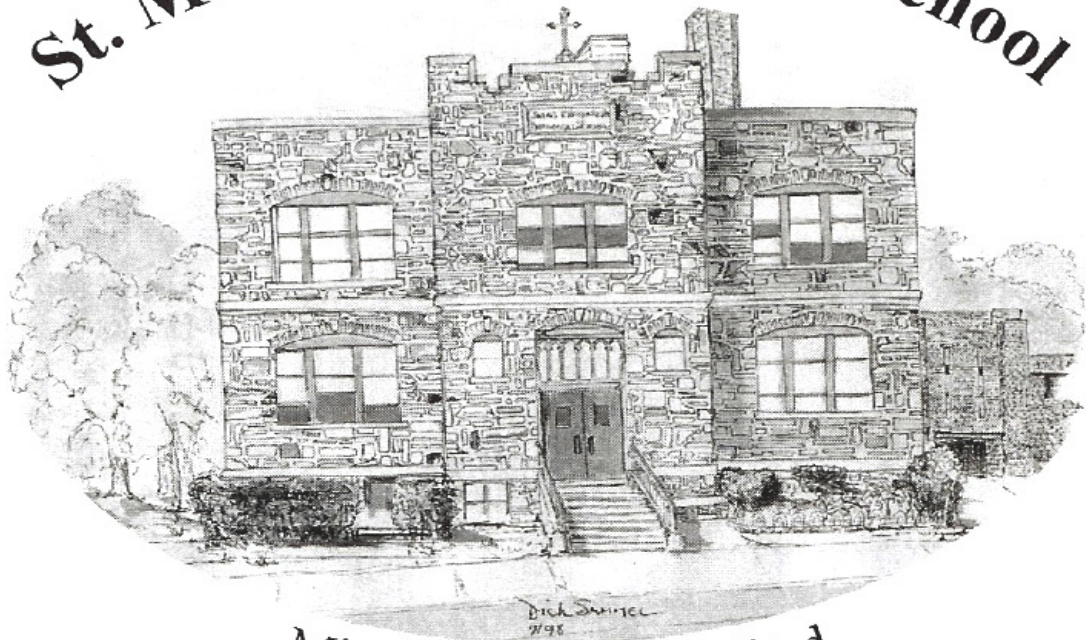


St. Margaret of Cortona School
SINCE 1926



Middle States Accredited

**Parent - Student
Handbook
2009-2010**

WELCOME TO ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the community of St. Margaret of Cortona School! We are pleased to present the Parent-Student Handbook to you so that you will know more about the school and how we will work together for the education of your child.

The faculty and staff of your school look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the Catholic values of community service, reverence and leadership.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

Sr. Kathleen Marie, CR
Principal

Fr. Brian McCarthy
Pastor

School Philosophy

The primary purpose of St. Margaret of Cortona School is to offer each child the spiritual, intellectual, personal and social foundation through which he/she will be able to lead a productive and fulfilling Christian life.

Our academic standards reflect a Christocentric philosophy where the Gospel message is nurtured through a unified effort of parents, teachers, and the total school community. The students reflect our goals as they move beyond the classroom to celebrate and extend Christ's message to the Christian community.

We strive to cultivate the varied talents of our students through intellectual, artistic, physical, moral, emotional and social development, always stressing the importance of the individual within the framework of a value centered community. It is our goal to send each student on to higher education with knowledge of his/her Catholic faith, self-knowledge and a commitment to helping others.

Our school accomplishes these goals through its policies and procedures and through a unified curriculum, which utilizes varied approaches that attempt to meet the needs of each student while enhancing his/her individual abilities.

Administration, Faculty and Staff of St. Margaret of Cortona School

PASTOR	Father Brian McCarthy
PRINCIPAL	Sr. Kathleen Marie, C.R.
PRE-K	Ms. Christina Washburn
PRE-K AIDE	Mrs. Cheryl Gallagher
KINDERGARTEN	Ms. Tricia Tomasulo
KINDERGARTEN AIDES (part time)	Mrs. Catherine McEntire Mrs. Mary O'Sullivan
GRADE ONE	Mrs. Abby Benedetti
GRADE TWO	Mrs. Patricia Hund
GRADE THREE	Ms. Allison Nixon
GRADE FOUR	Mrs. Maria Guttman
GRADE FIVE	Mr. James Hamilton
GRADE SIX	Mrs. Josephine Berical
GRADE SEVEN	Ms. Tricia Scott
GRADE EIGHT	Ms. Catherine Peterson
GRADE EIGHT	Mrs. Tara Bulfamante
HONORS MATH 8/MATH 7	Mrs. Mary O'Sullivan
PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH	Mrs. Mary Mallon
SPANISH	Mrs. Raquel DeMarco
MUSIC	Mrs. Kathleen LaFuentes
ART	Ms. Ann Post
TECHNOLOGY COACH	Mr. Michael Kovitz
SECRETARY	Ms. Kathleen McCabe
RECEPTIONIST	Mrs. Ana Gandia
NURSE	Mrs. Christina Gorham
MAINTENANCE	Mr. John Morgan Mr. Wilfredo Torres

**St. Margaret of Cortona School
452 West 260th Street
Bronx, New York 10471**

**School Telephone: 718-549-8580
School Fax: 718-884-3298**

Academic Program Policies/Curriculum

The curriculum is the sum, the TOTAL, of all the learning experiences the child has inside and outside the school, which are utilized by the school to further the aims of education. It includes every classroom activity, every auditorium experience, every field trip, and every library and playground activity undertaken by the children.

The curriculum encompasses what each child does, as well as what is done with others. It includes each child's growth in the tools and skills required for learning each child's guided mastery of facts and integration of these into meaningful spheres of knowledge. It includes each child's development of attitudes and appreciations and standards.

The curriculum is the nurturing of each child's moral and spiritual growth, the guidance of each child's social, emotional and physical progress. It is the business of the school. It is the medium through which teachers make a personal contribution to the children assigned to their care. ESSENTIALLY, CURRICULUM IS EVERYTHING THAT GOES ON IN THE SCHOOL!

“More than any other program of education, the Catholic School has the opportunity and obligation to be unique, contemporary and oriented to Christian service. **Unique** because it is distinguished by its commitment to the threefold purpose of Christian education and by its total design and operation which foster the integration of religion with the rest of learning and living. **Contemporary** because it enables students to address with Christian insight the multiple problems which face individuals and society today; **Oriented to Christian service** because it helps students acquire skills, virtues, and habits of heart and mind required for effective service to others.”

To Teach as Jesus Did
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is part of the process by which the church community hands on to each new generation the faith that marks us as God's people. For the Catholic student, learning about God and His love for us is a lifelong journey.

Parents are the first, that is, the primary teacher of their children in the ways of faith. We at St. Margaret of Cortona School collaborate with parents to help ensure that each child is encouraged to grow in basic religious attitudes of love for God and neighbor, to form habits of prayer and worship and to engage in works of Christian service to others.

The catechism of the Catholic Church and the Guidelines for Religious Education K-8 (Archdiocese of New York) form the basis of the Religious Education program for St. Margaret of Cortona School.

