



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

EXCELLENCE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Dear Parents and Prospective Students,

Welcome to St. Joseph School! We are proud to share our tradition of excellence in Catholic education. St. Joseph School develops the whole student – mind, body and spirit – and prepares children for personal growth and academic success. We hope you'll see how warm and welcoming our school community is - it's something we value and hope to pass on to all who visit with us.

If you decide to join our community, we encourage you to complete your registration materials as soon as possible. Please return the following to our school office to ensure a place for your child:

- Kindergarten Application – for incoming Kindergarten students only
- Diocese Information Form
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Date of Baptism if baptized at St. Joseph; if baptized elsewhere, please provide copy of Baptismal Certificate
- Registration in Parish
- Parental Commitment Form – this will help us get to know you better – one or two brief sentences per question is appreciated
- Transcript Request Form – for transferring Grades 1-8 students only
- A non-refundable \$100 registration fee (payable to St. Joseph School) – fee is deducted from tuition

For acceptance, consideration will be given to:

- Class size – we have a 30-child per classroom limit (Pre-K: 20-child per classroom limit)
- Child's age – for Kindergarten, child should be 5 years old by September 1; for 1st grade, child should be 6 years old by September 1
- Parent's commitment to our church/school philosophy

An acceptance letter will be sent following the completion of the registration materials

We hope that the following information helps you to learn more about St. Joseph School. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us.

We thank you for considering us in your search for high quality education.

Sincerely,

Rita Stasi
Principal

General Information

K–8 School Hours

7:45 am – 2:20 pm

Strong Enrollment and Financial Stability

- We are proud to be one of the schools in the Diocese of Joliet that has increased enrollment for the last several years
- There are 467 students enrolled including 58 Preschool students
- Our Second Century Fund is strong and positions us well for the future

Enhanced Facilities and Technology

- Updated Kindergarten classrooms
- New Computer Lab, Learning Resource Center (LRC) and laptops
- Tablet and Chromebook programs
- Google Classroom collaboration
- Wireless Internet access in all classrooms for web-based instruction, video conferencing, podcasting and streaming



Bus Service

First Student provides bus service for a cost of \$32 per student. K-8 students arrive by 7:45 am and are dismissed at 2:20 pm. “Bus Buddies” (older students) are assigned to guide Kindergartners to buses.

Uniforms

- **Preschool:** There are no uniforms for Pre-K3 or Pre-K4; they wear school-appropriate clothing.
- **K – 5 warm weather** (August to October; May to June): Navy walking shorts and gym shoes.
- **K – 5 Girls:** Uniform jumper or navy slacks with a white blouse or polo shirt.
- **K – 5 Boys:** Light blue oxford or polo shirt with navy slacks.
- **Grade 6 – 8 Girls and Boys:** Khaki slacks (or khaki shorts for warm weather) and a navy polo shirt. Girls wear uniform skirts instead of jumpers.
- **K – 8 Shoes:** Black, dark brown or navy dress shoes with slacks and jumpers.
- **K – 8 Uniform Sweatshirts:** Available at <https://www.school.stjosephdg.org/admission-policies/uniforms-spiritwear/>
- **Jumpers and Skirts:** Available at www.dennisuniform.com, or Dennis Uniform (630-932-7171).
- **Grade 1 – 8 Gym Uniforms:** Available at <https://www.school.stjosephdg.org/admission-policies/uniforms-spiritwear/>

Physicals

All students entering Kindergarten must turn in a signed, current physical, as well as an Illinois Department of Public Health dental form and eye exam form, by July 15, 2017. Please make copies for your records.

Curriculum

Detailed curriculum information can be found on our website, <https://www.school.stjosephdg.org/about-us/what-we-offer/>.

Extracurricular Activities

No-cut sports are offered to students in Grades 5 – 8: Football, volleyball, cross country, basketball and track. Every child has an opportunity to play. Other activities include Altar Servers, Band, Book Club, Boy/Girl Scouts, Choir, Hand Bell Choir, Mathletes, Piano, Scholastic Bowl, Student Council and more. More information can be found on our website at <https://www.school.stjosephdg.org/about-us/what-we-offer/>

Meet Our Kindergarten Teachers



Mrs. Meghan Jarzembowski

Mrs. Jarzembowski joined our St. Joseph School faculty in August 2014. She graduated from DePaul University in 2010 with a degree in Early Childhood Education. At DePaul, she also earned an endorsement in early childhood special education, which she finds extremely helpful when planning differentiated lessons for students.

She is qualified in English as a second language. This is a great tool when working with children who speak more than one language, but this knowledge also motivates Mrs. Jarzembowski to teach using many different learning approaches.

She enjoys finding and introducing children to fun books and incorporates them into daily lessons across all curricular areas. She is also fond of doing small reading groups, while other students enjoy Daily 5 literacy centers.

Mrs. Jarzembowski grew up in Minnesota, where most of her family still lives. She is the youngest of six children and an aunt to many. She lives in Chicago with her husband. They enjoy cooking together and taking their dog, Mowsley, for walks. She also does volunteer therapy work with Mowsley as a certified therapy team.



Mrs. Julie Boyle

Mrs. Boyle became the Kindergarten teacher at St. Joseph in 2016. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Dayton and a Master's Degree from Dominican University in Learning Disabilities and Behavior Disorders. During her 11 year teaching career, Mrs. Boyle taught at St. Giles in Oak Park, Laidlaw and Field Park in Western Springs and Todd Hall in Lincolnwood. After being away from teaching to be a stay-at-home Mom, Mrs. Boyle was eager to get back into teaching. Her three children; Danny, Sean, and Maggie are all currently enrolled at St. Joe's.

