumpers (no denim or corduroy)
- Khaki or navy twill knee-length shorts, Khaki or navy twill trousers (no corduroy or denim)
- Khaki twill skort/skirt *with attached shorts* - pleated only

- Tied or zipped tennis shoes should be worn every day, provided they are mostly solid white, black, brown, or Navy. Shoes may have a small heart or other graphic, but the majority of the shoe must be a solid color. (No lighted shoes or roller wheels) Pre-K, Kindergarten, and First Grade students may wear Velcro shoes.
- Solid-color white, Navy, or tan socks (not required to cover the ankles), knee high socks, or tights. Solid black, white, or Navy leggings are permitted.

CHAPEL ATTIRE: There is no specific Chapel attire. Students should wear typical uniforms just as they do other days of the week to chapel.

SPIRIT SHIRTS: All students will purchase a spirit tee shirt which will be worn on all field trips.

BELTS: Black or brown – optional for PK, K and 1st as long as pants stay up without the use of a belt. Belts must be worn with all pants in 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grades.

JEWELRY: Limited to wristwatch and one pair of post earrings (no hoops or dangles); boys may not wear earrings; no colored nail polish.

HAIR: Students must have natural colored hair. No colors, colored streaks, or brightly colored, clip-in style extensions are permitted. Boys must have a traditional male haircut; hair may not be over the ears or touch the collar.

GYM UNIFORMS: Tied or zipped tennis shoes in solid white, black, brown or navy (PK, K, and 1st grade may wear Velcro shoes). Gym uniform clothing consists of a combination of cobalt blue T-shirt, sweatshirt, shorts, or sweatpants purchased through Land's End ONLY. Items may be purchased online or at any Land's End. If sizing presents a problem, please speak with the principal.

MISCELLANEOUS: Hats, sweatbands, or bandanas may not be worn inside. No colored nail polish or make-up may be worn. Shirts and blouses must be tucked in (except gym uniforms). **Please be sure to put your child's name on all clothing and belongings.**

SPIRIT DAY FRIDAYS: Friday is day to celebrate our school spirit and/or support our local sports teams, the Ravens and Orioles! Your child may wear modest jeans with no holes in them, and a Ravens, Orioles, or St. Peter's spirit shirt or sweatshirt. If they would prefer to wear their every-day school attire, they may do that as well. This is not a mandatory policy for Fridays.

VIOLATION OF THE UNIFORM POLICY: The St. Peter's Elementary School administration reserves the right to make decisions regarding appropriate attire, and the acceptability of any questionable dress is subject to the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee.

PLEASE NOTE: The new logo, on all uniform items, will be mandatory beginning in September 2020.



Our Inclement Weather Policy

St. Peter's Inclement Weather Policy is determined by the School Board and carried out by the principal. Under most circumstances, our school will follow Baltimore County Public Schools in determining weather-related schedule changes. A one-hour delay means the school day begins at 10:00 a.m. A two-hour delay means school begins at 11:00 a.m. We do this in conjunction with other private Lutheran schools in our area, including Concordia Preparatory School. We follow their lead for several reasons:

- Our primary concern is **always** the safety of our students, their parents, and our staff. We have students and faculty who come from many different areas. Very often, the conditions throughout our metropolitan area vary widely. If needed, our principal may consult local and state police to get a more informed perspective. Occasionally there may be times when we do not follow BCPS because our instructional schedules do not agree.
- By coordinating with Baltimore County Schools, we try to give parents and staff as much notice as we can. We post our school's name as soon as possible, indicating "school closing", "delayed opening", or early "closing" on WBAL TV and radio. Ms. John also sends out a robo-call generally by 6:00 a.m.
- We want to present a united front with our Lutheran partner schools, as families may have children in more than one school.

Snow days/inclement weather days are built into the annual school calendar. Because we are required to provide a minimum of 170 instructional days per year, the school year may need to be adjusted according to the number of emergency closings used.



The School Day

Students may begin entering their classrooms at 8:45 a.m. and instruction begins promptly at 9:00. Pre-K dismissal begins at 3:25 p.m. and all other students are released at 3:30 p.m. Half day dismissal is at 12 noon.

Traffic Access & Parking

Parents should drop off and pick up their children at the rear entrance of the school, located on Lincoln Ave. at the big, blue awning. The gate will be closed to all traffic at 9:00 a.m. The gate will be reopened in the afternoon. Pre-K pickup is at 3:25 p.m. All other students are dismissed at 3:30 p.m. Teachers will oversee dismissal of students at the rear entrance until 3:45 p.m. At that time, any children who have not been picked up will be taken to After Care.

Late arrivals and any other parents needing to come into the office should park on the front Lincoln Ave. parking lot and enter the building by the main lobby doors. Any children who arrive to school late, must be accompanied by their parents into the office where they will sign them in. Children will be issued a late pass before going to their classroom.

St. Peter's Elementary School does not provide bus service. All of our families must provide their own transportation.

Attendance & Punctuality

In order for our students to get the full advantage of their educational program, regular attendance is essential. Barring illness, death in the family, or an emergency situation, children are expected to report to school on time, every day.

