



Saint Thomas School

2009 – 2010

Student / Parent Handbook

133 Bristol Street

Southington, CT 06489

(860) 628 – 2485

www.st-thomasschool.org

Saint Thomas School
“Faith and Education Hand in Hand”

133 Bristol Street
Southington, CT 06489
860-628-2485

*“What greater work is there than training the mind
and forming the habits of the young?”*

St. John Chrysostom

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dear Student:

This handbook has been drawn up because all of us – you, your parents and your teachers – believe that the most important gift you can receive is an education that helps you become an active follower of the way of Jesus Christ. To do this you must learn how to live with God, yourself, and one another. At Saint Thomas School we have adopted a philosophy, established goals, and set up rules and guidelines, which we believe, can help you to achieve this objective.

The handbook contains much important information. Please read it carefully, bearing in mind what has been said above. If you have questions or concerns, discuss them with your parents. It is our sincere wish that this year will be one of great learning and happiness for you.

In Jesus Christ,

Mary Pat Wirkus
Principal

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FACULTY / STAFF

2009-2010

PASTOR	REV. NICHOLAS P. MELO
PRINCIPAL	MRS. MARYPAT WIRKUS
SECRETARY	MRS. IRENE FOJTIK
NURSE	MS. LAURIE BLEAU
PRE-KINDERGARTEN	MISS JAMIE-ROSE BOLDUC
PRE-KINDERGARTEN AIDE	MRS. MARY SHANAHAN
KINDERGARTEN	MRS. BARBARA PESHKA
KINDERGARTEN AIDE	MRS. TINA RINGROSE
GRADE 1	MRS. MARILYN DESCOTEAUX
GRADE 2	MRS. JANET ZEMLIAUSKAS
GRADE 3	MS. CAROL GOSSELIN
GRADE 4	MISS MARY STRATTON
GRADE 5	MRS. PATRICIA WHALEN
GRADE 6 (Homeroom)	MR. JOHN CONDREN
GRADE 7 (Homeroom)	MRS. PAULINE PELCZAR
GRADE 8 (Homeroom)	MR. PATRICK HERGOTT
ART	MR. GINTER ZEMLIAUSKAS
SPANISH	MRS. SHEILA HIRSCH
REMEDIAL READING / MATH	MR. PATRICK HERGOTT
MUSIC	MR. JOHN CONDREN
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	MR. JOHN CONDREN
LIBRARY	MRS. MELANIE ROPER

SUPPORT PERSONNEL

SOCIAL WORKER	MRS. KATHY JARDINE
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC	MS. MOLLY WELCH
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST	Upon Request

CUSTODIANS

MR. DOUG BARNETT, HEAD CUSTODIAN
MR. MARTIN LOPATOSKY
MR. PATRICK CARROLL

HOME-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENT

TREASURER

SECRETARY

MRS. MICHELLE REIGNIER

MRS. ELAINE BOGDANSKI

MRS. KATHY PATENAUE

MRS. KATHY OWENS

SCHOOL BOARD

PASTOR

PRINCIPAL

CHAIRPERSON

SECRETARY

ADVANCEMENT/DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

REV. NICHOLAS P. MELO

MRS. MARYPAT WIRKUS

MISS CARMEL AVITABILE

MRS. DOROTHY DRECHSLER

MRS. MARY CAROL MORRISSEY

MRS. DAWN BUNTING

MR. ROBERT BURKE

DR. ANGELO COPPOLA

MR. EUGENE SLASON

DR. WILLIAM WELCH

MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Thomas school is a faith based community dedicated to:

- Developing Lifelong Learners
- Instilling Christian Values
- Guiding students to a personal relationship with Christ
- Fostering a positive self image

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that students need to develop the competencies required for active participation in a Christian way of life.

We believe that we need to develop the total child: spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

We believe that prayer, example, community involvement, and the sacraments are necessary to guide each student to develop a personal relationship with Christ.

We believe that Christ is the center of our school community.

We believe in the Gospel message to love and to serve as well as to teach the basic precepts of the church.

We believe that students need to develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility for their actions and resulting consequences.

We believe it is of paramount importance that we impart to each of our children the worth and dignity of every person belonging to God's family with a special emphasis on self respect and mutual cooperation.

We believe that students need to recognize the interdependence of the global family.

We believe that the parents should work in conjunction with the teachers for continuity in achieving spiritual values and academic goals.

We work to create an interactive learning environment that is a flexible variety of teacher-directed and student-centered activities. We strive to adjust teaching for the individual child to meet his or her learning needs. We do this with the goal of shaping each child to become an independent learner and critical thinker, as well as a witness of Christian consciousness and teachings. In light of this statement of philosophy, we profess the following goals.

SPIRITUAL

GOAL: That we as a community guides each child in his/her development as a Christian.

OBJECTIVE: To develop the student's knowledge of the Catholic faith, and Christian values.

OBJECTIVE: To develop the awareness of his/her own spirituality and relationship to God and others.

OBJECTIVE: To develop the student's awareness of the concepts of living peacefully and justly in society.

INTELLECTUAL

GOAL: That we develop the intellectual potential of each student to the fullest measure allowed by the school's resources.

OBJECTIVE: To instruct each student in basic skills areas.

OBJECTIVE: To develop strong study skills.

OBJECTIVE: To encourage each student to direct his/her own academic growth.

OBJECTIVE: To provide methods of evaluating academic process.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

GOAL: That we assist each student in the cultivation of a positive self-image as well as the development of respect for the dignity of others.

OBJECTIVE: To help each child become aware of his/her own uniqueness.

OBJECTIVE: To continue cooperative relationships among students, families and staff.

