



*St. Thomas of Canterbury School
336 Hudson Street
Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY 12520*

Parent/Student Handbook

2009-2010 School Year

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PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK
2009-2010

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY OF SCHOOLS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

Roman Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of New York base not only their educational purposes, but all their activities on the Christian teaching of the essential equality of all men as rooted in the fatherhood of God, Christ's love, and man's supernatural destiny.

Thus, with discrimination so repugnant to their nature and mission, Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese have not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

All Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese subscribe to this policy, the parishes of the Archdiocese or religious communities within the Archdiocese.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas of Canterbury Parish School is a Catholic School dedicated to spiritual, academic, and social excellence so that each student may leave empowered to make a difference in the community and the world at large.

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

Each year can be a new beginning for every child at St. Thomas of Canterbury School. You have the opportunity to make this year your very best. All of you can be successful, for each of you are gifted in some way that is different from every other student in this school. We want you to know from the very beginning of the year that we will do everything we can to help you reach that potential. We can do this only if we all work together.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

St. Thomas School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the three objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with Christian values. This commitment extends to building Christian community and to fostering Christian service to the whole human family.

RELIGIOUS ATTRIBUTE

At St. Thomas of Canterbury School, we strive to fulfill our religious commitment and to attain academic excellence through the educational mission of the church. Our program uses the pastoral message on Catholic Education To Teach As Jesus Did. We aim to integrate the Word revealed by God and the fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit with service to the entire community. Christ's message of love is the central theme of our school. As proclaimed in the Gospel, we recognize that each student is the focus of God's love. St. Thomas of Canterbury School creates an atmosphere that fosters a responsible and active membership to God's family.

We make a dedicated effort to transform the concept of community into a working reality of service. With a spirit of celebration, trust, and hospitality, we emphasize our interdependence and shared responsibilities. The entire school community serves as educators of one another. Through the experience of a Christian community, we strive to lead our students to an awareness of the needs of their sisters and brothers in the school, neighborhood, and society.

St. Thomas of Canterbury School
336 Hudson Street
Cornwall-on-Hudson, N.Y. 12520

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

Reverend Bernard P. Heter..... Pastor
Reverend Richard Caplice, S.J..... Parochial Vicar
Mr. John Peella..... Deacon
Mr. William Stafford..... Deacon
Msgr. Francis X. Duffy..... Pastor Emeritus
Mrs. Judy Valentine..... Director of Religious Education
Mrs. Agnes E. Maleakas..... Principal

FACULTY

Mrs. Mary Diane Lynch Grades 7 & 8
Mr. Dennis Costello..... Grades 5 & 6
Mrs. Ann Luca Grades 3 & 4
Mrs. Barbara Locascio..... Grade 2
Mrs. Corinne Herbst..... Grade 1
Mrs. Regina Mariotti..... Kindergarten
Mrs. Olivia L. Ferrara..... Music
Mrs. Eileen M. Ryan..... Phys. Ed.
Mrs. Alana Staudle..... Computer
Sra. Julia Castro..... Spanish

OFFICE STAFF

Mrs. Carol Henderson

HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Jennifer Rivera

CUSTODIAN

Mr. Peter Ralph
Mr. Duane Hamlin

PHONE NUMBERS

St. Thomas of Canterbury Parish School 534-2019
School Fax..... 534-2483
Dir. Religious Education 534-9393
St. Thomas of Canterbury Rectory..... 534-2547
Hall Phone..... 534-8845

Email: stoc336@hvc.rr.com
Website: www.stthomasofcanterburyparish.com

ST. THOMAS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The purpose of the St. Thomas Advisory Council (STAC) is to assist the pastor and principal in the daily operation of the school. The members have worked on improving the building and grounds, computers, marketing and development, finances and spirituality. In addition the playground and school renovations were made possible by the work of STAC.

PARENT GUILD

The purpose of the Parent Guild is to raise money to help subsidize the school budget. The money raised is used to benefit the children. Without the activities planned by the Guild it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the students to receive materials that enhance their learning.

The activities planned are of a social nature and are meant to be enjoyed by all. Your cooperation and assistance is essential to our students.

SCHOOL PROCEDURAL POLICIES

REGISTRATION & ADMISSION

A prospective kindergarten student **MUST** be 5 before December 1 of that year. A birth certificate and baptismal certificate should be presented at the time of registration. Medical and health requirements, as stated under New York State Law, must be met; therefore proper documentation of immunizations, etc. must be presented also. Kindergarten student's acceptance is contingent upon successful achievement on the screening test.

New registrations are accepted during the school year if there is room in a particular grade and after consultation with the principal regarding the student's academic, emotional and physical needs. **DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED BEFORE BEING ACCEPTED AS TO PRIOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IE: RECORD CARDS, STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES AND REPORT CARDS.**
All students are accepted on a ninety-day probationary period.

The process for admission is: parents must complete the school application form and provide all required documents. Following an interview and evaluation of the materials, the parent will be notified about the status of the child.

St. Thomas of Canterbury School gives preference in admission first, to siblings of currently enrolled students; second, to Catholic students whose parents are active members of the parish; third, to Catholic students whose parents are active in another Catholic parish; fourth, to non-Catholic students.

RE-REGISTRATION

At the time of re-registration parents will be notified if their child is being invited to return to the school in September or if the child is not being invited back.

Students attending St. Thomas of Canterbury School are asked to re-register for the following year.

EMERGENCY FORM

Parents/Guardians will be asked to complete information on an Emergency Card. **This information must be received by the end of the first week of school.** This will enable us to make contact with a designated person in the event of an emergency concerning the student. Keeping this information up to date is a necessity and we ask your cooperation regarding this matter. All numbers are kept confidential. Parents and Guardians of students whose address or phone number (business or home) changes must notify the school office and their teacher as soon as the new address and/or number are effective.

TRANSFERS

Any student transferring from St. Thomas of Canterbury School to any other school whether parochial, private or public must request a transfer form from the principal and the parent must sign a release form for records. Records, academic and health, are sent directly to the receiving school upon request from that school. The school should be notified a few days in advance of the actual date of transfer. Parents or guardians must request a transfer of records from the new school their child will be attending.