A written excuse from the parent or guardian, including the child's name, date of absence, and the reason for their absence, should be given to the teacher when the child returns to school. If a child has been seen by a doctor, a doctor's note should also be provided to insure that the child is either no longer contagious, or has specific limitations that the school needs to be made aware.

If a child needs to be dismissed before the end of the school day, parents must report to the office to sign out their child, and accompany them from the building. Under no circumstances will a child be permitted to leave the school unescorted, without parental permission, or with someone who is not listed on the child's emergency card.

School Lunch

Students will need to bring a lunch to school every day and will eat in their classroom supervised by their teacher or another staff member. Please remember that all tree nut products are strictly prohibited, and the sharing of food is never permitted.

Our children are scheduled a thirty-minute lunch followed by thirty minutes of supervised indoor or outdoor recess, depending on the weather.

Occasionally, we offer a pizza lunch or other special lunch options for fundraising or as a special reward. These lunches are prearranged, paid for in advance by parents, and are delivered to the school. Parents may or may not choose to participate.

In addition, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten have a mid-morning snack time. A healthy snack should be provided by each child's parent.



Before and After School Care

St. Peter's is fortunate to have on-site before and after care for all of students who would like to participate. Hours of operation are from 6:45 to 8:45 a.m., when children are delivered to their classrooms and from dismissal at 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. Before and after care is located in the fellowship hall, and a secure entrance is provided at the rear doors of our educational building by the big,

blue awning. There are fees attached to this service, and parents must register their children.

School Supplies & Materials

Each class has their own list of necessary supplies based on the needs at each grade level. A copy of the supply lists will come home with the final report card in June for our returning students, and an additional copy will be mailed to all new and returning parents in July.

The school teachers and staff carefully consider the cost of these materials to be purchased by parents. Only those items that the school deems essential for a quality education will be required.

Textbooks, and other professionally prepared educational material for student use, will be provided, in part, by the school and covered by the Book and Technology fee. We encourage students to cover all books and to take proper care of their books and materials. In the case of extreme damage or loss of school textbooks or materials by a student, parents may be expected to reimburse the school for replacements.

Homework

Homework is considered an integral and necessary part of the educational program at St. Peter's. Beginning as early as kindergarten, students will be given work to complete at home. This work will provide practice and reinforcement of skills already learned during the school day. It will also give parents an opportunity to see what their child is learning. The frequency and length of home assignments will increase with the child's age and grade.

Children may also be assigned reading practice, independent reading, and special projects and reports. Teacher will give specific directions and expectations for these assignments.

The best way that parents can assist their child in doing homework is to provide a quiet place for them to work without the distractions of television, telephones, or electronics. Establishing a daily routine for doing homework creates an excellent habit for learning.

Reporting Student Progress

Your child will regularly bring home completed, graded classwork and tests in their school folder. It is very important that parents check these folders daily to monitor their child's work and to stay current on any notices sent home.

In addition, your child's progress will be reported in a number of ways:

- Mid-term reports will be issued approximately half-way through each quarter.
- Report cards will be issued four times each year; mid-November, early February, mid-April, and June.
- Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten progress reports are in a different form than report cards, are more skill-based, and are issued twice during the school year.
- When report cards are issued, the envelope is to be signed by a parent, indicating that the report has been received, and returned to the child's teacher. The report card copy is yours to keep.
- Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged and may be requested by either party at any time. We ask that parents make appointments with teachers, rather than dropping in unannounced.

Standardized Testing

Children in kindergarten through the fifth grade are administered a standardized test once a year, generally in March. This information gives us an additional perspective on their academic progress compared with a broader sample of their age and grade level peers. A detailed testing report will be provided to parents and a copy will be filed in their child's confidential, cumulative record.

Promotion

Students who successfully complete their academic program during the school year will be promoted to the next grade. Children who display difficulty grasping instruction should be carefully monitored throughout the school year and close, frequent

communication should be maintained between parents and the teacher.

Parents, the teacher, and the principal will work together to make every effort to support the child, when possible. If retention appears to be the best alternative, a joint decision will be made with the child's best interest at heart.

If the child's lack of progress indicates that special education intervention may be needed, which we cannot supply, necessary steps will be made on the child's behalf with their home school.

Fire Drills and Safety Practices

Fire drills will be conducted regularly, following the requirements of the Baltimore County Fire Department. Every precaution will be made to teach our children how to safely exit the building in an emergency. Children will also be taught how to respond in other types of emergencies (severe weather, a threatening animal on the playground, etc.) or in a lock-down situation. Our primary concern is always the safety of our children and our staff.

Emergency exit routes are posted throughout our building and an Emergency Preparedness Guide is located inside the school office. We follow the Baltimore County Police recommendations to "**Avoid, Deny, and Defend**", should an intruder find their way into our building.

Change of Address or Pertinent Contact Information

It is critical that we have correct contact information for parents on record at all times. Please make every effort to provide us with up-to-date contact information in case of an emergency. If there is an emergency and parents cannot be reached, 911 will be called.

