

# St. Stephen Lutheran School Parent Handbook

## FOREWORD

St. Stephen Lutheran Church and School welcome you! We encourage you to review this handbook as you consider a Christian education for your child. The handbook presents the objectives and goals of our school, its teachers, and staff. It also defines our school's general philosophy of education, which focuses on our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For us, education takes its direction from the Holy Scriptures, which reveal God's eternal presence in all creation. In it, we're shown the grace of God through in our Savior Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's work of renewing and creating in each believer a new person in God's image.

Our school stresses academic excellence, strong character, and mutual compassion and understanding. We endeavor to give your child a well-rounded education to prepare him or her for this life and eternity. We hope you share these goals with us and will consider our school to help you provide for your child's needs.

The Board of Education  
St. Stephen Lutheran Church and School

## **OUR MISSION:**

The mission of St. Stephen Lutheran School is to proclaim Jesus Christ as Savior, equip ambassadors for His Service, and uphold high academic standards.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

### **Proclaiming Jesus Christ as Savior:**

***For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*** John 3:16

St. Stephen Lutheran School (SSLS) seeks to glorify God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We teach the Bible as the very Word of God. We teach the gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God for salvation from sin and the only way to eternal life. All students are taught the Bible as the history of God's work of redemption through His Son, Jesus Christ. Our curriculum includes biblical doctrine in order that students might be firmly established in the truth. We rely on the Holy Spirit to create faith in the Savior, and to enable students to put this faith into practice.

## **Equipping ambassadors for His service:**

***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ...We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. 2 Corinthians 5:17, 20***

SSLS is committed to building Christian character and to fostering service, evangelism, and discipleship skills. Our aim is to identify and develop God-given talents, gifts, and abilities. Our curriculum and daily school life are structured to provide a nurturing environment for personal Christian growth.

## **Upholding high academic standards:**

***And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Colossians 3:17***

SSLS maintains high scholastic standards in all subjects. Our curriculum review process ensures that we meet or exceed the academic requirements for general education set down by the State of California. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive education, with a continuing commitment to academic excellence and careful regard for the individual's learning potential. We are pleased to offer flexibility to individual students based not only on grade level, but also on capability.

## **CURRICULUM:**

### **Religion**

- Bible history
- Bible doctrine
- Apologetics
- Bible memorization
- Study of praise and worship music
- Community and congregational service
- Choral music
- Reformation history

### **English**

- Grammar
- Composition
- Phonics
- Spelling
- Reading
- Literature units
- Penmanship
- World literature

**Science**

- Earth science
- Life science
- Physical science
- Science laboratory

**Mathematics**

- Elementary mathematics
- Pre-algebra
- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- STEM labs

**Social Studies**

- US history
- World history
- Geography
- Civics
- Nation study
- California history

**Computer**

- Keyboarding
- Word processing
- Internet research skills

**Fine Arts**

- Drama
- Music appreciation
- Music theory
- Art and art appreciation
- Public speaking

Homework is assigned at the teacher's discretion. The curriculum is continuously reviewed and updated.

The entire curriculum serves to glorify Jesus as Lord and Savior. The class day is warmed by the constant love of God in Christ. We seek to educate not only mind and body, but also heart and soul. Our program instills the unchanging truths of God's Word with Bible study, Catechism doctrine, prayer, hymns, and Bible verses.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY:**

### **ORGANIZATION**

Organization is an essential skill to teach to students! Please take note of the following organizational tools, and help to enforce these at home:

- Take-home folder: Each day, a take-home folder will be sent home in the student's backpack. The folder will include pockets for graded work sent home, items that need to return to school, and parent/teacher communication. This folder should be checked daily.
- ThinkWave: All assignments for the upcoming week will be listed on ThinkWave. When in doubt of an assignment's due date or whether there is homework, students and parents can check ThinkWave. Results of graded homework and overall grade are also shared through ThinkWave and both parents and students are encouraged to check grades and homework there regularly.