ALL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS MUST BE SATISFIED BEFORE SCHOOL RECORDS CAN BE RELEASED.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

St. Thomas of Canterbury School expects students to perform to the best of their ability. Teachers are expected to evaluate student progress on a regular basis. Students will be given quizzes or tests regularly. After the test is graded, it will be sent home for the parent to review and sign. Parent signature indicates that the parent is aware of the student's progress. If a parent does not receive quizzes or tests to sign, the parent should contact the teacher.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential part of the instructional program and reinforces learning. It serves as a means for clarifying and reviewing material learned in class, for providing motivation and opportunity for individual growth, and for creating experiences of in-depth study and supplementary reading.

The time allotments for homework (written and study) are as follows:

Grade K	approximately 15 minutes
Grades 1 & 2	approximately 30 minutes
Grades 3 & 4	approximately 45 minutes
Grades 5 & 6	approximately 90 minutes
Grades 7 & 8	approximately 120 minutes

Students are required to complete all homework and it is expected that parents or guardians abide by the teacher's classroom policy.

GRADES AND GRADING

Report cards are distributed four times a year for Grades K to 8. The report card is a link between the school and the home.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The first part of the Archdiocesan Report Card is used to mark the student's achievement in academic subjects.

- The achievement mark is based upon the demonstration of mastery of material covered in class such as:
 1. class work
 2. homework
 3. daily quizzes
 4. unit tests
 5. comprehensive examinations and
 6. special projects

The June grade on the report card is an average of the four previous record card grades. This grade will be recorded on the student's permanent record card.

- Numerical marks are recorded on report cards for Grades 1-8;
Passing is any mark 70% or above or any mark of D or higher.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

The conduct/effort mark is placed under Character Development as a "Conduct Grade". This mark indicates that the student

1. follows class and school rules,
2. shows care in the use of personal property,
3. treats teachers with respect,
4. treats other students with respect,
5. exercises self-control,
6. listens attentively,
7. uses technology appropriately

HONOR ROLL GRADES 4-8

ALL CRITERIA MUST BE MET IN ORDER TO ATTAIN/MAINTAIN HONORS.

High Honors

95% average or above in each of the following subjects: religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and French.

No checks in subject subcategories.

A in conduct with no checks in subcategories.

A in art, music, physical education

First Honors

90-95% overall average in religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and French. Maximum of 1 check in subject subcategories.

A in conduct with maximum of 1 check in subcategories.

A or B in art, music, physical education

No grade below 85% on the report card.

Second Honors

85-89% overall average in religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and French.

Maximum of 2 checks in subject subcategories.

A or B in conduct with maximum of 2 checks in subcategories.

A or B in art, music, physical education

No grade below 80% on the report card.

Honorable Mention

Any student who shows significant improvement during the quarter in religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and French.

A or B in conduct

B or C in art, music, physical education

No grade below 75% on the report card.

Maximum of 2 checks in subject subcategories

Maximum of 2 checks in conduct subcategories.

REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION

Report cards will be withheld if financial obligations have not been met and fees are outstanding. All report cards will be mailed home except for the first quarter report card. A conference day and time will be sent home to each parent. They must attend the conference in order to receive their child's report card. Report cards may not be given before the assigned date.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Very few decisions we make about children are more important than recommendations to promote or to retain a student. Most students will be able to follow the school's regular program of sequential learning objectives. If the student successfully achieves the year's objectives, the student progresses to the next grade.

Testing, diagnosis, and actual performance, however, sometimes indicate that some students would benefit from the repetition of the school year. Therefore, the decision to retain a student presupposes that although the school has done everything to help the student achieve success, the student has not made satisfactory progress. *The decision of the principal is final regarding promotion and retention.*

SUMMER SCHOOL

Since most summer schools offer reading, mathematics, and language arts, a student who has failed in one or more of these subjects in three marking periods of the report card will be required to take a remedial course during the summer. It is the parent's responsibility to find a summer school in the area. Summer school also may be recommended due to poor performance on standardized tests or in the classroom.

The summer school Report Card must be submitted to the office in September. Failure to attend summer school will result in retention. It is the parent's responsibility to provide documentation that summer school has been successfully completed. In cases in which tutoring is allowed for the remediation, it must be undertaken by a qualified teacher.

ASSESSMENTS

In addition to class and school exams your child will also take part in the Archdiocesan testing program which includes the Archdiocesan religion test, annual standardized tests, and New York State Education Department assessments. These tests measure academic growth over a period of time.

Standardized Tests

ITBS	Grades 1 to 8	October
CogAt	Grades 2, 4, 5, and 7	October

Archdiocesan Tests

Religion Test	Grade 3 to 8	June
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NY State Tests

English / Language Arts	Grade 4 Grade 8	January January
Math	Grades 4 and 8	March
Science	Grade 4 Grade 8	May January
Social Studies	Grade 5 Grade 8	November June
Technology	Grade 8 (Optional)	June

The faculty reviews these test results regularly for the purpose of promotion or retention in conjunction with classroom performance, academic intervention services (AIS) for those who need extra assistance, and grouping for reading and math.

CONFERENCES

Either the teacher or individual parents/guardians may request conferences if necessary and/or desired. Please call school and schedule an appointment to meet with your child's teacher. All conferences are to be held by appointment only. This will provide for a professional meeting.

Teachers may be reached by phone after 3:10 p.m. If it is necessary to contact a teacher during the day, please leave a message with the school secretary and the teacher will return the call when she is free. **Please do not call teachers' homes.**

VISITORS

Visitors, parents/guardians must use the main entrance to the school and report to the secretary in the school office immediately upon entry to school.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school building opens at 8:00 a.m.*

School hours are 8:30 a.m. to 2:55 p.m. for Grades Kdg. through 8th.

Every holyday and first Friday students and teachers will attend 8:30 a.m. Mass.

*If you drive your child to school please do not arrive before 8:15 a.m. since there is no formal supervision until that time. Only bus students will be admitted before 8:15 a.m. Please make every effort to pick your child up promptly at dismissal.

The lobby must be kept clear. Your cooperation is needed for everyone's safety. **We ask that you do not stand in the lobby.** Your child knows to go to the gym upon entering the building and someone will be there to help a child who does not know where to sit.

