

CHELSEA ACADEMY

Parent-Student Handbook

2026-2027 Academic Year

School Address

1190 Progress Dr Front Royal, VA 22630

Phone (540) 635-0622 • Fax (540) 635-3533

www.chelseaacademy.org

"[Teach them to] esteem most whatever may teach them piety towards God, charity to all, and modesty and Christian humility in themselves."

- St. Thomas More

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MISSION STATEMENT

At Chelsea Academy, our vision extends beyond mere instruction; we aim for a profound transformation of each student. We are dedicated to shaping young men and women within the authentic Catholic Liberal Arts tradition, fostering not just intellectual prowess but the growth of their entire being. Our graduates emerge as eloquent critical thinkers, articulating ideas with clarity and conviction, yet profoundly humble in their relentless pursuit of knowledge and a deeper understanding of reality.

Beyond the classroom, Chelsea cultivates enduring friendships, rooted in charity and mutual respect, which profoundly complement intellectual and spiritual development. With courage and conviction, our students become trailblazers who embrace adventure, ready to conquer the natural world and carry out acts of selfless service, fearlessly exploring beyond the comfortable confines of the secularized world. They stand unwavering for God's Truth, even in the face of ridicule. Ultimately, Chelsea graduates are distinctive, tenacious Catholic leaders with real fortitude, overcoming adversity and embodying unwavering integrity. Steadfast in their faith and authentically committed to lives dedicated to God, they are empowered to make a tangible impact on their families, communities, and a world yearning for true meaning and purpose, embracing and spreading His Truth through virtuous action.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of a true education is to cultivate within the human person a habit of being and a "culture of the Word".[1] This responsibility arises both from the natural duty of parents to educate their children and from the solemn mission of the Church to remain faithful to Her Lord. Such an education requires that students be introduced to, and equipped with the intellectual and spiritual tools necessary to apprehend, all of reality in both its natural and supernatural dimensions. The very grammar of reality proceeds from the creative work of God, who brings all things into existence by speaking them into being. God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, the eternal Word made flesh, further reveals that "all things were made through Him," and that as the Divine Logos, all truth, goodness, and beauty find both their origin and their fulfillment in Him.

Accordingly, a "culture of the Word" consists of the concrete conditions in which parents, faculty, students, and staff, united in a community of friendship, seek God together. This begins with the recognition of God as our Father, who is therefore worthy of our worship, gratitude, and love. It continues with the formation of the intellect to seek the truth about created things and to understand each thing within the greater harmony, the symphony, of reality. Such intellectual formation necessarily cultivates awe and wonder before this symphony: its beauty, its goodness, and the inexhaustible richness of its contemplation. In contemplating both the natural and supernatural orders, students come to appreciate the unique dignity of the human person and are naturally led to ask how one ought to live.

The formation of virtue, rooted in the natural light of reason and perfected through Divine Revelation, equips students to exercise their freedom rightly. It forms them to conform themselves ever more closely to Jesus Christ: to courageously overcome the effects of their fallen nature throughout life; to choose wisely and act justly in every circumstance; to engage the wider culture with confidence, charity, and conviction; and ultimately to love God and neighbor more perfectly. As our patron, St. Thomas More put it: "To put virtue in the first place, learning in the second; and in their studies to esteem most whatever may teach them piety towards God, charity to all, and Christian humility in themselves...These I consider the real and genuine fruits of learning, and I would maintain that those who give themselves to study with such intent will easily attain their end and become perfect".[2]

1. This phrase was articulated by Pope Benedict XVI in an address to the ministers of culture in France on September 12, 2008 at the Collège des Bernardins, Paris. 2. Thomas More's "Letter to William Gonell" (22 May 1518).

General Information

ADMINISTRATION

Chelsea Academy is governed by an advisory Board of Directors, which possesses plenary authority over the mission, governance, and long-term direction of the School. The Board delegates the day-to-day administration of the School to the Headmaster. The Headmaster serves as the chief executive and academic officer of Chelsea Academy and is responsible for the daily operation of the School, the hiring and supervision of faculty and staff, and the oversight of all academic, student life, and operational programs.

By delegation of the Board, the Headmaster retains final authority over all academic matters, including curriculum, instructional standards, academic policies, program development, and any revisions thereto. The Headmaster likewise bears ultimate responsibility for the School's leadership and executive decision-making and reserves the authority to make exceptions or override delegated decisions whenever necessary to fulfill the School's mission and best interests. The administrative team serves in a delegated and supportive capacity, exercising only the authority entrusted to it by the Headmaster.

For the organizational structure of Chelsea Academy, please see the Appendix.

ADMISSION

Non-Discrimination Statement.

Chelsea Academy admits students of any race, color, national origin, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. Chelsea Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and financial assistance programs, athletic programs, or other School-administered activities.

As a Catholic school, Chelsea Academy gives admissions preference in the following order:

- Catholic students residing within the Diocese of Arlington;
- Catholic students residing outside the Diocese of Arlington; and
- Non-Catholic students.

Admissions Process

Chelsea Academy operates on a rolling admissions basis. Applications for the following academic year are accepted beginning each fall and are reviewed in the order in which they are received. Students entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before August 1 of the year of enrollment. Because enrollment is limited and classes often reach capacity, families are encouraged to complete the admissions process as early as possible.

A completed application includes:

- Submission of the online application through FACTS
- Academic records

- A teacher recommendation
- A student essay
- Successful completion of the admissions assessment
- Participation in a Chelsea Academy Shadow Day
- A family interview with the Headmaster and Director of Admissions

Applications are accepted for students entering Kindergarten through Grade 12. Chelsea Academy often welcomes a limited number of international students each year. Additional admissions requirements apply to international applicants.

Please visit the Admissions section of the Chelsea Academy website for complete information: https://www.chelseaacademy.org/admissions/

SCHOOL HOURS & ATTENDANCE POLICY

Office Hours

During the academic year, the School Office is open Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Office hours during holiday and vacation periods will be communicated separately.

School Hours - Arrival and Dismissal

Students may arrive on campus no earlier than 7:45 a.m., which is twenty-five minutes before the start of the school day. Students should be picked up no later than twenty minutes after dismissal (approximately 3:50 p.m.). Families who are habitually late in dropping off or picking up students will be contacted by the School. Continued noncompliance may result in the assessment of a late pick-up fee. Parents are expected to pick up their children promptly following any after-school activity, including athletic practices, clubs, performances, or other extracurricular events.

Early Dismissal

When a student must leave school before the end of the academic day, a parent or guardian must notify the School Office in advance. The notification must include the date and time of departure, the reason for the early dismissal, and authorization from the parent or guardian. Students must be signed out through the School Office by a parent or authorized adult before leaving campus. Students who drive themselves to school must sign out through the School Office before departing. Students are responsible for making up all assignments, assessments, and classwork missed as a result of an early dismissal.

Daily Convocation and Morning Attendance:

Beginning with the 2026–2027 academic year, Chelsea Academy will resume daily morning Convocation for the entire school. Convocation is an important part of our school culture, providing an opportunity to pray together as a community and hear announcements relevant to the school day. Attendance at convocation is mandatory. Students are expected to be in their classrooms by 8:10 a.m., at which time attendance will be taken. Students are expected to attend the full instructional day. Because convocation is an integral part of the Chelsea Academy experience, excessive tardiness or absenteeism related to convocation will be referred to the Headmaster and Administration and may result in disciplinary action.

Tardiness *(Amended November 13, 2026)*

Promptness is a fundamental habit of scholarship, self-discipline, and personal responsibility that demonstrates respect for the educational work of our school community. Because chronic tardiness disrupts instruction, diminishes valuable learning time, and negatively impacts the educational experience of both the individual and the class as a whole, students are expected to arrive on time for Convocation, every scheduled class, study hall, and all mandatory school activities.

Tardiness (continued)

Amended November 13, 2026

Students arriving at school at or after 8:10 a.m. must report to the Reception Office to obtain a tardy slip before proceeding to class. A student arriving after the designated starting time must comply with the school's established check-in procedures. Tardiness between classes shall be recorded by the responsible faculty member.

A distinction shall be maintained between excused and unexcused tardiness, taking into consideration circumstances beyond the student's reasonable control. Three (3) unexcused tardies within a semester will result in a detention. Repeated unexcused tardiness constitutes a disciplinary concern and may also result in parental notification or referral to the Administration.

Continued or habitual unexcused tardiness will be reviewed by the Administration and may result in additional disciplinary consequences, including, but not limited to, the loss of extracurricular participation, field trip privileges, or other school privileges until consistent improvement is demonstrated. The Administration may require a conference with the student and parents or guardians and establish a written plan for improvement.

Repeated tardiness shall not be treated solely as a succession of isolated infractions. Where ordinary corrective measures prove ineffective, the Administration shall consider whether further intervention is warranted.

Attendance and Absences

Regular attendance is essential to a student's academic success, personal formation, and participation in the life of Chelsea Academy. As a Catholic liberal arts school, Chelsea recognizes that education extends beyond classroom instruction to include the shared responsibilities, traditions, liturgies, and activities that form our school community. Students are therefore expected to attend school punctually and participate fully in all required school activities.

Parents are expected to notify the school office before the start of the school day whenever a student will be absent. Family vacations should be scheduled during school breaks whenever possible.

Excused Absences

An excused absence is one resulting from a legitimate circumstance that reasonably prevents a student from attending school. Such circumstances generally include:

- Personal illness, injury, or medical appointments that cannot reasonably be scheduled outside school hours.
- A death in the family, funeral, or significant family emergency.
- Religious observances or obligations.
- Legal obligations or other unavoidable circumstances.
- Exceptional circumstances approved by the Headmaster.

Parents are expected to notify the school promptly regarding an absence, preferably in advance when circumstances permit. The school may request appropriate documentation when necessary, particularly in cases of extended or recurring absences.