LITURGY AND WORSHIP

The unique nature of a child's prayer life and his/her concept of God differ dramatically from the adult faith of a mature Catholic. Catechesis for the child must strive to build upon his/her budding faith in a slow and reverent way, while encouraging him/her to develop according to his/her own pace, style and level. Regardless of age, the life of every Catholic must necessarily revolve around liturgy, and the students of St. Margaret of Cortona School are encouraged to value prayer. This will encourage both parents and children to meet their religious obligations and responsibilities to each other and to those in the community. Students attend Mass monthly during the school year and participate in other various paraliturgical activities.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

St. Margaret of Cortona School recognizes that service toward neighbor is a necessary part of any Religious Education program. Instruction and worship naturally flow into service for others. Showing our love for others takes many forms at St. Margaret of Cortona School.

SCHOOL PRAYER

Prayer is an integral part of our Catholic faith experience and is therefore a primary component of activity in our schools. Daily school-wide prayer and meditation is encouraged, as is individual classroom prayers during the day.

As a school community, we begin and end our day together with prayer. It is important that during this time we maintain a sense of respectful quiet and attention throughout the building (i.e. in the hallway, entrance, gym, etc.)

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

St. Margaret of Cortona School provides instruction in the following areas in accordance with the New York State Education Department and the Archdiocesan Essential Learning Guidelines.

Mathematics	Language Arts	Physical Fitness
Science	Reading/Literature	Art and Music
Computer Technology	Social Studies	Spanish
Instrumental Program	Library	

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

If there is a health problem, which will prevent a student from participating in gym class, a doctor's note explaining the problem must be presented to the gym teacher. A doctor's note with authorization to resume play is also required.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential part of the instructional program reinforcing 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.

Homework is meant to be an application or an extension of classroom learning experiences. It develops proper study habits, time management, and individual responsibility. Assignments are given to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and concepts previously taught.

Students are required to complete all homework, and it is recommended that parents or guardians sign or initial the completed homework. Parents are asked to check assignments before they are handed in. This is essential in order to ensure accuracy and neatness. All class work and homework must be completed, well organized and neatly written.

Homework assignments may take the form of short written assignments, study assignments, projects and long term assignments. The *approximate* time allotments for homework (written and study) are as follows:

Grade K	up to 15 minutes
Grades 1-2	up to 30 minutes
Grades 3-4	up to 45 minutes
Grades 5-6	up to 90 minutes
Grades 7-8	up to 120 minutes

REPORT CARDS

The Archdiocesan approved report cards are distributed four times a year. These report cards are a link between the school and the home. Report cards are withheld if financial obligations have not been met and fees are outstanding.

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 class work, homework, daily quizzes, unit tests, comprehensive examinations and 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, including coming to school on time
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.

Report cards are distributed in **November**, **February**, **April** and **June** for the students in Grades K-8 and two or three times a year for Pre-Kindergarten. Parent-Teacher conferences are held in late November for students in Grades PK-8.

If a student is experiencing academic difficulties, parents are notified by the classroom teacher. **Progress Reports** are sent home to parents periodically to keep parents/guardians aware of a student's progress. It is important for parents to keep the lines of communication open with their child's teacher(s). If it becomes necessary for a parent to speak to a teacher because of an academic or a disciplinary problem, appointments for a conference can be made by way of a written request or a phone call to the school.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

St. Margaret of Cortona 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.

ASSESSMENT

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, 6 and 8	April
Math	Grades 4, 6 and 8	May
Science	Grade 4 and 8	May/June
Social Studies	Grade 5 Grade 8	November June

The faculty of St. Margaret of Cortona School reviews these test results regularly for the purpose of promotion or retention in conjunction with classroom performance and grouping for reading and math.

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 program's objectives, the student progresses to the next level.

Testing, diagnosis and actual performance, however, may indicate that some students cannot follow the school's complex course of study. Therefore, the decision to retain a student indicates that although the school has done everything to help a student achieve success, the student has not made satisfactory progress.

Accidents

St. Margaret of Cortona School has student accident insurance coverage for all students providing valuable protection against accidental injuries occurring during school hours or during school sponsored and supervised activities. In the event of an accident at school, the parent/guardian will be notified. Please note that the school accident insurance is usually secondary to the parent's own medical insurance coverage.

Admission Policy/Application/Registration

Roman Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of New York base their educational purpose and all their activities on the Christian teaching of the essential equality of all persons as rooted in God's love. Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of New York do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, and gender in administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school administered programs.

Parents **APPLY** to the school for admission, then if all is in order, their child is **ACCEPTED** to the school, and ultimately they **REGISTER**. Applicants must meet the school's requirements, academic, psychological and residential in order to register. All decisions about student admission are made by the Principal.

ADMISSION POLICY:

Priority for Admission to St. Margaret of Cortona School is as follows:

1. Families who are registered members of St. Margaret of Cortona parish
2. Brothers and sisters of students presently registered at St. Margaret of Cortona School.
3. Catholic families who are registered members of other Catholic parishes.
4. Catholic families who are not registered members of any Catholic parish
5. Families not of the Catholic faith.

Registration for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Eight is held during the month of February. Notification of the registration dates is published in the parish weekly bulletin.

Parents wishing to register a child are required to present the following on the day of registration:

- a. Baptismal and Birth Certificates. Both documents are required for Catholic students. Copies of these documents will be made during registration.
- b. Record of required Immunizations. New York State law requires that certain immunizations be completed before a child may begin Kindergarten.
- c. Most recent Report Card and Standardized scores of child registering for Grades 2-8. For students in Grades 4-8, two letters of recommendation from teacher and/or Principal of previous school are needed.
- d. A \$75 non-refundable new registration fee and a \$225.00 non-refundable academic fee per child made payable to St. Margaret of Cortona School.

Once applications have been processed, new student entrance assessments and contact with the school from which the student is transferring take place before acceptance to St. Margaret of Cortona School is approved.

Students are required to have all inoculations as suggested by the Department of Health before admission to the school

RE-REGISTRATION

When your child is accepted into St. Margaret's School, this acceptance extends for one year only. Each year, parents must re-register their child(ren) for the upcoming school year during the month of February. Any child not registered by the deadline noted will be automatically dropped from our school roster and placed on the waiting list.

A parent/guardian may not be permitted to re-register his/her child for any of the following reasons: continual disciplinary problems, lack of parental cooperation, problems with tuition payments, or continued lateness or absence.

After School Program

Our After School Program serves working parents of pre-kindergarten through sixth grade students enrolled in St. Margaret of Cortona School. The program has an academic component, which provides homework time, arts and crafts, and other supervised recreational activities. This After School Program is available from 2:30 p.m.-5:00 (6:00) p.m. each day and from 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 (6:00) p.m. on early dismissal days.

Announcements

Informational announcements are handled through the school PA system. Courteous attention is expected when any message is presented over the PA system. All announcements must be written and brought to the office and approved by the principal.

Arrival and Dismissal of Students

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

In an effort to keep the flow of traffic smooth and safe for all of our children, we ask that all cars either park or drop off on **Riverdale Avenue or Delafield Avenue only**. Please do not come up 260th Street or block the crosswalks. Cars may turn onto West 260th Street from Delafield Avenue (toward Broadway) when dropping off children in the morning or picking them up in the afternoon.