LATENESS

Student lateness interrupts the learning process for your child and all other children in that classroom. Any student arriving at school after the published opening time is considered late. If late, the student may be admitted to class only with a late pass, obtainable in the main office. Repeated lateness affects your child's ability to be on the honor roll and could impede your child's re-registration for the coming year.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS (during school day)

The school has a sign-out book located in the lobby.

Occasions for the use of a Sign-out book are:

- for liturgies and services when altar servers leave school the students will sign out
- in the event of a student illness the parent or an adult designated by the parent must come to the school and take the child. It is against the law to dismiss a child during school hours except into the direct custody of a parent, guardian, or an adult designated by the parent. If the parent cannot be contacted, the secretary will contact the name listed on the child's emergency contact slip.
- Emergency slips are completed in September and must be updated as necessary.
- When a student is released to a parent or guardian, that adult must sign the book.
- For a prearranged appointment when the student is released, the parent, guardian, or approved adult must sign the book. *[Please note: only the principal **may** approve **the release of a student for a prearranged appointment.**]*

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The purpose of this attendance policy is to ensure that, to the maximum extent possible; every student attends school every day for the entire day. To accomplish this objective, St. Thomas School will employ the following strategies.

STRATEGIES

Explanation of Excused and Unexcused Absence, Tardiness, and Early Departure

The following reasons for absence or tardiness will be considered as **excused**:

sickness	attendance at health clinics
sickness or death in the family	approved work programs
impassable roads or weather	approved school visits
religious observance	suspension
court appearances	

Where applicable, the parent/guardian must provide a written note explaining the reason for the excused absence or tardiness. All other reasons for absence or tardiness will be considered unexcused. The school administration makes the final determination as to whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

The following reasons for early departure will be considered as excused:

sickness

court appearance

attendance at health clinics

All other reasons for early departure will be considered **unexcused**. The school administration makes the final determination as to whether an early departure is excused or unexcused.

A student is expected to be punctual and maintain regular attendance. Extensive vacations requiring students to miss school days during the year are discouraged by the school administration. It is the student's responsibility to make up all missed assignments. Assignments will be given to the child **after** he/she returns from vacation. **In order for a student to attain perfect attendance for the year the following must occur:**

1. The student must arrive to school on time (except if their bus is late).
2. The student is in attendance for the entire school day.
3. The student is in school every day school is in session.

When the child returns to school, a completed absence form must be given to the teacher. This form is distributed at the beginning of the school year and contains appropriate spaces for the child's name, date of absence, class, reason for absence, and the signature of a parent or guardian. Family vacations are not to be planned for those days when school is in session. The school provides families with an annual calendar to insure that does not happen.

Doctor or dental appointments should be scheduled for after school or on Saturdays. If it is necessary for a child to be dismissed during the school day, the parent or adult chosen by the parent **MUST** come to the school for the child. The school must be informed ahead of time about such occurrences.

SICKNESS

Please call the school before 9:00a.m. if your child will be absent. If the office does not get a call, the school secretary or nurse will make a call. In case of serious communicable disease, the school is to be notified by the parent or guardian as soon as possible. The student absent with such sickness must provide a doctor's note on the day of return to school. Prolonged absence or confinement to a hospital requires a doctor's note upon the student's return to school. Please make every effort to schedule doctor's appointments outside the school day.

Regular school attendance is necessary for your child to be successful in school. Students are responsible for missed assignments. Upon request class work and homework for absentees will be left on table in front hall at the end of each day for parents to pickup.

If there is a problem adhering to the school policy regarding attendance and punctuality, the school administration and parent/guardian will meet to define the problem and to develop specific strategies to eliminate the problem. If necessary, ongoing meetings will be held to review the matter.

MATERNITY/PATERNITY POLICIES

As members of the church committed to the preservation of life at all levels, the Catholic school must act in ways consistent with that commitment. Catholic schools, elementary as well as secondary, are faced sometimes with the situations of unwed mothers and fathers. The issue is certainly an emotionally charged one. School officials will consider carefully the consequences of any policies that are adopted. At the very minimum, students will be encouraged to finish their work and to receive grades and diplomas. The decision concerning a student's continued school attendance is made by the principal after consultation with his/her parents or guardians, and in consideration of the best interest of the student, the unborn child and the school's educational expectations.

MEDICATIONS

If a student needs any kind of medication during the school day, the medication is to be brought to the school office and kept there. A written statement from the parent or guardian requesting administration of the medication in school as ordered by the licensed prescriber is required.

Medication must be presented in a properly labeled container. Prescription medication must be in the original container. On the prescription medication the pharmacy label should display:

- student name
- name and phone number of the pharmacy
- licensed prescriber name
- date and number of refills
- name of the medication and dosage
- frequency of administration

Medication should not be transported daily to and from school. Parents should be advised to ask the pharmacist for two containers – one for home and one for school.

The school may receive a written request from a parent or physician to permit a student to carry and self administer his or her own medication. Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to do so. Such a decision will be made on a CASE BY CASE BASIS and will reflect the age and maturity of the child.

- severity of health care problem, particularly asthmatic or allergic conditions
- prescriber order directing the student be allowed to carry his/her medication
- written statement from parent requesting compliance with prescriber order
- student has been instructed in the procedure for self administration and can assume this responsibility
- parent contact is made to clarify parental responsibility in monitoring the child on an ongoing basis to insure the child is carrying and taking the medication as ordered

NURSE'S HOURS: Monday thru Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. An emergency nurse is always available.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

RELEASE OF COPIES OF REPORT CARDS, SCHOOL NOTICES, ETC

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide a non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding your child. If there is a court order specifying that this should not happen, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a copy of the court order. Non-custodial parents are generally entitled to receive duplicate sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc. Such parents might be told to supply the teacher with self-addressed stamped envelopes for convenience and expediency.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Non-custodial parents may pick up a child only if previous arrangements have been made.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Just as the parents look to the school to provide the facilities and the trained personnel that are essential to their child's proper development, so the school looks to the parents to assume active responsibilities that cannot be delegated to others. No school can be wholly effective in teaching the values of religion and the virtues of honesty, respect for authority, consideration for the rights and property of others, and standards of personal morality and integrity unless these principles have been established, upheld, and valued in the home. If parents cooperate with the school, instill respect for the integrity of its teachers and administration, and actively support their authority in the home, this is likely to be reflected in the positive attitudes of their children.

