



## **Employee Handbook**

**2021-22**

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## About St. Stephen's Episcopal School-Houston (St. Stephen's or School)

### **Mission and Vision**

Mission. St. Stephen's Episcopal School—Houston nurtures each child's academic, creative, and spiritual potential.

Vision. We see a future where young people lead with compassion, acceptance and a holistic view of the world. Our students are the future; they are our hope and promise for a more caring human community. To nurture that future, our faculty and staff seek to instill the Core Values in our students and strive to weave these values into the community.

### **Accreditations and Memberships**

St. Stephen's is accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools and American Montessori Society. It also holds memberships in Welcoming Schools, Independent School Management (ISM), and Houston Area Independent Schools (HAIS).

### **Philosophy of Education**

St. Stephen's embraces a continuum of education, where each developmental stage of the child is considered. From 15 months through 8th grade, we implement Montessori principles. The Montessori Method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood. Dr. Montessori's method has been time-tested, with over 100 years of success in diverse cultures worldwide. It is a view of the child as naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment. It is an approach that values the human spirit and the development of the whole child - physical, social, emotional, and cognitive.

### **St. Stephen's Episcopal Church**

The mission of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is to walk, without judgment, with those taking different paths to God so that we may be transformed through Jesus Christ as we serve others.

## Shared Core Values

St. Stephen's Episcopal School and Church share six core values:

- Individuality: We affirm individuality.
- Service: We practice service.
- Questioning: We question everything.
- Relationships: We build relationships.
- Belief: We believe.
- Future: We cherish the future.

## Employment Policies

### Hiring Policy

St. Stephen's is committed to ensuring that all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion or physical or mental disability, have equal opportunity to obtain employment with St. Stephen's. Our School is committed to building and maintaining a workforce consisting of people from various cultures and diverse backgrounds and reflecting the population we serve.

St. Stephen's prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion or physical or mental disability.

### Equal Employment Opportunity

St. Stephen's policy is to provide equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment and not to discriminate on any basis prohibited by law and values of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and School, including race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, national origin, disability, marital status or veteran status. It is our intent and desire to provide opportunities and apply policies equally in employment, recruitment, selection, compensation, benefits, promotion, demotion, layoff, termination and all other terms and conditions of employment. Employees are directed to bring any perceived violation of this policy to the attention of the Head of School (or to the President or Vice President of the School's Board of Trustees), who will promptly investigate and handle the situation or occurrence with the utmost regard for the privacy and respect of all involved.

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

St. Stephen's faculty and staff must ensure that their outside obligations, financial interests and activities do not conflict or interfere with their commitment to St. Stephen's. The areas of potential conflict arise when faculty and staff members have the opportunity to influence decisions that lead to personal gain or give improper advantage to members of their families or friends. If there is any question of a possible conflict, the employee is expected to notify or discuss the issue with the Principal and/or Head of School immediately.

## **Whistleblower Policy**

Integrity is one of St. Stephen's most important assets. Employees are responsible for reporting suspected violations of laws and School policies to the Principal and/or Head of School. If the employee believes that the issue has not been addressed through this avenue, they should report the violation to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees. Furthermore, it is unlawful for St. Stephen's to retaliate against or intimidate any employee for reporting a violation of a federal or state law. St. Stephen's will not retaliate against or intimidate any employee who comes forward with information of a suspected violation or violation of a law or School policy.

## **Harassment including Sexual Harassment**

St. Stephen's is committed to providing a workplace free of harassment, intimidation, threats, coercion or discrimination. Harassment includes slurs and any other offensive remarks, jokes, graphic material or other verbal, written or physical conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, threatening or hostile environment. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Any applicant or employee who feels that they are a victim of harassment from any person in connection with their employment at St. Stephen's should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Head of School or the President or Vice President of the School's Board of Trustees. Reported complaints of harassment will promptly be investigated in as confidential a manner as possible. An employee who, after investigation, is determined to have engaged in harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate action. Appropriate action can range from verbal or written warnings up to and including termination, depending on the circumstances. The School will not permit or condone any acts of retaliation against anyone who files harassment complaints or cooperates in the investigation.

## **Safeguarding God's Children Training**

All faculty, staff and volunteers at St. Stephen's School must participate in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas' Safeguarding God's Children training program to prevent sexual abuse of children. This training is held by certified trainers and must be completed every five years. Contact the School's Administrative Assistant to schedule training.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

After 12 consecutive months of employment and 1,250 hours worked in the 12 months immediately preceding the request for leave, full-time employees are entitled to 12 weeks of leave within any 12-month period when they are unable to work because they must care for their newborn or newly adopted child, have a serious health condition, or have a sick child, spouse or parent. Employees must use paid leave before using leave without pay. See the Benefits section for details on pay during leave.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

St. Stephen's is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state and local disability laws as applicable. It is the School's policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the employee can perform the essential functions of the job. The School will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability who has made the School aware of their disability, provided such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on the School. If an employee needs a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job because of a disability, that employee should contact the Principal or the Head of School.

## **Performance Review and Planning Sessions**

Each year, between February and April, the Principal, Department Heads and the Head of School will evaluate the performance of each faculty member who is a direct report. Administrative evaluations will be conducted in July and August each year. The Head of School will sign off on all performance reviews. The process will include employee reflections. The appraisal will be based on the accomplishment of goals set by the employee and School for that school year, classroom visits for teachers, conduct

demonstrated towards others (employees, parents, students, etc.), participation in School activities as well as attendance and punctuality.

In addition, planning sessions will be held each year to discuss plans and goals for the next school year. Faculty goals will be aligned with those of the Principal, whose goals will be aligned with the Head of School. Administrative staff goals will be aligned with those of the Head of School. The School's Board of Trustees will approve the Head of School goals, and the performance appraisal of the Head of School will be conducted by the Head of School Evaluation and Support Committee and reviewed by the Board of Trustees for final approval. Employment contracts for the upcoming year will be provided or not based on the evaluation results for employees on a Remediation Plan, only. Otherwise, re-hire contracts will be offered throughout the month of February and evaluations will be conducted through April each year.

## **Corrective Action/Termination/Suspension**

When deemed necessary by the Principal and/or Head of School, corrective action for failing to follow School guidelines, policies or instructions of one's director may result in a verbal warning, a written warning filed in the employee's work file, an improvement plan complete with detailed goals and due dates for improvement, being sent home without pay or termination.

There are, however, behaviors that may result in an escalation of the corrective action process including suspension or immediate termination of employment. These behaviors include (but are not limited to):

- Physical or verbal abuse of any student, parent, or co-worker.
- Conduct detrimental to the School's community image (i.e. negative comments about the School, staff, faculty, board, etc.).
- Coming to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Unauthorized sharing of confidential information regarding students, families, employees, or non-public school information.
- Absence of two consecutive days without notifying the Principal or Head of School or three unexcused absences in a school year.
- Misuse of Internet by accessing pornographic and offensive websites, mishandling of password, login information, social media sites, or destroying or changing School data, or attempting such action, without authorization.
- Failure to reach an agreement to repay monies owed to St. Stephen's.
- Theft of School property.
- Failure to keep to policies/practices of safeguarding

Contract employees have no guarantee of employment beyond the contracted period.

## **Employment at Will**

Neither the employee nor St. Stephen's School is bound to continue an employment relationship if either chooses, at its will, to terminate the contract at any time. In the event of termination, all employee benefits shall cease, and no further sums shall be due and payable by the School thereafter. Exceptions include any compensation earned, but unpaid at the date of termination.

## **Resignation and Termination of Employment**

St. Stephen's encourages employees who wish to resign voluntarily to provide the Head of School with a written notice of the intent to resign at least two full weeks in advance of the last day of work. The Principal and Directors are requested to provide a four-week notice of the intent to resign. An employee who resigns with proper advance notice may be eligible for rehire by the School or employment reference, and will be considered in good standing, not considering any other possible actions.

Please note that communications to staff and to parents are provided at the School's direction in order that information is coordinated, maintaining the parent's and employee's confidence in the School's processes and communication plans. Teachers will be asked to provide a letter to families which will be disseminated by the School at the appointed day. Professionalism is expected in all types of staff transitions.

