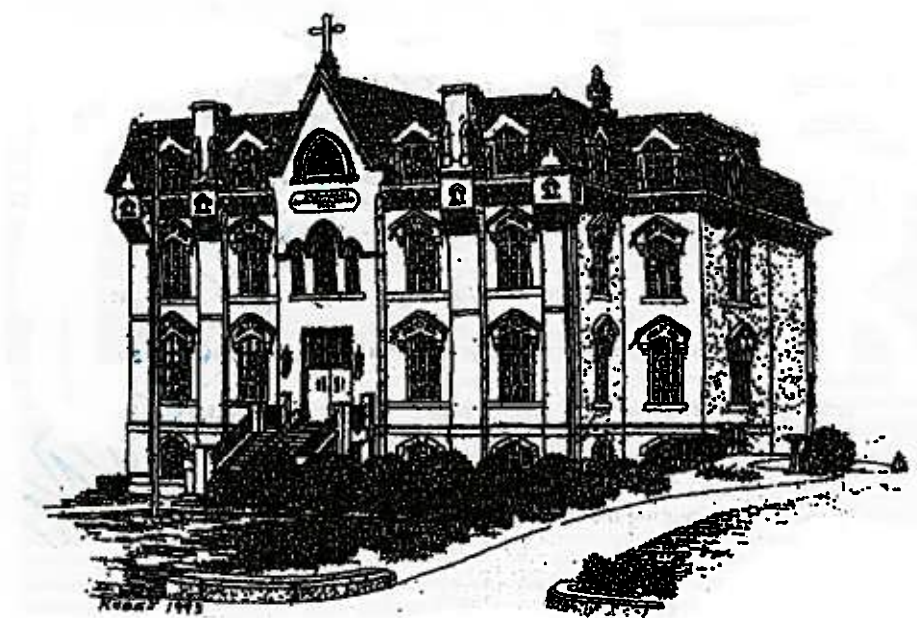


St. Patrick Cathedral School



Parent Handbook

ST. PATRICK CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

SCHOOL ADDRESS

St. Patrick Cathedral School

211 Broadway

Norwich, CT 06360

860-889-4174

860-889-0040 (fax)

Website: www.st-patrickschoolnorwich.org

RECTORY ADDRESS

St. Patrick Cathedral

213 Broadway

Norwich, CT 06360

860-889-8441

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Here is your family's copy of the 2025-2026 parent handbook for St. Patrick Cathedral School. Please review all policies as there are always changes in some areas.

St. Patrick Cathedral School is a school steeped in Catholic tradition and philosophy. We are Catholic first and educators second. We pride ourselves in being family oriented and it has always been the parents that have helped us create this atmosphere. We also pride ourselves in having some of the best educators around.

We are accredited by the Department of Education, State of Connecticut and the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the most prestigious organization in New England that is responsible for accrediting schools. We are very proud that our students score significantly above average on National Standardized Testing conducted annually.

We thank you once again for allowing us the privilege to educate your children for another year and thank you for your support and cooperation in all our endeavors.

SCHOOL OFFICE PERSONNEL

Rector: Monsignor Anthony Rosaforte

Principal: Mrs. Sharon Stewart

Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Jennifer Urgo

SCHOOL FACULTY

PreK- Ms. Emily Watrous

Kindergarten- Ms. Abigail Rasmussen

Grade 1- Ms. Kristen Violette

Grade 2-Mrs. Maria Smelser

Grade 3-Ms. Donna Flint

Grade 4- Mrs. Denise Vailliere-Peay

Grade 5-Mrs. Joan Banning

Grade 6-Mrs. Elizabeth Lane

Grade 7- Mrs. Crystal Hill

Grade 8- Ms. Mary Ann Manning

Interventionist/Computer- Mrs. Kathy Balogh

P.E.-Ms. Mandi Hogan

Spanish- Mrs. Aracely Graul

Music/Band-Mrs. Jessica Hanrahan

Art- Mrs. Candice Flewharty

Aftercare- Mrs. Jennifer Daley, Mrs. Susan Postler, Mrs. Monique Hanks, Mrs. Crystal Hill, Mrs. Sharon Stewart

ESL- Mrs. Jolea Cannon

Custodian- Mr. Michael Shirley

School Nurse- Mrs. Karen Weinberger

Building full time para- Mrs. Monique Hanks

PreK full time para-Mrs. Linda Jones

PreK full time para- Mrs. Erin Bresan-Gilbo

PreK full time para-Mrs. Jennifer Daley

Kindergarten full time para- Ms. Maria Perrino

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

St. Patrick Cathedral School is a Christ centered community. We are committed to a challenging academic program with a strong moral foundation. We provide our students with the skills necessary to be life-long learners while respecting their spiritual, intellectual and emotional differences.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Patrick Cathedral School admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin. Each student is guaranteed all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on basis of race, color, racial or ethnic origin in administration or its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships or loan programs. The school does not discriminate against any application or employee because of race, nationality and does not discriminate against any applicant or pupil because of race or nationality in admissions or education programs.

PARENTAL OBLIGATIONS

If you accept placement for your child at St. Patrick Cathedral School, you are automatically expected to:

1. Be very familiar with the school philosophy and uphold all school rules and policies. Students or parental attitudes, on or off school premises, which interfere with the implementation of the philosophical goals or objectives of the school may lead to the withdrawal of a student from St. Patrick Cathedral School.
2. Pay your monthly tuition, fees, and other expenses on the due date.
3. Be actively involved in the school volunteer program. All volunteers must be safe environment trained. For more information please contact the office.
4. Be an active participant with all fund-raisers, which help finance the school.
5. Work cooperatively with the administration, teachers, volunteers, parishioners, and families of St. Patrick Cathedral School.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: To strengthen St. Patrick Cathedral School's faith community.