Arrival

Students arrive at school between 7:55 and 8:05 a.m. (**There is no supervision available before 7:55 a.m. each morning**). The students in Grade 7-8 enter the school building at 8:00 a.m. and go promptly to their homeroom classes. The students in Grades K-6 enter the building at 8:05 a.m. when the bell rings. The doors for the Pre-K open at 8:10 a.m. All students should enter the school yard through the 260th Street entrance. Parents who drop their children off are asked to remain outside the gates of the school yard. For the safety of all, those who drive their children to and from school are asked not to pass the police barricades placed at Riverdale and Delafield Avenues.

In case of inclement weather, children should report directly to the school gymnasium through the main entrance of the school on West 260th Street They will be supervised by school personnel and escorted to the gym/classrooms by the homeroom teacher when the bell rings at 8:05 a.m.

Dismissal

Parents are asked to meet their children outside the main school building at the time of dismissal. **PARENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING.** The following procedure will be followed:

- Students in the Pre-Kindergarten will be dismissed at 2:30 p.m. from the Riverdale Avenue yard gate
- Students in Grades K-4 will be dismissed at 2:40 p.m. from the main school entrance on West 260th Street
- Students in Grades 5-8 will be dismissed at 2:45 p.m. from the main school entrance on West 260th Street

When school is in session for a half-day, students are dismissed after prayers at 12:00 p.m. If there is any change in your child's transportation plans, change in designated driver, or who picks up your child, it is **important** that the **school office be notified in the morning with a note** from the parent or guardian.

Early Dismissal of Students

If a student needs to leave school during the school day, he/she must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or a person designated by the parent or guardian. In such instances, the student must be **signed out** before leaving the school and must be **signed back in**, if returning at a later time.

Requests for a child to leave school **must be made in writing** to the homeroom teacher. The request should be forwarded to the office so that arrangements can be made for the child to be ready and waiting in the office at the appointed time. **Emergency requests** for the early pick up of a student will be honored **through the school office**. Teachers may not dismiss a child from the classroom unless authorized by the school office.

Attendance/Tardiness

Good attendance at school is helpful in teaching the children that education is important and that regular school attendance helps to develop habits, which will carry over into the child's working life as a responsible adult. When students are absent from school or arrive late, their quality of education is lessened. Their attitude about learning also suffers. They become frustrated because they have missed explanations and/or discussions necessary to an understanding of the lessons presented.

Parents/guardians should make every effort to have children attend school daily and on time. Prompt, regular attendance is absolutely essential to academic success. It is expected that these good habits are fostered in each child for the benefit of current academic achievement and to encourage good adult behavior for the future.

It is understandable that a child can be absent from school occasionally due to an illness or appointments with a doctor or a dentist. A child who is ill cannot function in the class should not be in school to pass on his/her illness to other children.

Attendance:

1. Parents are asked to call the school office by 8:45 a.m. if their child is sick and will not be in school. At this time, they may request a homework sheet for their child. Homework can be picked up in the office at 2:40 p.m.
2. Students are **required to bring a note of excuse to school when they have been absent.**
3. If a child is absent for one week or more, **a note from the doctor is required upon return!**
4. The student is responsible to make up work, which was missed during each day of absence at the discretion of the teacher.
5. Tests/Quizzes missed due to a student's absence will be made up at the discretion of the teacher.
6. Students with perfect attendance will be recognized each year.

Tardiness:

1. Students must stop in to the school office to receive **late passes** if they arrive after 8:10 a.m. prayers in the morning.
2. Parents must send in a note explaining why their child is late that day.
3. Work missed as a result of tardiness must be made up at the discretion of the teacher.

Students who are tardy 5 or more times during the marking period will lose their honor roll and perfect attendance status and may have to serve a detention to make up missed work. *These students also will automatically receive no grade higher than a "B" in character development.*

Availability of Records

Student record files are available with guidance from the principal. These records may not leave the office for any reason. The school voluntarily complies with the provision of the Buckley Amendment. Non-custodial parents may be given access to unofficial copies of student records. The Principal also will be available to discuss the students' records, unless a court order providing otherwise is filed with the school.

Birthday Parties

Birthday parties for Grades K-3 may be held monthly in each homeroom with the teacher's permission. Parents must make arrangements in writing with the classroom teacher beforehand. Parents may bring **small** individual items such as cupcakes, brownies, donuts, etc. Parents **may not bring** in candy, favors or 'goodie' bags for the students. Healthy drinks and snacks are highly recommended.

All children may "dress up" (no jeans, t-shirts, flip flops, sandals, sneakers) on their birthday as recognition of their special day.

Books and School Materials

Each student must have and use an appropriate book bag. *Book bags on wheels are not permitted because of the stairs and safety fire codes.*

Students must assume responsibility for their books. Every book is to be covered by a protective jacket. All hardcover and soft cover books should be covered by the first full week of school. All books are to be maintained in the best possible condition. Textbooks, workbooks and notebooks are to remain free of "scribbling and doodling". Regular inspections are conducted by the classroom teacher and the Principal.

Materials and supplies used by the students during the year are to be used and treated with the utmost respect and care. Parents and students are responsible for keeping textbooks, workbooks, notebooks, library books, etc. in good condition.

Some of the student workbooks (Religion, Math, Vocabulary/Grammar 6-8) in Grades 3-8 will be used as non-consumables to help promote student writing, problem solving and critical thinking skills. These books should be double covered with contact paper and brown paper.

In an effort to improve student penmanship and presentation of work, students in Grades K-4 will use notebooks and theme paper with controlled lines. Students may purchase these notebooks, as well as other school supplies from the school office.

Bus Service

Limited yellow service provided by the NYC Board of Education is available for the students in Grades K-6. Eligibility for this service is determined by a student's grade level and distance of their residence from the school. Yellow bus service is provided on days when NYC public schools are in session unless otherwise indicated.

Children in Grades K-8, who reside in New York City may be eligible, based on distance, to receive a Metrocard for reduced or full fare. Eligibility is determined by the Board of Education.

Transportation forms must be completed and returned to the school office to determine eligibility for either of the above services. Board of Education rules state that students are not eligible to receive a Metrocard and take the yellow bus. Once approved for yellow bus service parents are asked to notify the school office in writing if their child will not be taking the bus on a particular day. Students and parents should consider riding on the school bus as a privilege. Therefore, students are to demonstrate a respectful, Christian and safety conscious attitude at all times.

Change of Address

The school office must be informed immediately if there is a change of home address or telephone number for purposes of mailing and/or emergency.

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.

Child Custody

Custodial parents are entitled to receive original sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc.

Non-custodial parents are generally entitled to receive duplicate sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc. Such parents may be asked to supply the teacher with self-addressed stamped envelopes for convenience and expediency.

Communication

Since as parents you are the child's first teachers, you are our partners in education. Therefore, regular communication with you is an essential part of your child's school experience. Scheduled parent conferences allow teachers and parents to discuss student achievement as well as to develop means to assist students in areas of difficulty.