Attendance and Absences (continued)

Amended November 13, 2026

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence occurs when a student misses school without a sufficiently justified reason or without the approval of school administration. Examples include:

- Family vacations, recreational trips, or extended holiday travel during scheduled school days without an exception approved by the Headmaster.
- Absences resulting from a student's decision not to participate in a required school activity, celebration, performance, or other scheduled event with a legitimate excuse approved by the Administration.
- Absences for personal convenience, including oversleeping, avoidable transportation difficulties, or a preference to remain at home.
- Absences for which no satisfactory explanation has been provided.

Parental permission or notification does not, in itself, constitute an excused absence. The school administration retains final authority to determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

Required School Events and Activities

All scheduled school days are considered mandatory unless otherwise designated by the Academy. This includes days devoted to school traditions (Fall Hike, Camping Trips etc.), religious celebrations, academic presentations, performances, retreats, and other special programs (field trips for instance). These occasions are integral to Chelsea Academy's educational mission and are not optional simply because the normal classroom schedule has been modified. Students are expected to fulfill their responsibilities to their classmates, teachers, and school community. Absences from required school activities without a legitimate excuse will be recorded as unexcused and may result in disciplinary consequences.

Attendance Thresholds and Administrative Review

Students who accumulate more than 15 absences in a specific course or 20 full-day absences during the academic year, without extenuating circumstances approved by the Headmaster, will be subject to administrative review, a required parent conference, and may lose eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with his or her teachers regarding work missed because of absence, late arrival, or early dismissal.

Both excused and unexcused absences count toward these attendance thresholds, since prolonged absence from instruction can affect academic progress regardless of the reason. However, documented medical circumstances, significant family emergencies, and other exceptional situations will be considered individually by the Headmaster. Repeated unexcused absences may prompt administrative intervention before these thresholds are reached.

Reporting an Absence

Parents are asked to report their child's absence by 9 am the day of the absence. Parents may send an email to attendance@chelseaacademy.org or leave a message on the "Attendance Line" option at (540) 635-0622, indicating the dates and reason for the absence. Without parental notification on the day of the absence, absences are considered unexcused. The final determination regarding the classification of absences and any exceptions to this policy rests with the Headmaster.

Missed Assignments and Academic Responsibilities

Students with excused absences will be given a reasonable opportunity to complete missed assignments and assessments in consultation with their teachers. Students with unexcused absences remain responsible for all missed material and assignments and are subject to the Academy's established policies governing late or incomplete work.

Headmaster-Approved Educational and Athletic Opportunities

The Headmaster may grant excused absences for students participating in exceptional educational, cultural, athletic, or extracurricular opportunities that meaningfully complement the mission and educational philosophy of Chelsea Academy. Such opportunities may include approved academic competitions, athletic tournaments, international educational experiences, and other activities that contribute to a student's intellectual, physical, or personal formation.

Approval must be obtained in advance and will be granted at the discretion of the Headmaster. Students remain responsible for coordinating missed assignments and fulfilling their academic obligations. Approval of one opportunity does not establish automatic approval for similar absences in the future. An absence approved for an educational or athletic opportunity is distinct from choosing to miss a required school event. Students whose approval includes such an event must notify teachers and House leaders in advance and address existing responsibilities wherever reasonably possible.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications from the School

Chelsea Academy provides a comprehensive weekly communication each Friday to members of the school community. This newsletter includes important academic information, student life updates, upcoming events, announcements, and other pertinent school news. Throughout the academic year, the Headmaster may also issue additional communications containing reflections, policy updates, and matters of particular importance to the School. Likewise, the Assistant Headmistress, Lower School Liaison, and other administrators may communicate directly with families regarding matters specific to their areas of responsibility. Individual communications will also be sent as needed for significant announcements, special events, or time-sensitive information.

Parent Inquiries

Chelsea Academy encourages frequent, respectful, and open communication among parents, students, faculty, and staff. Faculty and staff will make every effort to acknowledge parent inquiries within twenty-four hours, recognizing that a complete response may require additional time. Parents are likewise asked to respect the professional responsibilities of teachers when scheduling conferences or meetings.

In accordance with the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, concerns should first be addressed directly with the individual most closely involved. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the matter may then be brought to the appropriate administrator or the Headmaster. All official school correspondence from faculty and administration is conducted through Chelsea Academy email accounts. Parents are asked to use these accounts when communicating electronically with faculty and staff. Out of respect for professional boundaries and personal privacy, parents should not text faculty members unless expressly invited to do so.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal parent-teacher conference/s are scheduled at designated times throughout the academic year to discuss student progress. These conferences do not preclude additional meetings as needed. Parents are encouraged to

contact teachers whenever questions or concerns arise, and teachers will likewise initiate conferences whenever academic, behavioral, or pastoral concerns warrant further discussion.

FINANCE

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees are established annually by the Board of Directors. The Headmaster and Chief Finance & Business Officer communicate the tuition and fee schedule to families each spring. Each parent or guardian must complete a Tuition Agreement through FACTS each year. This agreement specifies tuition, payment options, and other contractual obligations. A student's enrollment is not complete until the Tuition Agreement has been executed, the enrollment fee has been paid, and a FACTS Tuition Management account has been established. Because tuition constitutes the primary source of the School's operating revenue, timely payment of tuition and fees is essential. Payments not received by the due date are subject to late fees in accordance with School policy. Families experiencing significant and unforeseen financial hardship are encouraged to contact the Director of Admissions and the Headmaster as soon as possible to discuss their circumstances.

Student Activity Fee

The annual Student Activity Fee is a consolidated fee designed to simplify budgeting for families by incorporating many expenses that were previously assessed separately throughout the school year. This approach reduces unexpected costs while ensuring that students across all grade levels have access to the programs, resources, and activities that are integral to the Chelsea Academy experience.

The Student Activity Fee supports a broad range of educational, extracurricular, athletic, and campus-life initiatives, including, but not limited to:

- School-wide student life events and traditions
- Field Trip Fees
- Religious activities, including weekly Mass, Stations of the Cross, retreats, and other liturgical events
- House activities and community-building events
- Textbooks and shared classroom instructional materials
- Classroom, science, art, music, theater, and instructional supplies
- Physical education equipment and the maintenance and replacement of athletic equipment
- Athletic program support
- Transportation and School vehicles used for School-sponsored activities
- Campus facilities and student spaces that directly support student life and instruction
- Other educational resources and materials that benefit the student body as a whole.

Again, the purpose of this consolidated fee is to provide families with a more predictable annual cost while allowing the School to maintain the high quality of its academic, athletic, spiritual, and extracurricular programs.

Fundraising

Tuition alone does not cover the full cost of providing a Chelsea education. Fundraising therefore represents an essential source of operating revenue and helps the school sustain its academic programs, retain excellent faculty, maintain its campus, and advance its Catholic mission. The success of these efforts depends upon the active support and cooperation of the entire Chelsea community. Every family is expected to participate in the school's fundraising initiatives to the extent reasonably possible. Participation may take different forms, including volunteering, promoting school events, assisting with outreach, securing sponsorships or donations,

and supporting fundraising activities. This shared commitment strengthens the school and helps ensure that Chelsea can continue to provide an excellent Catholic liberal arts education for present and future students.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Cars on Campus

Students who drive to school must register their vehicle with the Front Office and receive permission from the Administration before parking on campus. Student vehicles must be parked only in designated student parking spaces. Once students arrive on campus, they may not return to or remain in their vehicles during the school day without express permission from a member of the Administration. Students may not leave campus in a vehicle during the school day unless they have received the required parental and administrative permission.

Student drivers may transport their siblings to and from school and to school-sponsored activities or athletic events. They may transport other Chelsea students only when the school has received written permission from the parents or guardians of both the driver and the passenger. Any additional requirements established by the Administration or Athletic Department must also be followed. Students are expected to drive slowly, cautiously, and respectfully at all times while on school property and in the surrounding neighborhood. Reckless, unsafe, disruptive, or otherwise inappropriate driving may result in disciplinary action, including the suspension or revocation of the privilege to drive or park on campus.

Personal Technology and Device Policy

I. Policy Statement and Mission

One of the most distinctive and important features of a Chelsea Academy education is the school's commitment to providing a minimal, low-technology learning environment. While technology can serve legitimate purposes, education is fundamentally a human activity. Genuine learning requires sustained attention, memory, contemplation, conversation, intellectual discipline, and meaningful engagement with teachers, classmates, books, ideas, and the created world.

Modern personal devices present a particular challenge to these ends. Smartphones, social media platforms, messaging applications, games, and other digital technologies are frequently designed to capture and retain attention through notifications, social rewards, endless content, and repeated opportunities for stimulation. For children and adolescents, whose habits, identities, judgment, and powers of self-command are still developing, constant access to these technologies can become compulsive and interfere with healthy intellectual, emotional, relational, physical, and spiritual development.

As a Catholic liberal arts school, Chelsea Academy seeks to form students who are free rather than governed by appetite or impulse; capable of sustained attention rather than dependent upon constant stimulation; and fully present to God, their teachers, their studies, their families, and one another. Chelsea's technology policy is therefore not merely a classroom-management rule or a matter of administrative convenience. It is an essential part of the school's academic and formative mission. Accordingly, Chelsea Academy maintains a total ban on student possession and use of personal electronic devices during the school day and during other school-sponsored activities governed by this policy.

II. Evidence-Based Rationale

Although the effects of personal technology vary among individual students and not every study establishes direct causation, the cumulative academic, medical, psychological, and developmental evidence provides more than sufficient grounds for a prudent and precautionary school policy. Chelsea's total device ban is based upon the following concerns.