OBJECTIVE: To encourage students to become involved in community service.

PHYSICAL

GOAL: That we identify the value of good health and physical fitness as essential to an attitude of self-worth.

OBJECTIVE: To provide health instruction and service for each student.

OBJECTIVE: To offer each student a program for the development and maintenance of physical fitness.

OBJECTIVE: To help each student develop respect for the human body.

SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

Nondiscriminatory Policy

St. Thomas School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, or national origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

Students are admitted to St. Thomas School on an annual basis. Students applying for admissions in grades 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Thomas School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student is part of the admission process. Testing in some academic areas may be scheduled for new incoming students in grades 3 – 8.

Continuance at St. Thomas School is the decision of the school administration and is based on the attitude, behavior and academic achievement of the student, parent partnership with school, and on up-to-date tuition payments. If a student's tuition payment is not up-to-date at the close of the marking period/quarter, and contact has not been made with the school, that student may not be allowed back in school for the new marking period. The year's calendar notes the end of each marking period.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE

An application form for each child must be completed and returned to the school office with a one-time nonrefundable registration fee of \$40.00. A copy of the child's birth certificate and a baptismal certificate (if, Catholic) must be included.

For students entering grades 1-8, parents are asked to bring copies of the latest report card and any test results. New kindergarten students must be screened prior to acceptance into our full-day kindergarten program.

If the child is accepted, the parent must request in writing that the child's present school forward to St. Thomas School the following information regarding the child:

- current grades
- complete record of grades for previous years
- results of intelligence and achievement tests
- medical forms
- psychological evaluation (if you wish these to be transferred)

A non-refundable first tuition payment is required to be paid no later than June 1, 2009.

TUITION

A. Rates:

- Tuition rates are as listed in the tuition schedule for the current year.
- To qualify for the Catholic tuition rate, parishioners of St. Thomas Church and non-parishioners must be registered and in good standing in their own respective Catholic parishes. Parishes without parish schools are assessed \$250 for each parishioner attending St. Thomas School. If a family is not registered and in good standing in its parish, this \$250 assessment will be added to the tuition rate. It is the responsibility of the parent to check on eligibility of this assessment with your pastor before registering your child for St. Thomas School.
- Families who have no affiliation with Catholic parishes of the Archdiocese of Hartford must pay the rate for non-Catholics.

B. Payment Schedule:

The option of paying tuition in 10 payments is a courtesy to families. The payment option will be revoked if any payment is not made on time. The tuition balance for the school year will then be payable in full in order for the student to continue to attend St. Thomas School. This policy will be strictly enforced.

C. Late/Delinquent Payment:

Budgetary calculations are closely tied to anticipated enrollment. Therefore, it is imperative that any parent who anticipates difficulty in meeting payment inform the principal immediately. A written notice will be sent to the parent/s of any student for whom tuition and/or fees remains outstanding. If there is no payment of the delinquent balance, enrollment should be terminated. Termination will be implemented only at the end of the current marking period.

D. Note: It is important to realize that tuition, alone, does not pay for the educational program provided by St. Thomas School. All students receive substantial financial assistance through a generous subsidy from St. Thomas Parish and through the cooperative efforts of parents and alumni by fund-raising activities of the Home and School Association and Development Committee. Therefore, all parents are expected to participate in these fund-raising activities. No student will be allowed to begin the new school year if the Home and School Association obligation remains outstanding from the prior school year.

Saint Thomas Home-School Association
Participation & Fundraising Agreement 2009-2010

The Saint Thomas Home-School Association (HSA) consists of the administration, faculty, and parents of Saint Thomas School. We work together to provide our children with a quality education within an environment that fosters their spiritual, academic, emotional, and physical growth. We support this important work financially through fundraising and work to build the spirit and community.

The Saint Thomas Home-School Association is committed to achieving this year's committed budget of \$75,000 and a stretch goal of \$78,000. In order to reach this goal, each family participates in various events to generate enough revenue to meet their family contribution of a minimum of **\$700** profit to the school. The HSA will provide numerous opportunities to meet or exceed your commitment through participation through these events. Here are a few examples of how this can be achieved:

Grocery Certificate Program: Beginning June 1, 2009 through the 2009-2010 school year, 5% of the amount of Grocery Certificates that you purchase through weekly orders, or sell at St. Thomas Church during weekend masses, will be credited toward your family assessment of \$700. (For as little as \$53.00 a week in your normal shopping you could earn \$100 for the year toward your commitment.)

Participation Credits: The \$700 commitment may be reduced through participation as an Athletic Coach, Chair of a Fundraiser or Chair of a family fun event. These commitment credits are as follows:

- Athletic Coach - \$250.00
- Fundraiser Chair - \$250.00
- Family Fun Chair - \$150.00

Fundraiser Volunteer: The total net profit of a fundraising event is calculated and credited towards your commitment based on your hours of participation. This will only apply to community based fundraisers and not family fun events.

Fundraiser Sales: Net profit of all individual sales of fundraisers such as the Magazine Drive, the Gala (tickets) and the Raffle will be credited towards your family commitment.

The H.S.A. Treasurer will send notices to the families with the year-to-date totals by the end of November, February and May. If by April 2, 2010 a family has not earned anything towards your commitment, the H.S.A. Treasurer will invoice the family \$350. The Home-School Association commitment must be paid in full by June 1, 2010.

In order to support this important goal, I/we agree to:

1. Assist on a committee/fundraiser.
2. A fundraising commitment of:

OPTION A: Fundraising Participation

This per family participation requires you to earn a minimum of \$700 net profit.

In the event I/we have not met the Fundraising commitment by June 1st, I/we will pay the balance due. (A letter/bill will be sent home from the HAS outlining the amount due.)