A parent may request a meeting with a teacher at any time by simply sending a note to the teacher in question, and the teacher will arrange for this meeting outside class time at a mutually convenient time. The meeting should take place in the classroom or someplace that insures privacy, never in a hallway or in the parking lot. A parent who is refused such a meeting should notify the Principal.

In keeping with the Church's principle of subsidiarity, problems or concerns that arise should be first addressed with the person or persons involved before going to the higher authority. Attempting to work out difficulties mutually is consistent with the demands of the Gospel. Positive communication between home and school is essential in helping to provide the best education for each student. When problems or concerns arise, parents should immediately contact the school to speak with the teacher or make an appointment to meet with the teacher/principal. This will help alleviate any misunderstanding.

Spontaneous visits to the classroom to speak with a teacher are not permitted. It disturbs the learning process. If you need to speak with a teacher or the principal, please make an appointment by telephone or letter.

Monday Communication Envelope

A weekly communication envelope will be sent home each Monday. These envelopes will contain important information, reminders, directives and upcoming events for the week. It is important that parents check with their children each week for these and any other communications from the school. Please empty contents, **sign** and **return** the envelope on Tuesday. Without a returned and signed envelope, no communication can be sent home for the next week.

Student Progress Folder

Teachers in Grades K-8 will regularly send home a student progress folder. These folders will contain student work, test papers, notes regarding missing assignments, behavior, etc. to keep parents abreast of the student's academic and behavioral progress. Parents are expected to review the folder when received, sign the enclosed papers and return both the papers and the folder to the classroom teacher by Monday or the next school day.

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 Service 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. A sense of the **sacred** should always prevail.

Crisis Plan

St. Margaret's School has developed a crisis plan according to Archdiocesan policy now in effect. Should a Crisis require evacuation from St. Margaret School, students will be brought to a safe place located at St. Margaret Church and parents may meet their children there.

For further information concerning a crisis, parents will be contacted through our school Instant Alert System. Therefore, it is important that each family keep their contact information updated at all times so that you can be notified in the case of an emergency situation.

Daily Schedule

The following schedule will be observed by Grades Pre-K through Grade 8:

8:00 a.m.	Grade 7-8 Enter School
8:05 a.m.	Grades K – 6 Bell Rings/Enter School
8:10 a.m.	Morning Prayers in Gym
11:30–12:10	First Lunch (Gr. Pre-K, 5-8)
12:00-12:40	Second Lunch (Gr. K-4)
2:30 p.m.	Pre-K Dismissal
2:40 p.m.	Prayers and Dismissal K-4
2:45 p.m.	Prayers and Dismissal 5-8

Before 7:55 a.m. and after 2:45 p.m. St. Margaret of Cortona School does not have staff available to supervise children on school grounds. Students should not arrive on the school grounds prior to 7:55 a.m. and parents must arrange pickup at dismissal times. **IN THOSE INSTANCES WHEN STUDENTS ARRIVE ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS PRIOR TO 7:55 A.M., PARENTS MUST PROVIDE FOR THEIR PROTECTION AND SUPERVISION.**

To avoid interruption during the school day, any messages, forgotten lunches, books and boots, etc., must be taken to the OFFICE and not to the classrooms while school is in session. The school office will see to it that the child receives these items.

Discipline Policy

St. Margaret of Cortona School strives to create a safe and caring learning environment for all students where promoting Reverence, Respect and Responsibility is key! Students are encouraged to do what Jesus would do...to think before they act ...and to make good responsible choices. We expect our students to exhibit Christ-like behaviors each day but we know that students sometimes need reminders. Parental support is critical and assists in challenging children to make better decisions in the future.

We believe that parents, students, and teachers alike working together and modeling Christ-like behaviors will help to maintain a safe, positive, and respectful learning climate at St. Margaret of Cortona School.

Parents choosing Catholic School for their children frequently cite our commitment to structure and discipline as a major reason for investment in Catholic Education. Our students are expected 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 school structure help to insure the safety of all students, facilitate the learning for all students, and promote self control and self respect in the individual student.

While most parents find our approach to discipline to be favorable, there are instances when students break the rules and must suffer the consequences of their actions. It is then that a parent may attempt to debate the fairness of the school policy or make excuses for their children'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 the student's growth in accepting personal responsibility for his/her actions. By enrolling a child in St. Margaret of Cortona School parents agree to be supportive of the rules and regulations that we deem as critical in the spiritual, academic and behavioral growth of the child.

It is expected that the students of St. Margaret of Cortona School, by word and deed, conduct themselves according to the Christian principles they learn at home and school in a manner appropriate to their particular age and development. A student in St. Margaret's neither loses the right nor escapes the responsibilities of a child in a Catholic School. All students are members of both the educational community and the local community. If an infraction does occur and disciplinary action is warranted, the school's intent is educational, never punitive. It is in this spirit that we hope parents will assist us in helping our young people develop their own self-discipline.

In order for students' rights to be respected, and in order to maintain good order and safety for all concerned, students are expected to assume the responsibility for adherence to the rules and regulations of our school and conform to teachers' regulations in the classroom. (See School and Classroom Rules)

At St. Margaret of Cortona School we believe:

1. A student is to be polite, considerate and respectful to the priests, faculty, staff, volunteers and to each other.
2. Student behavior should be exemplary both on and off school grounds. Whenever students wear our school uniform (even in sports activities) they represent their parents and the entire school community. Inappropriate conduct will result in consequences according to school discipline policy.
3. Every student has the right to certain protection (such as protection of property and an atmosphere conducive to personal growth and development). Each and every student has the obligation to preserve these same rights for others.
4. Disruptive or unacceptable behavior is defined as a behavior which interferes with the learning of the students, the rights of the students, or the performance of a duty of a staff member.

5. Damage done to school property must be repaired and/or restitution made immediately for by the end of the current school year.
6. In cases where a student engages in a fight which causes injury to another student or adult, the police may be called and then the parents will be notified. Likewise, the possession of drugs, alcohol, weapons, etc. by a student will be reported to the police. The school reserves the right to expel such students.
7. The Principal will be the final recourse in all disciplinary situations. All efforts will be made to create the ideal atmosphere for the students – a safe, orderly school in which your children can receive the quality education they deserve.
8. Serious misbehavior is met with a serious consequence, such as an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Parents are notified prior to suspensions and are asked to come to school for a conference, which will include the principal, teacher, and student. At the conference an individual behavior plan may be developed for the student.
9. Repeated uncooperative and defiant behavior in responding to school rules and regulations may result in suspension from school or in the non-re-registration of the student for the next school year.
10. The permanent dismissal or suspension of a student for disciplinary reasons is an extreme measure to be enacted only as a last resort after all other efforts of motivation and counseling have failed or circumstances of crime, scandal, immorality or disruption constitute a threat to the physical or moral welfare of teachers and other students. Only the Principal, with the consent of the Pastor, has the authority to suspend or expel a student.
11. The following offenses may be grounds for Suspension or Expulsion:
 - Possession of Cigarettes, Alcohol, Drugs or Weapons
 - Threatening, Fighting, Bullying, Harassment, Vandalism, etc.
 - Cheating, plagiarism, etc.
 - Conduct detrimental to the reputation of the school
 - Inappropriate use of the Internet, telephone, cell phone, cameras, etc.
 - Immorality in speech or action
 - Other inappropriate conduct not consistent with our philosophy as a Catholic institution
12. The students who conduct themselves in a mature, responsible manner often are not recognized for appropriate behavior. We usually take good behavior for granted and focus on students who misbehave. Our School Discipline Plan not only focuses on negative consequences for the students who violate school rules, but also provides positive reinforcement for those students who act as mature young people.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