A. Attention, Memory, and Serious Study

Learning depends upon the ability to direct and sustain attention. Personal devices divide that attention by creating the expectation that a message, notification, update, or digital reward may arrive at any moment. Research has found that the mere presence of a person's own smartphone can consume limited cognitive resources and reduce performance on tasks involving working memory and fluid intelligence, even when the phone is silenced and the individual successfully resists checking it. A device does not need to ring, vibrate, or be actively used to impose a cognitive cost. Its presence alone can distract the mind and reduce the intellectual resources available for the task at hand.[1]

This is especially significant at Chelsea, where students are expected to read difficult texts, listen carefully, participate thoughtfully in discussion, memorize material, write with precision, and develop the capacity for prolonged intellectual work. A phone stored in a pocket, backpack, locker, athletic bag, or vehicle remains psychologically and physically available to the student. Removing the device from the student's immediate possession allows attention to be directed toward the work and persons actually present.

B. Academic Achievement

The harmful effects of digital distraction are not merely theoretical. Research examining schools that prohibited mobile phones found measurable improvements in student examination performance following implementation of the bans. The estimated overall benefit was comparable to adding approximately one additional week of instruction to the academic year.[2]

UNESCO has similarly warned that smartphones can distract students and negatively affect learning. Its international review of technology in education emphasizes that technology should be used only when it demonstrably supports learning and should never displace the human relationships upon which sound teaching depends.[3] Chelsea Academy does not believe that students should be required to compete against deliberately engaging personal technologies while attempting to learn. A total ban establishes one clear standard for every student and protects those most susceptible to distraction.

C. Mental Health, Sleep, and Emotional Regulation

The effects of personal technology extend beyond the classroom. Continuous digital communication can create pressure to remain perpetually available, responsive, visible, and socially evaluated. Notifications, messaging, social comparison, approval metrics, and fear of missing out can prevent students from disengaging mentally from online social life, even while they are physically present at school.

The United States Surgeon General has concluded that there are substantial indicators that social media may pose a profound risk of harm to the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents. The Surgeon General's advisory identifies concerns involving depression, anxiety, social comparison, body image, excessive or problematic use, harmful content, and the displacement of activities essential to health, including sleep and physical activity.[4]

The American Psychological Association has likewise advised that adolescent social media use should not interfere with sleep or physical activity and has identified sleep disruption and unhealthy social comparison as significant areas of concern.[5] The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine has emphasized that the evidence is complex and that the effects of social media differ among individuals. Nevertheless, its review identified serious concerns involving sleep, depression, anxiety, social comparison, and the particular vulnerability of certain children and adolescents.[6]

Chelsea's policy does not presume that every student who possesses a smartphone will experience the same harm. It recognizes, however, that the school has a duty to establish an environment that reduces unnecessary psychological pressure and gives students a substantial period of genuine freedom from digital demands each day.

D. Adolescent Development and Harmful Content

Adolescence is a particularly sensitive period for the formation of identity, self-worth, emotional regulation, judgment, and social behavior. Young people are especially responsive to peer approval, rejection, comparison, and social reward. Personal devices provide immediate and often unsupervised access to an environment in which all of these pressures are intensified.

The Surgeon General has noted that extreme, inappropriate, and harmful content remains readily accessible to children and adolescents. Such content may include material that glorifies self-harm, eating disorders, violence, cruelty, sexual exploitation, or other destructive behavior. Social-media-driven comparison has also been associated with body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, disordered eating, and depressive symptoms.[7] Unrestricted digital access may expose students to explicit sexual, violent, or degrading material before they possess the maturity necessary to understand or resist it. It can also present profoundly distorted images of the human person, intimacy, popularity, success, and happiness.

Chelsea Academy cannot control every digital influence that students encounter away from school. It can, however, ensure that students are not given private and unsupervised access to such material while under the school's authority.

E. Friendship, Community, and Human Presence

Chelsea's mission includes not only academic instruction but also the formation of genuine friendship and community. Students should learn to converse, resolve disagreements, endure ordinary periods of silence or boredom, notice the needs of others, participate in common activities, and enjoy recreation without immediately retreating into private digital entertainment.

Even when students are not actively using their devices, the expectation of digital access can fragment their attention and weaken their engagement with the people around them. When devices are available during lunch, breaks, athletic events, or other communal activities, they can easily replace face-to-face interaction with passive consumption, private messaging, or online social comparison.

A genuinely device-free environment gives students something increasingly rare: sustained time in which they can be fully present to one another. It directly supports Chelsea's pillars of Faith, Academics, Friendship, and Adventure by encouraging students to participate actively in the real community, relationships, responsibilities, and experiences immediately before them.

F. Safety, Privacy, and Community Trust

Personal devices also create serious safety, privacy, and disciplinary concerns. Cameras, audio recorders, messaging applications, and instantaneous digital distribution make it possible for a momentary act of poor judgment to become a permanent and widely shared violation of another person's dignity.

Particular risks arise in restrooms, locker rooms, changing areas, athletic facilities, and other locations where students reasonably expect privacy. A device may be used to photograph or record another person without consent, distribute compromising material, engage in harassment or cyberbullying, facilitate academic dishonesty, or communicate secretly during a school safety incident.[8] The most effective way to prevent the misuse of personal devices during the school day is to remove the immediate means of recording, distributing, and concealing such activity.

G. Why a Total Ban Is Necessary

A policy prohibiting only the active use of devices is inherently difficult to enforce. It requires faculty members to determine whether a concealed phone is powered on, whether a smartwatch is receiving messages, whether wireless earbuds are connected, or whether a student has briefly accessed a device without being observed.

Such a policy also fails to address the cognitive effect created by the device's continued presence and availability. A phone in a backpack, locker, athletic bag, or vehicle remains accessible, continues to invite anticipation, and can be retrieved privately.

A device left in a student's vehicle also creates opportunities for unauthorized access during the school day and conflicts with Chelsea's prohibition against students returning to their vehicles without permission. Chelsea's policy is therefore based upon possession rather than observed use. Except during the brief and direct process of checking a device into the designated storage location or retrieving it while departing campus, or under one of the narrow authorized-driver exceptions expressly stated below, a prohibited personal device may not remain on a student's person, in the student's belongings, in a vehicle, or elsewhere under the student's control. The centralized check-in system provides a clear, consistent, and verifiable standard. It removes ambiguity, protects students from social pressure, allows teachers to focus on teaching rather than device surveillance, and ensures that every student receives the full benefit of Chelsea's minimal-technology environment.

III. Governing Rule

Students may not possess or use prohibited personal devices outside the school's designated secure storage location while this policy is in effect. The prohibition applies regardless of whether a device is:

- Powered on or off;
- Silenced;
- Placed in airplane mode;
- Concealed;
- Damaged or temporarily inoperable; or
- Actively being used. The unauthorized possession of a prohibited device constitutes a violation even when no evidence of active use exists.

IV. Scope of the Policy

For purposes of this policy, the school day begins immediately when a student arrives on Chelsea Academy property and continues until the student departs school property at the conclusion of the academic day or the student's final school-sponsored activity. The policy applies during:

- Classes and study halls;
- Convocation, assemblies, and school liturgies;
- Lunch, recess, breaks, and passing periods;
- Detention, tutoring, and academic support;
- Athletic practices, competitions, and team gatherings held on campus;
- Clubs, rehearsals, performances, and extracurricular activities;
- Before-school and after-school supervision;
- Field trips, retreats, competitions, and other school-sponsored off-campus activities, unless the Administration establishes a different written procedure;
- Evening and weekend activities in which a student is participating under school supervision; and
- Any other period during which a student remains under the authority or supervision of Chelsea Academy.

For evening or weekend events attended by students and their families, the Administration may establish an event-specific check-in procedure. When no check-in location is provided, students should not bring personal devices. A device brought by a family must remain in the possession of the student's parent or guardian and

may not be carried or used by the student. Students participating in school-sponsored activities away from campus must follow the directions established by the Administration, trip leader, coach, or activity supervisor. Unless students receive express permission otherwise, this policy remains in effect throughout the activity and during school-provided transportation.

IV-A. Athletic Procedures and Authorized-Driver Exceptions

The detailed procedures in the Athletics section of this handbook are part of this policy. Devices brought to an on-campus practice or away competition must remain in designated secure storage or be surrendered directly to the responsible coach. Coaches, rather than students, provide parents with ordinary scheduling, departure, return, pickup, and delay information through Remind or another reliable school-approved communication system.

The sole athletic-travel exception is for an authorized senior student who independently drives to or from an away competition. The driver, and only the driver, may possess a phone for GPS navigation and necessary communication concerning a breakdown, accident, significant delay, route change, or comparable travel need. Passengers receive no exception, and the exception does not authorize ordinary device use before, during, or after the competition.

At a home after-school competition or comparable event held after the school's normal secure collection procedure has ended, an authorized student who drives independently may leave a powered-off phone locked out of sight in the vehicle. The phone may not be brought into the venue, carried elsewhere on campus, or used while the student remains on school property. This narrow after-hours exception does not alter the school-day rule: a student may never leave a phone in a vehicle to avoid the normal check-in procedure.

V. Prohibited Personal Devices

Prohibited personal devices include, but are not limited to:

- Cell phones and smartphones;
- Smartwatches;
- Wearable devices capable of communication, internet access, photography, recording, messaging, notifications, or digital entertainment;
- Tablets and personal computers;
- Electronic readers;
- Music players;
- Handheld gaming systems and electronic games;
- Personal cameras;
- Audio or video recording devices;
- Wireless earbuds and electronic headphones;
- Personal internet hotspots;
- Virtual-reality or augmented-reality devices; and
- Any other personal device capable of electronic communication, internet access, photography, recording, entertainment, or digital data storage.

The Administration retains final authority to determine whether a particular item falls within the scope of this policy. Ordinary non-electronic watches are permitted.

VI. Annual Registration and Family Acknowledgment

Any family whose child may bring a prohibited personal device to school must register the device with the Main Office before it is brought onto campus. The student and at least one parent or guardian must sign Chelsea Academy's annual Student Technology and Device Acknowledgment. Their signatures confirm that they have read, understood, and agreed to follow:

- The total device ban;
- The mandatory check-in and check-out procedures;
- The prohibition against leaving devices in vehicles, backpacks, lockers, or other personal belongings, except under a narrow authorized-driver exception expressly stated in this policy;
- The communication procedures available during the school day; and
- The disciplinary consequences for violations.

