

SAINT MARGARET CATHOLIC ACADEMY



ADMINISTRATION

Pastor: Rev. Msgr. Steven J. Aguggia, JCL

Principal: Ms. Victoria Richardson, M.Ed.

Chairman of the Board: Mr. Stephen Barbaro

OFFICE STAFF

School Secretary: Sr. Barbara Kradick, OP

Office E-mail: stmargoffice@aol.com

Receptionists: Ms. Harlin Mrs. Kirmaier

Overview

The rules of this handbook apply to all students and all families who are enrolled in Saint Margaret Catholic Academy from Nursery through 8th Grade. **Legally, Registration in the school assumes acceptance of these guidelines and policies on the part of the families registered.** It is the sole responsibility of the administration of the school to interpret and, when needed, to change aspects of the handbook in whole or in part. First and foremost, Saint Margaret is a Catholic School, guided by the Gospel. The principles of the Catholic Faith will always be the guiding force behind these and all school policies and procedures.

All persons who attend the school are to learn and respect the Catholic Faith as taught within the school.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten

Full Day: 8:00AM to 2:25PM Children enter via school yard and leave by 80th St

Half Day: 8:00AM to 11:00 AM Children enter via school yard and leave by 80th St.

Grades Kindergarten through 8th

Doors open: 7:45AM (there is NO supervision before 7:45AM)

School begins at 8:00AM. There is a five minute grace period. Students who arrive at 8:05AM or later are marked late and must receive a late pass.

Dismissal

Nursery classes are dismissed via 80th Street next to the Flower Shop at 2:25PM

Pre Kindergarten classes are dismissed through the gym doors at 2:25 PM

Kindergarten via the school door near the church on 80th Street at 2:25 PM

Grades 1-3 via 79 Place at 2:35 PM

Grades 4-5 via 80th Street at 2:35 PM

Grades 6-8 via 80th Street at 2:45PM

Parents and Guardian should make every effort to be on time for the safety of all the children.

We urge all parents and children to leave the premises as quickly as possible.

Admission Policy

St. Margaret Catholic Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, national origin or health conditions (if reasonable accommodations can be provided on the part of the school for good and safety of the disabled person). However, in cases of waiting lists and crowded classes, preference is given to NEW PROSPECTIVE REGISTRANTS in the following manner:

- 1) Students with siblings already registered in the school.
- 2) Catholic students who live in Saint Margaret Parish (On a first-come-first served basis)
- 3) Catholic students (On a first come-first served basis)
- 4) Non-Catholic students may be accepted, but are required to pay the tuition rate of "full cost per child."

Students who are RE-REGISTERING from the previous year receive first preference up to and including a specific, clearly designated date. If they fail to register prior to this date, the student is now on the list of PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS, and will follow the above protocol for admission.

Attendance

A student registered in school should be able to profit from the school experience. Students in grades K-8 are **required by New York State Compulsory Attendance Law** to be present each day school is in session. Medical and dental appointments and family functions should be tended to during school recess periods. Vacation taken during school time must be recorded as an illegal absence. Teachers must be notified in writing one day prior to appointments. If a student is absent from school during the day then he/she cannot attend afterschool activities. Illness or family emergencies are the only real reasons for a student to be absent. If a student is unable to attend class, please observe the following:

1. A parent or legal guardian must call St. Margaret Catholic Academy by 9:00AM each day the student is absent. Please state student's name, grade and reason for absence. Indicate who will pick up books and assignments. **It is extremely important that this be done so that the school is aware that the parent knows of the absence.**
2. A parent or legal guardian is responsible to send a written note explaining the absence to the child's teacher when the student returns to school. If no written excuse is received within three days, the absence must be recorded as illegal. The school will always follow all State attendance always in this regard.
3. In case of a profound illness or contagious disease (chicken pox, measles, etc.) a physician's note must be presented to the teacher when the student returns. This note must indicate when the student is permitted to return to classes. For the safety of all, a student cannot be permitted back to class without such a note.
4. Long Term Illness- contact the Principal for Home Instruction Procedures.

