

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: What are the school hours?**

PreK3: 7:45-2:55PM

VPK: 7:45-11:00AM / Extended Hours: 11:00-2:55PM

K-8: 7-45-2:55PM

Extended Day

Morning-7:00-7:30AM

VPK: 11:00-2:55PM OR 11:00-6:00PM

Afternoon-PreK-8: 2:55-6:00PM

### **Q: What is the school uniform policy?**

All students wear the school uniforms purchased from School Zone

### **Q: Does the school offer financial assistance?**

The school also accepts the Step Up for Students Scholarship provided through the state of Florida. Details about this income-based scholarship can be found at their website. ([www.stepupforstudents.org](http://www.stepupforstudents.org))

### **Q: IS SMCS an accredited school?**

We are accredited through the Florida Catholic Conference (FCC) every seven years.

### **Q. What curriculum is used?**

St. Matthews Catholic School uses the Sunshine State Standards Curriculum combined with National Standards

### **Q: What standardized test does SMCS administer?**

Standardized tests are administered annually. Like all other diocesan schools, SMCS uses the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), given to students in grades 3-8 in the fall and grade 2 in the spring. Results are provided to parents and used to determine student needs.

### **Q: What is the student-teacher ratio?**

We currently have 25 teachers and approximately 265 students. The ratio varies between grade levels and is based on guidelines established by the Florida Catholic Conference (FCC).

### **Q: How is the Lunch Program set up?**

SMCS offers an optional hot lunch program five days a week. Snacks and beverages may also be purchased. Monthly calendars are sent via email and in Monday folders.

### **Q: What other services does SMCS offer?**

The following services provide for the recognized needs of school families:

Uniform Sale: stocked with outgrown girls' and boys' uniforms, donated by SMCS families. Sold by cheerleaders at Orientation and throughout the year

Lost and Found: allows for students to recover misplaced personal items. Please label all items.

Forgotten Lunch: Children without a lunch have the option of a peanut butter and/or jelly sandwich or a chef's salad and will be charged.

Extended Services: Morning Extended Services begin at 7:00AM. Afternoon Extended Services provides care until 6:00PM.

Summer Camp: Offered for 8 weeks during the summer months.

**Q: What happens if my child is sick or needs medicine?**

If a student becomes sick or injured during the day, parents/guardians are called. Prior to calling home, staff members take the student's temperature, talk to the student about symptoms, and talk to the teacher to determine the situation.

Medication should be turned in to the Main Office, whether or not it is prescription or over-the-counter medicine. Parents/guardians are required to fill out a consent form allowing a staff member to watch the child administer the medication. A medication log is maintained by the office staff.

**Q: How many students are enrolled?**

Every year we have 260-300 students enrolled from grades PK-8th grade. Class sizes range from 10-35 students, many classes with aides. We abide by the FL Catholic Conference for enrollment guidelines.

**Q: What percentage of the school is Catholic?**

SMCS enjoys having approximately 85% of our students celebrate the Catholic tradition, but we invite students of all faiths and background to attend.

**Q: What is the relationship between the parish and the school?**

The school is a ministry of the church. The pastor oversees the operation of the school and is an active member in the School Board and Finance Committee. The pastor and principal work toward the common goals of providing a spiritually rich, Catholic education with an academically challenging and socially uplifting environment. Students attend and participate in Mass every week.

**Q: Does the school have a guidance program and/or offer counseling services?**

The mission of the guidance program at SMCS is to promote student success with emphasis on the beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church. The guidance program is integrated with the school's total program focusing on a commitment to individual value and respect, uniqueness, an understanding of multicultural diversity, and the full development of each person's potential. The program addresses the relationships, social and personal issues including identifying and dealing with bullying in monthly class lessons. Academic problems or concerns of students and parents are addressed through individual counseling and group guidance. The ultimate goal is for students to learn how to make independent, attainable, and responsible goals and decisions that will help them be successful citizens.

Counseling services through the school are available to all students. Responsive services, which address students' and parents' immediate concerns, are conducted through individual counseling and conferences. In addition, the counselor provides referral sources for outside counseling.

**Q: How diverse is the school?**

Our school community is enriched by various cultures, including Asian, Hispanic, Filipino, Vietnamese, Middle Eastern, Haitian, and others.