Registration does not grant a student permission to possess or use the device during the school day. It permits the device to be brought to school solely for secure storage and later retrieval when the student departs campus.

VII. Mandatory Check-In Procedure

A student who brings a prohibited personal device to school must:

1. Power the device completely off before entering the school building; 2. Proceed immediately and directly to the designated check-in location upon arrival; and 3. Place the device in the student's assigned secure storage location.

The brief and direct movement from the student's arrival point to the designated check-in location is the only authorized period during which a student may personally possess a prohibited device on campus. A student may not first report to a classroom, locker, athletic facility, gathering area, or any other part of campus. Students arriving late must check in their devices before reporting to class or another school activity.

Students may not leave prohibited devices in:

- Vehicles;
- Backpacks;
- Lockers;
- Desks;
- Classrooms;
- Athletic bags;
- Coat pockets;
- Clothing;
- Restrooms;
- Offices other than the designated storage area; or
- Any other personal or concealed location.

During the school day, student drivers are specifically prohibited from leaving devices in vehicles parked on campus. After parking, a student driver must bring the powered-off device directly to the designated check-in location. Devices will be kept in a centralized, secured location under the supervision of designated school personnel. The after-hours spectator exception and the senior athletic-travel exception do not permit a student to avoid this school-day requirement.

VIII. Device Retrieval and Departure

Students may retrieve their devices only when they are preparing to leave Chelsea Academy property for the day. Students who remain on campus for athletics, rehearsals, clubs, tutoring, detention, meetings, or other activities may not retrieve their devices at the conclusion of the academic day. Their devices must remain secured until they are departing school property after their final activity. Students leaving early through an authorized dismissal may retrieve their devices from the Main Office as part of the dismissal process. When an authorized senior driver departs independently for an away competition, the device may be released directly under the coach's supervision solely for the travel purpose described in this policy.

Once a device has been returned, the student must depart campus promptly. The student may not power on or use the device while remaining on Chelsea Academy property, including in:

- School buildings;
- Parking areas;
- Athletic fields;
- Outdoor gathering areas; or
- Vehicles parked on campus.

A student driver may place the powered-off device in the vehicle before departing but may not use the device while driving or before leaving school property. An authorized senior driver traveling independently to an away competition may, while safely stopped and under the coach's direction, activate GPS navigation immediately before departure and may use the phone only for navigation or a necessary travel-related communication.

IX. Communication During the School Day

Parents and guardians who need to contact a student must call the Chelsea Academy Main Office. School personnel will relay messages or arrange for the student to speak with the parent or guardian when appropriate. Students who need to contact a parent or guardian must request assistance from a teacher, administrator, coach, or Main Office staff member. Necessary communication will take place through:

- A school telephone;
- A school-owned device;
- An administrator's office; or
- Another method specifically authorized and supervised by school personnel.

Parents are expected not to call, text, message, track, or otherwise attempt to communicate with students through personal devices while students are under Chelsea's supervision. The fact that a parent has called, texted, or instructed a student to use a device does not excuse a violation of this policy.

X. Communication During Emergencies

During an emergency, Chelsea Academy will direct communication in accordance with its emergency procedures. Centralized communication allows the school to:

- Provide accurate and verified information;
- Prevent the spread of rumors or conflicting instructions;
- Maintain clear lines of authority;
- Account for students;
- Avoid overwhelming emergency communication systems; and
- Ensure that students remain attentive to directions from faculty, staff, and first responders.

Students may not retrieve or use personal devices during an emergency unless specifically instructed to do so by the Administration. Parents should not attempt to bypass the school's emergency communication procedures by contacting students directly or directing them to leave supervised areas.

XI. School-Owned or School-Authorized Technology

This policy does not prohibit the limited use of technology that is owned, issued, or specifically authorized by Chelsea Academy for an educational, medical, safety, or administrative purpose. Students may use school-authorized technology only:

- Under the direction of a faculty or staff member;
- For the specific purpose assigned;
- During the period for which authorization was given; and
- In accordance with all other school policies.

Permission to use school-owned technology does not create permission to possess or use a personal device.

XII. Policy Violations

A violation occurs whenever a student:

- Possesses a prohibited device outside the designated secure storage location;
- Fails to check in a device immediately upon arrival;
- Leaves or conceals a device in a vehicle, backpack, locker, classroom, athletic bag, clothing, or other location;
- Wears or possesses a prohibited smartwatch or wearable device;
- Possesses wireless earbuds or another prohibited electronic accessory;
- Retrieves a device without authorization;
- Powers on or uses a device before leaving school property;
- Uses a device during a school-sponsored off-campus activity without authorization;
- Refuses, delays, or resists a directive to surrender a device;
- Provides false or misleading information regarding the possession or location of a device;
- Attempts to evade or circumvent the check-in system;
- Uses another student's device;
- Stores a device for another student;
- Assists another student in violating the policy; or
- Violates the terms of an approved exception.

The school is not required to establish that a student was actively using the device. Unauthorized possession alone constitutes a violation.

XIII. Confiscation

A prohibited device discovered outside the designated storage location will be confiscated immediately. Students must surrender devices promptly and without argument when directed by a faculty or staff member. Refusal, delay, concealment, or other interference will be treated as an additional act of insubordination and may result in more serious disciplinary consequences. Confiscated devices will be secured by the Main Office or Administration. They will not be returned directly to the student. A device will be released only to a parent or guardian at a time and under conditions determined by the Administration.

XIV. Disciplinary Consequences

Violations of this policy are serious disciplinary matters because they directly undermine Chelsea Academy's academic environment, safety expectations, formative mission, and culture of trust. The following are the ordinary and presumptive consequences for unauthorized possession. The Administration retains discretion to impose more serious consequences when aggravating circumstances exist.

First Offense: The device will be confiscated immediately. The student will ordinarily receive a one-day out-of-school suspension. The device will be released only to a parent or guardian at a time determined by the Administration. **Second Offense**: The device will be confiscated immediately. The student will ordinarily receive a three-day out-of-school suspension. The device will be released only to a parent or guardian during a mandatory reentry meeting with the Headmaster, Assistant Headmistress, or their designee. **Third or Subsequent Offense**: A third or subsequent violation will result in a formal disciplinary review. Consequences may include:

- An extended suspension;
- Loss of extracurricular or athletic privileges;
- Disciplinary probation;
- A final behavioral agreement; or
- Expulsion from Chelsea Academy.

A student's disagreement with the policy, a parent's instruction to retain or use a device, concern about missing a message, or desire to coordinate transportation does **not** constitute an extraordinary circumstance.

XV. Aggravated Misuse

Certain conduct involving a personal device constitutes a more serious offense and is not limited to the graduated consequence structure above. Depending upon the circumstances, the Administration may proceed immediately to an extended suspension, disciplinary probation, or expulsion. Aggravated misuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Photographing, filming, or recording another person without authorization;
- Using a device in a restroom, locker room, changing area, or other private location;
- Creating, possessing, accessing, requesting, or distributing obscene, indecent, sexually explicit, violent, or otherwise harmful material;
- Cyberbullying;
- Harassment, intimidation, impersonation, or threats;
- Academic dishonesty;
- Unauthorized access to academic materials, accounts, networks, or records;
- Distributing photographs, recordings, messages, or information involving students, employees, or school activities without permission;
- Tampering with the school's storage system;
- Taking, accessing, damaging, or interfering with another student's device;
- Using a device to interfere with school operations or emergency procedures;
- Refusing to surrender a device;
- Attempting to conceal or destroy evidence of misconduct; or
- Using a device in any manner that threatens the safety, dignity, privacy, or reputation of another person or of Chelsea Academy.

Conduct that may violate civil or criminal law may be reported to law enforcement, child-protection authorities, or other appropriate agencies.

XVI. Shared Responsibility

Chelsea Academy's minimal-technology environment can succeed only through a genuine partnership among students, parents, faculty, and staff. Students are expected to comply honestly and promptly with the check-in system. Parents are expected to support the policy, use the Main Office for necessary communication, and refrain from encouraging or assisting students in circumventing school procedures.

Faculty and staff are expected to enforce the policy consistently and to avoid creating informal exceptions. Coaches, trip leaders, volunteers, and activity supervisors must follow the procedures established by the Administration while students are under their supervision. Coaches are responsible for timely communication with the Athletic Director and with parents regarding practice and game schedules, departures, returns, pickup times, and significant changes or delays; student phones are not a substitute for this adult responsibility. This policy is not intended merely to remove an inconvenience from the classroom. It protects something increasingly rare and deeply valuable: a school culture in which young people can give their full attention to truth, develop habits of self-command, encounter one another personally, and participate fully in the intellectual, spiritual, relational, and communal life of Chelsea Academy.

XVII. Controlling Authority

This policy supersedes all previous Chelsea Academy handbook language, notices, protocols, or informal practices concerning:

- Cell phones;
- Smartphones;
- Smartwatches;
- Personal computers;
- Electronic entertainment devices;
- Personal recording devices; and
- Other student-owned technology. Where another school policy addresses a related subject, this policy controls with respect to the possession, storage, retrieval, and use of personal electronic devices. The procedures and narrow authorized-driver exceptions stated in the Athletics section are expressly incorporated into this policy and do not create broader exceptions. The Headmaster retains final authority to interpret and administer this policy and may establish additional procedures necessary to protect its purpose and consistent enforcement.

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Dress Code and Personal Appearance

Amended November 13, 2026

Chelsea Academy's uniform and dress standards are intended to foster an orderly, respectful, and academically serious environment. They also reflect the dignity of each student and the school's Catholic identity. Students are expected to present themselves with modesty, neatness, and good judgment at all times. Students must wear the prescribed school uniform each day unless the Administration has expressly authorized a different dress code. Uniform items must conform to the styles and specifications approved by Chelsea Academy and are available through Flynn & O'Hara or Lands' End.