## **Fraternization and Nepotism**

St. Stephen's discourages romantic relationships between faculty and staff or between faculty/staff and parents. Such involvement compromises the work environment. Any involvement of a romantic nature between a supervisor and anyone they supervise, either directly or indirectly, is prohibited. Violation of this policy may lead to corrective action up to, and including, termination of the supervisor involved in the relationship. In the event a romantic relationship begins, this must be brought to the attention of the Head of School immediately.

Nepotism Policy. The employment of relatives in the School's working environment can cause various difficulties for students, parents, other employees, administration and for the governing body. The problems created include but are not limited to, charges of favoritism, disadvantage, conflicts of interest and scheduling conflicts, in addition to the risk of family discord impacting the school environment.

It is the goal of St. Stephen's to avoid creating or maintaining situations whereby the appearance of, or possibility of, charges such as favoritism, disadvantage, conflicts of interest or management disruptions exist. The Head of School, with the support of the Board of Trustees, may allow existing family relations under the following circumstances:

*For the purposes of this policy, the term "relative" includes relationships established by blood or legal action such as marriage. Examples include the employee's spouse, parents, siblings or children including Step – parents, -siblings or children, aunts, uncles, nieces and/or nephews. The term also includes domestic partners (one with whom the employee's life is tied and who shares a common residence) and the children of the domestic partner.*

- Family relations do not work under the supervision of the same immediate manager;
- Family relations do not supervise/evaluate or create a supervisor/subordinate relationship with a family member;
- The relationship will not create an adverse impact on the school environment and/or performance;
- The relationship will not create an actual or perceived conflict-of-interest;
- Family relations do not audit or review, in any manner, the individual's work.

Existing family relations may no longer be employed if a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters, step family members) serves on St. Stephen's School Board or any Committee which has authority to review or order personnel actions or wage adjustments. No personal employee relationship covered by this policy will be allowed to be maintained, regardless of positions involved, if it creates a disruption or potential disruption in the work environment and school community, creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest or is prohibited by any legal or regulatory mandate. The Head of School may not employ any family relation by blood or marriage.

This policy must be considered when hiring, promoting or transferring any employee. Should relationships addressed within this policy be identified with either candidates for employment or, current employees the matter should be immediately reported to the Head of School and the following policies and procedures will be followed:

- A determination will be made whether the relationship is subject to the agency's Nepotism Policy based on the conditions described above.
- If the relationship is determined to fall within one or more of the conditions described in this Policy, the Head of School in consultation with the Board Chair, Vice-Chair and affected employees will attempt to resolve the situation through the transfer of one employee to a new position. If accommodations are not feasible then, with affected employee suggestions, the Head of School and

Board Chair will determine which employee must resign to resolve the matter in-keeping with the policy.

The school reserves the right to exercise appropriate managerial judgment and take actions necessary to achieve the intent of this policy and to vary from the guidelines outlined above in order to address unusual circumstances on an individual basis. It is the responsibility of all employees to identify to the Head of School any potential or existing personal relationship to which this policy applies. Employees who do not disclose existing or developing relationships covered by this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **Inappropriate Conduct with a Student**

St. Stephen's expects its employees to adhere to appropriate standards of professional conduct and the covenant made under Safeguarding God's Children. Any sexual relationship between a student and a School employee is always prohibited, even if consensual. Suspicion of inappropriate relationships and/or observations should also be reported to the Principal or the Head of School, immediately so that the allegation may be investigated.

Accordingly, St. Stephen's teachers and staff members are expected to refrain from inappropriate communication with students, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, e-mail, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- The nature, purpose, timing, subject matter and amount of the communication;
- Whether the communication was made openly or the teacher or staff member attempted to conceal the communication;
- Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- Whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- Whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the teacher, staff member, or the student.
- Whether the reported communication included private or confidential information.

Violation of this policy may lead to corrective action up to, and including, termination of the employee involved in the relationship.

## **Release of Information**

Any current or former employee of the School may have access to their personnel file, as mandated by state law. The requested information will be available during school business hours and will be provided after receiving a request in writing. There is no charge for this service.

The School will not share confidential information about an employee, current or former, with a third party except when:

- Given authorization to do so by the employee
- Requested to do so by a government agency or to comply with federal, state or local law, or
- Required to do so under subpoena that has been properly executed or served.

To have personal information released, the employee must submit written authorization in the form of a permission letter. The letter must specify the information to be released, the recipient and the date the authorization terminates. The employee must sign and date it. Deliver the letter to the Head of School.

## **Character Letters for Employees or Parents**

The Head of School provides written character letters for employees on request. No other employee is permitted to provide such letters unless approved by the Head of School. Employees of St. Stephen's School do not comment on or provide letters of reference or character for enrolled families except under subpoena.

## **Students and Families**

### **Subpoenas**

If the School receives a subpoena, the receptionist at the front desk is to call the Head of School to receive the document. However, if the Head is not in, the Deputy Head of School receives the document. The details of the delivery should be recorded and the document immediately provided to the Head of School. Should a faculty or staff member receive a subpoena to appear in a school-related matter, another staff member will/can be appointed to attend alongside the employee for support.

### **Separating or Divorcing Parents**

Employees of St. Stephen's will only respond to parent/attorney requests to provide information if/when subpoenaed or contacted by the child's attorney *ad litem*.

Employees are asked to notify the Head of School and Principal in the event they

receive a subpoena or is contacted by a *guardian ad litem* who will support the employee, as needed.

## **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

St. Stephen's, in accordance with the Texas Family Code, must report any suspected cases of physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse and/or neglect of children under the age of 18. All cases of suspected child abuse or neglect should be reported to the Head of School and Principal. According to law, the teacher must also report the case to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or any local or state law enforcement agency within 48 hours. Those reporting are not required to have proof a child is being abused but must have reasonable cause to know or suspect abuse. As long as the report is made in good faith, the reporter is protected from civil and criminal liability.

## **Medications**

Parents must submit all medications and the medication forms to the Administrative Assistant before any medication is dispensed by faculty. Medications submitted to the School must be in the original container, even over-the-counter medications. The School will not accept a zip-lock bag with medications in it. The teacher is asked to obtain the medication from the Administrative Assistant and keep it in a locked box in the classroom. Teachers are asked to provide a monthly record of medication dispensed to the School Office to be placed in the student's file. This frequency can be adjusted depending on circumstances.

## **Vaccinations**

Like other schools, St. Stephen's has updated its Vaccination Policy for students. Parents were notified that beginning August 2020, the school will only accept a vaccination waiver from board certified pediatricians. In addition, all employees are encouraged to obtain a measles booster. Beginning in August 2020, all employees will be asked to provide a vaccination record with their medical information.

## **Photo Release**

St. Stephen's faculty, staff, and contractors may take photographs and videos of students at school and PTO events throughout the year. Such photographs and videos, or portions thereof, may be used on the school website, publications, promotional materials, documentation, and/or social media only if the family has agreed by signing a

Photo Release Form. Photographs and videos of students taken by School faculty, staff, and contractors are the property of the School. At no time will a student be identified by full name in the absence of a further written authorization.

The Communications Department will manage a “no media release” list and must approve all photos prior to release in any manner. St. Stephen’s faculty, staff, and contractors may not use, post, or share any photo of any student or any family member without the express approval of the Communications Department.

The Communications Department expressly approves the posting of photos and videos of students on the Seesaw platform only. By default, family sharing is disabled in Seesaw. When family sharing is disabled, families do not have the ability to download any posts onto their device or share any posts over social media. Family sharing may only be enabled with the approval of the Communications Department.

## **Parent Communication**

The mission of St. Stephen’s is to serve students. This cannot be accomplished without being in service to their families. Building partnership with parents is accomplished daily with intentional and responsive communications. When employees are communicating with parents especially about a sensitive issue, first, calls are made and/or personal discussions are had. Then, the agreements discussed are included in the follow up email expressing gratitude/encouragement for their partnership. All written communication will be sent through PlusPortals. All class-wide correspondence including newsletters to parents and students must be reviewed by the Principal before it is provided to the Communications Department and it is sent home/emailed/posted. The Middle Years faculty will send regular email updates to parents regarding upcoming events.