1. Treat each person with RESPECT in **Word and Action**
2. Follow directions of supervisory adults the first time they are given.
3. Respect all school property.
4. Come to class prepared with homework, books, supplies, etc.
5. Wear complete school uniform neatly (including shirts tucked in)

Negative Consequences

- 1st Step: Verbal Warning
- 2nd Step: 2nd Warning / No Recess – Complete Incident Report
- 3rd Step: Conduct Referral and After School Detention
- 4th Step: Conference with Parent and Student
- 5th Step: Conference with Principal

Consistent infractions of above rules will result in checks on report card and loss of Honor Roll and Personal Development privilege.

Possible Positive Consequences

- Personal Development Honor Roll each marking period
- Awards may be given individually to groups or even classes for appropriate behavior.
- Phone calls may be made or notes sent home to parents of students exhibiting exceptional appropriate behavior by either teacher or Principal

Consequences for more serious “Bullying” Behaviors

Every student has the right to learn in an environment free from distractions and negative annoying or violent, threatening behaviors. With this in mind, a zero tolerance policy has been established here at St. Margaret of Cortona School. Behaviors that harm oneself or another’s body or property, self-worth or group acceptance may result in any of the following consequences:

Verbal Bullying

- Teasing and taunting
- Expressing physical superiority (“I’m better than you...”)
- Insulting remarks
- Calling names
- Gossiping
- Starting/spreading/increasing rumors
- Threatening physical harm
- Insulting family
- Harassing phone calls
- Insulting intelligence, ability, race, gender, etc.
- Undermining relationships

Nonverbal Bullying

- Threatening or insulting gestures
- Giving dirty looks
- Defacing or damaging one’s own or another’s property
- Pushing, shoving, poking
- Stealing
- Excluding others from the group
- Playing mean tricks/jokes
- Initiating fights
- Hitting, punching, scratching, tripping, etc.
- Cheating
- Making someone look foolish
- Touching another in an unacceptable way

More Serious Bullying

- Destroying Personal or Public Property
- Physical cruelty
- Repeated, violent, threatening gestures
- Threatening e-mail/phone calls, etc.
- Ostracizing – public humiliation - rejection
- Assaulting with a weapon

CONSEQUENCES

Repeated or More Serious Offenses may result in any of the following:

- Conference with Parent and Student
- Conduct Referral and After School detention
- In School Suspension with parent conference
- Out of School Suspension
- Conference with Parent to develop a contract
- Counseling Recommendation
- Notification of the Police
- Expulsion (according to the policy of Archdiocesan School Office)

** An arrest of a student for a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the school, at any time could result in a student’s suspension or expulsion.

** A conviction of a crime on or off of school grounds, within or beyond the vicinity of the school will likely result in the student’s dismissal from the school.

Dress Code

Your school uniform confirms your attendance at St. Margaret of Cortona School and is a symbol of unity within the school community. It minimizes distractions in the learning process. 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.

SCHOOL WINTER UNIFORM (October 15th through May 1st)

Boys - Grades K-8 Dark grey dress trousers of uniform design (no corduroys)
Black belt
White, long or short sleeve oxford/dress shirts and school tie
Maroon uniform pullover V-neck sweater with school name
White or black socks and black tie shoes (non-scuff black)

Girls - Grades K-4 Maroon Plaid Drop Waist Jumper
White long or short sleeve blouse with Peter Pan collar
Maroon uniform cardigan sweater with school name
Maroon knee socks or tights
Black tie or buckle shoes (non-scuff black)

Girls - Grades 5-8 Gray Kilt (winter and summer)
White long or short sleeve button down blouse
Maroon uniform pullover V-neck sweater with school name
Maroon knee socks or tights
Black oxford shoes (non-scuff black)
*Shoes must be plain black, leather, flat and fully enclosed.
No stripes, designer insignia, names or numbers of any kind*

SCHOOL SUMMER UNIFORM (May 1st through October 14th)

Boys - Grades K-8 Dark grey trousers with belt
White St. Margaret's Knit shirt
White Socks and Black tie shoes

Girls - Grades 5-8 Gray Kilt with white St. Margaret's Knit shirt
Maroon Knee Socks
Black oxford shoes (non-scuff black)
*Shoes must be plain black, leather, flat and fully enclosed.
No stripes, designer insignia, names or numbers of any kind*

Birthdays Dress Up Days

All students may "dress up" (no jeans, t-shirts, flip flops, sandals or sneakers) on their birthday as a recognition of their special day.

Gym Uniform

All students in Grades K through Grade 8 wear a school gym uniform on their designated gym days. For grades K-4 the gym uniform consists of a **maroon t-shirt with the "school logo"** on it and **gray gym shorts**. For grades 5-8 the gym uniform consists of a **gray t-shirt with the "school logo"** on it and **maroon gym shorts**. During colder weather and in the winter months the students must wear the printed maroon sweat suit. Appropriate sneakers and white socks are to be worn on gym days

Uniform Company

School uniforms are purchased from LU-DEL's Uniform Shop located on 364 South Broadway, Yonkers. The telephone number is 914-969-2664.

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 be above the collar and off the face. 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 will be made by school officials.

It is understood that all students are expected to dress in a neat, clean, modest and safe manner at all times. ***The length of the girl's skirts/dresses must always be modest in every position.*** Shirts and blouses are to be tucked into pants and skirts at all times, so that the waistband and belt is visible. Oversized blouses, shirts, and pants are not permitted. All hair (boys and girls alike) should be neat, clean and appropriately styled, above the collar (for boys), and off the face. Trendy fad-like hair styles, color and accessories that tend to disrupt the class or contribute to a safety hazard are not permitted. Make-up, false nails and fingernail polish are not permitted. Girls who have pierced ears may wear only one pair of post earrings (no hoops or dangling earrings since these can be a safety hazard). Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy

In recognition of the seriousness of the drug and alcohol problems to which the children are exposed, St. Margaret of Cortona School will follow this policy:

- If a teacher suspects that a child is under the influence of either, the matter will be referred to the administration to be handled privately.
- Parents will be notified of any action should it be determined that the student is involved. Parents will be expected to follow the recommendations of the school administration if the child is to continue in the school.
- 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 penalty will be levied.

Electronic Devices

Any electronic device such as cell phones, beepers, hand held (Ipods, MP3 players, etc.) 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.