5. A student with excessive absences is in jeopardy of retention. There is a legal limit for absences at which point it is highly probable that a student will be retained so as to ensure that he or she will truly benefit from the education offered.

6. **Please note: Students are registered for the school year. If for some medical or other reason, a student is absent for a prolonged amount of time, tuition is still required. Tuition is divided into monthly payments to budget parents. School tuition is not paid monthly based on attendance.**

Lateness

A student is late if s/he arrives after 8:05AM. Since there is a five minute grace period, 8:05 will be strictly enforced. Tardy students in grades K-8 must enter the building via the 79th Place Road entrance and receive a Late Pass. This pass must be presented to the class teacher upon entrance to the classroom. Lateness is recorded on the student's Permanent Record Card. Chronic lateness can result in a Parent conference. Chronic lateness is a serious issue for the child's total development and can influence acceptance into high school .

Release of Students From School

Students will normally be released ONLY at regular dismissal time. It is the responsibility of the parent to be certain that a qualified and designated adult is ready and able to pick up the child from school. Supervision is not provided after dismissal.

Students are expected to be in attendance all day each school day. If, for any reason, a student must leave school before the regular dismissal hours, a parent or legal guardian must send a note to the teacher and principal explaining the reason for early departure. **A Parent or duly designated person 18 or older must come to the School's Office to sign the student out and escort him/her to the designated place.**

No student will be dismissed from school to anyone other than a parent or legal guardian without prior written or verbal permission from the parent directly to the office or teacher. This is the case even if the student, of any age, recognizes the adult who presents himself or herself to pick up the child. Even in such cases clear permission must be received for the student to be released to this adult.

DRESS CODE

Students are required to wear official school uniforms unless special dress code is indicated for a specific reason. Failure to be **in full uniform** will result in disciplinary action. This is especially true for flagrant disregard for uniform rules and for repeat offenses on this matter.

Anytime and anyplace where the student is wearing the Saint Margaret uniform he or she is representing the school and is expected to act accordingly. This includes travel to and from school.

In addition to possession of the uniform, it is the responsibility of the student and family to be certain that the uniform is worn properly, in a manner that is neat, clean and presentable. Shirts must always be tucked in. Improper wearing of the uniform, such as untucked shirts, are also considered infractions of dress code.

Official School Uniform

Nursery and Pre-K Students will wear the gym uniform every day.

Students are ONLY to wear the specifically designated uniforms for Saint Margaret as clarified in handouts and as offered at Flynn and O'Hara. No exceptions or substitutions will be made.

Casual versions of the uniform can be worn only during clearly designated times of the year. Students may not take it upon themselves to wear the summer version of the uniform at any time of the year other than specific designated days. Similarly, skirts only during the summer/casual uniform times.

The girls skirt is to be no more than 1/2 inch above the knee. Student may NOT roll up their skirts.

The optional Blue blazer may be worn in place of the sweater or vest. Full dress uniform required for Mass and school pictures unless other instructions are given by the Administration.

JEWELRY- is never permitted to be worn on gym days. No rubber bracelets.

EARRINGS- Girls who have pierced ears may wear posts or hoops no bigger than ¼" inch. Only ONE pair is permitted. Large hoops or dangling earrings may not be worn as this presents a health hazard to the child during the school day. Only thin, inconspicuous chains may be worn around the neck. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings at any time.

WRIST WATCHES- may be worn, but it is the students' responsibility to provide a safe place for their belongings, especially during gym. Administration, faculty and staff are not responsible for students' belongings or personal money. If students wear watches or carry personal money to school, they do so at their own risk. No watches or other of the like are permitted.

MAKE UP AND NAIL POLISH --NOT permitted on regular school days. Only when specific instructions are given from the administration can an exception be made for special occasions.

Students are encouraged to have clean hands and nails, no "fake" nails of any kind.

DRESS DOWN/ NUT CARDS: Students may use NUT cards or Dress Down only on clearly designated days with the express permission of the School Faculty and Administration. For no reason can parents or students decide on their own to dress down without prior permission and a clear written explanation.