## **Communication Logs**

Lead teachers are required to complete a Communication Log for their records at the conclusion of each parent meeting. Additional Logs may also be required during the year depending on the nature of the exchange with a particular parent. Logs should include the following: Date, Time, Names of those in attendance, topics discussed, agreements made, follow up dates set, action items and responsible party for each. In the event a Conference only covers the information in the Conference Report, an additional Log is not needed. Parents DO NOT sign the Communication Log. This is an internal document only.

## **Student Records**

All records must be dated and include the student's name, age, and grade level. Student issues or concerns as well as conferences with parents should be documented. Student records should have a professional presentation, including appropriate school logo. Grades should be submitted via Grade Book WITHIN 24 HOURS as soon as the Cycle and/or Semester end. Teachers must turn in files of exited students to the registrar / IT Department, and files of moving-up children to the next level teacher before departing Summer Campus for summer break.

## **Student Recommendation Letters**

See below regarding the procedure to be followed for recommendations requested for student outplacement or to an outside professional:

- Ensure the parent and/or student sign the Release Form, first.
- Make a copy of the blank Recommendation Form and retain it.
- Complete the Recommendation Form and keep a personal copy.
- Give the completed Recommendation Form to the Principal for review and signature.
- Give the signed form to the Administrative Assistant who will make a copy, mail the original and file the copy in the student's file.

## **Conferences**

Teachers will have three conferences with parents each school year: fall, winter, and spring. All teachers, including Fine Arts, Language and PE, are required to complete conference forms for all conferences. Ultimate responsibility for the content of the conference's rests with each teacher. The Principal must be informed in advance of the conference about any concerns surrounding the student's discipline, academic progress, etc. and nothing should be written in a report that has not already been stated. Teachers are responsible for accurate grammar, spelling and editing before providing reports to the Principal for reading. For those parents who cannot attend conferences, a written report of the student's progress should be prepared and mailed/emailed.

## **PlusPortals, FACTS, Seesaw**

PlusPortals, FACTS, and other software platforms are used to communicate assignments and grades to students and parents. This is particularly so for students and parents in the Middle Years program. All teachers are required to email parents via PlusPortals in order that a communication record is kept. Grade updates will be needed, at a minimum, on a weekly basis. Assignment changes should be made immediately. A training session on these systems for new employees will occur during employee orientation at the beginning of each school year. The School made the decision to purchase these software tools to keep parents better informed.

All Levels will utilize Seesaw for communications to parents. Lower and Upper Elementary will also utilize Seesaw for distance learning.

## **School Calendar and Daily Schedule**

A School calendar containing the important dates for the upcoming academic year is provided to families. Teachers provide the calendar of class events in August, after receiving approval. The calendar is provided to families via the website.

If teachers or administrators need to plan activities or events such as out of town field trips, parent meetings or other extracurricular activities that need to be placed on the calendar, give this information to the Principal. When the need arises during the school year to schedule class meetings or events, consult the School calendar to confirm availability, then notify the Principal. When approved, email the date and time to the Communications Department to include on the calendar before notifying parents of the date. Ensure that the necessary resources have been allocated for your event, i.e. table set up, supervision, clean up, parking, etc. Please note, parents must have a minimum of two weeks' notice for all events.

Although the School calendar is posted on the School's website, please post a copy of the calendar in your classroom for parents and students to refer to when necessary. In addition, please post the daily schedule in your classroom.

## **Admission Tours, Student Shadowing, Student Interview Visits**

Campus Tours are posted on the school calendar. The Principal or Head of School may also conduct individual tours at any time. If/When a tour comes to your classroom with prospective students and parents, please introduce yourself briefly and welcome the visitor(s). If you are in a lesson, continue the lesson and acknowledge the guests with a smile or gesture. The tour may stay to observe your class or lesson for a brief period.

For assessments for enrollment, teachers will be asked to host a student for an Interview Visit and provide feedback relevant to possible enrollment. Please note that enrollment considerations are for admitting students into St. Stephen's School – not particular classrooms. Please return the necessary paperwork and/or discuss any concerns within two days of the visit.

Students in grades 4 to 8 may schedule a Shadow Visit before deciding to apply. This is not an official time of assessment, but rather for putting students at ease. Please see the Principal regarding the length of visit and scheduling.

During the summer, Lead Teachers will be asked to conduct Interview Visits. However, at any time schedules are prohibitive, the Principal or Head of School may fill-in to conduct Interview Visits.

## **Concerns Regarding Student Performance and Accommodations**

At the earliest sign of a concern regarding a student's academics, behavior and/or performance in School, teachers should document their observations for at least one week and follow up within two School days of that week with a meeting with the Principal. The Principal will work with the teacher to determine a plan of action and, likely, a method of contact with the student's parents.

At a minimum, within a week following the meeting between the teacher and the Principal, parents should be contacted to be made aware of the initial concern. Following the parent contact, if the parents(s) request any particular accommodation or service, it must also be recommended and documented by the appropriate psychologist and/or medical professional. The Head of School makes all final decisions regarding particular accommodations and services. Even if the teacher has already been providing some level of accommodation, the School may refuse to provide any particular accommodation or service. Accordingly, teachers may not promise a particular student or parent that any specific accommodation or service will be implemented without the prior written permission of the Principal. The School will not implement any accommodation that will fundamentally alter the nature of its program and its provision of services to students.

The School is not subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Faculty members may not make any representations to the contrary to parents. The School also has the right to require testing, evaluation, and/or assessment of the student's needs by qualified professionals, whose qualifications are deemed appropriate by the Head of School. The School, including faculty members, will not perform such testing, make or

hypothesize regarding a diagnosis. Parents will be responsible for obtaining testing and documentation required by the School at their own expense.

**No faculty member may make any medical or psychological diagnosis or hypothesize to a parent regarding a diagnosis of a student. No faculty member may talk about or otherwise communicate concerning a student to a professional outside the School without written permission from the particular student's parent(s).** If a faculty member receives information that a particular student is being evaluated/assessed to determine the student's medical, psychological, or educational need(s), the faculty member must communicate this information to the Principal who will to notify the Head of School about ongoing testing, evaluations, and assessments to determine student need.

If a newly-enrolled student's parent communicates to a faculty member that the student has medical, psychological, or educational needs which have already been assessed/evaluated and which require any form of accommodation, modification, or special treatment supplemental to the faculty member's typical classroom practices for all students, the faculty member must communicate that information within a day of learning it to the Principal. The Principal will arrange a meeting at a mutually agreeable time with the student's parent(s) to determine the nature of the need. The Head of School makes all final decisions regarding particular accommodations and services; the School Administration may refuse to provide any particular accommodation or service. The teacher may not promise a particular student or parent that any specific accommodation or service will be implemented without the prior written permission by the Head of School or Principal.

Failure to abide by the terms set forth in this section may subject an employee to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Role of School Counselor**

The School Counselor provides oversight of all counseling needs including one-on-one, family and group counseling with students, staff and family members. The Counselor's Role meets the psycho-social needs of students and provides support for faculty and teaching staff or administrator facilitating the care of a student. The sessions are "confidential in nature" with an option offered to the parents/guardian to execute a form allowing the Counselor to share information with specified adults such as outside therapists or teachers. The Counselor will work closely with the Head of School and Principal to ensure the needs of St. Stephen's – Houston are met.

## Health & Safety

### Security

St. Stephen's takes the responsibility of security of the students and campus very seriously. The School has developed a strategic security plan (Emergency Action Plan) for the campus, which is periodically updated, as well as continuous training for our employees. This overarching plan includes continuous review of security practices, on-going training, the support of first responders and strict policies regarding campus access, campus visitors, care of students, playground safety, dispensing medicine, hand-held radios, and use of HIPPA information.