OPTION B: \$700 Buy-Out

The fundraising Buy-Out will fulfill the family monetary fundraising obligation. The Buy-Out amount may be paid in two installments of \$350 each. The first payment is due August 15th, 2009 and the second is due February 15, 2010. Please make checks payable to St. Thomas Home-School Association.

I/we understand that failure to fulfill my/our financial responsibilities defined above will result in denial of re-admission to Saint Thomas School for the 2010-2011 school year.

EARLY WITHDRAWALS

If a family has to withdraw from St. Thomas School before the normal end of the year, the tuition charge will be pro-rated by the number of months the student(s) attended prior to withdrawing. The non-refundable tuition deposit will be excluded from any amount of tuition that may be refunded.

RETURNED CHECKS

Any check returned to the school for "*insufficient funds*" will incur both the fee assessed by the bank and an additional processing fee of \$25.00.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Some financial aid is available for those in need of assistance. This fund is administered by St. Thomas School and is dependent on the generous contributions made by parishioners and friends of St. Thomas School. Families requesting such aid should fill out a Financial Assistance Form at the time of registration or at re-registration. Applications are reviewed by the principal and pastor. Notification of awards will be mailed to parents.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

We, at St. Thomas School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models of the development of your child's life...spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of St. Thomas School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. Thomas School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (pre-school through middle school), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical being. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nurturing the students to reach his/her full potential. *It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results.* To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Children are naturally eager to learn and grow. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs the student needs understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits that provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

Parents as Partners

As partners in the educational process at St. Thomas School, we ask parents:

- To set rules, times, and limits so that your child;
 - Gets to bed early on school nights;
 - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time or makes arrangements for the after school program at the end of the day;
 - Is dressed according to the school dress code;
 - Completes assignments on time;
 - Has lunch money or nutritional bag lunch every day

- To actively participate in school activities such as parent-teacher conferences and Home and School Association functions;
- To see that students pay for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy or dismissal plans change;
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support religious and educational goals of the school;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

Virtus Training and Background Check for School Volunteers/Coaches

Virtus Training and a Background Check are required by the Archdiocese of Hartford for school volunteers who have regular contact with children and for coaches. Preventing child abuse is the goal of the Virtus Training which educated adults about child sexual abuse and the ways to create safe environments for children. The 2 ½ hour session includes videos and facilitated discussions that focuses on the prevention of abuse and the protection of children. Adults learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms that an adult is a potential risk of harm to children and how to know that a child is being abused or exploited in some way. Participants will learn about steps that the faith community can take to create a safe environment for all God's children and how to respond when adults behave in a way that raises concerns. Proof of attendance must be submitted to St. Thomas School.

ATTENDANCE

A student is expected to be present on all school days. If a student will be absent, the school should be notified with a phone call before 8:30 a.m. that day. A written excuse from a parent or guardian stating dates of absence and reasons should be sent in with the student the day the student returns to school.

The school day for grades K – 8 is from 8:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Students should plan to arrive at school no later than 7:55 am at which time the first bell rings. If anyone arrives after 8:00 a.m., he/she must report to the office for an admission slip to class.

Late arrivals and early dismissals are very disruptive to the educational process for all students. There are a few implications that parents should be aware of. Students arriving late or leaving early:

1. miss part of the academics
2. miss the prayer times on which the entire day is hinged
3. require special attention and take time that could be used otherwise
4. develop behavior patterns that are undesirable in school and later in work
5. may receive social pressure by peers that can lower their self-esteem suggests to the child that academics is not that important

Since even one child's lateness disrupts and delays all the students in the class, students must arrive on time. Students may enter the school at **7:30 a.m.** and report to the Gymnasium where teachers are on supervisory duty. School begins at **7:55 a.m.** and is signaled by a bell. Classroom doors close at **8:00 a.m.** signaled by a second bell. **If a child must open the classroom door to enter, he/she is tardy.**

Per the Town of Southington

3 unexcused tardies = ½ day absence

24 unexcused absences = truancy

Truancy = subject to police action and/or dismissal from school

Students who are absent from school may not participate in after school or evening school-sponsored events without special permission of the Principal.

St. Thomas School is not responsible for students on school grounds prior to 7:30 a.m.

All personal appointments (medical or otherwise) **should be made outside of school hours.** **If early dismissal is requested, a note from a parent or guardian, stating time, reason, and means by which the student will be picked up must be brought in to the school that morning.** Whoever picks up the student must report to the school office to present identification and sign out the student. This policy has been established to ensure the personal safety of the students and to which will be strictly adhered.

Family vacations should be scheduled to coincide with school vacations so as not to disrupt the learning process. Teachers will not supply work in anticipation of a trip or family vacation. Make-up tests may not be given; this compromises the validity of tests that have already been taken and handed back to students.

PROCEDURES FOR ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

ARRIVAL

Buses unload students at the main entrance of the school. Therefore, students who are driven to school must be dropped off in front of the main entrance of the school. Parents are asked to pull up far enough to allow the school bus to drop off bus students because the bus needs to go on to another school. Never drop off in the marked parking areas.

DISMISSAL

Walkers and students who are picked up after school will be dismissed after all buses have left the parking lot. They exit the building from the door at the opposite end of the main entrance. Students will be dismissed only to those individuals designated on our school emergency form. Positive identification may be asked to verify identity. A student will not be released to any individual not specifically listed on this form without specific written permission provided to the teacher and the main office. In such cases, positive identification is required to be presented before the child is released into the care of this individual.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Respect for self is evident in the personal appearance of each student, but the ultimate responsibility for cleanliness and appearance lies with parents or guardians. There are certain basic expectations that the school insists upon for the sake of the individual child, the class, and the teacher:

- Students come to school each day having bathed and combed their hair.
- No extreme hairstyles are permitted
- Students' uniforms are clean every day and properly worn.
- Students will maintain a clean, neat appearance insofar as is possible throughout the school day.

