

# Chelsea Academy

## Parent and Student Handbook

### 2008-2009

#### **Table of Contents**

Mission Statement  
The Chelsea Code of Behavior  
Academic Information  
Spiritual Formation  
Student Life  
Policy and Procedures  
Student Discipline

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Chelsea Academy seeks to form confident young men and women educated in the liberal arts tradition and the Catholic faith. The Academy is committed to promoting and cultivating in its students the life of the mind and the love of truth; an appreciation for the natural world and the heritage of human achievement; enduring friendships; a spirit of adventure; and the virtues of honesty, diligence, courage, piety, and personal responsibility. Through an ethos shaped by Catholic teaching and devotions and a balanced curriculum that includes the humanities, sciences, the arts, and athletics, Chelsea Academy provides students with opportunities for developing themselves into adults who are capable of making positive contributions to their families, places of work, and communities.

#### **THE CHELSEA CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

Chelsea Academy expects its students to adhere to the highest standards of civility and comportment. They should deal honestly in all their interactions with others. They should give proper respect to those in authority and to their peers as well as to personal and school property. They should take personal responsibility for all of their actions and fulfill their duties to the school and to others.

The rules and regulations governing student behavior at Chelsea Academy are meant to serve as basic guidelines. They are not meant to be exhaustive. Students are expected to follow the letter and the spirit of the rules in an effort to do their part in creating a pleasant, harmonious school environment in which the dignity of every person -- faculty, staff, and student -- is respected.

#### **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

##### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is critical to the mission of Chelsea Academy. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on quizzes, tests, and other assignments, helping another student to cheat, and presenting the thought or work of another person as one's own. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and one that Chelsea Academy does not tolerate. The

Administration will be notified and a failing grade may be assigned for cases of academic dishonesty. Students involved in repeated incidents should expect more serious consequences. Teachers will instruct students on what exactly constitutes academic dishonesty in each of the various disciplines.

### **Attendance and Absences**

Attendance is taken each morning, and students are expected to attend the full class day. Parents are asked to report all absences as soon as possible and to make arrangements in advance with a note to the school if their child has to miss any part of the day. It is the student's responsibility to meet with his or teacher about work missed due to an absence or a late arrival or early dismissal. Students who accumulate twenty or more absences, excused and unexcused, during the school year risk losing credit in their courses. Only absences for illness or family emergencies are excused.

### **Book Policy**

Books (with the exception of some workbooks) are the property of Chelsea Academy. Students who fail to return a book or return a book damaged beyond the normal wear and tear will be charged a fee to cover the cost of replacing the book.

### **Course Changes**

Students may make course changes without penalty up until the end of the first quarter of the school year. Unless initiated by a teacher or the Administration, changes after this date will result in a WP (withdrew passing) or WF (withdrew failing) notation on the student's transcript depending on the grade at the time of withdrawal.

### **Exams**

Ninth grade students take exams in all of their courses in May. Students in ninth-grade courses, such as Algebra I, also take exams. The exams cover content from the fall and spring semesters. Although teachers provide review sheets and spend class time to prepare students for these exams, students are expected to study on their own as needed.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are an important part of the academic experience at Chelsea Academy, as they enable teachers to broaden their students' experience and build on lessons covered in class. Parents will be notified in advance regarding trip details, including destinations, transportation, attire, etc. Permission forms are required for all students.

### **Grade Reports**

The school year is divided into two semesters. Full grade reports are mailed on a quarterly basis, twice in the fall and twice in the spring semester. In addition, an interim report is issued following the third full week of the academic year.

### **Grade / Course Requirements**

Students are expected to follow the full range of courses for their grade levels. Exceptions are made only for compelling reasons as decided by the Administration.