Mrs. Boyle strives to create a positive, happy and encouraging learning environment that is faith based. She loves finding great literature to use in her classroom. It is important to her to challenge each child at their own individual level. She is dedicated to the religious, academic and personal growth of every student at all levels.

Mrs. Boyle and her husband have been residents of Downers Grove for over 10 years and love being a part of the community. She enjoys running and exercising, reading, gardening and going out with her family. With three active kids, she is also a dedicated basketball and soccer Mom.

Information about other teachers and staff are available on our website at stjosephdg.com.

All-Day Kindergarten

St. Joseph School features an All-Day Kindergarten program, which provides a variety of benefits to our Kindergarten students:

- Since Illinois adopted the Common Core State Standards, students are expected to meet more rigorous requirements upon graduation from Kindergarten, which necessitates that students learn more at the Kindergarten level. A full day provides the opportunity for this additional learning to take place to meet the increased requirements.
- Research shows All-Day Kindergarten programs develop children's cognitive learning, creative problem-solving and social competence at a higher degree than Half-Day Kindergarten; children who attend a full day spend 30% more time in reading and literacy instruction and 46% more time on mathematics than children in Half-Day programs.
- An All-Day program allows more time for individualization; children receive more one-on-one and small-group work time with the teacher.
- More time during the day encourages a relaxed atmosphere, which provides more opportunities for child-centered, creative activities, as well as more opportunities for developing social skills.
- A full day offers more time for science exploration and social studies integration.
- All-Day Kindergarten sets the stage for first grade and beyond by helping students make the transition to more structured learning at an earlier age.

Our Kindergarten follows regular school hours of 7:45 am – 2:20 pm, with lunch and recess included. We have two Kindergarten classrooms, two teachers and two aides. Our maximum class size is 30 students per classroom. Tuition costs are the same as Grades 1-8; Kindergarten students are included in our multi-student discount program.

Our schedule for All-Day Kindergarten provides increased time to cover subject areas in more depth, providing a richer learning experience:

- **Religion class** has more time available to learn to love God and our neighbors.
- **Language Arts** time has been increased, allowing for reinforcement of basic skills and time to achieve success in all the Common Core Standards. Students will have extended time for reading, writing and spelling.
- **Math** time has been increased to allow for more instruction and for hands-on reinforcement of skills. The increased rigor of Common Core Standards will give our students a stronger understanding of math principles.
- **Social Studies** has increased from a few weekly mini lessons to daily studies of our world and community.
- **Science** is taught daily with an emphasis on inquiry-based learning, which will develop reading, writing and research skills.
- **Technology Exposure** allows students to learn computer skills.
- **Reinforcement Centers** are organized three times per week.
- **Specials** are included in the weekly schedule: Gym, art, music, library/learning resources center (LRC) and Spanish.
- All-Day Kindergarten students do not have a nap time, but have two recess periods for socialization and gross motor activities. All classroom time is used for educational, social and religious growth.

K-8 Core Curriculum

Our curriculum follows the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*. We seek to educate the whole child by providing an excellent education rooted in Catholic values. We follow the Bishops of the United States in realizing “our Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church.”

- Along with the National Catholic School Standards, we are integrating the *Common Core State Standards* that are being initiated throughout the U.S. We use Common Core Standards as measurable standards of our progress in preparing students for future success in high school and college, and for career readiness.
- The combination of both standards gives our students a strong academic program rooted in the Catholic faith.

Our students are assessed through the *Diocese of Joliet Curriculum Assessments* and the yearly standardized *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills*. Recent Iowa Test results indicated that St. Joseph School, on average, scored “significantly above” the Diocese of Joliet and national average scores.

Kindergarten Curriculum

Math

Text: *Go Math & Simple Solutions*. Our math series and instruction uses the guidelines from the Common Core Standards to build Kindergarteners’ early math skills. Our goal is to set an early foundation for students by strengthening basic skills, which they can then expand upon. We focus on counting and identifying numerals from one to one hundred, matching sets of objects to their numerals, greater than, less than, shapes, basic addition, and subtraction concepts. We also supplement with other crucial math skills like money, time, graphing and measuring. We use Smart boards, iPads, games, and many hands on manipulatives to reinforce math lessons.

Reading

Text: *Harcourt Storytown Series*, *Michael Haggerty Phonics* and *Jolly Phonics*. The Diocese of Joliet sets rigorous standards for reading and writing using Common Core Standards as a base, while incorporating religious texts into our curriculum. Reading curriculum includes literature, comprehension, phonics, phonological awareness and vocabulary. Our lesson begins each week with a “big book” that is used to reinforce vocabulary, rhyming, story elements and story structure. We also incorporate literacy centers (Daily Five) into our day. This allows the teachers to take small groups for guided reading based on student level, while other students practice various reading, writing and word knowledge skills. In addition, we do weekly journals and creative writing.

Religion

Text: *Allelu! Growing and Celebrating with Jesus*. Religion is incorporated in daily lessons, and the students work on developing and enhancing Christian behaviors of respect, friendship and responsibility. We also attend all-school mass once a month with 5th Grade buddies, as well as all observed Holy Days. Each morning, we pray together as a school by doing the Sign of the Cross followed by the Our Father or the Hail Mary. We use storybook Bibles to read stories from both the Old and New Testaments, and discuss the teachings of our Lord.