DRESS CODE

When in uniform, students are visible representatives of St. Thomas School. Uniforms eliminate fashion as a potential source of competition among students, and therefore, aid in keeping the focus of their attention on their studies.

All students are required to enter and leave the school in full uniform. The following mandates must be followed:

- Girls may wear one pair of stud earrings; hoop earrings may not be larger than a dime.
- Boys may not wear earrings.
- Religious crosses or medals may be worn beneath shirts.
- Make-up is not allowed.
- Artificial nails are not allowed. Nail polish is limited to clear.

- Hair coloring or highlighting is not allowed.
- Boys' hair may not exceed the top of their shirt collar.
- Hair must be away from eyes.
- Headbands worn by girls must be that of the school's colors.

The principal is the final arbiter in interpreting standards for all students.

An Out of Uniform notice will be sent home when a student is not following the dress code. This notice will bring non-compliance to the parent's attention and ask for immediate correction. The notice should be signed by a parent and returned to school the next school day.

Students who repeatedly violate the uniform policy will be denied participation in the next out-of-uniform date and/or will serve an office detention.

Uniforms can be purchased through Modern Formals, Southington.

Boy's Uniform: Grades K-5

White polos with school logo, long or short-sleeved, navy uniform dress slacks worn with a black or brown belt. A navy micro fleece pull-over with school logo is optional. Navy crew socks with buck suede shoes. Sneakers are not permitted, except on gym day. Shoes that mark the floor will not be permitted. Rain or snow boots are not permitted during the course of the school day. Navy shorts may be worn until October 31 and after April break, weather permitting.

Boy's Uniform: Grades 6-8

Blue oxford shirt with school logo, long or short-sleeved, khaki uniform dress slacks worn with a black or brown belt. A navy micro fleece pull-over with school logo is optional. Navy crew socks with buck suede shoes. Students are required to wear neck tie on mass days and formal occasions. Sneakers are not permitted, except on gym day. Shoes that mark the floor will not be permitted. Rain or snow boots are not permitted during the course of the school day. Khaki shorts with navy short sleeve polo may be worn until October 31 and after April break, weather permitting.

Girl's Uniform: Grades K-5

White polos with school logo, long or short-sleeved, with Hamilton plaid skirt. A micro fleece pull-over with school logo is optional. Navy ankle or knee socks or tights with buck suede shoes. Shoes that mark the floors will not be permitted. Sneakers are not permitted, except on gym day. Rain or snow boots are not permitted during the course of the school day. Navy uniform pants may be worn November 1 until April break. Navy shorts may be worn until October 31 and after April break, weather permitting.

Girl's Uniform: Grades 6-8

Blue oxford shirt with school logo, long or short-sleeved, and khaki uniform skirt. A navy micro fleece pull-over with school logo is optional. Navy crew socks with buck suede shoes. Sneakers are not permitted, except on gym day. Shoes that mark the floor will not be permitted. Rain or snow boots are not permitted during the course of the school day. Khaki shorts with navy short sleeve polo may be worn until October 31 and after April break, weather permitting. Khaki uniform pants may be worn November 1 until April break. Khaki shorts and navy polo with school logo may be worn until October 31 and after April break, weather permitting.

GYM UNIFORMS

On gym days, the following will constitute the uniform for **grades K-8**:

September through October 31	Navy uniform shorts with school logo and uniform grey T-shirt with school logo
Nov. 1–April break (or colder days)	Navy uniform sweat suit with school logo and uniform grey T-shirt with school logo
April break through June	Navy uniform shorts with school logo and uniform grey T-shirt with school logo

Please note: Sneakers may be worn on gym days, only. Sneakers must have laces. No extreme styles will be allowed.

Students may not wear hats or jackets during the school day.

***SUMMER UNIFORM DATES:**

September through October 31

April break through June

OUT OF UNIFORM DRESS CODE

On occasion, the school or a class may have a “dress down day.” Under special circumstances the Principal will give verbal notice. If there's sufficient time, a written notice will be sent home. On such days, clothing and accessories containing inappropriate pictures or words are not to be worn. Clothing that exposes the back or midriff is not to be worn. Shorts, skirts, or dresses must be uniform length.

NOTE:

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, trading cards, laser lights, all electronic devices, cell phones, beepers, iPods or other audio or visual players or anything that will detract from the learning situation are not allowed in school. The school administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of any of

these items in school. **Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardians(s) on the last day of school.** If your child needs access to a cell phone, they may be kept in the off position in the book bag.

NUTRITION AND SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICY

Children cannot produce their best work during a strenuous 6¼ hour school day without proper nutrition. Children should have a reasonable breakfast before coming to school. They should bring a nutritional lunch with them. Inadequate nutrition is a strong contributing factor in behavior and poor academic performance. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to ensure proper nutrition for their child.

School Wellness Policy

The State of Connecticut, Public Law 108-265, states that each local educational agency shall establish a local wellness policy. This law applies to all schools that participate in the subsidized milk program. St. Thomas has adopted the School Wellness Policy of the Southington School System. Following is a list of approved items that we have selected from the State list that can be brought in for school/birthday parties.