OBJECTIVE:

- build effective communication among individuals and groups
- develop unity and appreciation for our commonalities
- show appreciation and respect for individuals and their uniqueness
- encourage leadership and participation
- provide opportunity for group and school liturgical worship and Para liturgies

GOAL: To guide Students in the discovery of their God-given talents

OBJECTIVE:

- encourage creative expression
- promote academic excellence
- support physical and social development
- provide varied opportunities for expression of gifts and knowledge through projects and sponsored co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

GOAL: To serve God, our communities and one another in the world

OBJECTIVES:

- begin each day with school-wide prayer and patriotic observance
- encourage participation in charitable projects that help the needy
- develop an appreciation for student participation in church worship and community service

ADMISSION POLICY

St. Patrick Cathedral School admission policy does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or national origin, however, we give first priority in admissions to siblings of current students, followed in order of priority, by children of parishioners of St. Patrick Cathedral, Catholic children who are not parishioners of St. Pats, and non-Catholic children. The final decision rests with the pastor and the principal.

New applications for the following school year are accepted starting with our annual Open House during January. New families are encouraged to call the school in the month of January to obtain information about the Open House.

The deadline for the submission of applications for new students is March 1 and letters of acceptance, notification of child being placed on a waiting list, or non-acceptance are at that time. After this date, any available spaces will be filled on a first-come, first serve basis. In instances where there is a greater number of applications than the number of spaces available, acceptance as well as the order of qualified candidates on a waiting list shall be determined by a lottery following the prioritization criteria described above. Students will not be accepted if in the opinion of the administration, it is felt that the school cannot meet the educational and/or developmental needs of the child. Even after admission, if it is determined by the principal, in collaboration with faculty and/or staff member(s) that the educational/developmental needs of a student are not being met, the student will not be offered a space the following school year.

Current families need to re-register on an annual basis for the students to remain enrolled.

Re-registration for students currently enrolled must be received by March 1. Current students whose re-registration process is not completed by the designated deadline may lose their enrollment.

This application, admission and registration process at St. Patrick Cathedral School involves the following steps:

Pre-K Students:

1. Completed application form, all accompanying documents submitted, including the most recent IEP and Service Plan if applicable.
2. Letter of acceptance mailed.

3. Payment of Registration fee to secure space.
4. Once classes begin, new students may have a probationary period of six weeks to ascertain whether the school can adequately meet the student's needs and whether the student is able to adjust to the academic and behavioral climate of the school.

Kindergarten Students:

1. Completed application form, all accompanying documents submitted, including the most recent IEP and Service Plan if applicable.
2. Letter of acceptance mailed.
3. Payment of Registration fee to secure space.
4. Satisfactory completion of screening test for Kindergarten.
5. Once classes begin, new students may have a probationary period of six weeks to ascertain whether the school can adequately meet the student's needs and whether the student is able to adjust to the academic and behavioral climate of the school.

Grades 1-3:

1. Completed application form, all accompanying documents submitted, including the most recent IEP and Service Plan if applicable.
2. Letter of acceptance mailed.
3. Payment of Registration fee to secure space.
4. Satisfactory completion of screening test for grade level.
5. Once classes begin, new students may have a probationary period of six weeks to ascertain whether the school can adequately meet the student's needs and whether the student is able to adjust to the academic and behavioral climate of the school.

Grades 4-8:

1. Completed application form, all accompanying documents submitted, including the most recent IEP and Service Plan if applicable.
2. Letter of acceptance mailed.
3. Interview of student and parent(s) with the principal.
4. Payment of Registration fee to secure space.
5. Completion of math and reading screening test for grade level.
6. Once classes begin, new students may have a probationary period of six weeks to ascertain whether the school can adequately meet the student's needs and whether the student is able to adjust to the academic and behavioral climate of the school.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE/UNIFORMS

Students are expected to attend school well groomed, in complete uniform with clothing and hairstyles, which do not draw attention from others. Because St. Patrick Cathedral School believes that a student's appearance affects attitudes and behavior, the following code has been developed and will be strictly enforced.

ALL STUDENTS

Boys in all grades are not permitted to wear earrings or bracelets and only religious necklaces are allowed.

UNIFORM NOTES

Students are not allowed to wear hats in the building.

Jewelry - Girls are allowed only **one post earring per ear**. Religious pins or necklaces are allowed. Boys are encouraged to have regular haircuts. If hair is longer it must be out of their face and pulled back or cut to achieve above.

No FAD hairstyles (ex. Tails, partially shaved heads, artificially colored hair, or highlights).

No makeup or nail polish.

No tattoos or body piercing.

Uniforms, especially shirts, are to be ironed, un-torn, clean, fit properly and tucked in.

No oversized clothes allowed. Blousing is not permitted.

Sleeve buttons must be buttoned.

All articles of clothing should be labeled with the student's name.

Guidelines: St. Patrick Cathedral School believes that appearance and clothes affect attitude.

Therefore, on uniform free days students are to be neatly and appropriately dressed. No offensive logos, tight or short clothing will be allowed. No makeup and nail polish, no bare midriffs, low necklines, etc. No hoop or dangle earrings, not hats to be worn in the buildings. No flip flops style shoes, no tank tops or spaghetti straps.