Even when dressed down for any reason, students must dress with modesty and observe at all times the following:

- 1) No bare shoulders, spaghetti straps, camisoles or similar tops.
 - 2) No bare midriffs. The stomach must be covered entirely.
 - 3) No "short-shorts" or short skirts, etc. At least fingertip length is expected at any given time.
 - 4) No writing of any kind on the backside of pants or shorts.
 - 5) No ripped jeans/ pants.
 - 6) Shirts and jackets cannot have offensive or unchristian pictures, images or messages on them. This rule will be strictly enforced. It is the role of the administration to decide what constitutes an unacceptable saying or image on a shirt.
 - 7) No High heeled shoes. No flip-flops, crocs or any form of open-toed shoes. Sandals must be fastened.
 - 8) BOOTS may be worn to and from school during inclement weather. However, boots may not be worn during class. Upon entrance to the classrooms, the students must change into uniform shoes. (This applies only to regular dress days.)
 - 9) Boots with reasonable heels may be worn on dress down days or NUT card days. Administration will determine appropriateness.
 - 10) When dressing down or dressing up always keep in mind the importance of modesty and the fact that we are in a Catholic school setting.
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HAIR is to be well groomed. Hair styles should **be neat and simple.**

The following rules for hair styles will be observed at all times.

- 1) Students may not dye their hair or parts of their hair in any unnatural or unusual colors.
 - 2) Boys must always have their hair cut. It can extend NO LONGER than the shirt collar. Boys' long hair can never be held above the shirt collar in a ponytail or in any other fashion. It must be cut.
 - 3) Absolutely no words or images shaved into the hair.
 - 4) No Mohawks of any type.
 - 5) Students do not wear hats or head coverings in the school building at any time unless special permission is given by the Administration for a specific reason or special occasion.
 - 6) It is the responsibility of the Administration only to judge whether hairstyles and haircuts will be deemed acceptable or unacceptable in accord with the handbook as a clear guideline.
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GYM UNIFORMS- On gym days, Grades PK-8 must wear sneakers white crew socks and official gym uniforms. Official gym uniform consists of a St. Margaret Catholic academy sweatshirt or T-shirt and

navy blue shorts or sweatpants (with elastic at the ankle and waist). NO LEGGINGS CAN BE WORN UNDER GYM SHORTS.

School uniforms and gym clothes may be purchased at Flynn & O'Hara in Atlas Mall

Homework Assignments

Homework is given at the discretion of the teacher based on daily classwork.

Parents are requested **to check and sign homework daily in grades K-6.**

Homework for grades 7&8 may need to be signed at the request of teachers and/or parents.

Homework is included in report card grades. Each trimester, every student begins with a homework grade of 100%. All tests must be signed and returned. Homework is an essential part of the learning experience and the final grade.

Time Allotment

Primary Gr. K-2 maximum 45 minutes | Intermediate Gr. 3&4 maximum one hour | Junior High Gr. 5-8 maximum 90-100 Minutes

STUDENTS ARE NEVER EVALUATED BASED ON ONE SIMPLE CRITERION. MULTIPLE ASSESSMENTS ARE USED SUCH AS CLASSWORK, PARTICIPATION, HOMEWORK, TESTS, QUIZZES AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS. CLASSWORK INCLUDES EFFORT.

Timetable

Report Cards are distributed at three points during the year- December, March and June. Interim progress reports will also be sent home in grades 3-8. The purpose of the progress report is to let students and parents know how the student is progressing so far within the semester. It is a clear communication with the family regarding progress and how things are developing for the report card. Parents should take the progress report very seriously as an indicator. Issues and concerns should be dealt with promptly so that the student can be helped, if needed, prior to report card time.

The final grade recorded in the fourth column of the Report Card represents a comprehensive assessment of the student. **It is this grade that is recorded on the Permanent Record Card.**

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal Parent Teacher conferences set in advance by the school are an extremely important means by which parents and teachers discuss and work together for the good of the child. It is essential that parents make every effort to make it to the scheduled conference.