Parents are asked to take an active role in their child's education by:

1. assisting their child in his/her academic and moral development by carefully reviewing class work, test results, progress reports, and report cards; supervising home study; and reinforcing school policies
2. explaining and reviewing periodically the school behavior code with their child. Parents should discuss school disciplinary episodes in relation to the school behavior code
3. recognizing their child's talents and interests so they may be developed in cooperation with the classroom teachers

4. seeing that the dress code, including gym uniform, is enforced, and insisting that children dress according to Christian virtue
5. insisting on their child's regular school attendance and punctuality and on complying with attendance rules and procedures
6. making all tuition and fee payments on time, and participating in fund-raising activities
7. providing proper supervision at home, and not tolerating harassment, inappropriate or violent behavior, or viewing of such in videos, movies, song lyrics, and on the Internet
8. teaching their child respect for law, for authority, for the rights of others, and for public and private property. This includes showing respect for the work of others by not tolerating cheating in any circumstance
9. arranging for a time and place for their child to complete homework assignments
10. working with the school in a cooperative effort to carry out recommendations made in the best interest of their child, including those related to educational evaluations and counseling
11. attending all Parent-Teacher Conferences
12. by always interacting in a respectful manner when speaking with or about the administration, teachers and staff of the school. Verbal abuse or physical harassment may result in your child being required to withdraw from the school immediately or not being allowed to re-register for the following year

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS/SNOW CLOSINGS

Before the start of school: Listen for an announcement on one of the following radio stations:

WBNR 1260AM
 WGNV 1200AM or 103.1FM
 WHUD 100.7 FM
 K104.7 FM

The announcement will be "The Cornwall School District, including St. Thomas of Canterbury is on a delayed opening or closed." PLEASE LISTEN CAREFULLY.

During the SCHOOL DAY: Listen for an announcement on the radio stations listed above, for early dismissal. Since we have children who come to our school from more than one district, please listen for the district in which you live.

In the event of an early dismissal, all parents/guardians will be contacted. **Please do not call the school, as it will slow the process.** We will use the phone numbers on the emergency sheets you returned to us. No child will be released early from school until someone on that information sheet is notified.

CHILD ABUSE LAWS

Under NYS law, school officials are legally obliged to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the proper agency. In so reporting, no allegation is made against a parent or care giver. Rather, it is a judgment by the school that the child may be presenting signs of abuse or neglect.

If the teacher or school nurse suspects abuse or neglect, he or she must immediately confer with the principal to discuss the aspects of the abuse and to determine which person on the school staff will report the alleged abuse to the proper agency.

CONFIDENTIALITY

There is a professional and moral ethic that requires all persons to safeguard all information of a privileged nature. It is imperative that such information be regarded as a sacred trust.

- if there is evidence of knowledge that could impact on the health or safety of any person, the teacher has the responsibility to share the information with the principal
- under Section 423 of the Child Protective Services Act, school officials are required to report when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused or maltreated child. (See section on Child Abuse.)

The rules that govern privileged information apply, as well, to any personal or academic information that is discovered through daily classroom instruction or other social interaction with students, parents or peers. Always the sense of the sacred should prevail.

CAR TRANSPORTATION

All cars must enter the school grounds on HUDSON STREET and proceed to the car line. Please follow arrows.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO ENTER AND EXIT ON HUDSON STREET. SPEED LIMIT IS 10 MPH ON SCHOOL PROPERTY. PLEASE NO PARKING IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL. (AT ANY TIME)
Order of dismissal – Busses, followed by walkers

PARKING

ALL CARS are to be parked in the Church Parking Lot during the school hours, NOT THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT.

A dangerous problem results when parents remove children from the bus lines and try to leave parking lot before busses pull away.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Success in school depends to a great extent on how you feel physically. A good night's sleep, a healthy breakfast and lunch will enable you to use your mind to its fullest. Without them you will feel tired and lacking in the energy necessary to carry out your work.

MILK

Milk is available for the students at lunchtime. Parents are asked to pay for milk at the beginning of the school year for the entire year. Chocolate and white milk are available. Since the milk program is part of the Federal Nutrition Program, the cost is determined at the beginning of each school year after consultation with the dairy and the known government reimbursement to the school. Notification of the cost will be sent home.

LUNCH TIME

All children eat in the gym during the school week. Please remain seated while eating and dispose of all papers and food scraps in the waste paper basket. This will help the custodians who must clean that room everyday.

There are times when children forget their lunch or lunch money. In the event that happens, a lunch will be provided for them. **Due to the increase in peanut and other nut allergies we strongly recommend that students do not bring peanut butter sandwiches or snacks to school.**

RECESS

11:45-12:15 ---- Children will wait for crossing guard to get any equipment that rolls into the street. Children are not to run out into Hudson Street when in parking lot. Children are not to go into the wooded areas around the school.

FIRE DRILLS

Periodically students and faculty will hear the fire bell ring for a drill. This is a very serious matter because following directions might be the difference between life and death for all of us here at St. Thomas. It is demanded that there be perfect silence so that you might listen to instructions. Follow directions in leaving the building immediately. Please respond to your teacher when the attendance is taken. Grades K-8 will go to the front of the upper school along Hudson Street. Emergency drills - Tornado, Hurricanes etc. listen for signals and teacher directions.

ASBESTOS

All schools are obliged to inform their staff and parents of the presence of asbestos in their buildings according to the stipulations set down by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency).
The only area affected is the boiler room of the lower school-in one area-namely, the pipe insulation. We are in full compliance with New York State Regulations regarding asbestos.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education classes are held once a week. Students are responsible for having:

White socks and sneakers

light grey uniform shorts or sweats

light grey T-shirt with school logo or sweatpants

These clothes are important for full participation in all gym activities (Refer to Uniform Section).

Students may not be excused from successive gym periods unless a doctor's note is presented to the school nurse. A parent/guardian may request that a student miss a single P.E. period for a reasonable excuse, provided that this request is in writing and presented to the school nurse or office.

DRESS CODE – UNIFORMS

It is important that you take pride in your appearance by wearing your complete uniform always remembering that by wearing it inside and outside the classroom and the school you are representing the school and your behavior should be a credit to both yourself and the school community.