Emergency Procedures

Parent Notification

Emergency School Closing:

There may be occasions when severe weather, dangerous road conditions, or other emergencies make it necessary to close school during the school day. If this occurs, parents will be notified via our school Instant Alert System. For this reason, information provided by parents on the SCHOOL EMERGENCY CARDS and on the IRIS Instant Alert System must be accurate and up to date. Parents are asked to provide the name of the person(s) and phone numbers who will be responsible for the student when he/she arrives home. Students will only be released to the person(s) indicated on the emergency card.

***Please note that each family is responsible for keeping their Instant Alert Information current.

Illness or Injury in School

If a student becomes ill or injured during the school day, a parent or guardian will be notified immediately using the information on the School Emergency Card on file in the school office. If a parent cannot be reached, the Emergency Contact Person indicated on the Emergency card will be notified.

Any ill or injured student will be given appropriate first aid measures until further instructions are provided by the parent, guardian or physician.

A student who is visibly ill and feverish will not be able to work and should not be around other students. We ask, therefore, that sick children be kept at home.

Expectations and Responsibilities of Students

Students attend St. Margaret of Cortona 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.

Extracurricular Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in the extracurricular activities (sports, clubs, etc.) of the school. Participation in these activities is a privilege. Students are expected to fulfill their obligations in the classroom (class work, homework, behavior, etc). In order to participate in extracurricular activities, students must pass each subject on their report card and *model acceptable behavior both during the school day and during the selected activity*. Failure to meet academic or behavioral requirements will result in the student's suspension or dismissal from the activity. Participation in these activities requires a commitment of both student and parent.

As long as a student is engaged in school-sponsored programs or activities, the student is expected to follow school policy. Directors of individual activities may also issue rules of behavior, which recognize the special nature of non-classroom activities. In instances where students are picked up, parents are expected to make arrangements to pick-up their children at the end of the program or activity. Students will be released only to a parent or a person specified **IN WRITING BY THE PARENT**. The school is responsible for students while they are participating in school-sponsored programs or activities in the school building or on the school playgrounds.

Federal and State Funded Programs

Students of St. Margaret's School benefit from several State and Federally Funded programs which provide developmental academic services, transportation, (NYSTL) textbook loans, (Title V) equipment, (NYSLIB) library books, and (NYSLL) computer software.

Field Trips

Field trips must serve an educational purpose and their value should be an integral part of the school's instructional program. They broaden the students' educational experiences. Field trips are privileges given to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip.

- Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
- Field trips vary on each grade level.
- Field trips are permissible when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.
- 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.
- A written official permission slip, signed by the parent/guardian, 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.

Financial Policies

TUITION RATES AND FEES 2009-2010

PRE-KINDERGARTEN: \$4,150.00 plus \$300 Academic/Technology Fee

GRADES K-8	<u>IN PARISH</u>	<u>OUT OF PARISH</u>
1 Child	\$3,870.00	\$5,350.00
2 Children	\$5,350.00	\$7,550.00
3 Children	\$5,950.00	\$8,870.00

YEARLY FEES:

New Registration Fee:	\$75.00 due at registration
Re-registration Fee:	\$50.00 per child due each February
Academic Fee:	\$225.00 per child:(due at registration for new applicants)
Technology Fee:	\$75.00 (Gr. K-8)
Lunch Duty Fee:	\$60.00 per family
Home School Assn. Dues:	\$25.00 per family
Mandated Fund Raising Fee:	\$100.00 per family
C & E Lockbox Fee:	\$25.00 per family

Please note that with the exception of the Re-registration Fee, ALL annual fees will be paid on a ten-month basis along with tuition. Those families that are able to pay the full amount as of August 1, 2009 will receive a 2% discount

PARISH CONTRIBUTION:

The tuition rates for **IN PARISH** families apply only to our Catholic families who attend Mass faithfully, are registered with the parish **prior** to school registration and have an established history of church contributions. **If a family is not registered in the parish prior to school registration, they will be charged the “Out of Parish” rate for one year while “In-Parish” status is established.** To remain eligible for the “In-Parish” rate, a family must attend weekly mass and using the parish envelope system contribute a minimum of **\$500.00** annually to St. Margaret of Cortona Church. The first \$250 should be contributed between July 1st and December 31st; the second \$250 by May 30th. Families who do not meet these requirements will be required to pay the **OUT OF PARISH** tuition rate.

OTHER FEES & COSTS:

During the course of the school year, other fees and costs may be incurred, such as fees for field trips, additional equipment, school supplies, HSA events, parish events, or other miscellaneous items.

Your participation in ongoing religious, educational, and voluntary programs of our school is vital to our school and to our children. We thank you for your cooperation and support you give to St. Margaret of Cortona School.

Fire Drills

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by the law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the fire signal is given, everyone obeys promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. Students are not permitted to talk during a fire drill and are to remain outside the building until a signal is given to return inside. Teachers will direct the students.

Fund Raising

In order to enhance the working budget of the school and to guide our students toward providing service for their school, the Home School Association sponsors a variety of fundraising activities throughout the course of the year. We encourage all of our families to help keep St. Margaret's School affordable, while at the same time providing our children with an excellent education and a variety of programs in a good safe environment. Each grade level will be responsible for a particular fundraiser and school spirit event. *Every family is expected to participate in the fundraisers of their children's classes.*

Guidelines for the Education of Non-Catholics

Parents must be made aware of the intentional Catholic witness in our schools. St. Margaret of Cortona 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

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. Margaret of Cortona School provides a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well being of any individual are taken seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest) face 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.

Health Program

Health care is provided by a registered nurse on a daily basis but is limited to minimal first aid for accidents and illness until the parent/guardian can be reached. Emergency cards are kept for each child providing information to assist us in locating parents/guardians. It is very important for parents to keep this information up-to-date. Changes in address, home, cell or work phone number must be reported to the school office immediately. Also, please be sure that your child's emergency contact person and phone number is ALWAYS CURRENT.

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 others.

Illness

If a child has a chronic illness such as asthma or a condition that warrants frequent use of the bathroom, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school and classroom teacher in writing in September so that we are aware of the condition.

Immunizations

Students are required to have all inoculations as suggested by the Department of Health before admission to the school

New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance and Attendance

New York State (exclusive of New York City)

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

New York City

Pre-K, Nursery, Daycare	4 DTP, 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
Kindergarten	4 DTP, 3 Polio, 2 Measles, 1 Mumps 1 Rubella, and 3 Hepatitis B for children born on or after 01/01/93
1 – 12 (born before 1985)	3 Diphtheria, 3 Polio, 1 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella
1 – 12 (born on or after 01/01/85)	3 Diphtheria, 3 Polio, 2 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella
College (born on or after 1/1/57)	2 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella

**New York City Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization,
2 Lafayette Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007 (212) 676-2273**

**New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Communicable Disease Control Immunization
Program, ESP, Corning Tower, Room 649, Albany, NY 12237 (518) 473-4437**

Varicella Vaccine – Required

Immunization against varicella (chickenpox) is now required by law. In 1999, Public Health Law Section 2164 was amended to require all children born on or after January 1, 1998 and are entering kindergarten in September 2003 **and** all children born on or after January 1, 2000 and are enrolled in any school to be immunized against varicella.

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.