Shorts must come to the knee.

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Boys Pre-K Uniform

- Green Polo Shirt with school emblem - short and long sleeve
- Navy blue dress pants (Navy blue shorts for summer uniform)
- Navy blue or white ankle socks

Boys K through Grade 8 Formal Uniform

- Light blue dress shirt
- Navy blue tie or bow tie
- Navy blue dress pants
- Navy blue vest with school emblem
- Navy blue socks

Boys K through Grade 8 Informal Uniform (optional)

- Green Polo Shirt with school emblem - short and long sleeve

- Navy blue dress pants (Navy blue shorts for summer uniform)
- Navy blue or white ankle socks

Gym Uniform All Grades

- Dark gray t-shirt with school emblem (short or long sleeve)
- Navy blue mesh or jersey shorts with school emblem
- Navy sweatshirt with emblem crew or hooded
- Navy sweatpant with emblem
- White ankle socks
- Sneakers

Girls Pre-K Uniform

- Green Polo Shirt with school emblem - short and long sleeve

- Navy blue dress pants or skorts (shorts for summer uniform)
- Navy blue tights or white ankle socks

Girls K through Grade 5 Formal Uniform

- Yellow button down blouse
- Plaid jumper
- Navy blue or dark green knee socks or tights

Girls Grade 6 through Grade 8 Formal Uniform

- Yellow button down blouse
- Navy blue vest with school emblem
- Plaid cross tie
- Plaid skirt
- Navy blue or dark green knee socks or tights

Girls K through Grade 8 Informal Uniform (optional)

- Green Polo Shirt with school emblem - short and long sleeve
- Navy blue dress pants or skorts (shorts for summer uniform)
- Navy blue tights or navy blue knee socks
- white ankle socks may be worn with summer uniform only

Students may wear black sneakers or black or brown dress shoes with their uniform. All uniform items with the school emblem, plaid jumpers and plaid skirts can be purchased through Donnelly's.

Students may wear a green fleece zip up jacket, green sweater or green sweatshirt with a logo in school.

***October 1st summer uniform ends, May 1st summer uniform starts**

***detailed uniform picture guides attached to back of handbook**

Books and Book bags: Each student is required to have a bookbag in school each day and to have textbooks covered, numbered and named.

Damaged or lost textbooks must be paid for by the student.

Birthdays: All students will be allowed a uniform free day on their birthdays. Students with weekend birthdays may choose the school day immediately before or after to dress down (except on days of Mass).

Field Trips: The dress code for field trips, including the decisions as to whether or not uniforms will be worn, is up to the principal and will be announced in advance of each trip.

UNIFORM VIOLATIONS

Students who are in violation of the uniform code will:

- Receive a uniform violation letter from their teacher, which will be signed and returned by the parent.

Students are given 1 week from the date of notice to correct the uniform violation.

UNIFORM FREE DAYS

Monthly we will have 2 Dress Down For Charity days. Students will bring in \$1.00 to dress down and \$2.00 to wear jeans. The monies raised will benefit St. Vincent de Paul Place, Field Trip Costs, and Project Graduation. Uniform free days do not apply when Mass is scheduled or when other special events are scheduled. Please refer to the monthly school calendar for dates. In addition, the principal's dress down passes will be distributed as a reward for special accomplishments and participation in fundraisers.

TUITION INFORMATION/PARISH AFFILIATION

All catholic families with active parish affiliation are subsidized by St. Patrick Cathedral School parish or the parish in which the family is registered. Catholic families affiliated with a parish will receive a form to be presented to their Pastor for a signature acknowledging they are active parishioners. Catholic families are expected to contribute to their church by using the envelope system on Saturday or Sunday to determine if they are parishioners of a particular parish. Parishes will be sent lists after October 1st, notifying them of families who have noted their affiliation with their parish. If, upon verification, you are not registered with St. Patrick Cathedral School Parish, your tuition will be adjusted accordingly. If you are registered with a Parish other than St. Patrick Cathedral School and that Pastor indicated you are not registered, your tuition will be adjusted accordingly. This policy will be strictly enforced.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition is due on the date agreed upon each month according to the FACTS and School agreements and is payable in monthly installments unless arrangements for an alternative payment schedule have been set according to your tuition agreement. Final payment is due in May.

If tuition is more than 2 months late, your child/children may not be allowed to return to school until tuition is brought current.

A \$30.00 fee will be charged for a returned check from the bank. If there is financial difficulty in your family, please make an appointment with the principal **before tuition** becomes delinquent. Arrangements for payments will have to be made before the next billing date.

TUITION REFUNDS

Parents are asked to give two weeks notice of withdrawal. Any tuition refunds will be prorated, at the discretion of the principal. **Registration fees are not refundable.**

WITHDRAWALS/TRANSFERS

When a student leaves St. Patrick Cathedral School, the receiving school must formally request the students records, which will then be forwarded directly to the new school. Students who withdraw from St. Patrick Cathedral School will not be eligible for re-admission, special circumstances may apply. Parents will be encouraged to complete an exit survey and a phone interview with the principal.