Similarly, with the parent or the teacher may request an individual meeting during the year. The purpose of all such meetings is to work for the betterment of the child's education.

Promotion to the next grade is based on a total evaluation of a student's growth in all areas of his/her development and contingent upon attendance. Successful achievement of the program objectives

Principal's List: 95-100 average with no grade lower than 93 or A in any subject.

Honors: 90-94 average with no grade lower than 85 or B in any subject.

Merit: 85-89 average with no grade lower than 81 or C+ is any subject.

Effort: A passing grade in all subjects with no grade lower than a 75.

All of the above require good personal progress and conduct grades. Regular attendance is part of class participation and excessive absence can therefore influence awards. New York State law has clear compulsory attendance expectations for Grades K-8 and excessive absences, by State law, put promotion in serious doubt.

IEPS

St. Margaret's will accept students who have IEPs. The IEP, actually referred to as an IESP for private schools, will be respected insofar as possible. This discussion will take place with the parents. If it is not possible to accommodate the child as necessary, this will be told to the parents before registration or after an agreed period of trial.

IESPs that call for extra time or separate location cannot be enforced for regular testing, as Saint Margaret Catholic Academy does not possess the personnel or space to do so. Extra time and space can be given for major exams such as state exams.

Discipline Policy

A progressive policy is in effect, including both positive reinforcement as well as direct disciplinary action, in order to promote responsible student behavior and to ensure that each student is treated as a person with dignity and respect in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.

Rules are taught and students are expected to follow them. In turn, students have a right to expect fair treatment and respect. This is an integral part of their overall education and formation as productive members of society and as Christian ladies and gentlemen. Parents, as first educators of their children, share deeply in the responsibility to educate and form their children to be responsible and well-behaved.

Discipline is generally handled on the classroom level and respect is due at all times to the teachers and staff. In cases of a serious infraction of the rules, parents will be notified of the occurrence by way of the Disciplinary Notification Forms or Behavior Referrals. This form is meant as a tool of communication

between teachers and parents. It is simply the means by which parents are informed of a discipline issue that took place in school. It does not go on the child's permanent record. It is the parent's responsibility to sign the form as an indication that it has been viewed and read. Conferences are always possible to arrange.

Certain infractions of the rules are very serious and cannot be handled with only a form or a detention. These infractions can result in immediate suspension or even expulsion from the school. These infractions include but are not limited to:

- 1) Ongoing bullying behavior, as defined by diocesan policy and adopted by St. Margaret School
- 2) Physical harm caused to any person.
- 3) Damage of school or private property.
- 4) Possession of any dangerous or illegal items.

The Administration reserves the sole right to determine what infractions can and will result in the penalty of Suspension or Expulsion.

Discipline is always to be handled by school staff, meaning only faculty and aides. Parent volunteers are to inform teachers or aides of infractions. Any communication regarding discipline should take place between teachers and parents only.

In addition to these methods, students will also be rewarded when good behavior is consistently followed and modeled for fellow students.

The following rules **do not** constitute an exhaustive list. They are **some** of the major expectations of the school in regard to ethical conduct and Christian activity:

CAFETERIA-AT ANY TIME THE BELL RINGS STUDENTS ARE TO LISTEN SILENTLY. Grace is prayed before and after meals. Silence and respect are to be observed during grace. Children must remain in their seats while eating. There is NEVER walking around or socializing during lunch. Junk foods and bottled glass beverages are not permitted. While eating children should talk and socialize with those around them.

Parents may NOT deliver lunch to the cafeteria. Instead, forgotten lunches must be brought to the main office and the office will ensure that students receive their meal.

N.B. We have a number of children with NUT ALLERGIES, therefore for the children's health and safety, nut products of any kind may not be given to your child for lunch and/or snacks. Thank you for your cooperation. Please always keep in mind the seriousness and severity of this allergy.

No snacks may be shared with students in the cafeteria unless a teacher or administration has given approval

SCHOOL YARD- The children must stay in their designated area as defined by the teachers on duty. ONLY those games permitted by the school are to be played during recess. Students who are not playing by the rules or who are in any way dangerous to others will not be permitted recess.