Science

Our science curriculum is planned around inquiry-based learning. We use our current classroom themes to encourage children to ask questions about earth science, life science and physical science. We explore various topics such as the five senses, the way things move, living vs. non-living, space, and the human body.

Kindergarteners participate in monthly science experiment days, during which parents volunteer their time to help with simple experiments done in small groups.

Social Studies

Social studies units have a heavy focus on community and citizenship. We study church, school, community helpers, how we obtain and trade goods, government and diversity. We often have guest speakers join our class to teach us about their professions and how we can be safe in our community. We focus on acceptance of all people by exploring other communities and traditions in addition to our own. We explore our country's system of obtaining and trading goods by putting together a flea market, where children are responsible for creating, selling, buying, organizing money, and donating to those in need.



Handwriting

Text: Handwriting Without Tears. Our curriculum incorporates the use of songs, dances, fine motor manipulatives (Play-Doh, etc.), wood pieces, and iPad apps. Each letter is introduced to the children as being made up of big lines, little lines, big curves and little curves. The curriculum first teaches all uppercase letters of the alphabet according to the way they are formed. After uppercase letters have been mastered, we learn lowercase letters. The curriculum also outlines lessons on sentence writing, beginning with capitals, leaving spaces between words and using punctuation correctly. Each child works in his/her own workbook throughout the year.

Enrichment Activities

We attend each enrichment class once a week for 40 minutes. These classes include Computer, Spanish, Music, Art, Library/LRC and Physical Education. Students have recess once daily for 15 minutes. We have a half hour for lunch and a small snack in the afternoon. Students also perform in the St. Joseph Christmas Concert and Spring VIP show.

Field Trips

- Bengston Pumpkin Farm
- Brookfield Zoo
- Theatre trip for a play

Celebrations

- Halloween Parade
- Christmas Parties
- Star of the Week Project
- Polar Express Day
- Dr. Seuss's Birthday
- 100th Day of School
- Snowman Soup
- Gingerbread Houses
- Flea Market

Technology Program & Initiatives

At St. Joseph School, technology is integrated into all aspects of our curriculum as we aim to provide our students with the productivity tools needed to facilitate Digital Learning. Our teachers utilize varied instructional techniques to create enhanced learning opportunities for our students. Our students receive instruction and participate in more creative, productive lessons through the use of various devices and web-based programs in the classroom, Computer Lab and Learning Resource Center (LRC).

Advanced technology approach offers:

- Kindergarten through 2nd Grade Tablet program
- Grades 3-5 Laptops in the classroom
- Middle School Chromebook program
- New laptops in computer lab and LRC
- Google Classroom collaboration
- Wireless Internet access in all classrooms

Benefits of integrating technology into our curriculum for all K-8 students include:

- Increased engagement in instructional materials
- Ability to share and collaborate with other students
- Opportunities to perform creative and interactive exercises

Technology equipment and devices used in our classrooms:

- Smart Boards and Mimios: These interactive whiteboards use digital touch detection for user input. Teachers and students use their fingers or stylus to perform literacy and math exercises, graphing and other applications.
- Document Cameras: High resolution web cams display worksheets, textbook pages, three-dimensional objects and more, including web-based lessons, videos and educational games. Applications include experiments, manipulatives, student work product and note-taking skills.
- Classroom Computers, Grades 3-5: Classroom computers allow students to enhance skills across all subjects from basic reading and math in lower grades to advanced presentation preparations in Grades 6-8.

Computer Lab ready to facilitate full class 1:1 computer access

All K-8 students receive instruction on:

- Computer components and keyboarding skills
- Digital citizenship skills appropriate to each grade level
- Navigation of on-line educational games and resources

Students learn how to create documents, spreadsheets and presentations appropriate to each grade level. In addition, our students learn how to use video recording devices and digital cameras for incorporating into projects and presentations.

Our Learning Resource Center (LRC) includes 30 laptop computers for full class 1:1 access. Students are taught how to search websites for use in research projects and report writing. The LRC also includes an LCD projector for presentations made to students, faculty and parent groups.

Additional technology facts:

- Both the Computer Lab and LRC have color printers. Students may use the Computer Lab and LRC before and after school to work on reports and presentations.
- All computers and servers are installed with filters to protect students from accessing objectionable content. St. Joseph School is fully compliant with Children Internet Protection Act and Child Online Protection Act regulations.
- St. Joseph School students and parents sign an Acceptable Use Agreement form which governs students' conduct with regards to school equipment, the school network and the Internet.

Reading Team and Program

The St. Joseph School Reading Program is designed to assist students to reach their full potential in reading. The reading team consists of a certified reading teacher and a library resource teacher. We use a variety of research-based reading interventions, including:

- AIMSweb
- Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Interventions
- Read Naturally

The structure of the program includes small group instruction to support and improve reading skills. Additional interventions focus on individual student needs, including extra guided reading or phonics/word study practice.

Reading assessments are given on a regular basis to monitor students' progress in reading fluency and comprehension throughout the school year. Progress monitoring helps the reading team determine which skills the students have improved upon as well as the specific areas in which additional practice is necessary.