Boys - Grades Kindergarten through 8th

Green sweater (pullover or vest), or School Sweatshirt

Green trousers

Khaki trousers (**grades 5-8 only**) **

White long or short sleeve shirt

White Knit Shirt with School Logo

Black Belt

Green, brown, black, or white socks

Sturdy School Black or Brown Shoes (not sneakers)

Girls - Grades Kindergarten through 4th

Green Plaid Jumper/ green slacks

White long or short sleeve blouse

Green cardigan, pullover sweater, vest, or school sweatshirt

Green knee socks

Sturdy School Black or Brown Shoes – No Heels, Clogs or Platform Shoes

Girls - Grades 5th through 8th

Green Plaid Skirt/ green slacks,/khaki skirt or khaki slacks**

White long or short sleeve blouse

Green sweater and/or green vest, or School Sweatshirt

Green knee socks

Sturdy School black or Brown Shoes - No Heels, Clogs or Platform Shoes

OPTIONAL SUMMER UNIFORM (Sept1. - Oct 31; May 1- last school day)

Boys and Girls

White polo shirt with school logo

Green walking shorts

khaki walking shorts (**grades 5-8 only**) **

White ankle socks

White sneakers (no high tops)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM

Light grey shorts/sweats (plain)

Light grey t-shirt/sweatshirt with school logo

White socks

Sneakers

****Students in grades 5-8 who choose to wear the khaki uniform must purchase it from Donnelly's. This will ensure that the shade of khaki is the same.**

PLEASE NOTE: BEGINNING IN NOVEMBER ALL STUDENTS MUST BE IN THE REGULAR SCHOOL UNIFORM. ALL BOYS AND GIRLS ARE TO WEAR THE WHITE SHIRT/BLOUSE AND STUDENTS IN GRADES 5-8 ARE TO WEAR THE VEST.

BOYS AND GIRLS UNIFORMS ARE PURCHASED FROM DONNELLY'S.

The dark green hooded sweatshirt may be worn during the day with the regular uniform from November until the end of April.

The grey hooded sweatshirt may only be worn with the phys. Ed. Uniform.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

A good personal hygiene routine should be followed daily: ears, neck, and fingernails should be given special attention. When appropriate, children should be instructed in the use of deodorant.

Uniforms should be neat and clean.

Hair should be clean and well groomed. The boys' hair should not be below the shirt collar. Bangs should not be so long that they impede vision.

Parents will be notified if a child comes to school consistently in an unkempt manner. If no improvement is noticed within a reasonable amount of time, an appointment with the parents and principal will be made.

We ask your cooperation in adhering to our uniform policy.

All students, Kindergarten through 8th grade are to abide by the following:

- Students' hair may not have logos, tails or extreme hair colors
- Boys are not permitted to wear earrings to school.
- Girls are permitted to wear stud earrings only. No hoops or dangling earrings are permitted.
- No tattoos or body piercing.
- Girls are not permitted to wear eye makeup, lipstick, body glitter, or nail polish with the exception of clear nail polish.
- Boys or girls may not wear hats in the building.
- Boys and girls must wear the uniform shoes described in the Uniform section.
- Valuables are to be left at home. This includes large sums of money, jewelry, expensive toys, tapes, electronic games, tape players, radios, and CD players.
- Perfume or cologne may not be worn.
- Shoes must be tied or securely fastened at all times
- Flip flops, slides, platforms or high heeled shoes are not permitted.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STUDENTS

Students attend St. Thomas School in order to develop fully their God-given talents and capabilities. To accomplish this, students are asked to:

- try to do their best work at all times.
- treat all members of the school community (i.e., teachers, staff, priests, parents and students) with respect. This includes respecting the work of others by not cheating.
- obey all school rules and regulations, including those forbidding the use of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or disruptive behavior.
- develop personal standards of conduct that reflect Christian morals and behavior, and refrain from use of inappropriate language, verbal threats, and sexual behavior (including touching, gestures, writing, and dress).
- speak in a well-modulated tone of voice.
- observe the school dress code, including standards on no-uniform days.
- help care for school property and keep the school free from damage and defacement.

HARASSMENT POLICIES

Harassment regulations need to be grounded in the belief that all persons have a right to be treated with dignity. All demeaning behavior is prohibited.

St. Thomas School provides a safe environment for all. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken seriously. Students making such threats even in jest face appropriate disciplinary action including detention, suspension or expulsion. Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment.

Students involved in harassing behavior are subject to detention, suspension, or expulsion and where appropriate, will be referred for counseling services. If you believe that your child is being harassed, please notify the principal immediately. Teachers, also, should report threats made against them to the principal.

DISCIPLINE CODE FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

Parents choosing Catholic school for their children frequently cite our commitment to structure and discipline as a major reason for their investment in Catholic education. Our students are to conduct themselves at all times as examples of Christian behavior and exhibit the values of their family, the Church, and our school community. Good classroom order and a tight school structure help to insure the safety of all children, facilitate the learning for all students, and promote self-control and self-respect in the individual child. While most parents find our approach to discipline to be very favorable, there are instances when a child breaks a rule and must suffer the consequences of his or her action. It is then that a parent may attempt to debate the fairness of the school policy or make excuses for the child's misbehavior. The administration of this school does not engage in debates with parents about our rules and regulations, nor can it be supportive of parents who are interfering with a child's growth in accepting personal responsibility for his or her actions. By enrolling a child in this school the parent agrees to and is supportive of the rules and regulations that we deem as critical in the spiritual, academic, and behavioral growth of the child.

Teachers discipline students directly for minor classroom disruptions, for not coming prepared to class, not being in the complete school uniform, for not completing assigned homework, for minor verbal disputes with other classmates, or other incidents which interfere in the teaching-learning process for the child and his or her classmates. Parents are notified of classroom problems by the teacher and are asked to help the teacher to insure that inappropriate behavior is modified.

Teachers are not permitted to use corporal punishment on any child. Perceived acts of corporal punishment should be reported to the principal of the school immediately by students or parents.