For certain field trips, athletic events, performances, after-school activities, or special occasions, the school may establish an alternative dress code. That dress code will be communicated in advance. Students and parents are responsible for reviewing and following the requirements for each event. When no alternative dress code has been announced, students must follow either the regular school uniform requirements or the Activities Dress Code, as directed by the Administration.

Clothing must **always** be clean, properly fitted, in good condition, and worn as intended. The Administration retains final authority to determine whether a student's clothing, footwear, grooming, or overall appearance complies with the letter and spirit of Chelsea Academy's standards.

Purpose and General Expectations

Chelsea Academy's uniform policy is an integral part of its educational philosophy and commitment to forming young men and women in the virtues of modesty, self-discipline, responsibility, and respect for others.

The school uniform establishes a common standard of appearance, promotes an orderly academic environment, and encourages students to approach their daily responsibilities with seriousness and dignity.

Compliance with the prescribed uniform is mandatory throughout the school day, including Convocation, instructional periods, study halls, lunch, clubs, House activities, and other school functions for which the regular uniform is required.

All students are expected to arrive at school in the complete and properly worn uniform and to maintain that standard until dismissal. A student's grade level, the particular classroom attended, or the absence of an immediate correction by a faculty member does not constitute an exemption from these requirements.

Spirit Days and Dress-Down Days

Amended November 13, 2026

Spirit Days and Dress-Down Days are privileges expressly authorized by the Administration and do not constitute a general suspension of the school's standards governing modesty, appearance, or conduct. Unless otherwise specified in a written announcement issued by the Administration, the following requirements shall apply to all designated Spirit Days and Dress-Down Days.

Shirts and Sweatshirts

Shirts and sweatshirts must be modest, properly fitted, neat and in good condition. Students may wear:

- Chelsea Academy apparel clearly identifying the school by name.
- Official Chelsea Academy House shirts.
- Other specific garments expressly approved in writing by the Administration for the designated occasion.

The presence of an unrelated logo, graphic, emblem, or generic school-themed design does not, by itself, qualify an item as approved Chelsea Academy apparel.

Clothing featuring television programs, movies, celebrities, political campaigns, controversial messages, inappropriate language, or images inconsistent with Chelsea's Catholic mission is not permitted. Tank tops, sleeveless shirts, crop tops, low-cut tops, sheer clothing, and clothing that exposes the midriff are not permitted.

Pants

Students must wear plain blue denim jeans. Jeans must be clean, appropriately fitted, and free from rips, tears, holes, or excessive distressing. Leggings, jeggings, athletic pants, sweatpants, lounge pants, pajama bottoms, shorts, and other substitutes for blue denim jeans are not permitted unless expressly authorized in the written announcement for a particular event. Pants may not be excessively tight, sagging, or otherwise improperly fitted.

General Requirements

All clothing must be modest, appropriate for an educational environment, and consistent with the standards of conduct and appearance expected of Chelsea Academy students. A student who does not wish to participate in an authorized Spirit Day or Dress-Down Day may wear the complete regular school uniform.

The Administration retains the authority to establish additional requirements or approve specific exceptions for particular events. Such exceptions must be communicated in advance and do not establish a general precedent for subsequent occasions.

Footwear

Students may wear casual shoes, boots, or athletic shoes. Footwear must be safe, appropriate for the day's activities, and in good condition. Slippers or footwear resembling bedroom shoes are not permitted.

Activities Dress Code

Students attending Chelsea-sponsored activities for which no specific uniform or dress code has been announced must follow the Activities Dress Code. This includes, but is not limited to, athletic competitions, performances, dances, social events, service activities, and other school-sponsored gatherings. Clothing must be modest, neat, and appropriate for a Catholic school community. In particular:

- Clothing may not be excessively short, tight, low-cut, sheer, revealing, torn, or distressed;
- Shirts must cover the shoulders, chest, back, and midriff appropriately;
- Undergarments may not be visible;
- Leggings, jeggings, or similarly form-fitting pants may not be worn as outerwear;
- Clothing may not display inappropriate words, images, slogans, or messages contrary to Chelsea Academy's mission;
- Sleepwear, lounge clothing, and slippers are not permitted; and
- Footwear must be appropriate and safe for the activity.

Students whose clothing does not comply may be required to change, contact a parent or guardian for appropriate clothing, or leave the activity. Repeated or deliberate violations may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

Boys K-8 Dress Code

Fall and Spring Uniform

- Gray dress pants or gray chino-style pants;
- Navy short-sleeve polo shirt with the Chelsea Academy logo (FOH or LE);
- Black or brown leather belt, required for Grades 3–8 and optional for Kindergarten–Grade 2; and
- Dark-colored dress or crew socks. White socks are not permitted.

Winter Uniform

- Gray dress pants or gray chino-style pants;
- White long-sleeve Oxford cloth button-down shirt (FOH or LE);
- Navy V-neck sweater vest with the Chelsea Academy logo **or** navy V-neck long-sleeve sweater with the Chelsea Academy logo (FOH or LE);
- Maroon-and-navy striped necktie (FOH or LE);

- Black or brown leather belt, required for Grades 3–8 and optional for Kindergarten–Grade 2; and
- Dark-colored dress or crew socks. White socks are not permitted.
- A navy full-zip fleece with the Chelsea Academy logo may be worn as an optional outer layer, but it does not replace the required sweater or sweater vest.

Boys 9-12 Dress Code

Fall and Spring Uniform

- Gray dress pants. Pants with jean-style stitching or more than four pockets are not permitted;
- Navy short-sleeve polo shirt with the Chelsea Academy logo (FOH or LE);
- Black or brown leather belt; and
- Dark-colored dress or crew socks. White socks are not permitted.

Winter Uniform

- Gray dress pants. Pants with jean-style stitching or more than four pockets are not permitted;
- White long-sleeve Oxford cloth button-down shirt;
- Navy two-button sport coat or blazer (FOH or LE);
- Maroon-and-navy striped necktie (FOH or LE);
- Black or brown leather belt; and
- Dark-colored dress or crew socks. White socks are not permitted.
- A navy full-zip fleece with the Chelsea Academy logo may be worn as an optional outer layer, but it does not replace the required sweater or sweater vest.

Winter Uniform: Boys - All Grades

Amended November 13, 2026

During the designated winter uniform period, boys must wear the prescribed white, collared, button-down shirt and all other required uniform components.

Where a necktie is required, the shirt's top collar button must be fastened, and the tie must be properly secured and positioned at the collar. The wearing of an unfastened top button, loosened necktie, or otherwise incomplete winter uniform constitutes a dress code violation.

Uniform Compliance and Enforcement - All Students

Compliance with the uniform policy is an individual responsibility shared by students and their parents or guardians. Faculty and staff are responsible for enforcing these standards consistently across all grade levels, classrooms, and school activities.

Confirmed violations of the mandatory uniform requirements, following communication of these amendments, will ordinarily result in an in-school detention. Immediate correction of a violation does not automatically eliminate the disciplinary consequence.

The Administration may authorize an exception where justified by documented medical needs, disability-related accommodations, religious requirements, or circumstances genuinely beyond the student's control, consistent with applicable law and school policy.

Uniform enforcement shall be conducted professionally and discreetly, with appropriate respect for each student's dignity and privacy.

Girls K-5 Uniform Dress Code

Fall and Spring Uniform

- Gray jumper with the Chelsea Academy logo (LE);
- Plain white polo shirt or white blouse with a Peter Pan or pointed collar, worn under the jumper; and
- Navy or white crew socks or knee socks. Ankle socks are not permitted.

Winter Uniform

- Gray jumper with the Chelsea Academy logo (LE);
- White long-sleeve button-down collared blouse;
- Navy cardigan sweater with the Chelsea Academy logo (FOH or LE); and
- Navy or white ribbed tights, opaque tights, knee socks, or crew socks. Ankle socks may not be worn.
- A navy full-zip fleece with the Chelsea Academy logo may be worn as an optional outer layer, but it does not replace the required cardigan.

Girls' Uniform: Grades 6–12

Fall and Spring Uniform

- Red-and-navy kilt (FOH) or gray A-line skirt (LE);
- Navy short-sleeve polo shirt with the Chelsea Academy logo (FOH or LE); and
- Navy or white crew socks or knee socks. Ankle socks may not be worn.

Winter Uniform

- Red-and-navy kilt (FOH) or gray A-line skirt (LE);
- White long-sleeve button-down collared blouse;
- Navy cardigan sweater with the Chelsea Academy logo (FOH or LE); and
- Navy or white ribbed tights, opaque tights, knee socks, or crew socks. Ankle socks may not be worn.
- A navy full-zip fleece with the Chelsea Academy logo may be worn as an optional outer layer, but it does not replace the required cardigan.

Winter Uniform: Girls - All Grades *(Amended November 13, 2026)*

During the designated winter uniform period, girls must wear the prescribed white, collared, button-down shirt, together with the other required uniform components. The following standards apply:

- Where a shirt has a top collar button, that button alone may remain unfastened. All remaining buttons must be securely fastened.
- Where a shirt does not have a separate top collar button, all available buttons must remain fastened.
- Shirts must be worn neatly and in the manner prescribed by the school's uniform requirements.
- These requirements remain in effect throughout the school day.

Socks and Hosiery

All socks and hosiery must comply with the colors, lengths, and styles specified in the applicable uniform requirements.

Chelsea Academy Uniform Shopping Guide

Chelsea Academy's school code with Flynn O'Hara is VA-266
its code with Lands End is VA-266 .
The gray pants, gray jumper, kilt, navy polos, sweaters, blazer, and ties are required to be purchased from those stores.

Girls Grades K-5



Girls Grades 6-12



Boys Grades K-8



Boys Grades 9-12



PE Uniforms (Grades 4-7)

T-Shirts: Plain/solid colored or Chelsea t-shirt

Bottoms: Athletic shorts or sweatpants that are modest in fit and length.

Footwear: Athletic sneakers with laces or velcro

Grades K-3 do not change for PE but do need a pair of athletic shoes to keep at school.