CLASSROOMS/ASSEMBLIES- The children must enter quietly, follow directions and observe the rules of good manners. Class disruptions, disrespectfulness to students/teachers, cheating, lying, forgery, fighting, truancy and sexual harassment of any kind are never permitted. Jeering or booing is not appropriate behavior at a school function.

HALLWAYS- Students who are changing classes or walking through the halls for any reason are expected to maintain calm. There is absolutely NO running in the hallways. Students must always remain ON LINE. Students may talk **quietly** in the halls but must immediately become silent upon entering their next class.

CHURCH- Grades 2-8 go to Mass one day each week. The children are taught to genuflect toward the Blessed Sacrament before being seated and to participate fully in the liturgical prayers. A reverential attitude and behavior is expected at all times by all persons. Children will always be reminded of their obligation as Catholics to participate in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. Regardless of the child's religious faith respect in Church will be very strictly enforced.

CELL PHONES

If students carry cell phones, they are for emergencies ONLY during school hours or for parental approved use after school. They must be turned off at all times from the moment the student enters the school until he or she leaves. Cell phones may not be used during school time. This includes lunch and recess. The school phone is available in case of emergency. Cell phones will be taken away from any student who disobeys this policy. Students using their phones or texting during school hours will receive a disciplinary notice and will not be permitted to have their phones back until the end of the day.

TAPE RECORDING is absolutely forbidden unless specific permission is given.

Tape recording a teacher is permitted only with the teacher's permission. Tape recording without permission could result in expulsion.

PICTURE TAKING

No student is permitted to take pictures on school property without the expressed permission of the Principal. NO SUCH pictures are to be posted to Facebook or other social media without similar permission.

The principal and teachers reserve the right to implement and to modify the above policy at their professional discretion. Infraction of the above Discipline Policy after a student has already been suspended could result in an automatic expulsion from St. Margaret School.

Accident and Illness at School

Each student must have on file an Emergency Card with up-to-date information indicating parents' home and/or work telephone number and the number of an adult who can be contacted if parents cannot be reached. The doctor's name and telephone number should be indicated on the reverse side of the card. Please notify the school in writing if Emergency Card information changes.

If a child has a severe ailment such as diabetes or cardiac condition, and needs medication, please inform the teacher and the School Office at the beginning of the school year. **It is essential that the school nurse has updated access to all pertinent information to ensure that your child will receive the proper care.**

In case of an accident, parents will be notified and given a written report. In case of illness, a child will remain in school until a parent or responsible adult designated by the parent arrives.

School personnel may not dispense medication.

Health Services

Identification of Health Problems

Under Section 905 of the New York State Education Law, an inventory of children's health problems are undertaken each year. Students are:

Parents are informed of any observable health problems so that the children will get the necessary professional care.

Traffic Safety

Since we are only allotted one School Crossing Guard, parental cooperation is vital for the safety of our children.

Please observe the following:

1. DO NOT CONGREGATE ON THE SCHOOL SIDE OF THE STREET.
2. Instruct your child to obey the School Crossing Guard and the teacher on duty when crossing.
3. DO NOT DOUBLE PARK on 79th Place and 80th St., nor park on the School side of Juniper Valley Road.
4. Do not sit in your car opposite the School and call your child to cross the street in the middle of the block or between parked cars.
5. Be punctual when meeting your child at dismissal time. Instruct your child in advance to go directly to the Office if you are not in your designated meeting place.

6. Do not take another child home, unless parents of said child have given you and the school specific instructions.

7. Do not patronize vendors on 79th Place and 80th St. Vendors are not permitted within two hundred feet of the school. If vendors wish to sell their wares, they may do so on 80th St. and Furmanville or 80th St. and Metropolitan Ave., not on Juniper Valley Road at 79th Place and at 80th Street.