Student Behavior Expectations

When students enter St. Peter's we work hard to create a safe, structured, faith-centered environment. When issues concerning student behavior choices call for discipline, we do our

best to address the problem and provide the support, guidance and just consequences, when warranted.

Our behavior policy is one of positive reinforcement and redirection. We treat every challenge individually and use Biblical guidance in formulating a behavior management plan as a team of parents, teachers, and administrators. Each classroom establishes their own set of rules and consequences based on age-appropriateness. However, the school-wide expectation is that *we will be kind and respectful to everyone at all times.*

We make every effort to be proactive in addressing behavioral concerns in order to help a child find strategies to regulate their behavioral choices. Should a student's behavior become dangerous to others/themselves, or habitual, the student may be suspended or expelled from St. Peter's Elementary School.

The decision to suspend or expel a student is one that the principal and School Board make collectively and take very seriously. The principal will make every effort to redirect a student in a positive, encouraging manner before meeting with the Board to discuss suspension or expulsion.

IMPORTANT: There is a signature page at the end of this Parent Handbook indicating parents have read and understand this policy AND have explained these expectations to their child. This document must be signed and returned to the school office during the first week of school.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, educational field trips and in-house programs and special presentations will be scheduled to enhance our students' learning experiences. Parents will be notified, in advance, of the date, time, destination, transportation arrangements, and cost, if any, of the trip. If a trip is being taken outside the school campus, a signed permission slip must be provided by the parents of each student. All transportation will be pre-arranged by the school on commercially rented buses or vans. Parents may not provide transportation of students in private vehicles.

These trips, which are carefully planned by the teachers and approved by the principal, are an extension of the classroom in experience and value. All children are expected to participate, with their parent's written consent.

We also expect each child on the trip to purchase and wear a St. Peter's school spirit shirt or sweatshirt. These items make our children readily visible to parents and teachers in a crowd and help ensure the safety of our students.

Visitors

All visitors to our school must be buzzed into the building and checked in at the school office. Visitors must provide a current picture ID. Whether the visit is brief or of an extended nature, it is for everyone's safety that this procedure is followed at all times.

School Volunteers

Parents and other family members are encouraged to volunteer during the school day and in extra-curricular activities, but always under the supervision of our teachers and staff. Volunteers are not be allowed to be alone with students or in an unsupervised setting unless they have been properly fingerprinted and complete a background check. Once these requirements have been fulfilled, they will be issued an ID card by the proper authorities and their approved paperwork will be filed in the school office.

Lost & Found

Parents are strongly encouraged to identify all of their children's jackets, backpacks, and belongings *clearly* marked with their name. When items are left in various areas of the school or on the playground, they can be easily identified. If items are found without identification, they will be turned in to the office and placed in the Lost & Found bin. At the end of the year, unclaimed items will be donated to charity or disposed of accordingly.



Our School Library

The Russell C. Finkenbine Memorial Library was named for a former pastor of St. Peter's who helped to establish this school. Our library contains over 8,000 volumes. It is a lending library as well as a place where students may research topics and information. It is considered an important supplement to our educational program.

Children in every class have the opportunity to go to the library every week. They are introduced to new books and resources, learn the basics about how the library is organized, and are encouraged to borrow books.

Our library has mainly grown through the generous donations of books and money from our church, our families, and our alumni. When children outgrow their own books, or would like to donate a book to the library in honor of their birthday or other special occasion, we gladly accept all donations of new and gently used books. A bookplate with the donor's name and occasion will be placed inside the front cover of the book before it is placed on a shelf.

Special Area Subjects

At St. Peter's we continually strive to broaden and enhance our educational program. We are happy to continue our art, music, physical education, Spanish instruction and the Picture Parent program through the Baltimore Museum of Art for all age levels. We will also offer on-site instrumental music lessons.

After School Opportunities

In addition to our full day schedule, we arrange extra-curricular activities for any families who are interested. These programs are provided by independent contractors, using our school building. The classes run in multiple week sessions and are offered at a reasonable cost and may vary from year to year. Examples of these include a *newspaper club*, *Young Engineers*, and *The Science of Art*.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

- Contact the school office at 410-665-4521
- Ms. Jennifer John, Principal at jjohn@st-peterslutheran.com
- Ms. Marcia Darney, School Secretary at mdarney@st-peterslutheran.com
- Mrs. Karen Yelovich, School Financial Assistant at stpetersfinancials@gmail.com
- FACTS at <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3GDYQ>
- PACE at st.peterspace@hotmail.com
- The church office at 410-665-7300.
- The school website at www.st-peterslutheran.com



BEHAVIOR POLICY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

DIRECTIONS:

This document verifies your receipt and understanding of the Student Behavior Expectations included in this handbook on pages 23-24.

Please sign this separate document and return it to the school office on the first day of school.

This is to acknowledge that I have read St. Peter's Elementary School's *Student Behavior Expectations* on pages 23-24 in this Parent Handbook.

I have explained and discussed these expectations with my child,

Child's Name: _____.
(First and Last Name)

Grade: _____

We both understand this policy. We agree to abide by these *Student Behavior Expectations*.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