In addition to the formal reading interventions, the St. Joseph School Reading Team makes a special effort to find books that engage each student based on their personal interests and reading level. Daily lessons also include literacy-based activities and games to fully engage and develop the reading skills and strategies for all students.

A similar philosophy is seen in the after-school book clubs. The main goals for the after school clubs are to:

- Create an overall feeling of excitement for reading.
- Help students make real-life, personal connections to characters or events in the book. Connections can be made in a variety of ways, including hands-on activities, critical thinking scenarios, and reader's theater skits taken from scenes in the book.

Fortunately, the students' excitement is contagious and continues to draw more and more students to join the after school book clubs each semester. It is truly a pleasure to see so many students find the joy and excitement in reading through these reading clubs offered at our school.

Along with the formal reading interventions, personalized and engaging lessons, the St. Joseph School Reading Team also collaborates with classroom teachers to develop the specific skills that apply to their weekly lessons in class. The goal is to increase the student's confidence with both their work in class and at home.

While the team is especially proud of the reading program at St. Joseph School, they continue to strive to find new ways to assist and engage their students.

Our Tradition of Excellence

Our faculty and students are award-winning!

An award-winning Pre-K to 8th grade Catholic school, St. Joseph offers students a challenging academic education while building their love of God and commitment to improving the world. We encourage each child to become the person God calls him or her to be in a faith-filled, nurturing environment.

- Our graduates are well-prepared for high school, earning academic awards and scholarships
- Catholic values are woven into all spiritual, educational and extracurricular activities
- All-Day Kindergarten, plus Extended Care and Holiday Care are offered to Grades K-8
- Average class size is 24 students, offering a personalized approach to learning
- No-cut sports begin in 5th grade and include football, volleyball, cross country, basketball and track; youth sports teams (K-4th Grade) are organized through the YMCA and DG Park District.
- A variety of activities are offered for student enrichment; see “Extracurricular Activities”

Awards & Accolades

We are very excited about recent awards and accolades for our faculty and students, which demonstrate excellence in education:

- 2016 Nazareth Academy 8th Grade Math Contest:
 - SJS earned 1st Place Team award
 - SJS placed two students in top positions
- 2016 Benet Scholastic Bowl (4 Tests – Math, English/Literature, Science and History):
 - SJS 8th grade teams took 1st place in Math and Science, 2nd place in History and 2nd and 3rd place overall
 - SJS 7th grade team took 3rd place overall
- 2016 Montini Math Contest: With more than 420 participants representing 33 schools...
 - SJS 6th grade team took 10th place
 - SJS 7th grade took 9th place
 - SJS 8th grade team took 2nd place (individual students awarded 5th place and 2nd place)
- 2016 Athletic Victories:
 - Boys Football: JV - 5th/6th Grade Finished 2nd place in our division. Varsity - 7th/8th Grade finished the season 4-4.
 - Girls Volleyball: Both the 7th & 8th Grade teams won this year’s Bronco Bash Tournament hosted by Montini High School. 7th & 8th Grade A girls also won the DPL championship tournament.
 - Cross Country: 6th Grade girls and boys teams and 9 individuals repeatedly received ribbons. St. Joseph School co-hosted a cross country meet for 26 area Catholic schools.
 - St. Joseph 2015 Alumni led the Downers Grove South girls cross country team to a 4th place at the state meet this fall.
- 2015 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award to Principal Rita Stasi
- 2015 Nazareth Academy Scholastic Bowl: SJS placed 2nd out of 20 competing schools
- 2015 Nazareth Academy Math Contest:
 - SJS earned top honors overall (1st Place)
 - SJS placed four students in the top 5 positions of the contest, earning 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Places

- 2015 Montini's Annual Math Bowl Junior High Competition:
 - SJS 7th Grade Mathletes earned 3rd place out of 500 competing private and public school students
 - Two students earned Top 10 honors overall
- 2015 ICCP Math Competition for 7th and 8th Graders: With 146 participants representing 19 schools...
 - SJS 8th Graders had the Top 3 individuals scores and won the whole contest
 - SJS 7th Graders had the Top 2 individual scores
- 8th Graders won Gold and Silver Awards at the 2015 Illinois State Science Expo

We Also Think You'll Appreciate...

- Progressive Technology Program, including iPads for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, laptop instruction for Grades 3 to 5, and 1:1 Take-Home Chromebooks for Middle School
- Interactive Smart boards, Mimios, projectors and document cameras in all K-8 classrooms
- Online Grade-book communicates grades, assignments, report cards, attendance, class schedules, school calendar, and email to/from teachers and staff. Parents can logon and check their child's progress anytime.
- Streamlined communications through "Monday Morning Messages," website and online calendar
- Spanish is taught in Grades K-8
- Endorsed Reading Specialist on staff for Grades K-5
- Social Worker available by appointment for K-8 students (and their parents, by request)
- Curriculum includes STEM activities

Award Winning Faculty



Rita Stasi, Principal of St. Joseph Preschool & School Awarded “2015 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal”

“For her outstanding dedication to the education profession, Catholic ideals and school leadership,” Lewis University and the College of Education presented the 2015 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award to Mrs. Rita Stasi on April 30, during a ceremony at Lewis University. Mrs. Stasi was chosen from over 60 Catholic school principals in the Diocese of Joliet, demonstrating the many facets of her strong leadership and faith-based approach.