Records will not be given to parents to hand carry.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found area is in the school office. **Students should have their names on their belongings and clothing.**

TELEPHONES/FORGOTTEN ITEMS

Students are only allowed to use school telephones in case of an emergency. Students are encouraged to be responsible. Teachers will determine whether a student will be given a pass to call home. Students are not allowed to use the telephone without permission nor are they permitted to receive calls on it. **Cell phones are not allowed to be used in school or aftercare.** As per Diocesan regulations, cell phones shall be confiscated by the administration and parents will be contacted. Classroom teachers either collect cell phones at the beginning of the day or they stay in the students's backpacks. **Students are not permitted to receive personal phone calls.**

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

This is one of the most important sections of this handbook. Please read carefully and consider how vital correct communication is in any school, particularly one devoted to Christ's teaching.

Classroom-related concerns should be brought directly to the teacher. Teachers should be alerted to matters under their control before such matters are discussed with other parents, neighbors, the administrative assistant, principal or pastor. Non-resolved classroom

concerns or matters relating to the school in general should be brought directly to the attention of the principal.

School-related concerns should be brought directly to the principal before being discussed with anyone else. All members of our school community are expected to be careful not to violate the privacy of others and should refrain from spreading rumors or comments that may negatively affect the well-being of our school and church community.

You are requested to do all in your power to verify facts, through the correct channels of communication, before passing on misinformation or rumor.

Parents are asked to make every effort to resolve any disagreement with a teacher or school personnel without undermining their authority in front of the student.

The student's respect for their teacher or school personnel is crucial to ensure their safety and academic growth.

APPOINTMENTS WITH THE PRINCIPAL

The principal is available to parents/guardians whenever they have a concern. Please call for an appointment to ensure that sufficient time may be scheduled. If there is an emergency, call immediately.

CLASSROOM VISITATION

If you have a scheduled meeting with a classroom teacher.

1. Park on the main street in front of the school.
2. Use the main entrance.
3. Sign in at the school office before going anywhere in the school bldg.
4. If you wish to pick up your child, please go to the office. We will page the classroom to have your child dismissed. Do not go to your child's classroom.
5. If you wish to see a teacher, please send a note into the school requesting a conference or email the teacher directly. The teacher will contact you as soon as possible, to discuss the arrangement.

With the exception of shadowing, classrooms are restricted to enrolled students of St. Patrick Cathedral School.

CELEBRATIONS

The celebration of birthdays, holidays and student achievement are an important form of recognition in our school setting. In order to ensure that celebrations of all types are in fitting with the mission statement of St. Patrick Cathedral School, the following guidelines for healthy celebrations have been created:

1. Small sized cupcakes or muffins
2. Cheese and crackers
3. Pretzels
4. Fruit or Vegetable tray
5. Extra recess or game time
6. Parent visitor to read to the class

Classroom teachers can be used as an additional resource for creative, healthy ideas for celebrating birthdays. The school nurse should be used as a resource whenever a student's dietary concerns come into question.

FIELD TRIPS/SPECIAL FUNCTIONS

Field trips and enrichment programs are an essential part of the curriculum. Students are expected to take part in planned field trips. Any parent who feels their child should not participate in a planned field trip must submit a written request to the teacher. The principal will make the final decision.

Field trips and special functions, (i.e. dress downs, participation in school dances, and parties etc.), may be denied as disciplinary action for misbehavior, lack of cooperation or failure to complete assignments. If a student does not participate in a field trip or special program, he or she must report to the school on that day for an alternate assignment. Failure to complete the work will result in a failing grade for the assignment.

Written permission is required from parents or guardians for all field trips. Students who fail to bring their permission slip will lose the opportunity to go on the trip.

Each grade should be afforded an opportunity for at least one field trip annually from September to June.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

Students are discouraged from keeping large sums of money with them. Checks (no cash please), should be sent to school in a sealed envelope, with the student's name, grade and explanation of payment on the outside. The envelope should be given to the teacher upon arrival at school.

Students should not keep large sums of money in coats, book bags, desks, lockers, etc.

Students should not bring electronic games or other valuables to school. They will be confiscated and parents/guardians will be contacted.

Games and toys should not be brought to school without the teachers permission.

Cell Phone Policy- will be collected and returned daily by classroom teachers.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is considered an aspect of moral guidance and not merely a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is:

1. to maintain a safe and positive environment
2. to educate students with an appreciation of Christian values especially self-control and responsibility
3. to help build a sense of faith and community
4. to interact respectfully with others at all times

Remember: To discipline means "to disciple" - to teach.

It is expected that students work cooperatively with the administration, teachers, assistants and volunteer parents while at school and all students be allowed the freedom needed to study, learn, pray and play without undue interference from another.

Parents/guardians are expected to be familiar with the parent handbook. Parents/guardians and students will be held responsible for abiding by all rules set forth in the handbook. Parents/guardians and students must sign the handbook to verify that the rules and policies have been read and understood and agreed upon. Please read and review together with your child.

Parental attitudes, on and off school premises, which interfere with the implementation

of the philosophical goals or objectives of the school, may lead to the withdrawal of your child from the school.

CLASSROOM RULES

Each classroom has a list of general classroom rules, which each student must observe. Please be sure that your child is aware of and understands these rules:

1. Speak and act with respect at all times to all staff, adult supervisors and classmates.
2. Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
3. Raise your hand and wait to be recognized before speaking.
4. Keep six legs (chair and 2 feet) on the floor at all times.
5. Remain seated unless otherwise instructed.
6. Complete all assigned work, thoroughly, neatly and on time.

All students are expected to come to school on time and prepared.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The individual teacher/staff member is responsible for the discipline of students under their supervision.