It happens that some classroom discipline issues are referred to the administration of this school. This would include chronic minor problems listed above or major problems such as, but not limited to, chronic lateness, the verbal abuse of the teacher by a child; signs of disrespect to a teacher or another adult on the staff; fighting; physical, sexual, or verbal harassment of a fellow student; violent behavior; stealing; vandalism; or the possession of a drugs, alcohol, or a weapon. The administration handles such matters in a variety of ways depending on the severity of the incident.

The school employs a progressive discipline system for minor acts of misbehavior in order to encourage students to change inappropriate behavior so that sanctions do not increase in severity. Repeated violation of these rules and regulations may result in suspension from school or the non-re-registration of the child for the next school year.

For more serious acts of misbehavior such as fighting, stealing, vandalism, swearing at or being disrespectful to an adult in the building, and harassment, the student is immediately suspended for a period of one to five days. In cases of vandalism, the parent must pay the full cost of the repair or replacement of the item before the child may return to school. In cases of theft, the item is either returned in good condition or the cost of replacement is borne by the parent before the child can return to school.

In cases in which a child engages in a fight which causes injury to another child or adult, the police will likely be called and, then, the parents will be notified. Likewise, the possession of drugs or alcohol by a child is reported to the police. The school reserves the right to expel such a child.

In cases in which a child brings a weapon to school, the police are notified, and then the parents are called. The school reserves the right to expel a child for the possession of a weapon.

It is the expectation of this school that student behavior is exemplary both on and off school grounds. Whenever a child is wearing our school uniform he or she represents his or her parents and the entire school community. Therefore, the school reserves the right to punish students for acts such as, but not necessarily limited to, fighting, vandalism, and stealing off school grounds when the child is in the vicinity of the school or wearing the uniform of the school. The principal determines what is within the vicinity of the school. This could result in any number of punishments including the possibility of suspension or expulsion.

Lastly, a child's arrest for a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the school, at any time could result in the child's suspension or expulsion. A child's conviction of a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the school, will likely result in a child's expulsion.

DISCIPLINE

We believe that students have rights, but it follows that they also have responsibilities—one cannot exist without the other. Every student has the right to be free of harassment, intimidation or fear. Discipline is the climate and atmosphere of learning. Order demands it. No learning can take place without it. Discipline is not remote control, it is self-control.

To train children in virtue and to meet the program of studies of the Catholic School, discipline is necessary. Discipline can be obtained only by the closest cooperation among parents, students, and teachers.

INFRACTIONS

1. Disturbances, which disrupt education.
2. Lewd behavior, or abusive language including cursing or swearing, and offensive gestures when speaking to staff members or other students, either on school grounds or at school activities.
3. Dressing or grooming in a way that causes the educational process to be disrupted or that creates a dangerous situation for the student or others either on school grounds or school activities.
4. Possessing obscene material
5. Smoking or use of, or possession, or the sale of tobacco products, illegal drugs, dangerous drugs, counterfeit drugs or alcohol on the school grounds or in a non-smoking area, or at school activities.
6. Cheating, either in a regular class, athletics, or other after-school activities. Presenting someone else's work as your own (plagiarism).

7. Insubordination – the refusal to follow the reasonable directive of a person in authority or the violation of these rules which follow or any other building or classroom rules including refusing to identify oneself on request. Persons in authority including but not limited to administrators, teachers, teaching assistants, teaching aides, secretaries, bus drivers, including bus monitors, custodians, cafeteria workers.
8. Fighting, bullying (Bullying – the act of threatening, verbally, in writing or by gesture, the well-being, health, safety freedom or property of any person) or assault (Assault – a physical confrontation wherein an individual uses or attempts to use physical force against another individual).
9. Possessing a dangerous or deadly weapon on school property.
10. Possessing fireworks on school property or at a school activity.
11. Using fireworks on school property or at a school activity.
12. Gambling, extortion, hazing, arson.
13. Destroying or stealing school property.
14. No gum is permitted during school hours on school grounds. This includes waiting for a bus or parent pick-up.

PENALTIES

The appropriate disciplinary actions of St. Thomas of Canterbury School are at the discretion of the Administration.

- Warnings, either oral or written
- Detention.
- In-school suspension.
- Suspension from school for up to five school days.*

*SUSPENSION: When a student is suspended, parents/guardians will be notified by phone. Parents/guardians and student involved must meet with the Principal. During in-school suspension, it is understood that the student may not attend classes or participate in school activities. At end of suspension, child must report to office for readmission to class.

Any student who is suspended from school may not attend or take part in any after school activities during the time of the suspension.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICIES

In recognition of the seriousness of drug and alcohol problems to which the children are exposed, St. Thomas School will follow the policy as stated below:

1. if a teacher suspects that a child is under the influence of either drugs or alcohol, the matter will be referred to the principal immediately. The principal will verify teacher observation and will notify parents
2. should it be determined that the suspicion is accurate, parents will be expected to follow the recommendations of the school principal if the child is to continue in the school
3. any student who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or any drug, and appears at a school function in questionable condition will be barred from attending or participating in that ceremony, a party, dance, or school outing. Parents will be notified and appropriate action will be taken which may include suspension or mandatory withdrawal from the school.

SMOKING

New York State Law prohibits smoking in a school building and on school property.

Smoking is prohibited at all times in the St Thomas School building, on its parking lot and playing fields. This prohibition applies to faculty, staff, parents, and all visitors to the school.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Any electronic device such as cell phones, beepers, hand-held and other personal electronic devices that may distract the student, other students, or the class as a whole during the course of the school day is prohibited. These devices will be taken away from students and kept in the office until the end of the school day. Should

a student continue to use these devices during the school day they will be taken away and his/her parent will be notified to pick it up.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RIDING THE BUS AND OR CAR

Please remember that children are permitted only on their assigned bus, and are not allowed to ride buses outside their SCHOOL DISTRICT. A WRITTEN NOTE is required on the morning of the day a student expects a car ride home, and the name of the person who will be picking your child up must be in the note. Walkers must not leave until dismissed by teacher.

DISCIPLINE ON BUS

The Board of Education, Bureau of Pupil Transportation, supplies transportation. Students who ride the bus are expected to act like ladies and gentlemen. The bus drivers have been instructed to report students who are not obedient or respectful. Repeated infractions may result in the student being asked to find another means of transportation for a set period of time. A bus driver has the important responsibility of driving the bus. This demands undivided attention so he/she cannot also be a disciplinarian.