Medication

St. Margaret's School strongly discourages the administration of either prescription or non-prescription medication in school or on field trips. However, if it is absolutely essential that a student receive medication while under school supervision, the following procedures apply:

- A parent/guardian should come to the school and personally administer the medication
- If the above arrangement is impossible, the school nurse, principal or her designee will administer the medication under the following conditions:
 1. The medication must be given to the school nurse or school principal by the parent/guardian
 2. The medication must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container
 3. The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an **"Authorization to Administer Medication in School"** form, which is available in the nurse's office.

Students will be permitted to self-administer medication only for life-threatening illnesses or conditions. The parent/guardian must schedule a conference with the school nurse or principal to discuss in the need for medication. The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an **"Authorization to Administer Medication in School"** form.

Honor Roll Policy

Through the school atmosphere and educational system at St. Margaret of Cortona School students are taught to reach their potential and accept themselves as they are, recognizing their individual differences. As part of the school discipline program teachers encourage the students to assume responsibility for their work and actions. Not only do they work with students who are experiencing difficulties, but they try to provide incentives for students who strive for success on a regular basis.

Students in Grades K-8 may be recognized with the **Personal Development Honor Roll** each marking period.

Requirements for the Personal Development Honor Roll

Grades K through Eight may be recognized for positive growth in the domain of personal development:

1. Student must demonstrate a positive and productive attitude toward him/herself and others
2. Student must demonstrate respect, courtesy, and cooperation with his/her classmates, teacher and school administration.
3. Student must demonstrate a motivation for personal development during the marking period
4. Student must demonstrate effort to the best of his/her ability.
5. Student must maintain an (A) in Character Development.
6. The principal reserves the right to approve these recommendations.

Requirements for the Academic Honor Roll

Students in Grades 4-8 may be recognized with First Honors, Second Honors, or Third Honors in each of the marking periods *of the School year*.

Good conduct is a requirement to receive Honors. A student who does not receive at least an “A or B” in Character Development will not receive Honors even though their grades may warrant it.

FIRST HONORS - Grades Four through Eight

Any student who has received a grade point average of 95 or above, has received no grade less than 90 ... and who has received an A or B rating in Character Development and Special Subjects.

SECOND HONORS - Grades Four through Eight

Any student who has received a grade point average of 90-94, has received no grade less than 85 ... and who has received an A or B rating in Character Development and Special Subjects.

THIRD HONORS - Grades Four through Eight

Any student who has received a grade point average of 85-89, has received no grade less than 80 ... and who has received an A or B rating in Character Development and Special Subjects.

Students who are tardy 5 or more times during a marking period lose their academic honor roll and perfect attendance status. These students also will automatically receive no grade higher than a “B” in character development.

Library and Computer Lab

The Library and Computer Lab will be open on designated days during regular school hours throughout the year.

1. Books may be signed out for a period of one week and may be renewed for no more than two additional weeks.
2. A fine of ten (10) cents per day will be imposed for overdue books.
3. If a student has an overdue book, no additional books may be signed out until the book is returned and the fine is paid.
4. Failure to respond to a third overdue notice for a book and payment of the fine, may result in loss of library privileges.
5. All library books or money owed must be settled before student report cards are issued.
6. The Computer Lab may be used by students only when there is proper supervision.
7. Use of electronic media services, including the Internet, will be permitted only with Staff supervision and guidance. Parents must return the signed contract before their child/children will be allowed to use the On-line Services available in the school.
8. Any student misusing electronic media services will lose Library and Computer privileges.

Lunch Program

The following options are offered to children:

1. Hot lunch provided by the NYC Board of Education. Price eligibility for free or reduced lunch is determined by the Board of Education after reviewing the application form submitted by each family.
2. Children may bring lunch and purchase milk. The price for milk is determined by current price and is billed each trimester.
3. Children may bring lunch and a beverage. Healthy snacks are encouraged. Candy and soda are not permitted for lunch.

All children on register in Grades K - 8 must complete a lunch registration form provided by the Board of Education - whether or not the child will take hot lunch. Forms must be kept for inspection by Board of Education Supervisors.

Children may switch a program at the beginning of each trimester but not beforehand. Forms will be sent home for completion by parents/guardians at the appropriate time.

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 the 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 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.

Mission Money

In order to promote concern for the needy people of the world, St. Margaret of Cortona School will collect money for the missions.

Money

Money that is brought to school for a specific purpose (class trip, book fair, milk money, etc.) must be put into an envelope with the child's name and grade and amount. If a student does bring money to school, the money should be kept on the student's person and not left in the school bag, coat pocket, lunch box, or desk. The school cannot be responsible for lost money.

Non Discriminatory Policy

St. Margaret of Cortona School admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities in the school. We will not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin in our admission policies, in our treatment of the students or in our personnel practices, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school administered programs.

Note books/Test Papers/School Heading

Students must have the designated school notebooks and theme paper for various content areas. All papers that are written should have the school heading. This establishes habits of orderliness and consistency. Teachers will check books regularly to ensure neatness, good writing, and improvement. Neatness and orderly arrangement of papers and books is essential. The school heading on all papers is as follows:

Name _____ Grade _____
School _____ Date _____
Subject _____

Opening Exercises and Activities

Opening exercises and activities will take place in the school gym each day. Talking and socializing should cease after the morning bell sounds. As part of the beginning morning activity, teachers and students raise their minds and hearts to God in prayer. Following prayers, teachers and students are to face the American flag, which must be on display (in the gym as well in the classroom) for the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and an acceptable patriotic song such as *God Bless America* or the *Star Spangled Banner*. Students may then quietly be dismissed and prepare for their day's activities.

Parental Conduct

Parental cooperation is essential for the welfare of students. Parents or guardians must maintain appropriate behavior toward teachers, staff, principal and other students and their families. The following unacceptable behaviors: verbal abuse, physical intimidation, violent threats, harassment, assault or any behavior related to these - will not be tolerated. It seriously interferes with the teacher/learning process and the school may require parents to withdraw their children and sever the relationship with the school.

Parents as Partners

Just as the parent's 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:

- Assisting their child in his/her academic and moral development by carefully reviewing class work, test results, progress report and report cards; supervising home study; and reinforcing school policies.
- Explaining and reviewing periodically the school behavior code with their child. Parents should discuss school disciplinary episodes in relation to the school behavior code
- Recognizing their child's talents and interests so they may be developed in cooperation with the classroom teachers.
- Seeing that the dress code, including gym uniform, is enforced and insisting that children dress according to Christian virtue.
- Insisting on their child's regular school attendance and punctuality and on complying with attendance rules and procedures.
- Making all tuition and fee payments on time and participating in fund-raising activities.
- Providing proper supervision at home, and not tolerating harassment, inappropriate or violent behavior, or reviewing of such in videos, movies, song lyrics and on the internet
- 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.
- Arranging for a time and place for their child to complete homework assignments.
- 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.
- Attending all Parent-Teacher Conferences and HSA meetings.
- By always interacting in a respectful manner when speaking with or about the administration, teachers and staff of the school. Verbal or physical harassment may result in your child being asked to leave 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.

Parental Rights

Custodial Parents

Custodial parents are entitled to receive original sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc. Non-custodial parents are generally entitled to receive duplicate sets of report cards, school and special event notices, school calendars, etc. Should a custodial parent challenge this, please refer the parent to the principal.