“It is truly a team effort,” Rita stated when accepting her award. “The St. Joseph School community is formed of teachers and staff, and parents and students who care about academics, each other, and our long-term well-being. It’s because of everyone’s efforts that I am here today. Together, we’ve worked to achieve great things, and I accept this award on behalf of everyone at St. Joseph’s.”

Under Rita’s leadership, the school has thrived. Since 2007, Rita has established St. Joseph Preschool, implemented full-day Kindergarten, developed a Spanish language program for all grades, converted the library into a Learning Resource Center, and increased the length of the school day to provide extended instructional time. Rita hired a Reading Specialist for K-5 classes to assist students in becoming strategic readers, and also a Social Worker to support the needs of students and families. She has been a proponent of enhancing the school’s facilities and technology program. Not surprisingly, enrollment has climbed 7% since Rita’s arrival.

Academically, St. Joseph’s has maintained a strong performance, scoring in the top quartile nationally on standardized tests, winning local scholastic bowls and math contests, and earning alumni valedictorian honors and scholarships at local high schools. The school is also a place where Catholic values of service

and charity are as important as academic excellence. St. Joseph students live their faith by organizing prayer services for the ill, donating clothing and supplies to people in need, collecting food for the hungry, and cooking/serving meals to those without permanent housing. Choosing service over self-interest is a trademark of Rita Stasi, her staff and school families.

As part of the award nomination process, many gave powerful testimony to Rita’s extraordinary leadership. St. Joseph’s pastor, Fr. John Phan, shared, “Mrs. Stasi always puts others before herself.” The president of the St. Joseph School Board indicated, “Mrs. Stasi is the definition of ‘above and beyond.’ She is an extension of each and every family that belongs to our school.” A staff member wrote, “The students have tremendous respect for her. She sets the tone for compassionate and respectful interaction.”

A parent nominator affirmed, “My children have received a wonderful, faith-based education at St. Joe’s in large part due to Mrs. Stasi’s efforts. She shows remarkable focus on her 462 students, and a commitment to our faith in everything she does. She is a hard-working leader with a positive, ‘can-do’ approach. She exemplifies what it means to be a caring, supportive Catholic school principal.” And finally, from a Downers Grove Village Commissioner, “Mrs. Stasi has kept St. Joseph’s on the leading edge. Simply put, St. Joseph School is a staple of the Downers Grove community, and Rita Stasi is its engine.

Extracurricular/Enrichment Activities

“We love the additional benefits, such as opportunities for leadership, public speaking, art, music and group sports. My children are becoming faith-filled, productive members of society because of what they’ve learned at home and at St. Joe’s.” ~*St. Joseph School Parent*

No-cut sports are offered to students in Grades 5-8, every child has an opportunity to play:

- Football
- Volleyball
- Cross Country
- Basketball
- Track

Other activities:

- Altar Servers
- Band
- Book Clubs
- Boy/Girl Scouts (beginning in Kindergarten for girls and 1st grade for boys)
- American Heritage Girls
- Yomechas Guides & Princesses
- Choir
- Hand Bell Choir
- Mathletes
- Piano
- Scholastic Bowl
- STEM LEGO Engineering Class
- Student Council
- Youth sports teams through the YMCA and DG Park District (K-4)

Special events for students (and parents!):

- Band Concerts
- Book Fair
- Christmas Music Concert and Class Parties
- Confirmation
- Father-Daughter Dance
- Field Day
- Field Trips
- First Communion
- First Reconciliation
- Forever Green Athletic & Booster Party (for parents)
- Fun Fair
- Golf Scramble (for parents)
- Graduation (for Kindergarten & 8th Grade)
- Halloween Parade and Class Parties
- May Crowning
- Mother-Son Outing
- Open House / Catholic Schools Week
- Outdoor Education (for 6th grade)
- Science Expo (for 8th grade)
- Spelling and Geography Bees
- Spirit Wear/Out of Uniform Days
- Student Council Dances
- Social fundraisers (for parents)
- VIP Music Concert

Extended Day

Extended Care offers K-8 students (and parents!) all-day coverage

Before school: 7 am – 7:45 am

After school: 2:20 pm – 6 pm

Extended Care Offers Students an Extended Day of 7 am – 6 pm

The Extended Care program is a convenient option for families with working parents. Before-school care is available from 7 am - 7:45 am; after-school care is available from 2:20 pm - 6 pm.

The program, directed and run by St. Joseph teachers and aides, includes time for homework with the help from teachers, play and snacks. In the morning, children attend the program in Room 104. After school, older children meet in the LRC while the younger students meet in another room. The school provides snacks, toys, games, puzzles and art supplies.

Registration is \$30 per child; the hourly fee is \$4.85 per hour for each child based on use, so you only pay for the time that your child is there. A monthly invoice is sent home to each participating family.

Scheduling

A calendar is sent home before the start of each month; parents fill out the times when their child/ren plan to attend. The program is very flexible and accommodates changes; if plans change, simply send a Travel Note with your child on any given school day.

Holiday Care

Holiday Care

Holiday Care is available for many school holidays – a huge convenience for working parents. The cost is \$45/day for 7 am – 5 pm, and \$50/day for 7 am – 6 pm on selected holidays.

Holiday Care is available for Teacher Institute Days, Columbus Day, Parent-Teacher Conference Day, Veteran's Day, the day after Thanksgiving, during Christmas break, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Spring Break and Easter days.