- Exterior doors are to remain locked from 8:15 to 5:45 pm. (Use the unlock/lock motion when unlocking doors to gain access so as not to close the door in the unlocked position.)
- All visitors must have identification. Employees are asked to send visitors without visible ID (Name badge) to the office to get one AND to notify the office immediately he/she has done so. Employees must wear name badges daily.
- Employees are asked to carry a hand-held radio in the ON position and tuned to channel 16 during school hours, including Extended Care.
- All Employees must remain certified in CPR, First Aid and Safeguarding Children.
- All Employees must remain informed regarding the school's safety/security practices, playground rules, and the dispensation of medication.
- During school hours, access to Havens and houses on Sul Ross is via the main playground. Families who arrive late will be given access. Employees are asked to also utilize the same path during school hours.
- Medical information, including allergy information must be posted in keeping with HIPPA regulations.

### School Badges

Employee name badges must be worn on campus at all times during the school day and during Extended Care and at all School events. Faculty and Staff will be provided a new badge annually. Pictures for badges are taken during Pre-Planning, each year. Everyone is encouraged to leave badges in a locked drawer nightly to ensure it is not lost. IF a replacement badge is needed, a \$10 fee will be assessed. In the event of a name, department or title change, the School will provide a new badge.

## **Emergency Response Procedures**

If an emergency arises on School grounds or during a School activity, employees should follow the instructions given by the Crisis Leader or Public Safety personnel. Notify the Head of School or Principal via phone or hand-held radio of suspicious or threatening activity or individuals, or in the event you call 911. The Emergency Action Plan is provided in your Safety Binder.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are required on a monthly basis. The Crisis Leader is in charge of the drill/event. Some drills will be designed to test your decision-making skill. Not all drills will be announced. The Crisis Leader will direct all communication and keep a record of the time to clear all buildings for the Fire Drill Record which will be logged by the Administrative Assistant. During a drill, the alarm will be activated and the following evacuation procedures tested:

- Teachers will take their roll books and hand-held radios for communication purposes when evacuating.
- Students will leave their classrooms in an orderly manner without talking.
- Teachers will ensure all people are evacuated.
- Upon reaching the designated evacuation area, faculty must check their roll books to ensure that all students are accounted for.
- Teachers communicate directly with their assigned Zone Leader.
- Students and employees are to return only after hearing the “all clear” signal given by the Crisis Leader.
- Two exit routes for each grade are required and are posted in each classroom (primary and secondary exit route).

### **Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing Process**

Information regarding school closing due to weather or similar emergency will be provided via text to employees and school families. Information will also be posted on the School website. Teachers are asked to notify any guests, outside observers, or visitors scheduled for the day in question. All employees are highly encouraged to keep their personal contact information updated with the IT Department to ensure they receive all updates.

## **School Related Injuries – Employee and Student**

Employee. If you are injured while at work or incur a job-related illness, you may qualify for Workers' Compensation benefits. An occupational job-related illness or injury must be reported immediately to the Principal or Head of School and the Workers' Compensation protocols must be followed. The Principal or Head of School will complete an Injury Report for Workers' Compensation.

Student. If a student is injured on School grounds or at a School event, the teacher or faculty member who was present at the time of the accident will complete an Accident Report immediately. Copies are to be provided immediately to the Head of School, the Principal, placed in the student's file and provided to the parent of the child on the day of the event.

## **Supervising Children in the Classroom/Playground**

Lead Teachers and Teacher Assistants are expected at all times to ensure that students are actively supervised in the classroom, on the playground and anywhere else on campus. Active direction and supervision are necessary to facilitate the student's development and to ensure safety. No student is ever to be left unattended in any building or classroom or be allowed to enter any building or classroom unattended. Faculty may not be accessing their computer or smart phone when supervising or teaching their students.

Faculty/student ratio must be maintained at all times, as mandated by the Department of Human Resources. Responsibility for the students lies with the employee(s) who is/are under contract to be responsible.

- When students are outside and in the parking lot, orange cones should be placed in the parking lots to provide visual boundaries.
- The gates between the buildings and playground should be closed at all times.
- Students are not allowed to be in areas where they cannot be seen or supervised.
- Students are not allowed to climb on the fences.
- Climbing should be limited to play structures built for climbing, as well as the first junction of the branches of the trees on the playground.
- Students may use the restroom in the main building during recess.
- Students must have their shoes on at all times and have access to water to keep hydrated.
- Teachers should position themselves on the playground and classroom where visibility is maximized and must be attentive to playground activities.

- Teachers should be on the playground with their classes. Teachers should not leave the playground to make phone calls or to check email.
- Teachers should make a safety check of the equipment daily, specifically for ants, sharp objects, or broken or damaged equipment. Report repairs via email immediately to the Facilities Director, copying the Director of Finance and the Head of School.
- Cell phones may only be used for taking pictures. Pictures should not be sent directly to parents from personal cell phones but transferred to email or class letters. Communications may NOT occur while responsible for students. Cell phones may be used for school related emergencies only. Use of cell phone while responsible for students may result in termination.

## **Maintaining a Safe and Prepared Work Environment**

Faculty are expected to be in their classrooms at least 15 minutes before class to prepare the environment and 15 minutes after class to restore the environment. When preparing the environment, the teacher will be sure everything is clean and in its proper place, including, but not limited to:

- All tables cleaned
- Chairs placed on the floor and at the tables
- Clutter removed from shelves, materials and work space well organized
- Supplies replenished
- For restoring the environment, teachers/students will complete the following:
  - Dust and straighten shelves
  - Replenish exercises as necessary
  - Place chairs on the tables
  - Sharpen pencils
  - Clean area outside classroom, including hallways and other common areas
  - Inspect bathrooms
  - Pick up any trash including the outside pavilion, if used
- In the Middle Years building, recyclables should be delivered to the outside recycling bin once a week

Students should be asked to participate in the maintenance of their environment. They should be encouraged to clean up their own spills and other messes, and to perform other tasks necessary for daily maintenance.

## **Field Trips/Class Trips**

The following steps should be followed when planning or executing a field trip or other class trip.

- Ensure that you have the correct number of chaperones. Orientation – 1 adult/1 student; Primary – 1 adult/2 students; Elementary – 1 adult/5 students; Middle Years – 1 adult/12 students.
- All chaperones must take the Safeguarding God's Children training prior to the field or class trip.
- The Head of School, Principal, and the parents must be notified at least one week before any field trip, and the trip must be placed on the School calendar. All overnight field/class trips should be listed on the School calendar prior to the first day of the school year.
- Students should wear the School's field trip shirt on the day of the field trip.
- Teachers must take the Emergency Medical Release and Field Trip Permission forms with them, and return the forms to the Administrative Assistant following the trip. A list of students going on the field trip must be posted on the classroom door 48-hours before the trip. Destination of the field trip, arrival and departure times, and carpool information must also be posted. A copy of the information must also be posted in the Administrative Assistant's office.
- Schedule the use of the School van with the Administrative Assistant.
  - When using the van or bus, no eating or drinking is allowed in the van or bus. The students should help clean the van or bus when they return.
  - The van or bus should have at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a tank of gas when returned to School.
- Employees may not drive students in personal vehicles on School-sponsored trips unless they have approval from the Head of School and parents. Each driver must have a list of students riding in their car. Students may not sit in front seats.
- All students must sit properly, each wearing their own seat belt. Students should talk quietly, exercise courtesy, and demonstrate respect for each other.
- The students must stay with an adult. The teacher should keep track of all students and ensure that she/he returns with all of the students taken on the trip.
- Upon arriving at the destination and upon arrival back at school, teachers must lock the van and ensure that a child is not left in the van.
- On overnight trips, girls and boys should not visit each other's rooms. At no time, should a girl or a boy be allowed to go into the opposite gender's room.
- Students who break the rules on a field/class trip should immediately be sent home and parents notified, with a follow-up meeting with the Head of School. In elementary, parents should be asked to come and get the student. In the Middle Years program, the students will be sent home at the parent's expense, which may include paying for airline escort depending on the age of the student.
- Teachers and chaperones may not partake of alcohol or drugs while on a field/class trip.