Muffins	Popcorn	Baked Chips	Granola bars/Cereal Bars	Bagels
Cheese	Animal Crackers	Graham Crackers	Crackers/Pita chips	Juice (50%)

Please check all ingredients in treats you bring in. There are students in our school who have allergic reactions to different foods. **DO NOT SEND IN FOODS THAT CONTAIN NUT PRODUCTS.**

SPECIAL MEDICATIONS

No medication can be administered without written instructions from a physician. Medication will not be accepted in loose unlabeled container. All must be given to the nurse in a labeled RX bottle or box.

Parents should consult with the school nurse regarding special medications or any other medical need. Students may never carry any medication; even cough drops, on their person or in backpacks.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

These activities include athletic teams, student council, clubs and any additional activities sponsored by the school. While participation is open to any student in the school depending on the grade designation of the activity, certain guidelines for such participation will apply:

- The student must maintain an average of at least C- in each major subject. (Student council members must maintain a C in each major subject)
- The student must receive a teacher recommendation based on his/her academic records and behavioral records, such as detentions or suspensions.

- No student who has been absent from school may participate in an extra-curricular activity that evening.
- It will be the responsibility of the coach or moderator to keep the principal informed, on a regular basis, of the progress of the activity and cooperation of each student participating.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The student council is made up of four officers; a cabinet, two representatives and one alternate from grades 4-8. Individual classes elect their class representatives. All students and teachers in grades 2-7 elect the officers.

Eligibility and rules governing elections are as follows:

- The student must maintain a C average in all classes at all times.
- The student must be an active supportive member of the student body with a good behavioral record.
- Campaigning must be carried on as directed - the student is responsible for the actions of all his/her supporters.
- Students who wish to run for election as a council officer must be 7th graders with good behavioral records. They must submit in writing a paper indicating why they wish to run for that office and what talents they feel they can bring to it. The principal, teachers and the student council advisor will make the decision regarding their candidacy jointly.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Academic probation is defined as a student who has the ability to succeed but chooses not to be successful. A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. This will be in place for the remaining of the marking period or unless significant improvement has been shown and determined by the teacher or the principal. Your child may not participate in sports while on academic probation.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is an important part of our philosophy. Therefore, calendars, weekly newsletters, and occasional information are sent home through the children. Manila envelopes containing all of the weekly notices will be going home with students on Tuesdays. Please look through the envelope and return necessary information in the envelope Wednesday morning. There will be a 25 cent charge if we need to replace the envelope.

- A parent or guardian wishing to speak with a teacher can call the school between 7:00 and 7:45 a.m. or 2:15 to 2:45 p.m. If the teacher is not available, a message may be left on teacher's voice mail or email. All calls and messages will be returned within 24 hours.
- A parent or guardian wishing to meet with a teacher or the principal should arrange an appointment in advance. Every effort will be made to arrange a prompt, mutually convenient appointment.

- Teachers should not be contacted at their homes concerning school business. If the matter is serious enough to require immediate attention, the principal will contact teachers.
- We ask parents to respect class time and not interrupt teachers at the beginning of class or during class time.

SCHOOL SAFETY

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held once a month. Students should follow directions given by the teacher for finding the nearest exit. Fire drills are conducted in complete silence. Students move as quickly and quietly as possible. Procedures for exiting from the building during a fire drill are posted in each classroom.

LOCKDOWN PROTOCOL

There is a lockdown protocol in place. Students will practice this protocol twice a year.

VISITORS

Parents or other persons entering the school are required to report to the office when they enter the building regardless of purpose or length of stay. No one should go directly to a classroom.

ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENTS

Assignments are given with the purpose of increasing knowledge and developing grade appropriate skills. Assignments should be completed thoughtfully and carefully. Written assignments are always to be done in neat writing. As often as possible, all answers to questions must be written in complete sentences with proper spelling and punctuation across all content areas.

- *Study work* is as important as written assignments, and should be done faithfully EACH EVENING.
- All work required for a class should be complete prior to the start of the school day.
- Books, pencils, papers and anything else needed for a given subject, should be ready at the start of the class. Students will not be permitted to return to homeroom for materials.
- Long range programs should be started as soon as possible after they have been assigned.
- In grades 4-8, homework will be assigned on a daily basis. Approximate times for student, written work, and long term assignments are:

Grades 4-5	1/2 hour to 1 hour
Grade 6	1 hour to 1 1/2 hours
Grades 7-8	1 1/2 hours to 2 hours

- Primary children (K-3) will be given assignments at the teacher's discretion.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOMEWORK

1. To record assignments in the homework notebook.
2. To bring assignments home and return them on time.
3. To complete homework neatly and accurately with the standard heading.
4. To make up any missed work.
5. To do their own work and not rely on the efforts of others.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOMEWORK

1. To check the student's homework notebook.
 2. To provide a quiet place to study.
 3. To encourage or to establish a set study time.
 4. To supervise a student's assignments and assist when necessary.
 5. To coordinate long range assignments when necessary.
- ***Parents are encouraged to frequently check their child's planner.***

TESTING AND GRADING

The individual classroom or content area teacher determines testing and grading procedures. Parents are made aware of these procedures and expectations at the beginning of the school year at the September Parents' Meeting.

MARKING SYSTEM

Marks for academic achievement in grades 4-8 are letter grades based on numerical marks in daily class work, tests, quizzes, homework and effort/participation. The marking code is listed below.

A+	100 - 98	C+	79 - 77
A	97 - 94	C	76 - 73
A-	93 - 90	C-	72 - 70
B+	89 - 87	D	69 - 65
B	86 - 83	F	Below 65, Failing
B-	82 - 80		

Evaluation key for the academic progress of students in grades 1-3, found on the report card, is listed below. Evaluation is based on the progress made in written and oral class work.