BUS CONDUCT

The following rules have been established in order to insure the safety of all students who ride busses:

1. Use only the bus and bus stop assigned.
2. Orderly behavior is required at the bus stop.
3. Remain seated, facing front, when the bus is in motion.
4. Talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise.
5. Keep head and arms inside the bus.
6. Do not litter the inside of the bus or throw anything out the window.

A teacher will escort all students to the bus.

CLASS TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the school's instructional program and they broaden the students' educational experiences. The principal is responsible for provision of necessary preparation for the trip and adequate supervision of the trip. Trips are planned and directed by the teacher. The number of chaperones is determined by the teacher. There will be times when only the class parents will be invited on a school trip. This would happen if only a certain number of people were allowed in entry to a site.

GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIPS

Motivation for the field trip should include: a description of the place; an explanation of its relationship to current curriculum topics; a specification of what is to be learned; and explanation of any homework or follow-up assignment(s).

- The field trip must be adequately supervised. At least one adult should accompany every ten students. Parents may assist in the supervision.
 - Only a licensed public carrier may be used for transportation.
 - No student may be permitted to go on the field trip unless his/her parent/guardian has returned the school permission slip.
 - Parents' responsibilities as supervisors of students necessitates they do not include siblings. No siblings will be allowed on the field trip.
 - There is to be no smoking or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
 - The number of parents needed as chaperones is left to the discretion of the teacher and/or principal.
 - Any parent who is asked to chaperone is expected to ride the bus to and from the destination.
 - All students must go to and from their destination by bus.
1. Field trips broaden the students' educational experiences. Field trips are privileges given to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip.
 2. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
 3. Field trips vary on each grade level.
 4. Field trips are permissible when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.

5. Individual teachers in consultation with the administration reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
6. A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip. Verbal permission cannot be accepted. Permission slips are due in the office 48 hours before the day of the trip.

ASSIGNMENTS

Children are responsible for all work that is assigned, including homework. If the child is not sure how to complete an assignment, ask for help from teachers. This work is given to your child so that he/she might grow in their understanding of the subject.

BOOKS

All books must be properly covered. Contact paper is NOT to be used to cover any books obtained under N.Y.S. Textbook Loan. These books are stamped on the inside front cover. Each child is responsible for keeping his/her books in good condition. Books that are lost or defaced become the liability of the **student** and his/her parents. If a book is lost or defaced, the school will bill the parents for the cost.

ASSIGNED TEXTBOOKS: When a textbook is loaned to a pupil on a semi-permanent basis, the New York State Department of Education requires that:

- the pupil's name be placed in the space provided in each book
- the teacher make a record of the number of the book
- the teacher make a record of the condition of the book
- In September, each child will put a clean cover on each textbook received.
- In June, all textbooks are collected, extra materials and covers are removed.
- all workbooks are collected in June.

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKS: When books are handed out to the children for use during a specific period within the classroom, they will be immediately collected after they have been read. If the book is to remain with the children for any length of time, his/her name must appear in the book and the teacher should have a record of this.

COMPUTER LAB

Our equipment is costly and needs to be handled with care. It is every student's responsibility to treat the lab respectfully.

Every student in grades 3-8 will be asked to sign an internet contract. Parents will also be asked to sign. No student will be permitted to access the internet without this signed contract.

Every computer will have security installed so that students cannot access certain websites. If at any time a student accesses one of these inappropriate sites his/her computer privileges may be suspended or revoked.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Adapted from NCEA's "From the Chalkboard to the Chatroom". 1997

As a computer user, I agree to follow the rules and code of ethics in all of my work with computers while attending St. Thomas School.

I recognize that all computer users have the same right to use the equipment; therefore I will not use the computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or take supplies such as paper, printer cartridges, and diskettes that are provided by the school. When I am in the computer lab, I will talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users. I will keep my computer work area clean and will not eat or drink in the computer lab.

I recognize that software is protected by copyright laws; therefore, I will not make unauthorized copies of software and I will not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others. I understand I will not be allowed to bring software applications, games, or CD-ROMS from home to be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval of appropriate school personnel.

I recognize that the work of all users is valuable; therefore, I will protect the privacy of theirs by not trying to learn their password; I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without prior permission from that user; I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs for computer equipment; I will not use computer systems to disturb or harass other computer users or use inappropriate language in my communications.

Each student who receives Internet access will be instructed in the proper use of the network. The use of the Internet must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students using network or computer resources must comply with the appropriate rules for that network or resource.

As a user of a network, I will not use bulletin boards or chat lines for personal use. In addition, I will not reveal my personal information, home address or personal phone number or those of students, teachers or other staff members. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. The use of school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

Parents must realize that their students may encounter material on a network/bulletin board that they do not consider appropriate (vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.). The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive.

The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of these privileges. Vandalism or intentional modification of system settings will result in cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user.

The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request the system administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific privileges. Violation of the rules and code of ethics described above will be dealt with seriously.

SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

Students with learning differences are children of God and members of the Church. St. Thomas School makes every effort to meet individual student needs. Sometimes, however, a student may have needs that do not permit him or her to benefit fully from the program. In those cases your child's teacher and/or principal may schedule a meeting with you to discuss having an evaluation of your child's learning needs. Such evaluations can be done through the local public school district, i.e., Committees on Special Education (CSE's), or privately. Once the results of the evaluation are available the teacher and principal will meet with the parents to discuss the results of the evaluation and the recommendations.

LITURGY

All students in grades K to 8 will attend Mass on the first Friday of each month and at other times as indicated in the school calendar. Respectful participation of every child is required at school liturgies.

SCHOOL'S RIGHT TO AMEND

St. Thomas School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent as necessary.

SECURITY

To assure the security of the building and the safety of each child, St. Thomas School strongly enforces its policy of requiring all visitors, even parents, to report to the office.

To avoid interruption of the learning process, no one may enter a classroom without permission of the principal.