## **Grading and Grade Scale**

Letter grades are assigned for all courses as follows (including numerical equivalents for determining Grade Point Averages (GPA)):

A = 93-100% (4.0)    A- = 90-92% (3.67)    B+ = 87-89% (3.33)  
B = 83-86% (3.0)    B- = 80-82% (2.67)    C+ = 77-79% (2.33)  
C = 73-76% (2.0)    C- = 70-72% (1.67)    D+ = 67-69% (1.33)  
D = 63-66% (1.0)    D- = 60-62% (0.67)    F = less than 60% (0.00)

Final grades in each course will be weighted on a 45% fall semester and 55% spring semester basis.

## **Grade Requirements**

Students who finish the year with a D+ average or lower risk not being able to advance to the next grade or return to Chelsea Academy. The Administration will review all students in this situation and meet with their parents to determine the best course of action.

## **Homework**

Homework is designed to reinforce a concept or lesson presented in class or to prepare students for the next day's lesson. Time spent on homework each school night should be about 1.5 – 2 hours for middle school students and 2 – 3 hours for ninth grade students. Failure to complete homework assignments may result in a study hall.

## **Honor Rolls**

Based on a student's Grade Point Average (GPA), honor rolls are posted immediately following each of the four major grading periods during the school year. Students may earn a place on one of two honor rolls:

High Honors:            3.7 or higher GPA  
Honors:                    3.3 or higher GPA

## **Academic Probation**

After each grading period, the academic progress of each student will be reviewed. Students who earn two or more grades below a C- will be placed on Academic Probation. Parents will be notified, and a plan will be established for helping the student to raise his or her grades. Students who remain on Academic Probation risk not being re-invited to continue their education at Chelsea Academy for the following year.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held at the beginning of each semester. Parents and teachers are encouraged to initiate a meeting at any time of the year when the need arises.

## **Tests**

Students are not required to take more than two tests on any given day. Tests must be announced at least one week in advance.

## **Tutoring**

Teachers make themselves available outside of class hours to meet with students and to address questions or problems. At the same time, an occasion may arise in which a student needs more formal tutoring on a regular basis. Peer tutoring is often available. Students may, alternatively, work with an outside tutor independent of the school or request tutoring from an adult in any of their subjects. Tutoring sessions organized by the school are provided at the family's expense. Generally, students may not be tutored in a subject by their own teacher.

### **Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive to school on time each day. Late arrivals are recorded in the school office. Frequent tardiness and patterns of tardiness are addressed by the Administration. Parents are requested to call the main office if they know their son or daughter will be arriving late to school.

## **SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

### **Daily Rosary**

In an effort to promote the prayer life of its students, Chelsea Academy makes the praying of the Rosary available each day. Students are encouraged to participate.

### **Days of Recollection and Retreat**

Special days are set aside during the school when students and faculty will participate in retreats and recollection. These are times for individual spiritual reflection as well as community building.

### **Festivals / Feast Days**

Throughout the year, Catholic feast days will be celebrated with special meals, outings, parties, and festivals. Students are encouraged to participate in the planning and organization of these days.

### **Mass Attendance and Attire**

As "the source and summit of the Christian life," the Eucharist holds a special place in the liturgical life of the school. All students are required to attend Mass every week and should wear their best uniform on these days. In addition, Mass is available to students and their families on a daily basis.

### **Reconciliation**

The sacrament of reconciliation will be made available to students at various times throughout the school year.

### **Monthly Holy Hour**

Time will be set aside for Holy Hour once a month.

## **STUDENT LIFE**

### **Choir**

All students are encouraged to participate in the Choir. In recognition of the rich and vibrant musical tradition of the Catholic Church, the Choir will learn and perform traditional sacred music, including parts of the Mass in Latin, as well as secular works.

### **The Arts**

A goal of Chelsea Academy is to awaken students to beauty. In addition to learning how to recognize artistic beauty, they will be instructed in the skills and knowledge necessary for producing beautiful works of art. Holding that the visual arts involve far more than self-expression, the Academy will strive to train both “the eye and the hand” in its art program.