### **AMOUNT**

The amount of homework assigned will vary from grade to grade. All children will be responsible for a few daily tasks: 20-30 minutes of reading (aloud for younger children), studying spelling, and memory work. Beyond these responsibilities, K-2nd have a minimal amount of homework; most will be completed in school. Grades 3-5 will normally have 30-60 minutes and grades 6-8 may have 1-2 hours each evening. Every day, students are expected to complete any homework, complete their reading minutes, study spelling words, and study memory work.

### **HOMEWORK SHEETS**

Grades 1-4 will use homework sheets. These serve a two-fold purpose. They help your child to keep track of work, and they inform you of your child's homework situation. Every week, K-4 graders will receive a new sheet. Anything written on the assignment sheet (unless otherwise specified) is homework! Your child will bring this sheet home. Please check over all homework and the homework sheet, and initial the sheet daily. Your child will give the sheet to his teacher the following morning. This ensures daily communication between teachers and parents!

## UPDATE REGARDING COVID-19 AND ONLINE LEARNING

It is the intention to continue to maintain grade-level standards for the students. The staff will make every effort to continue the regular coursework for the student's level, as we would in any other year. Students will still be required to attend classes in person or online (depending on school closures or quarantine) and submit assigned material in a timely manner.

### **HOME AND SCHOOL:**

SSLS is a school that considers Christian education to be the most complete and valuable education available, since it deals with all aspects of a child's development: soul, mind, and body. Our school, however, cannot take the place of the home. It can only aid parents in their God' given duty of "training" their child "in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6).

In our view, our school provides professional training in spiritual and secular subjects while the home upholds and reinforces the work of the school. The primary responsibility for the child's education remains with the parents. Parents will take an active part in the education of their children.

***And these words which I command you today will be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.***  
Deuteronomy 6:5-7

### **ENROLLMENT:**

1. Submit Application
2. Schedule a Tour & Shadow Day
3. Meet with the principal and pastor
4. Board of Education review and decision
5. Complete Enrollment Form

Our school hopes to foster a kind of faith life which goes beyond what can be accomplished in the classroom. We therefore cordially invite parents and their children to participate in the worship services, Sunday school, Bible classes, and other activities of our school's sponsor, St. Stephen Lutheran Church.

We feel that it is very important that parents know and understand what is being taught to their children in our school; therefore, we also **require** that parents of new enrollees attend a two hour introduction class to the Biblical teachings of our church and church body. Attendance at this meeting by **both** parents is strongly encouraged. We have found that the study provides information parents both need and want.

The Board of Education reserves the right to deny continued enrollment to any student if there is a conflict with the stated principles and rules of the school. It also reserves the right to deny enrollment to any student whose needs cannot be met by the available staff.

## **GRADE PLACEMENT:**

Generally, kindergarten students must be 5 years old and first grade students must be 6 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> before they can be admitted. Other grade placements are determined on the basis of achievement tests, past records of performance, and other indicators of ability, aptitude and maturity.

## **FIELD TRIPS:**

SSLS provides many enhancements to the curriculum in the form of field trips to area cultural events, museums, businesses, and other learning opportunities. Parental permission is required before students can participate in field trips. Parents may also be asked to help with student transportation. Drivers transporting children to and from school activities must be insured and have a valid California driver's license. Seat belts and car seats as required by law are required for each child transported in private vehicles.

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Occasionally, SSLS will release online or printed publications and posts. Parents will be asked to share their comfort level with photos of their children. Our school will abide by the wishes of the parents when sharing images of the students.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS:**

Students at or before arrival must be fully immunized for diphtheria, haemophilus influenzae type b, measles, mumps and pertussis (except for students who are seven years or older), poliomyelitis, rubella, tetanus, hepatitis b, varicella (chicken pox), and any other disease deemed appropriate by the state department of health services. Those students entering seventh grade must be fully immunized against pertussis (includes all boosters appropriate for the student's age). Cal. Health and Safety Code §120335.

All medications must be left with the child's teacher. No medication (including pain relievers) may be dispensed without written parental permission.