Unless a very serious violation occurs, the following apply:

1. A child will be given opportunities to correct him/herself through counseling, detentions, etc.
2. If not effective, parents will be called in to discuss the problem with the teacher.
3. If improvement does not occur, the principal, teacher and parent will meet to discuss the conditions necessary for the child to succeed in school. The student may be placed on probationary status at this point.
4. If not effective, the administration will determine the action to be taken

Disciplinary action will be taken for The following reasons:

IRRESPONSIBILITY:

Destroying or defacing any school property, furniture, walls, drinking fountains, or bathroom fixtures. Damaged textbooks must be paid for according to the amount of damage. Littering outside is not permitted.

DISCOURTEOUS BEHAVIOR:

Answering back, refusing to accept correction, being disrespectful to others, showing a negative attitude, open or persistent defiance of authority.

LACK OF COOPERATION:

Annoying other students by unacceptable behavior; Talking during a lesson or other quiet time; Writing notes and passing them to other students; Throwing anything in the classroom; Frequent absences; Constant tardiness or lacking necessary supplies.

VIOLATION OF SOCIAL HABITS:

Calling names or bullying; Showing unkindness physically or verbally; Failure to keep desk or materials in good order; Failure to follow uniform or grooming regulations; Failure to demonstrate good table manners or safe behavior at lunch; Failure to cooperate with other students when involved in group learning situations. Academic Dishonesty: cheating, forging signatures, changing grades.

All of the above also apply to behavior on the bus and after-school programs.

DETENTION

Any student who continues to not follow classroom rules, Extended Day Program rules and bus rules after being given two warnings, will be issued a detention from 2:00-2:45 on a designated day. No student is permitted to participate in any extracurricular activity in the evening of the day the detention is given.

The following are classroom infractions. They will be enforced according to the standards established in each individual classroom.

1. Failure to complete homework
2. Lack of class materials
3. Excessive talking
4. Lack of cooperation
5. Conduct or behavior unbecoming a Catholic student

In case of serious violation of school policies, parents may be called to immediately remove their child from school.

SUSPENSION

In-school suspension will only be used when other corrective measures have failed or a serious offense has been committed. If a student is to be suspended, the parents will be notified and given the reasons for the disciplinary actions.

Depending on the seriousness of the offense, the student may be suspended, for as much as two weeks. The principal and parents will do whatever is reasonable to help the student bring about a change in behavior. It is expected that parents will cooperate with the administration to bring about a change in behavior. Under severe circumstances at the discretion of the administration parents may be called for the student's removal.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is an extreme but sometimes necessary measure. The following offenses, committed by students while under the jurisdiction of the school, may be grounds for expulsion:

1. Actions gravely detrimental to the physical, moral or spiritual welfare of the students.
2. Continued willful disobedience.
3. Use, sale or possession of any narcotic or alcoholic substance on or near school grounds or at a school activity.
4. Willful damaging, in any way of school property.
5. Habitual truancy.
6. Theft.
7. Assault or battery or any threat of violence directed toward any school personnel or their property.
8. Threatening another student or faculty member.
9. Bringing a weapon to school.
10. VAPING on school grounds is not permitted.

Categories of Weapons Requiring Expulsions

Weapon Category

1. Firearm - Any weapon that can expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; a firearm frame, receiver, muffler, or silencer; or any destructive device, which includes explosives, incendiaries, and poison gases (but not rifles intended for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes or knives) (18 USC 921 (a) (3) - (4))
2. Deadly Weapon - Any device from which a shot can be discharged, a switchblade or gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles (CGS 53a-3(6))

An air pistol such as a pellet gun (State v Hardy, 278 Conn. 113 (2006))

3. Dangerous Instrument - A device or animal that, under the circumstances in which it is used, can cause death or serious injury, including an attack dog or a vehicle (CGS 53a - 3 (7))
4. Martial Arts Weapon - A nunchaku, kama, kusari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa, or chinese star (CGS 53a - 3 (21))

POLICY ON COMMUNICATING STUDENT PROGRESS

Report cards are issued three times each year, with parent conferences scheduled following the issue of progress reports for the 1st period. Letter grades are earned in grades 3-8, including PE, Foreign Language, Art and Music. Progress reports for 2nd and 3rd period will be issued only if there is a cause for concern/failing.

Grades 6-8 will publish an Honor Roll three times a year. High Honor consist of all A's in every subject. Honors will consist of all A's and B's.

PARENT/GUARDIAN TEACHER CONFERENCES

These conferences are scheduled midway through the first and second grading periods or after Report Cards are issued for grades K-.8. Also conferences may be requested by the parent or teacher.

Diocese of Norwich
Board of Education
Manual of Policies and Procedures

5114.1 Policy on Bullying

Approved : Diocesan Board of Education 06/01/2011

Approved : Bishop Michael R. Cote, D.D. 06/07/2011

Position Statement on a Healthy Catholic School Environment

The Diocese of Norwich, under the teaching authority of the Bishop, believes that schools should be healthy learning environments that are physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually safe, clean and secure. Our schools are founded on the principle of love espoused by Christ in St. Matthew's Gospel. "You should love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole mind, and all your strength. And your neighbor as yourself". (Mt:22,37,39)

Catholic schools are designed to function as Christian laboratories for learning. Their environments enhance student learning which requires the attention of all community members. Safe and healthy environments enhance student learning which requires the attention of all community members. Safe and healthy environments require attention to physical conditions as well as the assurances of frequent, consistent and positive teacher-student and student-student interactions. Research shows that academic achievement improves in schools when students feel physically and emotionally safe and where cultures support reasonable rules that are carefully explained and fairly enforced. A healthy learning community that is safe and founded on the principles of love and moral behavior is the foundation for comprehensive high quality Catholic education.