VG	Above Grade Average Progress
G	Good
M	Meets Grade Level Expectations
I	Improvement is Needed

HONOR CERTIFICATES

Honor certificates are awarded to students in grades 4- 8 who achieve the following requirements:

High Honors	No grade below an A- in all subjects. Conduct must be satisfactory in all areas of the school program.
Honors	No grade below a B- in all subjects. Conduct must be satisfactory in all areas of the school program.
Honorable Mention	A combination of A's and B's with only one C allowed. Conduct must be satisfactory in all areas of the school program.

St. Thomas School has a chapter of the Junior National Honor Society.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued to grades 1-8 in November, January, March and June.

Kindergarten evaluations are given by conference in November and by report cards in January, March and June.

Pre-kindergarten progress reports are given twice a year.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent conferences for all students, K-8, are held in November after the first marking period. The year's calendar lists the dates. A second conference is scheduled following the third marking period.

In addition to parent-teacher conferences, parents will be contacted whenever the need arises or upon request of the teacher, parent, or administration.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be issued for students in grades 3-8 halfway through the marking period to inform parents of the student's performance to date.

Progress reports must be signed and returned within three days. Parents who notice a drop in the student's performance should contact the classroom or subject area teacher.

PROMOTION

Promotion indicates a student has successfully completed a designated course of study and is ready for the next grade.

Promotion in the primary grades is determined mainly by the child's progress in reading and mathematics and social and emotional development. For students in grades 4-7, promotion is determined by successfully completing at least four of the six major subject areas and school conduct is commensurate with expectations for those grade levels.

Graduation from 8th grade requires passing grades in at least six of the eight academic subjects, satisfactory conduct in all school programs, and fulfilling required service hours. In addition, all records and tuition and fees must be up to date, and/or paid in full to participate in 8th grade celebrations and to receive final grades.

RETENTION

Administration may recommend retention for a student who did not successfully complete a designated course of study and, thereby, projected success in the proceeding grade is in jeopardy. Retention in the same grade enables a student to “catch-up,” reinforces grade level skills and better prepares the student academically or emotionally for the next grade. Retention in the same grade in St. Thomas School is based upon parent approval.

TRANSFER

A student may also be “transferred” to the next grade, which indicates a student did not successfully complete a course of study, retention was recommended, but parents did not approve. Hereby, students are transferred into the proceeding grade. (A student who is transferred to another grade may not be allowed to continue as a student at St. Thomas School per discretion of the principal).

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Standardized achievement tests are administered each year to children in grades 3-7. The tests will be given in grades 3-7 in March. Results of the tests will be sent to the parents when the school receives them, usually within two months.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

In accordance with the stated philosophy of St. Thomas School, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of others in all interactions and celebrate each person as a specifically designed gift of God. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school, which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility.

Children need to learn problem-solving skills in order to work on changing behavior. We are here to help students identify a problem, brainstorm best possible solutions, and check to make sure the problem has been resolved. Students are learning that their actions have consequences, both positive and negative. Our goal is that our students learn from their mistakes and take responsibility for their actions.

A spirit of cooperation is expected of all students and parents on obeying the rules, written or unwritten, of the school. Respect for rules, even those we do not like or agree with, contributes to a positive, safe, productive, and peaceful school environment for all.

The best discipline is self-discipline. Maturational factors determine how much assistance is given each child towards the development of self-discipline. Discipline should help the child maintain a healthy balance between the environment and him or herself.

Detentions, suspensions, and/or other punishments may be imposed for any inappropriate behavior (whether listed in this handbook or not) at the discretion of the Principal. The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Each member of the school community has the right to expect that order will prevail. Disciplinary measures are applied, so that bad habits will not be recurrent.

Parents are expected to monitor their children's behavior at all school events to which parents are invited by the school, Home and School Association or Development Committee.

To help students develop self-discipline and to respect the rights and dignity of other members of the school community, rules have been established. The following regulations regarding acceptable behavior in specific situations and locations are enforced at St. Thomas School.

RESPECT FOR TEACHERS

Parents are held to the same standard as students with regard to respect for teachers. Enrollment of the child in the school implies a partnership between the school and the parents/child. If the partnership breaks down, parents can be required to withdraw the child from school.

RECESS

- All students at recess must be visible to the teacher on duty at all times.
- Ball playing is not allowed near the school building.
- Contact sports may lead to injuries and therefore are disallowed during recess.
- Any problem that arises must be reported to the person on duty immediately. No student is allowed to leave the area without the permission of the person on duty.

SCHOOL BUS

- Students line up quietly in the school designated area.
- Students board the bus in a line under the supervision of the teacher on duty.
- Students seat themselves immediately and remain seated until they exit from the bus.
- Saving seats for other students is not allowed.
- Loud talking, singing, shouting, or any horseplay when on the bus is strictly prohibited.
- Only students on the bus list may ride the bus; they must ride only the bus to which they have been assigned.
- Acceptable standards of verbal and body language apply when on the bus or when waiting for the bus.

- Riding the bus is a privilege. Violation of bus rules will necessitate contacting parents and may result in suspension from the bus for a period of time to be determined by the principal and the bus company.

CAFETERIA

- Students will walk to the cafeteria quietly, escorted by a teacher or other designated adult.
- Students will sit in the area assigned and remain seated there until the lunch period ends or unless the person on duty otherwise has given permission.
- Students obtaining hot lunch or milk will line up quietly as directed, and then take their designated places at the tables.
- Food is to be consumed only in the cafeteria unless otherwise indicated.
- Appropriate table manners are expected from all students at all times.

CORRIDORS AND STAIRWELL

Students will walk, NOT RUN, whenever in the corridors and stairwells. This applies whether passing from class to class or moving through the school on other business. There is also to be no loud talking at these times.