Children who are ill must be kept home for the welfare both of the child and of others in our school. Arrangements must be made for students who become ill during school hours. Parents must designate someone who is available to pick the child up within one-half hour of being notified of an illness or injury.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Regular attendance is essential for a child's development and continued enrollment in our school. The yearly academic calendar will be provided in the registration packet.

Punctuality is expected. Any arrivals **after 8:10 am** will be considered **unexcused tardies**. Ten unexcused tardies within one trimester will result in a child being withheld from school for one full day. This will occur on the M,T,Th,or F school day following the tenth tardy. Students will be responsible for all missed assignments but there will be a loss of credit for those assignments. Excusable tardies must be called in to the staff **before 8:00 am**. Parents must notify the school if their child will be absent. The staff must be notified of all absences and tardies by 8:00 am.

Children are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school hours without permission from a parent. Please attempt to schedule all necessary appointments after school. If this is not possible, please arrange appointments during the noon hour or at the end of the school day.

Only children enrolled in the school or participating in special programs are allowed on the premises during regular school hours.

### **Drop-off and Pick-up Times:**

**Arrival:** Doors open at 8:00 am and close at 8:10 am.

#### **Departure:**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday dismissal at 3:15 pm. Doors close at 3:30 pm.

Wednesday dismissal at 2:30 pm. Doors close at 2:45 pm.

Early dismissal at 12:00 pm. Doors close at 12:15 pm.

If a child remains on campus after 3:30 pm on regular dismissal days or after 2:45 pm on early dismissal days without school consent, a late pick-up fee will be owed at time the child is picked up.

## **DISCIPLINE:**

We pray that SSLS is a place where Christ is honored and where our good behavior flows naturally from His love to us. We teach children to be ambassadors for Christ in all aspects of their daily life. To this end, teachers and volunteers are trained to maintain Christian discipline at all times. They strive to discipline all children fairly according to Scriptural principles and with unconditional Christian love. They are guided by our written discipline policy. Specific rules of conduct for our school, as well as discipline procedures, will be given to students and parents during the first week of classes.

At SSLS children are taught three basic rules. All school routines flow from these biblical commands.

### **BE KIND:**

***Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as in Christ God forgave you.*** Ephesians 4:32

### **BE SAFE:**

***But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.*** 1 Corinthians 14:40

***Therefore honor God with your body.***

1 Corinthians 6:20

### **BE RESPECTFUL:**

***Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*** Hebrews 13:17

***Therefore encourage one another and guild each other up, just as in fact you are doing.***

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Procedure for continued minor infractions:

- 1) conversation with the teacher and review of the rule or routine
- 2) "practicing" the correct routine or behavior
- 3) "teacher boundaries" which means staying close to a teacher to ensure their protection and the safety of the students around them.

Possible consequences for serious infractions:

- 1) an email or call to the parents
- 2) meeting with the parents and student
- 3) one-day suspension in which the student receives no credit for the assignments
- 4) three-day suspension in which the student receives no credit for the assignments



## **DRESS CODE:**

St. Stephen Lutheran School has a school uniform policy. Students are expected to be in uniform as well as neat and clean. Exceptions may be allowed for field trips and extracurricular activities. A specific outline of the uniform requirements will be provided.

## **BETWEEN PARENTS AND STAFF:**

### ***Report Cards***

Report cards are sent home at the end of each trimester. If a child is working below his or her abilities, a notice is sent home prior to the report card date.

### ***Conferences***

Conferences are held at the end of the first and second trimester in an ongoing effort to bring school and home together in the education of each child.

### ***Visits***

Parents will naturally wish to inquire into their child's education. Please make arrangements to visit the classroom or meet with the staff as often as desired.

### ***Communications***

Parents can stay up to date on school happenings by checking the website (blog and parent resources pages), and via email communications.

### ***Support***

Parents are expected to support the instructors in all academic and disciplinary matters. If problems arise, parents are asked to address them with the teacher involved. Subsequently, if necessary, they may confer with the principal and the Board representative.