### **Athletics**

Embracing the ancient Greek ideal of *mens sano in corpore sano* (a healthy mind in a healthy body), Chelsea Academy will provide opportunities for the physical development and well-being of all its students. A variety of sports, including soccer, volleyball, basketball, tennis, and softball, will be offered. Interscholastic competition will depend on student interest and ability levels.

### **The Outdoors**

Chelsea Academy seeks to promote physical health, a spirit of adventure, friendships, and an appreciation for God’s creation. To these ends, Chelsea Academy will draw on the wonderful natural resources available in the Shenandoah Valley by including outdoor activities as part of its program. Students will participate in at least one hike in the Blue Ridge or Massanutten Mountains each year, and an all-school canoe trip on the Shenandoah River will become an annual tradition.

### **Clubs**

Students are encouraged to take the initiative to form clubs that will attract other students and will contribute to enhancing the life of the school. A faculty advisor must be chosen for each club, and a written proposal explaining the rationale for the club must be presented to the Administration for approval.

### **Houses**

Chelsea Academy will be divided into groups called “houses,” two houses for boys and two for girls. Each house will have students from across the grades, and each of the boys’ houses will be paired with one of the girls’ houses, with family members belonging to the same house or pair of houses. The houses will be involved in various activities and competitions, including field days, poetry recitations, peer tutorials, and service projects.

The houses serve several purposes. They provide membership in a smaller group for all Chelsea students. They encourage interaction and friendships among students across the grade levels. They promote camaraderie and healthy competition. They contribute to creating strong school morale and solidarity.

The names of the Chelsea houses are associated with Thomas More:

- **Fisher House:** John Cardinal Fisher (1469-1535) was a trusted friend of More and served as bishop of Rochester during the early sixteenth century. A distinguished scholar of international renown, he put his life at risk by supporting Catherine of Aragon in her efforts to resist her husband Henry VIII's attempt to annul their marriage in defiance of the Pope. After refusing to recognize the Act of Supremacy, which declared Henry VIII the head of the Church of England, Fisher was martyred for the Catholic Faith. He was made a cardinal shortly before his execution in 1535. In 1935, Pope Pius XI declared Fisher (and Thomas More) a saint.
- **Holbein House:** Hans Holbein (1497-1543) was a draftsman and painter responsible for the most famous portrait of More. Holbein came from a family of artists in Germany and distinguished himself as one of the premier portrait painters of his generation. In addition to his celebrated portraits of More and Erasmus, Holbein is known for his sketch of More's household at Chelsea.
- **Colet House:** John Colet (1467-1519) was a scholar and priest who served as young More's spiritual advisor. A man of great learning, Colet studied at Oxford, Florence, and Rome before holding the position of dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Beginning in 1509, Colet devoted his life and vast inherited fortune to the founding of St. Paul's School, one of England's oldest and most prestigious secondary schools.
- **Roper House:** William Roper (1496-1578) married More's devoted daughter Margaret (1505-1544) and wrote the first biography of More. As a young man, Roper spent much time in the More household and enjoyed close relations with his father-in-law. He served in Parliament during the reign of Queen Mary, and throughout his life he was respected for his character and learning. His wife, Margaret Roper, received a liberal arts education that included literature, languages, history, mathematics, science, and philosophy, and she earned a reputation among her contemporaries for her scholarly command of Latin.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

Students may arrive to school no earlier than thirty minutes before the start of the class day and should be picked within thirty minutes of the end of the last class in the afternoon. Parents are requested to pick up their children immediately following an after school activity, such as a sports practice or extracurricular event.

### **Dress Code and Personal Appearance**

The dress code serves to foster a serious, academic environment and to prepare students for professional work. Students are required to wear a uniform to school each day. (Details will be forthcoming.) Exceptions are made on days when students go on field trips, in which case, depending on the destination, a relaxed or more formal uniform will be worn. Students should wear their best uniform on days when Mass is celebrated. In addition to the dress code, students are expected to follow appropriate standards of grooming.