## **Taking Attendance and Tardiness**

All teachers are expected to take class attendance marking absent or tardy students each day on PlusPortals. Overall School attendance is to be input into PlusPortals no later than 9:15 a.m. This is the attendance that is officially reported each day and on which security procedures will rely. However, a teacher that has separate classes must take individual class attendance for all classes throughout the day.

## **Reporting a Missing Student**

In the event a student is missing, immediately search the entire room for the student (i.e. closets, under desks, etc.). Ask other students if they know where the missing student may be. If the student is still missing, notify the Head of School or the Principal and furnish a physical description and clothing information, as well as any problems that are known to you regarding the student. Remain calm.

The Principal will then contact the Administration to enlist all available adults to search the buildings and grounds, particularly behind doors, in bathrooms, in empty classrooms and on the perimeter of the School grounds. The Head of School or designee will determine the point to call the parents and police. The Head of School or designee will complete all reports.

## **Nutrition and Snacks**

Students must bring their own snacks to school. Teachers are asked to keep individually wrapped snacks such as applesauce available for students who arrive without a snack. Teachers should ensure that students follow the nutrition guidelines for their classes. Gum is strictly prohibited on campus. Parents have requested that class birthday celebrations, particularly in Orientation and Primary, include not sugary treats but healthy snacks with a flair. Sugary snacks on extra special occasions would be tolerated. Pinterest has excellent suggestions for fun snacks.

## **Substance Abuse/Smoking**

Employees shall not use illegal substances or abuse legal substances in a manner that impairs work performance. In addition, smoking is prohibited anywhere on campus.

If an employee suspects a student of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, smoking on campus, or possessing illegal substances on campus, notify the Principal and/or Head of School immediately.

## **Media Relations**

Head of School is the official spokesperson for St. Stephen's. If approached, all other employees must refer the media to the Head of School. Employees may NOT comment to the media on behalf of the school or in their capacity as an employee.

## **Compensation and Reimbursement**

### **Contracts and Compensation**

The Head of School or designee will negotiate employment contracts and compensation, annually. Faculty or staff on a Remediation Plan will have their evaluation scheduled as part of the contract renewal process. All other faculty and teaching staff should expect contracts to be provided by the end of February and evaluations conducted in April and May each year. Administrative staff should expect evaluations and contracts to be provided by August each year.

### **Overtime**

Prior to scheduling more than 40 hours in a work week, non-exempt employees must receive permission in writing from the Head of School. Only non-exempt employees are eligible to receive overtime pay. Non-exempt employees who work more than 40 hours in a week will be paid 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for the excess hours. However, if an employee works over 40 hours without prior approval the employee is at risk of termination.

### **Paydays**

All employees are paid bi-weekly, every other Friday. Employees enjoy 26 pay periods throughout the calendar year (i.e., two (2) bi-weekly paychecks per month with the exception of two months per year when employees will receive three (3) paychecks). Upon request, checks will be mailed when a payday occurs during vacation.

## Extended Care

Each Extended Care class is staffed with two employees, per Child Safeguarding requirements. Extended Care is managed by designated Coordinators; with one Coordinator usually appointed per level or two levels.

### Ratios

- 6:1: Orientation
- 12:1: Primary to Middle Years

### Stipends

- Teachers and Teacher Assistants are paid an hourly wage commensurate with their annual salary as prorated on an hourly basis.
- Extended Care Coordinators are paid a monthly stipend totaling \$1,000 for the academic year.

### Extended Care Coordinators

Extended Care Coordinators are responsible for the full academic year; responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Set the schedule for Extended Care for their level(s);
- Confirm student enrollment with the Business Office;
- Schedule assistants and teachers for Extended Care, evening meetings, conference and in-service care, and early dismissals;
- Cover staff absences in Extended Care;
- Determine student activities;
- Provide for a smooth experience for students, staff, and teachers.

## Summer Camp

Each Summer Camp class is staffed with a minimum of one Lead Teacher and one Teacher Assistant. Summer Camp is managed by designated Coordinators; with one Coordinator usually appointed per level or two levels. Summer Camp Coordinators also act as the Extended Care Coordinators during Summer Camp.

### Ratios

- 6:1: Orientation
- 12:1: Primary to Middle Years

### Stipends / Benefits

- Teachers and Teacher Assistants are paid an hourly wage commensurate with their annual salary as prorated on an hourly basis.

- Summer Camp Coordinators are paid a stipend of \$300 / month, comprised of \$200 / month for coordinating Summer Camp and \$100 / month for coordinating Extended Care.
- Summer Camp benefits for full-time employees include one sick day per four weeks.
- Summer Camp compensation does not qualify for retirement or vacation benefits.

### Summer Camp Coordinators

Summer Camp Coordinators are responsible for all sessions of Summer Camp; responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Work as the Lead Teacher for the Summer Camp day (not including Extended Care);
- Work as the Extended Care Coordinator for Summer Camp;
- Schedule assistants and/or teachers as needed;
- Determine curriculum;
- Manage parent communications;
- Work with the Communications Office regarding the marketing of the program;
- Interface with the Principal regarding hiring and providing for a smooth experience for students.

## **Payroll Deductions**

Federal law requires that income tax be deducted from an employee's pay. Therefore, employees must complete a W-4 form and other required forms in the Business Office before receiving a paycheck. Social Security and Medicare taxes are also deducted. Court-ordered child support and any other government-mandated wage withholding may also be deducted from any affected employee's pay. Amounts owed to the School by an employee (such as for tuition, textbooks, field trip fees, etc.) may also be withheld from compensation.

## **Compensatory Time Off**

There is no compensatory time off given to salaried employees. The expectation is that a salaried employee will put in the time that is required to perform their job satisfactorily.

## **Stipends**

Stipends will be approved and/or offered only by the Head of School. Stipends will only be offered for projects that require a substantial amount of extra time from the employee's regular job duties.

## Expense Reimbursement

Employees will be reimbursed for previously authorized expenditures made on behalf of the School. All purchases in excess of \$100 must follow the purchasing process outlined below. **Please note, sales tax will not be reimbursed.**

Any entertainment expenses require prior Head of School approval. Tax-exemption certificates can be obtained from the Business Office to reduce the expense to be reimbursed. An expense reimbursement form must be completed which should include receipts and given to the Principal or Department Head for approval. The request for reimbursement will then be forwarded to the Business Office for payment. Failure to follow procedure may result in having personally incurred expenditures not being reimbursed.

## Purchasing Process

Having budgeted for an expense does not, in and of itself, authorize the expenditure. Purchases in excess of \$100 must be authorized via the purchase requisition process.

Faculty and staff submit a purchase request form, available on the public drive, to the Principal or Director. Among other items, this form must contain the name of the person making the request, the requestor's department, and description of the items to be purchased and, when possible, product numbers, price quotes, vendor information and other specifications or requirements. If approved, the purchase request is then routed to the Business Office to be executed.

A check request does not take the place of a purchase request. All purchases greater than \$100 must follow the aforementioned procedure. Failure to follow procedure may result in having personally incurred expenditures not being reimbursed.

## Benefits

### Health and Dental Insurance

St. Stephen's – Houston is participating in a consortium of area private Schools offering health insurance through Aetna. St. Stephen's will pay 50% of the employee only health insurance premium for the lowest cost plan offered. Additional coverage will be available at the employee's expense.

## **Time Off**

Full-time salaried employees are given 10 personal time-off (PTO) days per school year which can be used for sick/personal time after 30 days of employment. Part-time salaried employees are given 1 sick/personal day per 160 work hours. New employees will earn one day per month during the school year and must have earned the days to be paid. Employees must work with the appropriate supervisor (Principal, Department Head or Head of School) to ensure their classes and other responsibilities are properly covered while they are out. The Head of School must approve NON-medical leaves of absence of more than 3 consecutive days. Days used for time off will be tracked through the payroll system and should be reported to the Business Office for system input.

Up to thirty days of existing PTO for 2019/20 returning employees may be held over cumulatively to be used for a medical/paternity leave, only. As of July 1st, 2019, additional unused sick/personal days will not be held over, year to year. Compensation will NOT be paid upon termination (voluntary or not) of employment for unused PTO days.