## **TESTING PROGRAM:**

The Iowa Assessments are administered to students every year. These tests monitor students' accomplishments in various subject areas and provide a standard means for evaluating progress throughout the educational process.

## **BOOKS AND SUPPLIES:**

Textbooks purchased by the school are used for several years. Student fees cover this cost. These books must be maintained in good order. Replacement fees are assessed on lost or damaged books.

Each child is expected to bring his or her personal school supplies on the first day of school. Our school furnishes a list of required supplies. Please replenish supplies as needed throughout the year.

## **LUNCH:**

SSLS does not provide meals. Students are asked to bring their own snacks and lunches. Volunteers are available to warm the children's meals in a microwave oven.

## **REGISTRATION:**

Initial fee payments and tuition are required of all who attend St. Stephen Lutheran School. Additional student and activity fees are charged to cover costs for work books, textbook rentals, supplies and materials, basic field trip expenses, and Family Fun Night. The Books and Materials fee is non-refundable.

## **ACCOUNT PAYMENTS:**

Payments may be made annually or monthly. Monthly payments are divided over ten equal payment periods beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> and ending May 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Monthly payments are due and payable on the first of each month and considered delinquent on the 6th.
- A \$10.00 late fee is added to each account for payments made after the 5th of each month.
- The late fee will increase to \$20.00 for payments made after the 10th of each month.
- All accounts must be kept current in order for the student to remain enrolled in the school.
- If an account becomes 30 days past due, the student will not be eligible to attend classes until the delinquent account is brought up to date.

If a student is dismissed or withdrawn for any reason, the tuition is charged for the entire month, even if the student is in attendance for only a portion of that month. Written notification of withdrawal must be submitted to the school office. School records are not released until all accounts are made current.

## **Late Enrollment:**

When a student is enrolled in SSLS after the academic year has already started, they are not required to pay the full year's tuition. The amount is prorated based on the number of school days remaining at the time of enrollment and divided equally among the remaining months.

Here is an example of how this would work:

There are 176 total days of school. Tuition for a full year is \$12,000.

Count the number of days a child will be in attendance.

If a child joins on March 6, there are 61 school days remaining.

$$\begin{array}{r} 61 \quad \times \\ \hline 176 \quad \$12,000 \end{array}$$

To get the prorated tuition amount, multiply 61 x 12,000. Then divide by 176.

$$61 \times 12,000 / 176 = \$4,159.09$$

There are three payment months remaining (Mar, Apr, May), so divide the total tuition amount by 3.

$$\$4,159.09 / 3 = \$1,386.33$$

Round to the nearest dollar for monthly payment amount.

March \$1,386  
April \$1,386  
May \$1,386

The initial fees, such as Books & Materials fee and the Activity Fee, are due along with the first tuition payment as normal.

## **PROPERTY LIABILITY:**

Our school enjoys the use of the facilities of St. Stephen Lutheran Church. While normal wear and tear are assumed during the operation of a school such as this, the church reserves the right to charge individual parents for material damage directly attributable to the neglect, abuse, or misuse of these facilities, furnishings, and personal property by their children.

## **OTHER PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Our parents bring many gifts to SSLS. We appreciate their participation, which enhances our school immeasurably. Required annual parent involvement includes attending at least two parent-teacher conferences, and four evening meetings (Back to School Night, Spring Fair, and two Book Club Evenings).

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

SSLS is most pleased to make this educational opportunity available to you and your children. The governing body of St. Stephen Lutheran School is the voting membership of St. Stephen Lutheran Church, operating through its Board of Education. If you have any questions about this handbook, the administration of our school, or the teaching ministry of SSLS, please direct your inquiries to:

**St. Stephen Lutheran School**  
**320 Moorpark Way**  
**Mountain View, CA 94041**  
**650-961-2071**  
[www.SSLS.org](http://www.SSLS.org)  
principal@ssls.org

\* Notice of non-discriminatory policy as to students St. Stephen Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan program, and athletic and other school-administered programs.