LAVATORY

For purposes of safety and order a student may use the lavatory only with permission of a teacher or the person who has charge of the student at the time.

LIBRARY

- A quiet atmosphere should be maintained at all times.
- Classes are escorted to and from the library.
- Books removed from the shelves must be returned to the place designated by the librarian.
- Students should leave the library in the condition in which they found it.
- If a student enters the library at a time other than that assigned, he or she must have permission from a designated adult and approval from the librarian when she is on duty.
- Students are responsible for the books they take out. Lost or mutilated books must be replaced or paid for at the time the problem is encountered. Failure to do so may result in the student being denied the privilege of borrowing further books.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Every item and area in St. Thomas School that is not directly owned by a student is considered school property. Respect for school property is second only to the rule of respect for one another.

- Each student is totally responsible for the desk and chair he or she occupies in homeroom and in other classes and for all books and materials given for his/her use.
- All students in a class are responsible for the overall condition of that classroom.

- Students are forbidden to write on desks, tables, chairs, walls, etc. or in any other way damage school property.
- School books must always be covered.
- Students must not touch items belonging to other students without appropriate permission.
- Damage in or around the school should be reported to the appropriate adult immediately.
- A student causing damage or destruction is responsible for repair or replacement of area or item affected.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for the cost to replace any sports uniform, library book, or school book not returned and/or damaged by the student for whom they are responsible.

All parents and students must sign annually the Saint Thomas School Acceptable Use Policy for Computer and Technology.

UPKEEP OF CLASSROOM

- Clothing should be hung on the lockers. Lunch boxes, backpacks, gym bags, etc. must be placed appropriately in the closet.
- Before leaving in the afternoon, all chairs are to be placed on desks or stacked in corners as directed by classroom teacher, desks straightened out, and papers picked up. Nothing should be left in the coat closet.
- Desks should be kept neat and clean at all times.

St. Thomas 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, in jest, or online) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

BEHAVIOR WHICH IS UNACCEPTABLE AT ST. THOMAS SCHOOL

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, My Space.com®, Xanga®, Friendster®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

- Insubordination: refusal to comply with a direct order from a teacher or administrator.
- Use of foul language or gestures as well as disrespectful language and behavior towards teachers, students, and others.
- Cheating on quizzes and exams, copying and allowing work to be copied (homework or school work).
- Vandalism: abusing school property by throwing food in the cafeteria, writing on desks, tables, walls, chairs, breaking furniture, chewing gum, etc.
- Leaving St. Thomas School without permission.
- Truancy: unexcused absence from school or leaving school without permission. A conference with student, parent or guardian and principal will be held to determine appropriate action.

- Fighting: a student who strikes another forcefully will automatically receive a one day school suspension for the first offense; three days suspension for a second offense and expulsion from the school for a third infraction.
- Bullying (verbal, physical, or relational): any overt act 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. Students who engage in any act of bullying, while at school, on the school bus, at any school function, or in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to including suspensions, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.
- Possession and/or use of illegal items: cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, weapons or facsimile thereof- on school property or while involved in school related activities.

BEHAVIOR NOT SPECIFIED ABOVE BUT DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE BY THE ADMINISTRATION WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

Penalties for violations will be age-appropriate. They will include one or more of the following:

- Verbal warning
- Loss of recess
- Lunch detention
- Incident Report
- Detention Report
- Conference with parents
- Suspensions: In-School (ISS), Out-of-School (OSS)
- Expulsions and/or police action

Classroom rules based on the policies set in this handbook and appropriate to the age of the students will be posted in each classroom and made available to parents at the Parent Meeting in September.

Harassment and Bullying

Harassment or bullying of students or staff is an extremely serious violation of the Code of Conduct. It can also be a violation of criminal law. It will not be allowed in school or at school sponsored activities. Any such offenses will result in severe disciplinary actions.

It is harassment when:

A student displays inappropriate sexual behavior or bullies others. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate touching, grabbing or pinching.
- Sexual or obscene language or gestures.
- Physically frightening another person.

It is harassment when:

A student talks inappropriately about a person’s sex, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, race, color, religion, physical attributes, disability or handicap. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Calling people names.
- Writing comments about a person, i.e., on a bathroom wall
- Teasing a person about his/her body.

Bullying

Bullying is a form of aggression and occurs when a person willfully subjects another person (victim), whoever he or she may be, to intentional, unwanted and unprovoked hurtful verbal and/or physical action(s) which result in the victim feeling oppressed (stress, injury, or discomfort) or threatened at any school site or school sponsored activity or event. Examples of types of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Physical bullying – pinching, shoving, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting and excessive tickling.
- Verbal bullying – such acts as hurtful name calling, teasing, and gossip.
- Emotional (psychological) bullying – rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rate/ranking personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, or perceived sexual orientation, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing and peer pressure.
- Sexual bullying – inappropriate or obscene language or gestures, touching, grabbing, pinching or exposing “private” body parts.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REGULATIONS

Quarantine Period (Minimum Control)

- Chicken Pox: One week after appearance of first blister and when rash has begun to scab over. Reminder to parents to avoid ASA products. Notify parents of children who are immuno-suppressed of an exposure so that appropriate action may be taken.
- Measles: Five days after appearance of rash.
- German Measles: One week after rash appears.
- Scarlet Fever: May return to school 48 hours after antibiotic treatment started.
- Mumps: May return to school 48 hours after swelling of glands has subsided or 9 days after symptoms began, whichever comes first.
- Pertussis: With written permission of a M.D. and no less than 3 days after start of antibiotic.
- Hepatitis: With written permission of a M.D.
- Strep Throat: May return to school 48 hours after start of antibiotic.
- Impetigo: 48 hours of treatment before returning to school. May be left uncovered. No swimming.