Unless it is an emergency, each teacher is required to fill out a Request for Absence prior to taking time off. If the Request is not submitted, then the teacher may be subject to disciplinary action, including up to termination.

St. Stephen's allows three additional paid days off in the event of the death of immediate family (parents, spouse or partner, children and siblings of the employee) plus two days of travel time, if needed.

## **Retirement**

For employees who have completed one year of service (1,000 hours in a 12- month period), St. Stephen's will contribute to a pension plan five percent (5%) of the employee's base salary and an amount equal to the employee's contribution, not to exceed four percent (4%) of their base salary. St. Stephen's will act as the plan administrator for the pension plan approved by the Board of Trustees. The retirement plan is managed by TIAA-CREF.

## **Tuition Remission**

Each full-time employee of the School and/or Church is awarded tuition remission as follows.

- Year 1 of employment: 50% tuition remission
- Year 2 of employment: 55% tuition remission
- Year 3 of employment: 60% tuition remission
- Year 4 of employment: 65% tuition remission
- Year 5 of employment: 70% tuition remission
- Year 6 of employment: 75% tuition remission
- Year 7 of employment and beyond: 80% tuition remission

The applicable tuition remission as of the first day of the academic year will be the tuition remission applied during the entirety of the academic year; provided however that any tuition remission will immediately end if and when the employee is no longer a full-time employee of the School and/or Church.

## **Leave of Absence**

St. Stephen's allows up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for full-time employees who have worked for the School for one year.

Paternal or maternal leave may be taken when the employee cannot work to care for the employee's newborn or newly adopted child, or because of a serious health condition of the employee, or a sick child, spouse or parent.

Employees may be paid during leave as long as PTO days are available.

## **Professional Development**

St. Stephen's actively encourages continuing education for all of its employees. This professional development may include visiting other Schools, taking classes at a university, or attending relevant conferences and workshops. For faculty, opportunities for such development and requests for funding are coordinated through the Principal and the Head of School. For administrative staff, professional development needs are coordinated by the Head of School. Decisions regarding professional development leave and funding will depend on budgetary funds available for professional development.

Each school year, 20 hours of professional development are required for each faculty member, which includes partial In-Service hours, approved by the In-Service Committee and/or Head of School. Teachers with Texas State certification(s), wishing to keep current, must have a minimum of 30 hours of professional development each year. Employees are expected to keep track of their professional development hours and report them to the Principal at the end of each school year.

Please see the Director of Finance and Operations regarding the registration and payment process for workshops or conferences.

## **New Employee Orientation and In-Service**

New employees are required to attend an orientation session at the beginning of each school year where they will become familiar with St. Stephen's culture, organization, policies and procedures, as well as technology. The purpose is to familiarize and onboard employees as quickly as possible to ensure they become productive members of the St. Stephen's School community.

In-service meetings are generally held monthly, typically on Early Dismissal Friday and are MANDATORY for all faculty and staff, including administration and part-time employees. Separate Bulldog 360 staff are not required to attend. If the meeting content is job specific, employees not impacted will be notified in advance of the limited amount of time they should plan to attend. Administration meets weekly. Co-employed staff of the school and church also attend the weekly Church Administration meeting.

These meetings are important to the support of our professional culture, including communication and whole school connection. This is the opportunity to communicate what is happening at St. Stephen's and to exchange feedback, as well as provide professional development hours for the faculty. In addition, monthly faculty meetings will be held to discuss important issues related to classes, events, procedures and curriculum. Employees are required to attend their designated staff meetings.

## **Workplace Accident/Injury**

All employees are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance, which compensates an employee for medical expenses from an injury arising out of or in the course of work.

Employees must immediately report any accident or injury to the Business Office or Head of School so that the necessary paperwork may be completed. Any employee who fails to immediately report an on the job incident which leads to the injury of the employee may be disciplined up to and including termination. All injured are subject to drug and alcohol testing.

Improper representation of a non-workplace injury as a workplace injury is considered workers' compensation fraud and is punishable under state law. Workers' Compensation insurers have zero tolerance for fraud and actively pursue offenders. This policy is necessary to permit St Stephen's Episcopal School – Houston to comply with federal and state laws and the rules of the Workers' Compensation provider with

respect to workplace safety and employee rights under state workers' compensation laws. It is absolutely essential that each employee report any on-the-job injury, no matter how minor, to the School. Remember the Workers' Compensation provider, and St. Stephen's – Houston have the right to obtain an alcohol and/or drug test at any time after an on-the-job injury. Positive results may jeopardize your coverage and your employment.

## Standards of Conduct

### **Professionalism**

It is imperative that employees behave with courtesy and respect at all times during School hours, at School events and even at non-School events. Faculty and Staff are an extension of St. Stephen's, and it is important to portray a professional manner with students and parents, as well as others connected with the School and beyond.

Employees must maintain confidentiality as it relates to all students and their families, pending school related information such as calendar or facility changes, new or departing staff and/or policy changes. All student records, files, conversations, and conferences are held for the benefit of the students and are strictly confidential.

Discussing rumors or "hearsay" information, in places like the parking lot or at parties, can be hurtful and destructive. Employees are required to refrain from spreading rumors or gossip. Employees are also expected to keep professional boundaries with parents regarding their private business. If employees are found to be engaging in destructive and undermining actions with families or other staff, disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Attendance/Punctuality**

The School's daily operation depends on employees' regular attendance and punctuality. Personal affairs should be scheduled if at all possible outside of the School day. Should the employee know of an impending absence, written approval should be obtained from your Principal or Head of School and placed in the employee's file. It is the employee's responsibility to obtain the appropriate coverage for their classroom.

In the event the employee is sick, they must notify the Principal or the Head of School as soon as possible. (Note: Refer to the Benefits section for details on the number of personal days employees receive.) A doctor's note is required for absences of three days or more. In case of a last-minute emergency or late arrival to work, please call the Administrative Assistant immediately. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness will be a factor in performance reviews and may result in corrective action, including termination.

The Administrative Assistant will record attendance and tardiness, and it will officially be tracked through the payroll system.

Full-time faculty and staff members are expected to attend designated School events, as well as chapels, teacher in-service days, conference days, and other School-related activities as deemed by the Head of School. Part-time employees should consult with the Principal since they may be exempt from some of these activities based on their schedule. In addition, faculty members are required to attend their designated faculty meetings. If an employee is unable to attend a School event, they should notify the Head of School or the Principal in advance of the event.

St. Stephen's reserves the right to identify "blackout periods" where requests for paid time off shall require the written approval of the Head of School. Standard blackout periods include: staff training; in-service; the week before school starts; the first day of school; the last day of school; a week before Thanksgiving, winter, or spring break; the day before and after any school holiday. Such blackout periods shall be approved in advance by the Head of School. In the event that a "black out period" must be added to the calendar, notice of at least 30 calendar days shall be given prior to the implementation of said blackout period.

## **Netchex Bio-Clock**

It is the policy of the School to streamline the timekeeping and payroll process, as well as ensure consistency of treatment for employees. This policy covers all exempt and nonexempt employees that are required to clock in using the Netchex BioClock timekeeping system.

Employee Clocking Responsibilities. It is an employment requirement that all exempt and non-exempt employees must "clock in" at the beginning of their shift and "clock out" at the end of work each day. Employees are not required to clock in/out for lunch unless the lunch break will exceed 1 hour. Depending upon an employee's "role" and accompanying "aftercare duties," certain employees are required to clock in and out separately for their hours worked in aftercare.

Missed Time Clock Punches. If an employee forgets to "clock in" or "out" for their shift, they are to contact their supervisor immediately when it is realized, to provide actual clock in or out information. The Supervisor will adjust the employee's time in the Netchex system. Employees will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination\* for excessive failure to clock in or out without reasonable justification.

Falsification or Tampering. Any attempt to tamper with the timekeeping hardware or software will be considered a serious offense, subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination\*. Any employee interfering with another's use of time clocks or in

possession of or defacing another's ID card will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination\*.