IMMUNIZATIONS

New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance and Attendance

Pre-K, Nursery, Daycare	3 Diphtheria, 3 Polio, 1 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella, 3 Hib (or 1 Hib if administered > 15 months of age) and 3 Hepatitis B for children born on or after 01/01/95; DSS licensed daycare centers also require Tetanus and Pertussis vaccinations
K – 12 (born before 1985)	3 Diphtheria, 3 Polio, 1 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella
K – 12 (born on or after 01/01/85)	3 Diphtheria, 3 Polio, 2 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella and 3 Hepatitis B for children born on or after 01/01/93
College (born on or after 1/1/57)	2 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella

Varicella Vaccine Required

Immunization against varicella (chickenpox) is now required by law. In 1999, Public Health Law Section 2164 was amended to require the following children to be immunized against varicella:

- all children born on or after January 1, 1998 and are entering kindergarten in September 2003
- children born on or after January 1, 2000 and are enrolled in any school.

The administration of varicella vaccine is not recommended for children under the age of one.

Information on varicella vaccine was not required to be entered on the immunization survey form until September 2001.

GUIDELINES FOR THE EDUCATION OF NON-CATHOLICS

Parents must be made aware of the intentional Catholic witness in our schools. St. Thomas School as a Catholic school within the Archdiocese of New York has as its primary mission the formation of children in the Catholic faith.

All children will participate in total academic life of our school, including religious education. According to the norms of our Church, it is expected that non-Catholics participate as fully as they can in the liturgical and prayer life of the school.

The religious educators of our schools are committed to teaching the fullness of revelation as it is taught by the Roman Catholic Church and as the life and doctrine are set forth in the Religious Education Guidelines of the Archdiocese of New York. While our teachers value ecumenical education, and respect the traditions of other ecclesiastical communities, they always teach within the context of fidelity to the doctrine and traditions of our teaching church.

HARASSMENT POLICIES

Harassment regulations need to be grounded in the belief that all persons have a right to be treated with dignity. All demeaning behavior is prohibited.

St. Thomas School provides a safe environment for all. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken seriously. Students making such threats even in jest face appropriate disciplinary action including detention, suspension or expulsion. Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment.

Students involved in harassing behavior are subject to detention, suspension, or expulsion and where appropriate, will be referred for counseling services. If you believe that your child is being harassed, please notify the principal immediately.

Teachers, also, should report threats made against them to the principal.

HIV/AIDS CURRICULUM

The Archdiocese of New York and the NYS Education Department mandate that all schools are to give age-appropriate instruction on *HIV* and *AIDS* to all students in Grades K –12. The Archdiocesan schools use an HIV/AIDS Handbook developed and approved by the Catholic Bishops of the State of New York.

Schools under the authority of the Office of the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of New York do not discriminate on the basis of HIV or AIDS.

Students with HIV or AIDS shall not be excluded from school by reason of infection with HIV unless the following conditions are evident as determined by the student's physician and parents (or legal guardian), together with the school administrator and pastor. The conditions are:

The student is not toilet-trained or is incontinent, or unable to control, drooling.

The student is unusually physically aggressive, with a documented history of biting or harming other

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Once students have met the necessary admission requirements and have been accepted in St. Thomas of Canterbury School, the school warmly welcomes these students for the coming school year and will strive to provide them with a solid Catholic spiritual and academic education in a supportive learning environment. Students and parents must always be mindful that attendance at St. Thomas of Canterbury School is by invitation. It is not a “right” because this is a private school. Admission to and continued enrollment in this school include responsibilities regarding conduct, both inside and outside the classroom and school, and students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to be a credit both to themselves and to their school.

In order to protect its standards of scholarship, discipline and character, St. Thomas of Canterbury School reserves the right, and students and parents or guardians concede to the school the right to require the withdrawal of any student at any time, for any reason deemed sufficient in the sole discretion of the school and its administrators. By their signatures on the Parent Signature Page contained in this handbook and the student’s attendance at the school, a student and his or her parents or guardians acknowledge the important obligations and restrictions contained in this handbook and agree to be bound by the terms of this handbook.

Students attending St. Thomas of Canterbury School relinquish certain rights they might otherwise be entitled to if they were attending a public school. For example, a student’s freedom of speech is limited in many important respects here at our school. Speech, either written or oral, contrary to the Roman Catholic faith, the teachings of the church or the directives of the local Bishop or Ordinary is prohibited, as is any other speech which is contrary or disruptive to the philosophy and purposes of our school. Another important right all students at St. Thomas of Canterbury School surrender involves searches and seizures. School administrators may search a student’s person and belongings if there is a reasonable belief, in the sole opinion of the school administrator, that contraband, illegal substances or inappropriate objects are being concealed. Any unauthorized items found may be seized. Additionally, student desks and lockers, which are at all times under the joint control of the school and the student to whom the desk or locker has been assigned, may be searched by school administrators at any time, for any reason or for no reason at all. Students should have absolutely no expectation of privacy with regard to any item in their desks or lockers.

Another important right that a student and his or her parents or guardians give up when they decide to have a student attend this school is the right to sue the school, the parish or the Archdiocese of New York, and/or any individuals acting on behalf of the school, such as the school administrators, teachers, staff or any of their agents for any matter relating to academic or disciplinary decisions or other matters covered within this handbook. Each student and his or her parents or guardians, by their acceptance of enrollment at St. Thomas of Canterbury School agree to and accept the school’s rule and policy that students, parents and guardians may not bring any civil action in any local, state or federal court or in any administrative agency or body to challenge any school decision on academic or disciplinary matters, including any decision relating to the rules, regulations, procedures or programs covered within this handbook. Students and parents or guardians agree that any challenge to any school academic or disciplinary action or relating to the rules, regulations, procedures or programs covered in this handbook may only be challenged or appealed within the hierarchy of the school, subject to the limitations contained in this handbook. This includes any decision relating to a student’s enrollment at the school or termination of that enrollment.

While any student and his or her parents or guardians are of course free to consult with legal counsel regarding any school decision taken with respect to a student, the school emphasizes that students and parents or guardians are not permitted to have legal counsel present during any meetings with school administrators. School administrators are not obligated to meet with legal counsel at any time.

There are several grounds for disciplinary action or expulsion set forth in the “Discipline Codes” section of this handbook. It should be noted, however, that any listing of prohibited conduct is set forth by way of example only and to provide guidance to the student and his or her parents or guardians. It is not meant to be an exhaustive listing of improper conduct or resultant disciplinary action.