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.

Parent Organizations

A Home-School Organization provides an effective channel of communication between parents and teachers for the benefit of the students and the whole community. Its main purposes are:

- to create mutual support and understanding between home and school, and thus bring about a total learning environment for students
- to provide a means for keeping parents informed of school activities, programs, etc., and if any, parent service requirement
- to assist the school in meeting its financial obligations, primarily through fund-raising activities
- to provide adult education programs

The Home-School Association does not function in an administrative or supervisory capacity. Home-School Association membership is comprised of parents/guardians and staff of St. Margaret's School. General meetings are held three times a year: September, November and May.

Philosophy and Goals

St. Margaret of Cortona 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

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide for the students and parents of St. Margaret's School. The principal of St. Margaret of Cortona reserves the right to conduct the affairs of the school and to exercise discretion in a manner deemed consistent with its goals and policies. This handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students and/or parents/guardians.

Search and Seizure

Because desks, etc., are the property of the school, they may be subject to search at any time.

Security

To assure the security of the building and the safety of each child, St. Margaret of Cortona 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.

Students are not permitted to open the doors to anyone seeking entrance into the school building.

Visitors are welcome – HOWEVER- for security reasons....

Parents, as well as all visitors to the school **MUST** report to the school receptionist office to **SIGN IN and attain a name tag indicating their destination in the school building**. No one will be permitted to move through the building unless authorized by the school office. All visitors must **SIGN IN** and **SIGN OUT** in the book provided in the school receptionist office.

The security of students is of utmost importance. Parents are not permitted to walk through corridors at any time or to speak with a teacher while she/he has the responsibility of monitoring the class.

Sex Offender Policy

This notice is to remind you of the importance of taking steps to keep your child safe when he or she is involved in outdoor activities, including traveling to and from school. The following are some safety tips that we hope you will share with your children:

- Students should never go home with strangers.
- Students should never talk to strangers.
- Students should never take things from strangers.
- If students are approached by strangers and are still near the school, they should be encouraged to return to the school and immediately inform a staff member.
- Young students should be escorted to and from school.
- Older children should be encouraged to walk/travel to school in groups whenever possible.

The teachers at our school will also remind students of the importance of not responding to strangers and actions each child should take if approached by a stranger, including reporting it to responsible adults.

In addition, over the course of the school year, we may receive from the New York City Police Department notification under the New York State Sex Offender Registration Act that a registered sex offender has moved into the region where our school is located. Copies of all the notifications we receive will be kept accessible to parents in the Principal's office. You can also find information about registered sex offenders on the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services website, located at <http://www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us> -- or by calling 1-800-262-3257.

Finally, if our school is notified during the school year that a registered sex offender has moved within the vicinity of our school, further notice will be sent to you. These procedures are part of our continuing effort to provide a safe environment for all children in this 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. Margaret of Cortona School building, on its parking lot and playing fields. This prohibition applies to faculty, staff, parents, and all visitors to the school.

Special Learning Needs

Students with learning differences are children of God and members of the Church. St. Margaret of Cortona 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. Child Study Team Evaluation 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.

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. Summer school also may be recommended due to poor performance on standardized tests or in the classroom.

In May, a list of available summer schools in the archdiocese will be available upon request. Whenever the administration becomes aware of quality programs suited to the specific needs of a student, the principal will notify the parent directly.

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.

Telecommunications Policy Student Expectations in Use of the Internet

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use or violation of any of the following standards will result in serious consequences and could result in expulsion from the school.

1. Use of the computer at school is limited to school related activities. Internet users are expected to behave responsibly in accessing and viewing information that is pertinent to the mission of the school.
2. Vandalism and other infractions of school policy while using the Internet will result in immediate cancellation of privileges along with disciplinary action.
3. After School/Home Access requires students to follow the same student expectations as stated in the "Discipline Code for Student Conduct", "Harassment Policies" and the "Summary Statement" in the student handbook.
4. Students must abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include but are not limited to the following:

Standards of Behavior

- Be courteous and respectful in your messages to others.
- Use appropriate language. Do not use vulgar, harassing, obscene, threatening, abusive, or sexually offensive language, or make any statements that are slanderous or disparaging of any students or adults.
- Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- Do not reveal your home address or phone number, or that of other students or staff.
- Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages related to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Proofread your message before you send it.
- Never agree to get together with someone you "meet" on-line.
- Only public domain software ("shareware") can be downloaded.

- Copyright laws must be respected. Do not make unauthorized copies of software and do not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others.
- Software applications, games, or CD-ROMS from home may not be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval of appropriate school personnel.
- Do not reveal personal passwords or try to learn others' passwords. Do not copy, change, read or use files from another user without prior permission from that user. Do not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs for computer equipment.
- Do not post personal messages on bulletin boards or "list servers". Send personal messages directly to the person to whom you want to write.
- Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network for other users.
- Do not waste or take supplies such as paper, printer cartridges, and diskettes that are provided by the school.
- Talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users. Keep computer work areas clean and do not eat or drink in the computer lab.
- If students encounter material on a network/bulletin board that is not appropriate (vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.,) the student is responsible for not pursuing this material and reporting the matter to appropriate school personnel.
- The use of cell phones, camera phones or other digital media is prohibited during the school day. Cell phones, camera phones, or other personal electronic devices will be confiscated if students use them during the school day without permission. In addition, any student who uses a camera, camera phone or other personal electronic devices in school or in the classroom for any reason will be suspended. Further disciplinary measures including expulsion will be considered depending on the nature of the camera, camera phone, or personal electronic device use.
- Technology Use (including but not limited to cell phones, e-mail, text messages, camera-phones, cameras, personal digital assistants (pda's), chat lines, bulletin boards, etc., outside normal academic hours and/or off school grounds are subject to the same guidelines as previously cited in the "Discipline Code for Student Conduct", "Harassment Policies" and the "Summary Statement".
- 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.
- *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.

Vacations

Extended vacation trips are not encouraged by the school. In the event that a family does take a vacation during the school year, the school is not obligated to issue work for the student to complete while on vacation. The student will be required to make up all missed work when he/she returns to school.

Withdrawal of Students from School

A family that intends to move away should notify the Principal well in advance. Before any transfer of records is given, all financial accounts must be settled. Transfers are given only to the parents personally, not through the children or the phone. A transfer request must be obtained from the school secretary. Records are sent directly to the given school after notice is received that the child has been accepted.

If a student informs the school that he/she is going to a particular school and then a change of schools is made during the summer, this information must be submitted in writing to our office as soon as possible, since we must account for every pupil who leaves our school and verify his/her acceptance into another school.

Summary Statement

Once students have met the necessary admission requirements and have been accepted in at Margaret of Cortona 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. Margaret of Cortona 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. Margaret of Cortona 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 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. Margaret of Cortona 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. Margaret of Cortona 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, which are at all times under the joint control of the school and the student to whom the desk 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.

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. Margaret of Cortona 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.

Principal's Right to Amend School Handbook

The Principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause and parents will be notified if changes are made.