Clock Problems. If any employee is unable to "punch in" or "out" because of a time clock malfunction, it is the employee's responsibility to immediately inform his/her supervisor or Chief Financial Officer. In the event of time clock malfunction, the Business Office will clock employees in and out and will notify Department management of the problem.

Overtime. Overtime must always be authorized in advance by a supervisor and documented in the system. Overtime will be calculated based on the actual hours recorded and credited to the employee and approved by management. Overtime is earned on a bi-weekly basis and is only earned after forty (40) hours of actual work hours have been accumulated during the established work week.

## **Going Off-Site During the Workday**

Faculty may not leave campus to go to lunch, to pick-up lunch or to run an errand during their teaching time at School. Exceptions can be cleared by the Principal or the Head of School. If approved, please inform the School's Administrative Assistant that you will be off campus.

## **Dress Code**

School Employees are expected to dress professionally at all times while keeping in mind specific activities being performed during the day with your class. Faculty and staff set the examples of proper attire for the time and place of school. Additionally, professional and well-kept attire is representative of a professional school, therefore impacts the image and reputation of St. Stephen's.

Business Casual attire is appropriate for teachers and staff at most events and during the school day. Teachers in Orientation, Primary, and Lower Elementary are expected to dress comfortably for working on the floor with students. It is necessary for the PE and Art Teachers to dress specifically for their classes, and are encouraged to do so appropriately. Fridays are a "dress-down day" which means jeans and spirit T's are permitted. However, both must be appropriate for a learning environment; free of holes and/or provocative messaging. Leggings are only permitted when paired with a long top such as a tunic. The following items are not permitted: jeans (M to TH), flip-flops, shorts, spaghetti straps, athletic wear, athletic tank-tops, short skirts/dresses, see-through or tight-fitting clothing or denim/painting overalls.

During the summer, Camp faculty may wear appropriate shorts, Spirit T's or Camp Staff shirts provided by the school. Administrative staff may add appropriate shorts to the options for Dress-Down Day during the summer.

## **Gift Policy**

St. Stephen's School recognizes that charitable giving is a joyful expression of the donor's commitment to the mission program and future of our organization. If a parent offers you a contribution and wants to know what you need, please ask what they have in mind and/or refer them to the upcoming opportunities for all parents in your class. For example, leading up to a gardening day, all parents are encouraged to bring plants or mulch. Then, suggest that they speak to our Director of Development. Here is some basic information that will help you support the work of the Development Office.

- Contributions or gifts of real property such as real estate or furniture will be submitted to the School Board or a committee of its designees for a determination of acceptance.
- St. Stephen's is a 501(c)(3) corporation. Gifts are tax deductible as described by law.
- Because we respect the privacy of our donors, our mailing list is never given to another party. Please note, some donors wish to remain anonymous.

To avoid a conflict of interest, School employees may not accept an individual gift from a parent, student, or any other person connected to the School that is valued more than \$25. Cash is specifically prohibited. School employees may not solicit expensive items or money as gifts.

Students are not permitted to fundraise on behalf of the School. Student-initiated funds raised to benefit other organizations or needs is part of nurturing students budding compassion for others and the planet.

## **Children of Employees during Work Hours**

During work hours, children of employees should be in their appropriate classes and/or Extended Care. Children of employees are not allowed to be unsupervised on campus and should not be supervised by their own parents at any point during the school day. If care/supervision of children is needed before and/or after School, the children should be enrolled officially in the School's Extended Care Programs.

Whenever possible, we provide limited childcare for the first three days of In-Service/Pre-Planning in August to support our employees with children in the transition back to work/school life. Care is also provided on the last day of school to enable faculty and staff to attend end-of-school celebrations. Parents may bring babies

or children who are able to play quietly while their parents are working to limited work sessions in the classrooms during In-Service/Pre- or Post-Planning. This should occur on a limited basis and on days when meetings in other areas of the school are not planned. Otherwise, parents are responsible for securing care for their children on In-Service days and for events when school is out of session or students are not included.

## **Solicitation**

Employees or students should not solicit other employees, parents or students for payment, donations, favors or anything else without the approval of the Head of School.

## **Tutoring Outside of Work**

Teachers may tutor SSESH students on site outside of work hours for money with approval by the Head of School. However, teachers may not be paid to tutor their own students in courses where grades are given. This creates a conflict of interest. Teachers may not tutor non-SSESH students on site.

## **End of the School Year**

It is each teacher's responsibility to complete the End of Year Checklist, as well as leave contact information with the Principal no later than the last day of School. Compensation may be interrupted in the event the Checklist is incomplete.

## **Technology and Equipment**

### **Cell Phone Usage**

The use of cell phones during a meeting (e.g., In-Service) or while responsible for students is prohibited. If you receive a call that is an emergency, you can step out of the meeting, wait until a break or when the meeting is finished, or call the Principal to cover your class while you do the above.

In no circumstances should cell phones be used while children are present or under your supervision. It is permissible to snap a picture while in the care of children. It is not permissible to send or post it at that time. Outside of picture taking, cell phones must be kept out of view when in the presence of children.

## **Social Media**

Faculty and staff are asked to ensure that St. Stephen's values and brand are upheld when posting on any social media sites. School leadership is available for addressing employee concerns or objections, appropriately. The School counts on all members of the faculty and staff to engage collectively in outward expressions of the School's message. Faculty and staff are encouraged to represent themselves professionally and appropriately on personal sites, as an extension of the St. Stephen's culture. Faculty and staff are prohibited from posting photos of School events or students on their personal Facebook pages or any other social media sites such as Twitter or Instagram. Photos may be sent to the Communications Department, who will, in most cases, post the appropriate photos to the School's Facebook page.

Faculty may not accept current students or parents as "friends" on their personal Facebook pages or any other social media sites and should wait a period of three years after a family leaves St. Stephen's before granting access.

The following uses of social media are also considered inappropriate: engaging in unlawful and malicious activities; sending, receiving or accessing pornographic material; engaging in abusive, profane, sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise objectionable language; misrepresenting oneself or St. Stephen's; defeating or attempting to defeat security features on St. Stephen's applications; engaging in commercial activities for personal profit; sending chain letters; chatting in chat rooms; or causing congestion or disruption of St. Stephen's network.

## **Internet Use**

Employees are expected to use the Internet for work and educational purposes. Websites should not be accessed that have been blocked by St. Stephen's in accordance to the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). At no time is it acceptable for an employee to utilize the School's Internet connection to access obscene or pornographic websites, websites promoting gambling or matters violating federal and state laws. Internet access at St. Stephen's is monitored. The School has an absolute right to document and inspect an employee's Internet (including email) usage while utilizing the School's computer network. In addition, employees should not share their login or password information with others or attempt to find others' login and password information. Users shall not communicate using a false identity.

## **Email Use**

Faculty and staff are reminded to keep email communication professional at all times. When communicating with parents, especially about a sensitive matter, a phone call or meeting in person is preferred – do not use email. Use email when communicating basic information.

Keeping to the following aspects of email etiquette by all stakeholders will support our on-going partnership:

- Take a breath before emailing concerns;
- After three (3) exchanges on one topic, advance to phone or in-person discussions;
- When verbal agreements are reached, use email to confirm the decision/process;
- Never send what should be stated;
- Copy only those who need to know;
- Keep responses timely;
- When in doubt, ask the direct supervisor (Principal or Director of Fine Arts) to read a draft before sending.

Email may not be used for solicitation to sell items like kitchenware, cosmetics, jewelry, etc. or solicitation to a particular charity. In addition, emails that are chain letters, or are obscene, harassing, or offensive are prohibited. Email content must not be in violation of any state, local or federal laws or regulations. This includes, without limitation, material protected by copyright or trademark without proper authorization. Any material that is obscene or defamatory constitutes unacceptable use. All email from School accounts are not considered private and may be monitored by School staff.

Faculty and staff are required to use the email signature template provided by the Communications Department, without alteration. Do not open unfamiliar emails or attachments. Delete them and empty the computer “trash can”. If the email or attachment is suspicious, contact the Technology Director immediately.