Parent Perspectives



Joining the St. Joseph Family

“This is our first year at St. Joseph School and we are thrilled with our choice. The faculty and staff have been very receptive and helpful. The school families have been wonderful to all of us. We felt a part of the St. Joe's community immediately.”

“I have told everyone I know that choosing St. Joe's is the best decision we have made. This is more than a community – it's more like an extended family. We feel very fortunate to be a part of it!”

What Parents Appreciate Most

“St. Joseph's has done a beautiful job of weaving faith, ethics, respect and accountability into a very strong academic program. I don't think any child should have one without the other, and St. Joe's does an outstanding job.”

“The school family has such a great spirit. Each child is encouraged to find what they are good at and given an opportunity to shine. There is something for everyone.”

“I can't say enough about the warm, welcoming environment at St. Joe's. I have never encountered anything but kindness and inclusion with both the parents and students.”

“My favorite aspect of St. Joseph School is how comfortable my child feels here. It is like a home away from home. I can tell each day that she feels safe and cared for by her teacher.”

“I can see that my child is truly thriving. His teachers seem very eager to guide him to his fullest potential, both academically and spiritually.”

Why Parents Recommend St. Joseph School

“St. Joe's is a wonderful school. It has a caring community of teachers, staff and parents. I feel confident that my child is learning academically, while also learning to act in accordance with the principles of our faith.”

“In this ever-changing world, it is wonderful to have our children at a place where they can learn values, pray, feel safe, become educated and make life-long friendships with people. It is a tremendous start to their life.”

“We love the additional benefits, such as opportunities for leadership, public speaking, art, music and group sports. My children are becoming faith-filled, productive members of society because of what they've learned at home and at St. Joe's.”

“We would highly recommend St. Joe's to others and have done so already. It has been nothing but a positive experience for us and our son, both socially and academically.”

“We cannot imagine having our children anywhere else, and couldn't be happier with our choice. The community is very solid, and we are pleased to be a part of it. They receive a quality education and will be well prepared when it's time to attend high school.”

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should my child attend St. Joseph School?

St. Joseph School is a Catholic community that offers students a challenging academic education while building their love of God and commitment to improving the world. We educate the whole student – mind, body and spirit – and encourage each child to become the person God calls him or her to be. Ultimately, our goal is to prepare children for academic and personal success in a faith-filled, nurturing environment.

What is the greatest attribute of your school?

An award-winning school, St. Joseph nurtures spiritual growth, provides challenging intellectual opportunities and encourages each child to succeed.

Do you have a Pre-Kindergarten program?

Yes, we have a preschool morning program for three and four-year-old children. Classes fill up quickly; you are encouraged to return your registration paperwork as soon as possible to ensure a place for your child.

Is there an all-day option for Kindergarten?

Yes, we have an All-Day Kindergarten program, which follows regular school hours of 7:45 am – 2:20 pm, with lunch and recess included. We have two Kindergarten classes and teachers, with a maximum of 30 students per classroom. Tuition cost is the same as Grades 1 – 8; Kindergartners ARE INCLUDED in the multi-student discount program. There is an option to extend your child's day to 7:45 am - 6 pm with our Extended Care program (see the "Extended Care" page for more information).

What is the maximum class size at St. Joseph?

Currently, our class size is approximately 24 students per classroom; there are two classrooms per grade. If needed, we enforce a maximum class size of 30 students per classroom. There are teacher's aides that support each class as needed.

What is the school's curriculum?

Religion, Reading, Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Spanish, Art, Music, Computers, Library Skills and Physical Education are taught.

What is included in Religious Education?

Catholic values are emphasized in all spiritual, educational and extracurricular activities, including:

- Daily classroom prayer and religion as a subject in every grade level
- Weekly mass, with students serving as greeters, lectors, sacristans, ushers and choir members
- Sacramental preparation is incorporated into the school day with a focus on Reconciliation and First Communion in 2nd Grade, and Confirmation in 8th Grade
- Prayer services, Rosary, Stations of the Cross, May Crowning and Reconciliation
- Service projects for the parish and community
- A team prayer is said before all athletic events

Do you offer virtue/character formation programs?

We have a Buddy Program that matches each student with a "buddy" from another class; the class buddies participate in various activities and events throughout the year.

What extracurricular activities does St. Joseph School offer?

St. Joseph is proud to offer a variety of activities. No-cut sports are offered to students in Grades 5 - 8, including football, volleyball, cross country, basketball and track; every child has an opportunity to play. Other activities include: Altar Servers, Band, Book Club, Boy/Girl Scouts, Choir, Hand Bell Choir, Mathletes, Piano, Scholastic Bowl, Student Council, Writing Club and more.

When does registration begin for new school families?

Registration begins with our Open Houses in January and continues until classrooms are full.

Is there a wait list?

There is no wait list at this time; however, parents are encouraged to turn in registration materials as soon as possible to ensure a place for your child.

What admission policies are followed at St. Joseph School?

The order of priority is as follows:

1. Siblings of current St. Joseph students
2. Children of St. Joseph parishioners
3. Children from other parishes whose parish does not have a Catholic school
4. Transfer students from other Catholic schools
5. Transfer students from public schools

Additionally, a child must be five years old by September 1 to enter Kindergarten. A child who is six years old by September 1 is eligible to enter 1st grade. A county birth certificate and a baptismal date or certificate are required.

Is there a registration fee?

There is a \$100 non-refundable registration fee required at the time of registration for the next school year. This fee is deducted from the following year's tuition.