Conjunctivitis:	24 hours of medication before returning to school. No swimming.
Diarrhea:	24 hours after symptoms are resolved.
Fever:	24 hours after return of normal temperature.
Aids:	Per policy.
Coxsackie:	All suspected cases to M.D. for diagnosis. Must have note from physician upon return to school.
Ringworm:	May return 24 hours after treatment begun. May remain uncovered if under treatment
Pinworms:	Home until treated.
Lice:	Pediculocide per recommendation of school medical advisor. 24 hours at home to remove nits. Parent must accompany child to school with empty container and remain while the school nurse checks child.

ABSENCES/ILLNESS/INJURY

The nurse's goal is to collaborate with each parent in supporting your child's optimal health continuum, within the framework of his/her unique health issue(s). If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact your School Nurse at 860-628-2485. The Health Office is located on the first floor.

INCIDENT REPORTS

The purpose of the Incident Report is to aid in the student's understanding of the school and classroom rules, to set consequences that fit the student's actions, and to keep parents informed.

An Incident Report is given when a student fails to follow a school or classroom rule. The student must complete the consequence appropriate for the age of the student and have the Incident Report signed by a parent. The Incident Report is returned to the teacher who issued it or to the homeroom teacher the next day. A detention will be given for unreturned Incident Reports.

DETENTION REPORTS

A Detention Report may be given instead of an Incident Report if a teacher determines a detention to be a just consequence for not following a school or classroom rule. In most cases, the teacher has given the students fair warning to change a behavior. The Detention Report is to go home, be signed by the parent, returned to school the next school day to the teacher who issued it or to the homeroom teacher. At dismissal time, the student reports to the designated detention room. A parent must pick up the student at a determined time *from the detention room*.

If a student is scheduled to participate in a school-sponsored after school event, the determined detention time will apply to that event *as well*. In the case of an In-school Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension, he or she is suspended from that event for the duration of the suspension.

DETENTION POLICY FOR HOMEWORK – Grades 3 - 5

Detention will be assigned when homework is missed on three occasions per semester. Such occurrence will impact student's grade.

After the 3rd offense and the detention, a parent must meet with the teacher if additional assignments are not done.

If homework becomes a chronic problem after the conference, detention will be assigned on a regular basis. During detention for homework, the assignments will be worked on.

Detention for discipline will be up to the judgment of the teacher. Additional writing assignments may be given during the detention. No homework may be done during a discipline detention.

DETENTION POLICY FOR HOMEWORK – GRADES 6 - 8

A homework detention slip will be given out if a student arrives at school without his or her homework assignments.

1. Parent must sign detention slip. 2. No detention will be assigned if the student returns to school the next day with the signed slip and the homework done. The student will receive 50% credit towards homework. 3. If the detention slip is signed and no homework turned in then the student will stay after school for the detention. The detention slip must be signed.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the school's educational program. The purpose of field trips is to augment and/or enhance the curriculum. Students are expected to observe school rules, bus rules and all behavior requirements as previously stated in the handbook while on field trips.

Students must bring a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian in order to participate. The teacher and the principal will determine exclusion of a student from a field trip.

LUNCH PROGRAM PROCEDURES

Milk

Milk is available daily to all grades. All purchases are payable in cash or by check to St. Thomas School during the first week of school. The cost of milk is for the full school year. Envelopes should be addressed with the student's name, grade, milk money and amount as follows:

Robert Smith

Grade 1, Room 104

Milk Money for School Year 2009-2010

Amount Enclosed: \$_____

Lunch Orders

Special lunches are served on Mondays and Wednesdays. Lunch will be ordered on Thursday of each week for the following Monday and Wednesday. Money should be sent to school by Thursday in the exact amounts as change cannot be given. Milk is not included in the hot lunch price. Those who ordered milk will receive milk with their lunch.

A separate envelope should be addressed for each student and given to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school day. Envelopes are to be addressed with the student's name, grade, room number, "Lunch Money for Date", and amount enclosed. Monday lunch is provided by Subway and cost \$3.50. Wednesday lunch is provided by Napoli's and cost \$3.00.

Students will have lunch on shortened days.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

St. Thomas School will follow the "NO SCHOOL" announcements for the Southington Public School System. Radio station WTIC (1080AM and FM), WKND, WRDC (1360 AM and 103 FM), WKSS (96 FM), WHCN (106 FM) and WRCH (910 AM and 100.5 FM). Television station WFSB-TV (Channel 3) and WVIT-TV (Channel 30) will broadcast these announcements beginning at 6:00 a.m. Delays and cancellations will also be posted on the following website www.southingtonpublicschools.org

TELEPHONE CALLS

Telephone calls from students and telephone messages to students should be kept to a minimum and only for urgent reasons. Class will not be interrupted to give messages. The school will not be held responsible for any mix up in the delivery of messages. Students will be discouraged to make phone calls for items that were forgotten, such as clothes, homework assignments, etc.

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

For birthday celebrations in the primary grades, please check with the teacher for guidelines. Any sharing of food may take place only in the cafeteria.

St. Thomas School reserves the right to amend this handbook.

Notice of amendments will be sent home via students or mail.

ACCEPTANCE

*We have read and understand all policies listed in the
2009 - 2010 St. Thomas School Student / Parent Handbook.*

Parent/Guardian	(print name / signature)		Date
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Student	(print name / signature)	Grade	Date
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Student	(print name / signature)	Grade	Date
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Student	(print name / signature)	Grade	Date
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Student	(print name / signature)	Grade	Date
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