Chelsea Fleece



May not replace the winter sweaters or blazers

Fleece Jacket with Logo

Shoes



CHELSEA ACADEMY



P.E. Uniform

Chelsea Academy's physical education attire is intended to promote modesty, order, preparedness, school unity, and freedom of movement during physical activity. Students are expected to arrive properly equipped for P.E. and to maintain the same standards of neatness and appropriateness that apply throughout the school day.

Kindergarten–Grade 3

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 do not change clothes for physical education and will participate in their regular school uniforms. Each student must keep or bring a pair of sturdy athletic shoes suitable for running, games, and other physical activity. Fashion sneakers, sandals, boots, slippers, and other footwear not designed for athletic use are not appropriate for P.E.

Grades 4–7

Chelsea Academy has introduced an official P.E. uniform for students in Grades 4–7. The uniform consists of a Chelsea Academy athletic shirt and shorts and is designed to provide students with modest, durable, and consistent clothing for physical education. The 2026–2027 academic year will serve as a transition year. Students in Grades 4–7 are strongly encouraged to purchase and wear the official Chelsea Academy P.E. uniform. The complete uniform set is available for $25 through the school's designated uniform sales and ordering process.

Beginning with the 2027–2028 academic year, the official Chelsea Academy P.E. uniform will be required for all students in Grades 4–7. During the 2026–2027 transition year, students who do not yet have the official P.E. uniform must wear:

- A modest athletic T-shirt;
- Athletic shorts or sweatpants; and
- Sturdy athletic shoes.

Chelsea Academy shirts or plain, solid-colored athletic shirts are strongly preferred. Tank tops, sleeveless shirts, crop tops, leggings, excessively tight clothing, short or revealing athletic shorts, pajama-style clothing, and clothing displaying inappropriate words, images, slogans, or messages are **not** permitted. Athletic attire must be clean, in good condition, properly fitted, and appropriate for vigorous physical activity. Undergarments and the midriff may not be visible.

General Expectations

Students are responsible for bringing the required P.E. attire and athletic shoes on scheduled physical education days. Failure to bring appropriate clothing or footwear may prevent a student from participating and may affect the student's participation grade. P.E. clothing may be worn only during physical education or when specifically authorized by the Administration. Students must change back into the regular school uniform promptly following class unless otherwise directed. The Administration and physical education faculty retain final authority to determine whether athletic clothing and footwear comply with Chelsea Academy's standards of modesty, safety, and appropriateness.

Shoes

Students must wear black, brown, or gray dress shoes with the school uniform. Shoes must be closed-toe, flat or low-heeled, and appropriate for formal school attire. Acceptable styles include bucks, loafers, and docksiders. Athletic shoes, boots, and casual fabric shoes, including styles such as Hey Dudes and Vans, are not permitted with the school uniform. Shoes with a distinctly athletic or sneaker-style appearance or sole are likewise not permitted. Sturdy athletic shoes designed for running and physical activity must be worn for physical education classes and athletic practices.

Kilts and Jumpers

Kilts and jumpers must reach the kneecap when the student is standing and may extend no more than two inches below the knee. They must be worn at the proper waist and may not be rolled, folded, or otherwise altered to shorten their length.

Outerwear

Students may wear weather-appropriate coats and other outerwear while outdoors. Upon entering the school building, all non-approved outerwear must be removed. Coats, jackets, hoodies, sweatshirts, and other non-uniform apparel may **not** be worn inside the building. Wearing non-Chelsea-approved apparel indoors will ordinarily result in detention. Repeated or deliberate violations may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

The approved Chelsea Academy full-zip fleece may be worn indoors as an additional outer layer. It does not replace any required uniform item, including a sweater, cardigan, sweater vest, sport coat, or blazer. Chelsea Academy-approved varsity jackets may be worn only on game days designated by the Administration or Athletic Department. Varsity jackets may **not** be worn as everyday uniform apparel or in place of any required uniform item.

Grooming and Personal Appearance

Students must maintain standards of grooming and personal appearance consistent with Chelsea Academy's expectations of modesty, neatness, and respect for the school community. Hair must be clean, neat, and limited to naturally occurring hair colors. Extreme, distracting, or otherwise inappropriate hairstyles are not permitted. Boys' hair must be neatly trimmed, remain above the collar, and be kept off the ears and out of the eyes. Boys must be clean-shaven and may not wear jewelry. Girls' jewelry, makeup, and accessories must be modest and discreet. The Administration retains final authority to determine whether a student's grooming or personal appearance complies with Chelsea Academy's standards.

Athletic Practice Attire

Students participating in athletic practices must wear modest and appropriate athletic clothing, including an athletic shirt and athletic shorts or pants. Tank tops, crop tops, leggings worn as pants, excessively short or tight clothing, and clothing displaying inappropriate words, images, or messages are not permitted. The midriff and undergarments must remain fully covered. Athletic attire must be clean, properly fitted, in good condition, and suitable for the activity. Sturdy athletic shoes must be worn.

Dress-Code Enforcement *(Amended November 13, 2026)*

Students are expected to arrive at school and school-sponsored activities in full compliance with the applicable dress code. When a violation can be corrected immediately, the student will be directed to do so. Depending upon the nature of the violation, a student may be required to remove an unapproved item, obtain appropriate clothing from home, or refrain from participating in an activity until properly dressed. Confirmed violations of mandatory uniform requirements will ordinarily result in an in-school detention, subject to the exceptions and safeguards under Uniform Compliance and Enforcement. Repeated, deliberate, or defiant violations of the uniform, grooming, or dress-code requirements may result in additional disciplinary action.

Emergency Procedures

Chelsea Academy works with qualified professionals and local public-safety officials to develop and maintain appropriate procedures for fires, severe weather, lockdowns, evacuations, medical emergencies, and other situations affecting the safety of the school community. Emergency policies and protocols are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary. Faculty and staff receive annual instruction and training in these procedures, and students participate in required safety drills throughout the school year. During any emergency or drill, students must remain calm, follow all instructions immediately, and refrain from any action that could interfere with the school's response.

Campus Cleanliness and Gum

Students share responsibility for maintaining a clean, orderly, and attractive campus. They are expected to dispose of their own trash properly, care for school property, and assist in keeping classrooms, hallways, athletic areas, and outdoor spaces tidy. Chewing gum is **not** permitted **anywhere** on Chelsea Academy property or at school-sponsored activities.

Building Use and Age-Designated Areas

Chelsea Academy's building is organized into age-appropriate areas to support student safety, proper supervision, and suitable interaction among students. Certain classrooms, hallways, gathering areas, and restrooms are designated for particular grade levels or groups. These designations include Lower School boys' and girls' restrooms, student restrooms assigned by age or school division, and faculty-only restrooms and workspaces. Students, parents, visitors, and volunteers must observe all posted room and restroom designations. Students may not enter faculty-only areas or areas assigned to another school division without

permission from a faculty or staff member. The Administration may establish or revise building-use assignments as necessary for safety, supervision, privacy, and orderly school operations.

Lockers and Student Storage

Students in Grades 6–12 are assigned lockers for the storage of books, binders, school supplies, and personal belongings. Students in Kindergarten–Grade 5 use the cubbies, hooks, and other storage areas provided in their classrooms. Lunches, coats, backpacks, athletic clothing, and other belongings must be stored neatly in the areas designated by the school. Hallways, stairways, doorways, and other common areas must remain clear. Lockers, cubbies, desks, and other school-provided storage areas remain the property of Chelsea Academy. Students should not expect privacy in these spaces. The Administration reserves the right to inspect any school-provided storage area when it reasonably determines that an inspection is necessary to protect the safety, health, welfare, property, or orderly operation of the school community.

Students may not place locks on lockers or other school storage areas unless the lock has been provided or expressly approved by the Administration. Students are responsible for keeping their assigned spaces clean and may not store prohibited, dangerous, perishable, or inappropriate items. To reiterate, personal electronic devices may not be stored in lockers, cubbies, backpacks, athletic bags, or other student storage areas and must be handled in accordance with Chelsea Academy's Personal Technology and Device Policy.

Lunch

Chelsea Academy provides designated dining areas under adult supervision. Students should bring a packed lunch unless they have ordered an available school lunch option. Hot lunches, pizza, or other meal options may be offered periodically. Ordering instructions, deadlines, and payment information will be communicated to families through the school's approved online forms or other designated system. Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately during lunch and to contribute to an orderly and pleasant dining environment. Each student is responsible for disposing of trash, cleaning spills, returning the eating area to good order, and following the directions of supervising adults. Food and beverages may be consumed only in approved areas unless permission has been granted by a faculty or staff member.

Student Health, Medication, and Medical Needs

Parents and guardians must inform the Main Office of any medical condition, allergy, prescription, emergency medication, or other health need that may affect their child during the school day or at a school-sponsored activity. Parents are responsible for providing the school with accurate and current medical information, emergency contact information, and any required health-care or emergency action plan.

Medication Authorization

Chelsea Academy will administer or supervise medication only in accordance with school procedures, written authorization, appropriate medical instructions, and applicable law. A student who requires prescription medication during the school day must have the required authorization on file. The school may require written authorization from both the student's parent or guardian and a licensed health-care provider or prescriber. Medication must:

- Be delivered to the Main Office by a parent or guardian unless another arrangement has been approved;
- Be provided in its original, properly labeled container;
- Include the student's name, medication name, dosage, and administration instructions; and
- Remain secured in the location designated by the school. Students may not share medication or carry medication on their person, in a backpack, locker, vehicle, or other personal storage area unless the Administration has approved a documented exception.

Emergency and Self-Carried Medication

A student who requires immediate access to an inhaler, epinephrine auto-injector, glucagon, seizure-rescue medication, or another emergency medication may be permitted to possess or self-administer that medication when the school has received the required written authorizations and has approved an appropriate individual health or emergency action plan. Emergency epinephrine or other authorized emergency medication may be administered by trained personnel in accordance with school procedures.