Financial Obligations

NURSERY AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN

HALF-DAY : \$3,000 (\$300 PER MONTH) FULL DAY: \$3,300 (\$330 PER MONTH)

THERE IS NO CATHOLIC/ NON CATHOLIC DISTINCTION IN TUITION FOR NURSERY AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN

KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 8

Catholic:	1 Child	\$4,300	(\$430 PER MONTH)
	2 Children	\$6,900	(\$690 PER MONTH)
	3 Children	\$9,000	(\$900 PER MONTH)

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Non-Catholic:	1 Child	\$5,300	(\$530 PER MONTH)
	2 Children	\$7,500	(\$750 PER MONTH)
	3 Children	\$10,000	(\$1,000 PER MONTH)

TUITION IS DUE ON THE 5TH OF EVERY MONTH BEGINNING IN JULY AND ENDING IN APRIL. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT TUITION IS PAID IN FULL AND ON TIME. WHEN THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN, THE SCHOOL LACKS THE PROPER FUNDS TO FUNCTION AND TO PAY BILLS. TUITION MAKES UP ONLY A PORTION OF THE ACTUAL COST PER PUPIL, WHICH IS WHY FUNDRAISING IS SO NECESSARY. PLEASE LET US ALL DO OUR PART TO BE PUNCTUAL WITH ALL OF OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS.

\$150 per child at time of Registration (Non-Refundable)

\$100 per child payable at re-registration (Non-Refundable)

If a family is not current on all financial obligations, students will unfortunately have to be held from certain school activities including trips. REPORT CARDS WILL NOT BE DISTRIBUTED UNTIL TUITION IS PAID.

Graduation Policy

All students successfully completing Grade 8 will receive a diploma at a public graduation ceremony in June. However, participation in this ceremony is **an honor and privilege** from which a student may be excluded if s/he consistently fails to behave as a mature Christian.

Students must achieve a passing grade in every major subject area in order to receive a diploma in June. Those who do not meet this requirement will receive their diploma by mail upon successful completion of a recognized summer school program.

IF A FAMILY STILL OWES TUITION AND FEES TO THE SCHOOL THE 8TH GRADERS RECORDS WILL NOT BE SENT TO THE HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE DIPLOMA CANNOT BE ISSUED UNLESS AND UNTIL ALL SUCH OBLIGATIONS ARE SATISFIED. SUCH STUDENTS CANNOT BE LISTED AS GRADUATES. ALL EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO HELP FAMILIES MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS.

Awards

An awards ceremony is held annually for our eighth grade students. Participation in Awards Brunch is an honor and privilege from which a student may be excluded if s/he consistently fails to behave as a mature Christian and/or does not adhere to the Discipline Policy or Academic Standards of St. Margaret Catholic Academy. Service awards are presented to those who have conscientiously given their time to assist members of the school community. Also, students are recognized for their outstanding scholastic achievements with an honor cord to be worn at graduation. A gold cord will be presented to those who meet the requirements for the Principal's List and a white cord for students who meet the requirements for Honors.

8th Grade Class Trips

Class trips may be a tradition but they are an earned privilege and are not a mandatory part of 8th Grade graduation activities.

Potential Holdovers

Students who through early identification and assessment indicate difficulty in completing required program objectives are to be considered potential holdovers.

When a student is identified as a potential holdover, the procedure is:

1. Parents are notified and a Parent-Teacher Conference is held.
2. Recommendations are made for remediation or, in severe cases, for an educational evaluation.
3. By May, the academic status of the student is reevaluated and recommendations communicated in writing to the parents. Copies of such notifications are kept in the student's Permanent Record Folder.

Transfer Policy

When a student transfers to a new school, the parent must come to the School Office and request the appropriate transfer form. To facilitate the procedure, the necessary information is required:

Student's Name

Present Address (if appropriate) New Address (if appropriate) Name of New School

Transfers at the end of the school year are issued at the parents' request, the last week school is in session. Failure to notify the school of a transfer, will delay the transfer of records.

The Administration of St. Margaret Catholic Academy reserves the right to modify policies and procedures contained herein at their professional discretion. Parents will always be notified of such changes. Similarly, any issues or rules not specifically covered within this handbook are dealt with by the Administration of the school, who possess the sole right to interpret and enact school rules for the good of the entire school community.