Recently, our society has become concerned about unsafe and unhealthy interactions in which some students engage. There have always been interactions between and among children of all ages which have been characterized as unacceptable. Many of those situations in the past have been viewed as the result of normal growth and development. We know that children of all ages at times can be mean. Parents and schools try to discipline and, at the same time, instruct those engaging in unacceptable behavior. Children learn that certain behaviors are not within the bounds of acceptability. Through this process children learn how to live in an adult world. Through this process children in Catholic schools learn how to follow Christ and how to apply the moral code as established by Christ. "God is love and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him." (1Jn 5:16) Now unacceptable behaviors have become exacerbated. Bullying has become so serious that society in general has decided that further interventions are necessary. Hence, the need for a specific policy.

Policy on Bullying

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Norwich. Behaviors characterized as bullying will not be tolerated during the school day or during any school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Any behavior deemed by the school administration as bullying shall result in disciplinary actions, which may include detention, suspension and expulsion from school. Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying may be subject to disciplinary actions, which may include detention, suspension and expulsion from school.

Bullying is defined as any overt action by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity, which acts are repeated against the same student over time. Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral, written or electronic threats; teasing, "putdowns"; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

School Responsibilities

- Ensure that the learning environment is healthy and safe.
- Provide opportunities, to the extent feasible, for students to engage in activities that promote a positive school climate.
- Monitor and supervise all areas of the school to ensure that health and safety of all students, staff, families and visitors.
- Create personalized and nurturing learning environments.
- Take immediate action to identify and address all acts of mean-spirited words and actions including but not limited to:
 - Name calling
 - Teasing
 - Exclusion
 - Harassment
 - Bullying behaviors
- Send clear and consistent messages to students regarding their individual responsibility to behave responsibly and respectfully towards others.
- Enforce rules fairly and consistently and provide opportunities to develop and foster moral and ethical reasoning, self-control and a generalized respect of others.
- Use academic subjects, the teaching of the Catholic faith and teachable moments as methods for examining and reflection upon respect and responsibility toward self and others.
- Incorporate conflict resolution techniques into school-based practices and provide students with the capacity and commitment to solve conflicts in fair, non-violent ways.
- Provide effective leadership to create a climate that supports student achievement and well-being.
- Maintain school environments that are welcoming and friendly.

Teacher/Staff Responsibilities

- Participate in professional development activities that address health and safety concerns as appropriate.
- Communicate and collaborate with families to address the health and safety needs of individual students.

- Develop positive and meaningful relationships with students.
- Celebrate students uniqueness and strengths
- Differentiate and individualize instruction to ensure that health and safety needs of all students are met.
- Model respectful and appropriate treatment of others.
- Apply school policies and classroom rules consistently and fairly

Family Responsibilities

- Model respectful and appropriate treatment of others in accordance with the dictate of the Gospel
- Maintain a physically and emotionally healthy home based upon the Church's view that all are created in the image and likeness of God.
- Provide emotional support, set strong examples and correct inappropriate actions (resolving conflicts peacefully, demonstrating tolerance and respect for individual differences and encouraging lifelong learning.)
- Be involved and engaged in school programs, practices and activities.
- Be connected with children's academic and social lives (e.g. know where children are, know who children's friends are, and have regular conversations with children about their interests, their activities and their practice of the Catholic faith)
- Communicate regularly with classroom teachers and other relevant school personnel.
- Participate in collaborative and family functions.
- Participate in parent programs sponsored by the school; become familiar with school strategies for creating and sustaining a physically, emotionally, intellectually safe, healthy learning environment with morally acceptable behaviors based upon the teachings of the Catholic Church and contribute to these strategies.
- Ensure that children are prepared for school by getting adequate sleep, healthy meals, daily physical activity and provide an area at home that is conducive for study.
- Ensure that children receive regular health care (e.g. immunizations, dental care)

Student Responsibilities (as developmentally appropriate)

- Follow the laws, rules, policies and procedures of the classroom, school, community, Church,

state and nation.

- Take advantage of the teaching, learning, and faith practicing opportunities that are provided.
- Recognize individual differences and diversity and demonstrate respect for all people as children of God
- Contribute to creating and sustaining safe and healthy environments.
- Serve as positive role models for others in school, at home and in the wider community.
- Actively participate in school and church activities in addition to satisfying academic requirements.
- Assume leadership and/or supportive roles in school to foster a positive, Christiana, and productive learning community.
- Develop positive and meaningful relationships with peers and school personnel.

Procedure

School employees, students, and parents who become aware of any act of bullying or suspected bullying must report the incident to the school administration for further investigations. Students may report acts of bullying or suspected acts of bullying anonymously. The guide to follow is the State of Connecticut Bullying Task force Report, *Brave Enough to Be Kind*.

Upon learning of a bullying incident or suspected bullying incident, the administrator shall thoroughly investigate the circumstances. Investigations may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff.

If, upon investigation, it is concluded that an act of bullying has occurred, the parents or guardians of the student who committed such acts and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such acts were directed shall be notified. Consequences for students who bully others shall be determined based upon the seriousness of the actions and include parent conferences, recommended professional counseling, detention, suspension or expulsion. Depending on the circumstances, the administrator may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising student(s) involved, providing staff for students as necessary, reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate, and establishing a supervision plan with parents. Bullying incidents that demand expulsion shall be reported to the superintendent of schools before and final decision is reached.