Are other required fees in addition to tuition and registration fees?

You are expected to be an active contributor in Sunday stewardship through the parish. Families are also asked to contribute an annual \$300 Development Fee, as well as participate in development initiatives that support our Second Century Fund – including events, raffles, Manna gift card purchases, sponsorships, etc. A \$20 Parent Forum Party Fee is collected at the beginning of the year from each family to cover classroom parties. There is also a small fee for students participating in First Communion and 8th Grade Graduation. At your discretion, you may contribute to bi-annual collections for teachers' gifts (at Christmas and year-end).

Is tuition assistance available?

Yes, please ask our Principal for details about our Tuition Assistance Program for qualifying families.

What is the school's daily schedule?

- For K–8:
 - The first bell is at 7:45 am
 - Students are in their seats for prayers at 7:50 am
 - Dismissal is at 2:20 pm
- Preschool:
 - 3 year old class: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 am – 11:15 am
 - 4 year old class: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:30 am – 11:15 am

Can I volunteer at the school?

We regularly welcome parent volunteers for a variety of events and activities – inside and outside the classroom – throughout the year. The talents and time that our parents provide are a daily blessing to our faculty, staff and students. Before volunteering, parents are required to attend a “Protecting God’s Children” session and to complete a background check. Please see the Diocese of Joliet’s website for more information at dioceseofjoliet.org/cso/protectingChildren.asp.

What are your parish boundaries?

There are no boundaries for the parish.

Where do your graduates typically attend high school?

St. Joseph is a popular feeder school for the Catholic high schools in the area, including Benet Academy, Montini Catholic, Nazareth Academy and Fenwick. Some of our graduates also attend Downers Grove North and Downers Grove South.

Do you offer a hot lunch program?

On Mondays and Wednesdays, K-8 students can participate in the optional Hot Lunch program with pre-ordered lunches from various locations. Students can buy Pizza Lunch on Fridays.

Other questions? Please call us at 630-969-4306 or send an email to sjsoffice@sjsdg.org.

Tuition & Financial Support

Providing our children with a high quality, faith-filled education is an effort that requires financial support. The annual operating costs of the school are approximately \$2,000,000; this is funded through:

- Tuition payments
- Stewardship offerings
- Parish investment
- Development commitments

Tuition

2016-2017 Preschool Tuition

- Preschool:
 - Pre-K3: \$1,355
 - Pre-K4: \$1,895

2016-2017 Grade K-8 Tuition

- One child: \$4,275
- Two children: \$6,410
- Three children: \$7,910
- Four children: \$8,550
- Unsubsidized: \$5,250 per child

Optional Extended Care Costs

\$4.85 per hour for Extended Care, plus a \$30 registration fee per child each school year.

Optional Holiday Care Costs

\$45 per day for 7 am – 5 pm, or \$50 per day for 7 am – 6 pm. Holiday Care is available on Columbus Day, Parent-Teacher Conference Day, Veteran's Day, the day after Thanksgiving, during Christmas break, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Spring Break and Easter days.

Multi-Student Discounts

Please see above for our multi-student rates. To receive the discount, all students must currently be enrolled at St. Joseph School. All-Day Kindergarten is included in the multi-child discounted rates, as noted above.

Tuition Assistance

Please ask our principal for details about our Tuition Assistance program for qualifying families. The Diocese of Joliet also offers a financial aid program for qualifying families.

Stewardship & Parish Investment

Sunday stewardship is an expectation of all parish families. The parish invested over \$630,000 of stewardship offerings in the school for the 2015-2016 school year, covering 31% of school operating expenses. The parish relies on the generosity of school families, as well as all parishioners, to make this investment.

Families have multiple options to fund their stewardship: automatic bank account deductions, credit card payments (which incur an additional convenience fee), monthly donations directly to the church, or weekly donations in the Sunday collection basket. Bank account deduction and credit card options, which are administered through the automated FACTS program, are strongly preferred.

Development

St. Joseph School has a Development Committee that plans initiatives to grow the school's Second Century Fund. The Fund is used to cover the cost of multi-student tuition discounts, tuition assistance, academic and technological enhancements, budget shortfalls, and resources for the future. Each year, there is a development goal that supports this effort. Each family is asked to contribute \$300 to support that goal, as well as participate in optional fundraising efforts and events. Your support is appreciated!

Kindergarten Application

For incoming Kindergarten students only.

Answers to the following questions will help our Kindergarten teacher to be prepared at the beginning of your child's experience at St. Joseph School.

Name of Child _____ Gender _____ Birth Date _____

Address _____

Home Number _____ Cell Number _____

Email Address _____

Names of Parents (or Guardian) _____

If Guardian, what is your relationship to the child? _____

Names and ages of siblings _____

Language spoken: _____ English _____ Other; please indicate: _____

Date of St. Joseph Parish Baptism: _____ (if baptized at other parish, please attach copy of baptism certificate)

1. Has the child had preschool, Kindergarten or play class experience? _____ Yes _____ No
Where _____ Date _____ How Long _____

2. Are there persons other than parents and siblings living in the home? _____ Yes _____ No
Who? _____

3. Father's Occupation _____ Mother's Occupation _____

4. Has there been anything unusual in the home or the family situation such as divorce, family death, family illness, frequent moving, etc.? _____