## **School Logo and Email Signatures**

Each year the Communications Department will provide the appropriate logo for all documents/letters and the updated email signature template. All employees are asked to update their files no later than 5 days after receiving both the logo and email template. Titles must be succinct, representing one’s main role. Questions can be directed to the appropriate supervisor.

## **School Equipment and Software**

Employees will not misuse telephones, email system, Starboard, iPads, computer, printer, or other School equipment. Teachers may only use the computer for educational purposes at the time they are responsible for students and/or are in the presence of students.

No software may be downloaded on a computer or iPad that is owned by the School without approval from the Technology Department. Unapproved software will be subject to removal upon discovery and disciplinary actions could be taken. In addition, School computers and other equipment can be obtained from the Technology Director, as needed. When registering School software, use the email address [software@ssesh.org](mailto:software@ssesh.org) rather than your School email address. Employees may not bring in their personal computers for the Technology Director to fix UNLESS they are having problems accessing the School's mail system and other School software from home.

## **Facilities/Equipment Issues**

Any problems with the School's facilities or IT equipment should be reported to the Facility or IT Manager via email or by submitting a help-desk ticket here: <http://helpdesk.ssesh.org/portal>. Verbal requests for a repair are not official requests. If the repair is not made within a reasonable amount of time, please send a second request and copy the Head of School and Director of Finance. Employees are responsible for assigned equipment – Do not leave computers in your car!

## Appendix A – Employee COVID-19 Acknowledgement

As employees of St. Stephen's Episcopal School, you are in a unique position to join arms and endeavor to extend our care of students during COVID-19. Our students and families need the in-depth and individualized education we provide that values the whole person, the impactful qualities of student interaction and actively engaged learning. Our students and families depend on us to provide this experience in a physical environment which mitigates risk to COVID-19.

In an environment built on the best scientific guidance for safe processes, enhanced by employee training, intentional implementation and a culture of grace and courtesy, risk to students, families and one another can be managed. Communications can be effective. Confidence can exist which allows each of us to see our students, mentor their becoming, and challenge their minds. We are interdependent on one another to make this a reality.

As we embark on the path to meet this challenge together, please carefully read and consider the following. In light of the training and information provided to you regarding the safety protocols adopted for our school and the support provided by school leadership, please provide your signature indicating your commitment to the following:

- I will not work sick.
- I will self-manage social distancing.
- I will wear a mask.
- I understand my temperature will be taken daily, as I enter campus.
- I will notify the Head of School (Rector, if shared staff) if I suspect that I have been exposed to COVID-19 or if I am diagnosed with COVID-19.
- I will observe all COVID-19 policies and procedures (published on [www.sshesh.org](http://www.sshesh.org)) and support participation by all adults with whom I encounter.
- I will wash my hands often and use hand sanitizer.
- I will guide students to observe the healthy practices as outlined to me in training and in COVID-19 policies and procedures.
- I will publicly support all requirements for safety.
- I understand that I may be required to quarantine if I am directly exposed to, or contract COVID-19. I understand and will adhere to the Return to Work requirements.
- I understand I will likely be supporting on-campus and distance learning students.
- I understand that I am an integral part of an exceptional school staff, qualified to meet this challenge.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

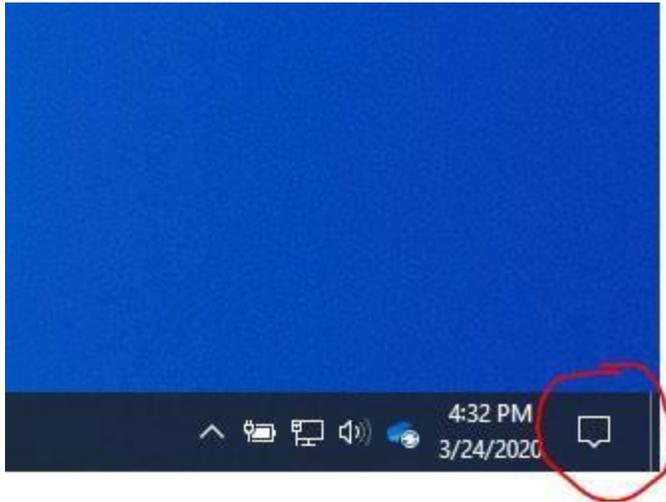
Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

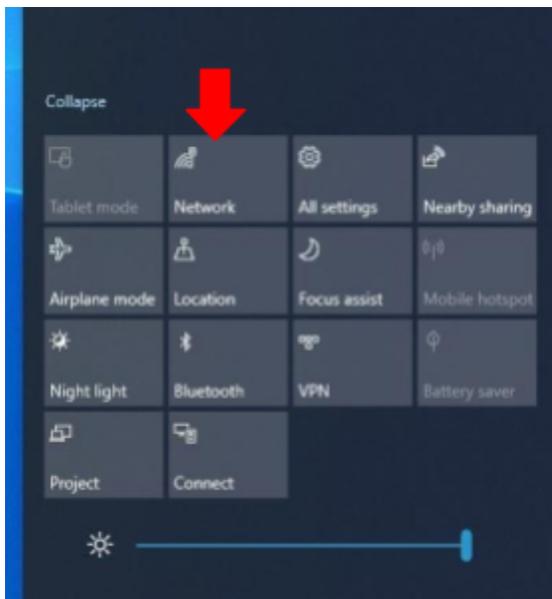
## Appendix B – Connect Laptop to WiFi

Login using your credentials (or type in your password if you're currently signed in)

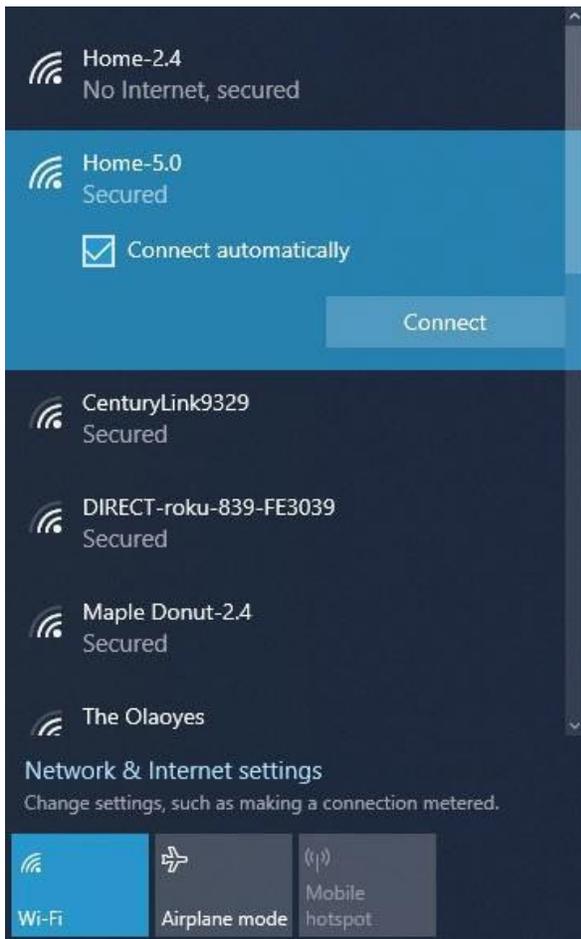
Click on the “Notification Box” that’s located on the lower right-hand corner of the screen



Click on “Network”



Look for the name of your home WiFi network. When you see it, select it, check the box that says “Connect Automatically”, and then click "Connect"



Enter the WiFi password

## Appendix C – Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form

### ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL – HOUSTON EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

This Employee Handbook contains information about St. Stephen's Episcopal School – Houston. I understand and acknowledge that the information, policies, and benefits described in the handbook are subject to change, annually, and that addenda may be provided as needed, with or without prior notice, and revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is not intended to be a contract of employment for any particular duration and that my employment with St. Stephen's is at will. I agree to consult with the Head of School regarding any questions not answered in the handbook or if I need clarification of any of St. Stephen's policies or procedures.

I have read the handbook which is located online, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Employee's Name

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Employee's Signature

Date

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