HOMEWORK

Appropriate guidelines for homework are set by the classroom teacher and should be a reinforcement of classroom teaching and learning. A regular homework schedule establishes good study habits. The suggested times that follow are at the discretion of the teacher:

Grades 1, 2, & 3 - Thirty minutes

Grades 4 & 5 - One hour

Grades 6, 7, & 8 - One and a half to two hours

RETENTION

Retention is more successful in the primary grades than later grades; therefore the primary teacher should diligently observe the learner so that problems may be corrected before the student reaches upper grades. Although the opinions of the teacher and the parent/guardian are significant factors, the final decision to retain a pupil is the responsibility of the principal. All possible steps will be taken to assist a student as needed during the course of the year.

Consultation with other professionals may be necessary to complete an accurate assessment.

LIBRARY

Students are encouraged to use the school library. They are responsible for the care and welfare of the books and other items they borrow. Students are allowed to check out books for one week with the option to renew. Damaged books will be paid for by the student. A student's library privileges will be suspended if library items are not returned or if a student repeatedly mistreats library items. If a book has not been returned by the end of the school year, a lost book invoice will be issued.

THE SCHOOL DAY

School begins at 7:45 a.m. Busses arrive at approximately 7:30 a.m. Children who are not in line for morning prayer will be marked tardy. On full days, dismissal is at 1:50 p.m. On half days, dismissal is 11:50 a.m.

It is important that children be present for continuity in learning. It is understood that when they are sick that they stay home. **Please telephone or email the Administrative Assistant if your child is absent.** A note is requested when your child is absent.

Please do not drop your children off in the bus zone next to the rectory on Perkins Avenue, block the rectory driveway, or pull into the Chancery parking lot (Otis Street). If you wish to speak with your child's teacher, please call to make an appointment.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for satisfactory work. In order for a student to be eligible for promotion, it is required by Diocesan regulation that the student is in attendance no fewer than 160 days.

Therefore, no student may accumulate more than twenty (20) excused absences for the **ENTIRE** school year. Extreme medical absences and/or homebound instruction may be excluded from the 20 days at the discretion of the administration and consultation with the Diocesan Superintendent when necessary.

A written request from parents is required for a pupil to leave school before the time for dismissal. The request must state clearly the reason for the early dismissal and be approved by the principal.

Students may be signed out by the appropriate person in the log that is kept in the school office. To avoid disruption in the classroom, please wait for your child to be dismissed to the office. Frequent absence is extremely detrimental to the student's academic program and will place your child in violation of the Diocesan regulations. The principal must approve extended absences.

According to Dioesan Policy, we can refuse to promote a student who is absent more than 20 days, especially if their work is not completed.

TARDINESS

All students and their parents must report to the school office when they arrive after 7:45 a.m. No student will be permitted into a classroom without a tardy slip from the office. Five (5) incidences of being tardy, per trimester, in grades 5-8 will result in a letter being issued to parents. Parents may also be called for an interview with the principal.

ABSENCE/MAKE-UP WORK

For everyday out, 2 days are given to make up work. All teachers will work with the student to make sure they have what they need. Please note that work will be available for pickup on the following day after 2:30pm in the school office.

VACATIONS

Teachers are not required to give homework assignments when a student will be absent for reasons other than illness. **Please do not ask for work ahead of time.** Children can make up work when they return from vacation.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

In the morning, buses will drop off students on Perkins Avenue. Cars may drop off students using the upper entrance to the parking lot on Otis Street. Morning drop off begins at 7:30 a.m.

With safety in mind, I am requesting that if you need to speak with your student's teacher that you please make an appointment. The teachers need to have their full attention on the safety and well being of all students at dismissal which cannot happen if they are talking with a parent/guardian.

At the end of the school day, buses will pick students up on Perkins Avenue next to the rectory. If you are picking your student up at the end of the day you will enter the parking lot from the lower entrance on Otis Street and park behind the cones. All classes will walk students out to the parents in their cars. There is **NO PARKING** above cones. **THIS IS SCHOOL POLICY.** The safety of our students and your children is an important issue to us. **Please leave dogs/pets at home or in the car. All cars, parents and students must leave the playground/parking lot by 2:00 p.m. so that our Extended Day program can use the area.**

Students who transport by car to/from school are referred to as “walkers”. If your mode of transportation changes for the day, you must submit this change in writing to your child’s teacher. Without a note, students will follow normal dismissal home. Written permission must be given for your child to leave school with another parent or adult not on your emergency pick-up list.

EXTRA - CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities help create school spirit, create unity, encourage good relationships, instill good citizenship and promote the welfare of the school community. St. Patrick Cathedral School offers the following activities dependent on interest and enrollment:

- Choral Group and Band
- Liturgy Participation and Altar Servers
- Basketball for boys and girls in grades 5-8
- Cheerleading
- Cross Country
- Yearbook Club (Gr.8)
- Afterschool Clubs

Academic Eligibility:

All students who participate in extracurricular events, including athletics, should be in good academic standing by passing all courses. Students receiving a failing grade on a report card are subject to suspension from extracurricular activities to include athletics. A conference among the student, parents and teacher(s) must be scheduled to create a specific action plan for making significant academic progress based upon individual needs. in order to be reinstated.

Students who are absent from school on the day of a scheduled sports event may not be allowed to participate in that event. Special circumstances may alter any academic, disciplinary or attendance

probation. The ultimate decision resides with the principal.