Over-the-Counter Medication

Chelsea Academy does not routinely provide or administer over-the-counter medication without prior written authorization and compliance with the school's medication procedures. Parents should contact the Main Office to obtain the required forms and discuss any continuing or specialized medical needs. Medication authorizations and health plans must be renewed or updated as required by the school.

School Closures, Delays, and Early Dismissals

Severe weather, hazardous driving conditions, utility failures, facility problems, or other emergencies may require Chelsea Academy to close, delay opening, dismiss early, or modify normal school operations. The Administration has sole authority to make these decisions based upon the conditions affecting Chelsea Academy and its families. The school's decision may differ from those of surrounding public-school systems. When a closure or delayed opening is necessary, the school will notify families through its official communication channels, which may include email, text alert, telephone recording, and the school website. Whenever reasonably possible, morning announcements will be issued by 6:00 a.m. Families should rely upon official Chelsea Academy communications rather than assuming that the school will follow another school system's decision. If deteriorating weather or another emergency requires an early dismissal, parents and guardians will be notified as promptly as possible. Families are responsible for maintaining current contact information and arranging for the timely transportation or supervision of their children.

Telephone Calls and Messages

Chelsea Academy's Main Office serves as the primary point of communication between parents and students during the school day. Parents who need to contact a student should call the Main Office. Urgent messages will be relayed promptly. Nonurgent messages will be delivered when reasonably practicable and in a manner that minimizes disruption to instruction. Requests to remove a student from class for a telephone call should be limited to genuine emergencies or other significant and time-sensitive circumstances. Locating a student and bringing the student to the office interrupts both classroom instruction and office operations. A student who needs to contact a parent or guardian must first receive permission from a faculty or staff member. The student may use a school telephone when a significant reason exists. Students and parents may not use personal electronic devices to bypass these procedures. All personal communication during the school day remains governed by Chelsea Academy's Personal Technology and Device Policy.

Visitors and Campus Access

All visitors, including parents, family members, volunteers, vendors, and guests, must enter the school through the main entrance at Doorway A unless the Administration has provided different instructions for a particular event. Upon entering, visitors must:

1. Report directly to the Receptionist or Main Office; 2. Sign in; 3. State the purpose of the visit; 4. Receive permission before proceeding beyond the reception area; and 5. Obtain and visibly wear a visitor badge for the duration of the visit.

Visitors must remain in approved areas and follow all directions given by school personnel. Upon completing the visit, visitors must return to the reception area, sign out, and return the visitor badge. Parents and visitors

may not proceed directly to classrooms, offices, athletic facilities, or other student areas without authorization. These procedures apply even when the visitor is known to school personnel and are necessary to preserve student safety, accountability, and an orderly academic environment. The Administration may deny, limit, or terminate a visit when necessary to protect students, preserve school operations, or enforce Chelsea Academy policies.

Christian Anthropology, Biological Sex, and Gender Dysphoria

Chelsea Academy joyfully affirms the goodness and dignity of every human person, created by God in His image and likeness. Catholic teaching recognizes the human person as a unity of body and soul. The body is not separate from personal identity but is an essential gift through which the person is known and called to love. Every person is created male or female, and biological sex is a fundamental and unchangeable aspect of the person as created by God.

Chelsea Academy also recognizes that some individuals may experience distress, confusion, or conflict concerning their biological sex. Every person must be treated with charity, compassion, sensitivity, patience, and respect. Genuine compassion, however, cannot require the school to affirm an understanding of the human person that is inconsistent with biological reality, right reason, or the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Chelsea Academy adopts and follows the teaching set forth in Bishop Michael F. Burbidge's A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Ideology and the Diocese of Arlington's Policy for Schools and Ministries Related to the Human Person and Gender Ideology, which are incorporated into this handbook by reference and included or identified in the Appendix.

Accordingly, the following standards apply.

A. School Policies and Student Life

Chelsea Academy will recognize and respect each person according to his or her God-given biological sex. School policies, records, forms, names and forms of address, pronouns, uniforms, grooming standards, restroom and changing-facility assignments, athletic participation, rooming arrangements, and other sex-specific practices will be administered according to biological sex.

The school will not facilitate, endorse, or require conduct that presents a person as a sex different from his or her biological sex.

B. Faculty, Staff, Volunteers, and Representatives

Faculty, staff members, administrators, employees, coaches, and volunteers must conduct and present themselves in a manner consistent with their God-given biological sex and with Catholic teaching. This expectation includes, but is not limited to:

- Dress and uniform requirements;
- Hairstyles and grooming;
- Jewelry, makeup, and accessories;
- Names, titles, and pronouns; and
- Conduct in school, ministry, and public-facing settings connected with Chelsea Academy.

Employees and volunteers must communicate and enforce this policy consistently and may not independently create exceptions.

C. Students

Students must follow the uniform, grooming, facility, athletic, and conduct requirements assigned to their biological sex. Students will be addressed by names, nicknames, titles, and pronouns consistent with their

biological sex. School records will reflect the student's biological sex unless a correction is required to remedy a factual recording error. Students may not engage in conduct, dress, presentation, or advocacy at school or during school-sponsored activities that deliberately contradicts or undermines Chelsea Academy's teaching concerning the human person. Questions or concerns involving a particular student will be handled privately, pastorally, and with appropriate regard for the student's dignity and the legitimate role of the student's parents or guardians.

D. Athletics and Sex-Specific Competition

Chelsea Academy recognizes the legitimate and important distinctions between male and female students in athletics. Sex specific athletic competition protects fairness, safety, privacy, and the dignity of every student while respecting the biological reality of the human person. Accordingly:

- Male students may participate only on boys' teams, and female students may participate only on girls' teams;
- Chelsea Academy will not field coeducational teams in sports ordinarily organized by sex;
- Boys' teams will compete only against boys' teams composed of biological males;
- Girls' teams will compete only against girls' teams composed of biological females; and
- Chelsea students will not be required to compete directly against members of the opposite biological sex in any game, match, meet, tournament, scrimmage, exhibition, friendly, or other athletic contest.

These standards apply regardless of an individual athlete's asserted gender identity, designation on another school's records, or eligibility under the rules of another school, league, conference, tournament, or athletic organization. Whenever reasonably possible, the Athletic Department will review opposing-team eligibility requirements and address potential conflicts before a contest occurs. Coaches, parents, and students may not independently waive or disregard this policy.

If Chelsea Academy learns that an opposing team includes an athlete who is not biologically eligible for that sex-designated competition, the school will first seek an appropriate resolution consistent with this policy. Chelsea will not participate if the conflict cannot be resolved. When withdrawal, cancellation, or forfeiture is the only available means of remaining faithful to this policy, Chelsea Academy will withdraw from or forfeit the contest rather than require its students to participate.

No student, coach, or team will be disciplined by Chelsea Academy for declining to participate in a contest prohibited by this policy. Decisions concerning withdrawal or forfeiture will be made by the Headmaster or his designee in consultation with the Athletic Director. Competitions in which boys' and girls' events occur at the same venue—such as separately scored cross-country or track events—do not violate this policy merely because both sexes are present, provided that the actual events, eligibility, and results remain appropriately separated by biological sex. This policy applies to all Chelsea Academy athletic participation, including regular-season contests, postseason competition, tournaments, invitationals, scrimmages, exhibitions, friendlies, and school-sponsored recreational competition.

E. Partnership with Families

Chelsea Academy partners with parents as the primary educators of their children. Enrollment constitutes a voluntary partnership in support of the school's Catholic mission, philosophy, and standards. Parents and guardians are expected to support the school's teaching and policies concerning the human person and biological sex. At a minimum, families may not demand that Chelsea Academy act contrary to Catholic teaching or require faculty, staff, students, or volunteers to affirm language or conduct inconsistent with that teaching. Public conduct by a student or family that substantially undermines the school's Catholic identity, disrupts the school community, or prevents a workable partnership between the family and Chelsea Academy

may result in a meeting with the Administration and, when necessary, further action concerning the student's continued enrollment.

F. Pastoral Response and Administrative Authority

Concerns involving gender dysphoria or confusion regarding biological sex should be brought promptly and confidentially to the Headmaster. The school will seek to respond with truth, charity, prudence, discretion, and pastoral concern. Depending upon the circumstances, the school may consult the student's parents or guardians, appropriate clergy, diocesan authorities, qualified professionals, or legal counsel. No faculty member, staff member, coach, or volunteer may independently promise confidentiality, establish an accommodation, alter school records, or authorize an exception to this policy. The Headmaster retains final authority to interpret and administer this policy, subject to the teachings and policies of the Catholic Church and the Diocese of Arlington.

Academics

CATHOLIC LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM

Chelsea Academy offers an integrated Catholic liberal arts curriculum ordered toward the pursuit of truth and the formation of the whole person. Students are invited to engage both faith and reason as they study the permanent questions, achievements, and inheritance of Western civilization. The curriculum is designed not merely to convey information, but to cultivate intellectual discipline, sound judgment, moral imagination, eloquence, and a lifelong love of learning. Students are expected to participate fully in the prescribed program of study for their grade level. An overview of Chelsea Academy's curriculum and reading lists is available on the school website at: https://www.chelseaacademy.org/academics/curriculum.cfm

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Academic honesty is essential to Chelsea Academy's mission. The school seeks to form students who love truth, take responsibility for their own work, and demonstrate integrity even when dishonesty might appear easier or remain undiscovered. Every assignment submitted by a student must represent that student's own knowledge, reasoning, writing, and effort, except where collaboration, outside assistance, or another form of support has been expressly authorized by the teacher. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating or attempting to cheat on a quiz, test, examination, paper, project, homework assignment, or other academic work;
- Copying another student's work or permitting another student to copy one's own work;
- Giving, receiving, requesting, or communicating unauthorized assistance;
- Obtaining or distributing questions, answers, or other assessment materials without authorization;
- Completing work for another student or having another person complete one's own work;
- Submitting another person's words, ideas, reasoning, images, research, or creative work as one's own;
- Failing to identify and cite sources properly;
- Using unauthorized notes, books, websites, applications, devices, translators, calculators, or other resources;
- Reusing work previously submitted for another course or assignment without the teacher's permission;
- Fabricating or falsifying quotations, citations, sources, data, experiments, or research; and

- Misrepresenting the process by which an assignment was completed. A student who knowingly assists another student in committing academic dishonesty is subject to the same disciplinary consequences as the student who receives the assistance.