**Early Dismissal**

Appointments for doctors, dentists, etc. should be made outside of school hours. When a student needs to miss part of the school day, he or she must submit in advance a note with departure date and time, reason for the early departure, and signature of parent or guardian. Students must sign out at the school office when leaving campus.

**Emergency and Snow Closing Policy**

The Headmaster will make the decision to cancel classes or delay the start of the school day due to inclement weather or an emergency situation. Announcements will be made over the local radio and television stations as well as on the school's website <[www.chelseaacademy.org](http://www.chelseaacademy.org)> as soon as possible.

**Fire Alarms and Fire Safety**

When a fire alarm is triggered, students should immediately stop what they are doing and proceed quickly, quietly, and orderly with their teacher and class through the fire exits. They should remain with their teacher and class outside the building until receiving instructions.

**Lockers**

All students will be assigned lockers. Coats, gym and sports clothes, and books should be stored neatly in them.

**Lunch**

A dining area under adult supervision is provided for student lunch. Students should bring a sack lunch to school, and they are expected to dispose of all trash and leave their area tidy and clean.

**Medical Needs**

Parents should contact the Administration regarding prescriptions, medicines, or other medical needs of their children. Students who receive medication during the day must have a letter from their parents on file with the school identifying the drug and the purpose of its use.

**Telephone Calls**

Only emergency messages will be delivered to students. Other messages will be posted on a bulletin outside the main office. The school phone is not for personal use. Cell phones may not be brought to school.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE****Philosophy**

Chelsea Academy strives to present students with clear expectations and positive models of behavior in an effort to help them internalize and follow the highest standards of good conduct. It is expected that students will make mistakes as they grow in independence and learn to exercise their freedom. Rather than impose a rigid code of rules that emphasizes harsh consequences, the Academy seeks to provide opportunities for students

to develop maturity and self-discipline and expects them to take responsibility for all of their actions.

### **Disciplinary Responses**

Most disciplinary cases are handled by individual teachers. Detentions will be used when a conversation with a student fails to lead to an improvement in behavior. If the student's misconduct persists, the Administration is asked to intervene. Violations of major school rules are referred immediately to the Administration. Parents are notified in all cases involving major rule violations, which may result in probation, suspension, or dismissal from school.

Chelsea Academy reserves the right to place on probation, suspend, or dismiss any student whose conduct is determined by the Administration to be out of sympathy with the goals and ideals of the school.

### **Major School Rules:**

#### **Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco**

Chelsea Academy does not tolerate student use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, drugs (illegal and unauthorized), or tobacco of any kind. Violation of this rule on campus or during school sponsored events will result in immediate dismissal from the school.

#### **Fighting and Bullying**

Every student is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. Fighting is not permitted, nor is harassment or intimidating behavior of any kind tolerated. Students engaged in this kind of behavior will be referred to the Administration.

#### **Leaving Campus**

No student may leave campus during the school day without permission.

#### **Lying, Cheating, Stealing**

A school depends on the trust of all its members. It is expected that students will tell the truth, do their own work, and respect the property of others. Failure to follow these guidelines will be treated by the Administration as a serious rule infraction.

#### **Safety Issues**

Possession of dangerous objects, including knives, firearms, ammunition, and explosive devices, are not permitted and will result in immediate referral to the Administration.

#### **School and personal property**

Students are expected to respect all school and personal property. The deliberate destruction of property will be considered as a major rule violation. Chelsea Academy will make an effort to investigate any cases involving theft or damages to property. However, it does not assume responsibility for damaged or stolen personal property.

#### **Other Rules:**

**Food and Drink**

No food and drink are permitted outside of designated areas.

**Litter and Gum**

Students are expected to help maintain a clean and tidy campus. They should pick up and properly dispose of their trash. Gum chewing is not allowed on campus at any time.

**Cell Phones, I-pods, and Other Technology**

Students may not bring cell phones, I-pods, video games, and other technology to school. Violations of this rule will result in confiscation of the equipment until a parent can retrieve it.