CURRICULUM

Art	Literature	Religion
Computer Science	Mathematics	Spelling
English	Music	Social Studies
Geography	Handwriting	Science
History	Physical Education	Spanish
Library Science	Reading	Vocabulary

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Special activities may be scheduled and some may include: concerts, drama activities, religious observances, ethnic celebrations, exhibitions and guest speakers.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/PUPIL SERVICES

Special Education instruction is provided to St. Patrick Cathedral School through the Norwich Public School System.

BUS SAFETY

Students at St. Patrick Cathedral School and who are residents of Norwich, have the privilege of riding on Norwich School Buses. In order to retain that privilege, students must adhere to the following rules:

1. Sit in assigned seats.
2. Use polite language - no swearing or name calling.
3. Keep hands to yourself. NO hitting or throwing.
4. Never stand. Stay in your seat at all times.
5. Identify yourself upon request.
6. Obey the bus driver.

Bus safety violations will be handled in the following way:

First Violation: The principal will be notified by the bus driver or the administrative assistant of the type of violation. The teacher will then send a bus behavior note home requesting a parent's signature.

Second Violation: Same as above and the principal will make a telephone call to the parents noting it is the second violation. An in-school detention and written assignment will be given.

Third Violation: The principal will contact the parents and set up a conference. The child will be suspended from utilizing the bus service.

Continued problems will result in removal from the bus.

BUS RULES

The following WILL NOT be tolerated:

- Extending hands from the bus windows
- Throwing items from bus windows
- Pushing in line while waiting to get off the bus
- Using improper language or making derogatory remarks
- Shouting, yelling or loud singing that could distract driver
- Eating or drinking on the bus
- Destruction of property
- Getting out of seats
- Disturbing other passengers

HEALTH

The Health Programs in the school are conducted by Norwich Public Schools. Physicals are required for all students before entering PreK, Kindergarten and seventh grade.

A physician's written order and a written authorization of a parent or guardian must be presented for any medication (including aspirin or Tylenol) to be administered in school. Forms for physician's orders and parent's authorizations are available at the nurses office. No medication (prescription or non-prescription) including cough drops, may be self-administered on school grounds, except for approved inhalant asthma medication.

The medication must be delivered in and dispensed from the original pharmacy container, properly labeled with the original strength of medication and directions for administration. Parents may bring to school the exact amount of medication for each week or month, no more than a 45-day supply. Long-term medication orders are to be renewed at least once each school year.

Unused medication shall be picked up by the parents or responsible adult when notified by the school nurse. **Students are not allowed to bring medicine to school.**

IMMUNIZATIONS

It is the parents' responsibility to keep their child's immunization records up to date. All questions regarding immunizations should be addressed to the school nurse.

SCHOOL SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

Students participating in school sports programs must submit a completed health form to the school. The school nurse will keep the student's health form on file. Coaches will keep permission slips on file. Parents must also participate in a "Play Like A Champion" workshop. Please contact the school office for sign up information.

EMERGENCY FORMS

Each family must have on file in the office an emergency form supplying certain necessary information, including the names of two persons who may be contacted in the event neither parent can be reached in an emergency. ***If there is a change in this information (i.e. address, employment, phone, etc.), please notify the office by phone or email. You can also update your information in the parent portal.***

EXTENDED DAY CARE

St. Patrick Cathedral School offers a program designed to provide quality care for students when they are not in school.

The Extended Day Program covers after school hours when school is in session:

Full days: 1:50 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Half days: 11:50 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

EXTENDED DAY CARE POLICIES

1. Students are required to register at least one week prior to attending Extended Day. Request a form to be emailed to you.
2. A parent/guardian or designated adult is required to sign the student out of the program, regardless of student's age.
3. Bills are issued monthly.
4. Extreme weather conditions may delay, shorten or cancel our program. If Norwich Public Schools cancels after school activities, Extended Day Care will also close.
5. No cell phones allowed. They are to stay in student's backpacks at all times.
6. School policies are to be followed in aftercare.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/CLOSINGS

St. Patrick Cathedral School will follow Norwich Public Schools in regards to closings and delays. We post on Facebook. You can also receive a text message if your cell phone is updated in Educonnect. You may also check the following:

TV: NBC CT
WFSB
WTNH
Fox61

ST. PATRICK HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)

Welcome to the school year. The HSA is the Parent Teachers Organization (PTO) at St. Patrick Cathedral School. The objectives of the HSA are:

1. To promote open communication between parents, teachers and administration.
2. To provide information of particular interest to parents and teachers through planned programs.
3. To promote goodwill and cooperation between parents, faculty, administration, the School Board, and St. Patrick Parish.
4. To direct and coordinate parent support of St. Patrick Cathedral School through assistance, activities, social functions and fundraisers which will directly benefit the students.
5. To foster the political action of parents as advocates regarding national, state and local legislation that affects Catholic Schools as well as the lives of students and parents.

These objectives are fulfilled through the active participation of parents and staff in the HSA. The children are the direct recipients.

To indicate the importance of this family handbook and the policies enclosed, we ask that you sign and submit your acknowledgement with your beginning of the year update form. This assures us that you have read and understand our policies and what St. Patrick Cathedral School stands for. Your signature also indicates that you agree to abide by all the rules and regulations stipulated in this handbook. Cooperation and understanding between your home environment and the school is absolutely essential to ensure the most effective and complete education of your child(ren). We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.