5. Which hand does your child show a preference? _____ Left _____ Right _____ Ambidextrous

6. What special interests does your child have? _____

7. Do you feel your child will need any special help in these areas? _____ Hearing _____ Vision _____ Speech

8. Has your child participated in the Downers Grove Public School Preschool Screening Program? _____ Yes _____ No

9. Is your child taking any medication? _____ Yes _____ No If yes, please describe: _____

10. Is your child under treatment for any special conditions? _____ Yes _____ No
If yes, please describe: _____

11. Please indicate if you have concerns with:
- _____ Elimination
 - _____ Allergies
 - _____ Frequent nosebleeds
 - _____ Hay fever
 - _____ Sinus
 - _____ Hyperactivity
 - _____ Asthma
 - _____ Other: _____

12. Has the child ever been hospitalized? Yes No
 For what? _____ For how long? _____
13. Are your child's playmates: Older Younger Same age
14. Do you read to your child daily? Yes No
15. Do you go on family outings? Yes No Where? _____
16. How does your child share in family responsibilities? _____
17. What regular TV programs does your child watch? _____
18. Approximate bedtime: _____
19. What have you found to be an effective means of disciplining your child? _____
20. Does your child:
- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Put on coat and boots? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Tie own shoe laces? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Take care of toilet needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Know name and address? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Know phone number? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
21. What is your child's attitude about starting school this year? _____
22. Is your child afraid of any of the following: Dark
 Being alone
 Strangers (nurses, etc.)
 Strange animals
 Making mistakes
 Other: _____
23. Would you be able to assist with class activities during the year if needed? Yes No
 If yes, please explain interests: _____
24. Has your child ever received special education? Yes No
 If yes, please explain: _____

Diocese Information Form

Answers to the following questions are at the request of the Diocese.

School: St. Joseph School, 4832 Highland Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515 County: DuPage Parish ID#: _____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Date Baptized and Church _____

First Communion Date _____ Reconciliation Date _____ Confirmation Date _____

Name of Child (last, first, middle) _____ Sex ___ M ___ F

Entrance Date _____ Grade _____ Religion _____

Telephone _____ Cell phone _____

Former School _____ City, State _____

Birth date _____ Birthplace (city, state) _____

Address (address, city, state, zip) _____ Email _____

How many miles do you live from St. Joseph School? _____ What public school would you attend? _____

Home Situation (please circle situation that applies):

- 1) Living with both parents
- 2) Parents separated; living with mother
- 3) Parents separated; living with father
- 4) Father deceased; living with mother or mother/stepfather
- 5) Mother deceased; living with father or father/stepmother
- 6) Parents divorced; living with mother; father; mother/stepfather; father/stepmother
- 7) Living with guardians
- 8) Living with single mother/father

If 2 - 8 are circled, who has custodial rights? _____

FATHER, STEPFATHER, GUARDIAN (circle one) INFORMATION

Name (last, first, middle) _____

Religion _____ Parish _____

Home address (if different from student's) _____

Birthplace (city, state) _____ Education completed (circle) 12 13 14 15 BA MA Phd

Are you a St. Joseph alumni? ___ Yes ___ No Home Telephone _____ Work Telephone _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____ Title _____

MOTHER, STEPMOTHER, GUARDIAN (circle one) INFORMATION

Name (last, first, middle) _____

Religion _____ Parish _____

Home address (if different from student's) _____

Birthplace (city, state) _____ Education completed (circle) 12 13 14 15 BA MA Phd

Are you a St. Joseph alumni? ___ Yes ___ No Home Telephone _____ Work Telephone _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____ Title _____

Parental Commitment Form

**Your responses will help us determine what's important to you in the educational experience of your child.
One or two brief sentences per question will be appreciated.**

St. Joseph School is committed to developing children into young, maturing Christian students. How will you support St. Joseph in this commitment?

It is our belief that the student should have a commitment to the community, both school and church, as well as the community of Downers Grove. Do you have any ideas as to how this can be achieved by your child over the years?

Prayer is an important part of the daily life of each child. How will you emphasize this to your child?

It's important to the development of each student that parental support be evident to the student and to each teacher during his/her years at St. Joseph. What ways will you give support to your child?

How will you support the school and the church? For example, will you be able to give of your time, treasures or talents to support St. Joseph?

As parents, you are your child's first teacher, how will you continue this role?

Signature

Transcript Request Form

For transferring Grade 1 – 8 students only.

To:

Name of Former School

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone Number

The following student(s) have enrolled at St. Joseph School. Please forward all academic records – including health and special services files – to:

St. Joseph School
4832 Highland Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515
Telephone: 630-969-4306
Fax: 630-964-9074

Student Name	Grade

Federal Law requires that written permission of the parent or guardian be obtained for the transfer of such records. Please sign below to indicate your permission for us to obtain the requested records.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone Number

Tuition Grant for Transfer Students

St. Joseph School, in an effort to make Catholic education affordable to more families, has adopted a Tuition Grant Program for transfer students for the 2017-18 school year. Families who transfer their child/children in grades first through eight from any public, private, charter or home school will be eligible to receive a two year tuition grant.

Who is eligible:

- Any Family who transfers their child/children from any public, private, charter or home school.
- Any student in grades 1st through 8th (Students transferring from another Catholic school in the Diocese of Joliet or surrounding dioceses are not eligible.)

How it works:

- Eligible families receive a \$1,000 tuition discount in year 1
- Eligible families receive a \$500 tuition discount in year 2

This program is co-sponsored by the Diocese of Joliet.