Artificial Intelligence and Automated Writing Tools

Students may **not** use artificial intelligence, automated writing systems, or similar technology to generate, complete, rewrite, translate, summarize, solve, paraphrase, or materially revise schoolwork. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized use of:

- ChatGPT and other generative artificial-intelligence systems;
- Grammarly and other automated editing or rewriting services;
- AI-assisted search, research, translation, coding, or mathematical tools;
- Automated paraphrasing or summarization programs;
- Essay generators and answer-producing websites; and
- Any other software that produces or substantively alters work submitted in the student's name.

Limited tools such as ordinary spellcheck or teacher-approved grammar assistance may be used only in accordance with the teacher's directions and Chelsea Academy's Artificial Intelligence and Academic Technology Guidelines contained in the Appendix. When authorship or academic integrity is reasonably in question, the school may require a student to explain the submitted work, identify and produce sources, provide notes or drafts, reproduce part of the work under supervision, or complete an oral or written assessment demonstrating mastery of the material.

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious disciplinary offense. At a minimum, a student found responsible for academic dishonesty will ordinarily receive a grade of zero or another failing grade on the affected assignment or assessment. The teacher will notify the Administration, and the student's parents or guardians will be informed. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident, additional consequences may include:

- Detention;
- Required completion of a replacement assignment without academic credit;
- Loss of eligibility for academic honors or awards;
- Academic or disciplinary probation;
- Suspension;
- Failure of the course; or
- Dismissal from Chelsea Academy.

Repeated offenses, organized cheating, deliberate deception, extensive plagiarism, or the use of artificial intelligence to produce substantial portions of an assignment may warrant consequences more serious than those imposed for an isolated or minor first offense. The Administration retains final authority to determine whether academic dishonesty occurred and to impose consequences appropriate to the circumstances.

Senior Thesis

The Senior Thesis is a required, stand-alone, one-half-credit course and the culminating academic achievement and intellectual experience of a Chelsea Academy education. It appears separately on the student's transcript. Its grade is not incorporated into the student's English Literature grade. It gives each senior the opportunity to investigate an intellectually significant question, conduct sustained research, develop and defend a reasoned argument, and contribute his or her own reflections to the Great Conversation of Humanity.

Senior Thesis Program: Confidentiality of Readers

Amended November 13, 2026

Appointment and Confidentiality of Thesis Readers

The appointment of readers and evaluators for the Senior Thesis Program shall be determined by the Administration or its designated academic representatives.

To preserve the independence and integrity of the evaluation process, students shall not be informed of the identities of their assigned thesis readers before the conclusion of the evaluation process.

All evaluations shall be conducted in accordance with the academic standards and assessment procedures established for the Senior Thesis Program.

The Administration may authorize exceptions to the confidentiality requirement where necessary for the proper administration of the program or otherwise required by applicable law.

Through the thesis, students demonstrate their ability to:

- Formulate a meaningful intellectual question;
- Locate, evaluate, and properly cite appropriate sources;
- Conduct sustained and responsible research;
- Develop a coherent and defensible argument;
- Write with clarity, precision, and proper documentation;
- Respond thoughtfully to questions and criticism; and
- Participate in the Great Conversation of Humanity with intellectual seriousness and personal reflection.

The Senior Thesis grade appears as a separate line on the student's transcript and is not incorporated into the senior English Literature grade. Students must satisfy all written, oral, research, presentation, and deadline requirements established in the Senior Thesis syllabus. Failure to complete or pass the thesis may prevent a student from satisfying Chelsea Academy's graduation requirements.

Because the thesis is intended to demonstrate the intellectual habits, academic skills, and personal integrity developed throughout a student's years at Chelsea, academic dishonesty involving the Senior Thesis is an especially serious offense. All thesis work is fully subject to Chelsea Academy's Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy. Academic dishonesty involving any portion of the thesis process, including research, notes, outlines, drafts, citations, written work, presentations, or oral defenses, may result in:

- A failing grade on the thesis;
- Failure to earn the required Senior Thesis credit;
- Ineligibility to graduate until the requirement has been completed satisfactorily;
- Loss of senior activities, honors, awards, or privileges;
- Exclusion from commencement exercises;
- Suspension; or
- Expulsion from Chelsea Academy.

These consequences are not limited by the ordinary progression applied to less serious academic-integrity violations. The Administration will determine the appropriate response based upon the nature, extent, and intentionality of the misconduct, including whether the student attempted to conceal or misrepresent the manner in which the work was completed.

Graduation Requirements

Students must complete all prescribed coursework and earn a minimum of **26 credits** to graduate from Chelsea Academy's Upper School.

Academic Area	Required Credits
English	4.0
History	4.0
Mathematics	4.0
Religion	5.0
Science	4.0
Latin or French	3.0
Fine Arts	1.0
Civics	0.5

Academic Area	Required Credits
Senior Thesis	0.5
Total	**26**

The mathematics requirement ordinarily includes courses such as Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Statistics, Precalculus, or Calculus. The science requirement must include Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, together with any additional science coursework required by the student's prescribed academic program. Students must ordinarily enroll in at least five full-credit academic courses during each school year. Students must also satisfy any additional grade-level, departmental, service, or program requirements established by Chelsea Academy.

Requests for exceptions, substitutions, transfer-credit determinations, or independent study must be submitted to and approved by the Administration. Exceptions will be granted only for compelling academic or personal reasons and must remain consistent with the integrity of Chelsea's diploma.

Course Requirements and Academic Progression

Students are expected to complete the full prescribed course of study for their grade level. Course placement and advancement are determined by the Administration in consultation with the appropriate faculty members.

Factors considered may include:

- Completion of prerequisite courses;
- Academic performance;
- Demonstrated mastery of prior material;
- Teacher recommendations;
- Placement assessments;
- Maturity and work habits;
- The student's overall course load; and
- The requirements of Chelsea Academy's curriculum.

A student who finishes the academic year with an overall average of D+ or below may be retained in the current grade, required to complete remedial work, denied advancement in one or more subjects, or not invited to return for the following school year. Sequential courses, including mathematics, Latin, and French, may be repeated only when the Administration determines that repetition is academically appropriate and compatible with the student's continued progress toward graduation. Passing a course does not automatically entitle a student to placement in the next course when the student has not demonstrated the preparation or proficiency necessary for success.

Foreign-Language Requirement

Chelsea Academy requires students to earn three credits in Latin or French. Students who entered Grade 9 in the 2025–2026 academic year or later must select either Latin or French as their principal foreign-language sequence and ordinarily remain in that language through the third-year level. These students must successfully complete Latin III or French III to satisfy the foreign-language graduation requirement.

The normal course of study is for a student to begin Latin I or French I in Grade 9 and continue sequentially through Latin III or French III. Students may not move between introductory levels of Latin and French merely to accumulate the required credits. Students who entered Grade 9 before the 2025–2026 academic year will not be disadvantaged by the implementation of this requirement. All previously earned Latin and French credits will continue to count toward graduation. A student who completed one year of one language and then

changed to the other with the school's permission must earn three total language credits and ordinarily continue through Level II of the second language.

For example, a student who completed French I and then transferred to Latin may satisfy the requirement by completing Latin I and Latin II. Such a student is not required to complete Latin III or French III solely because the sequential-language requirement was subsequently adopted. Any change from one language sequence to another after Grade 9 requires a compelling academic reason and the approval of the Administration. The Administration may establish an individualized requirement for transfer students or students facing unusual placement, scheduling, or academic circumstances.

Mathematics Placement

Students are placed in mathematics courses according to demonstrated readiness, mastery of prerequisite material, prior achievement, teacher recommendations, assessment results, work habits, maturity, scheduling considerations, and overall academic workload.

Students may be placed above or below the course ordinarily associated with their grade level when the faculty and Administration determine that the placement will best support genuine understanding and sustained academic success. All mathematics placement and advancement decisions are subject to the approval of the Administration.

Electives and Study Halls

Freshmen are ordinarily not eligible to enroll in elective courses. Exceptions may be approved by the Administration when the student's schedule, preparation, and graduation requirements justify the placement. No student may ordinarily be assigned more than two study-hall periods during the school day.

When a student has completed the necessary graduation requirements and would otherwise have a third unassigned period, that period will not be treated as an additional study hall. The student will ordinarily be assigned meaningful service or administrative responsibilities under the direction of the Office Manager, Student Life Coordinator, or another member of the faculty or staff. Study hall is an academic period. Students are expected to work quietly, come prepared with appropriate materials, and use the time for reading, assignments, study, or other approved academic work.

Independent Study

A student in good academic and disciplinary standing may request an independent study when the student:

- Has completed the ordinary course offerings available within a department;
- Wishes to pursue a particular subject in greater depth; or
- Has a compelling academic need that cannot be met through the regular schedule.

An independent study is a substantive academic course and not a substitute for an unassigned period or ordinary study hall.

A student seeking approval must:

1. Identify a qualified full-time faculty member willing to serve as the faculty sponsor; 2. Submit a written proposal during spring course registration; 3. Describe the subject, purpose, objectives, readings, assignments, schedule, and expected final product; and 4. Demonstrate the maturity, preparation, and ability to work independently.

Approval depends upon:

- The academic merit and rigor of the proposal;
- The student's prior achievement and work habits;

- The student's existing course load;
- Faculty availability;
- Scheduling and supervisory requirements; and
- The approval of the Administration.

The faculty sponsor is responsible for supervising and evaluating the work. Independent studies receive academic grades according to Chelsea Academy's regular grading scale. An additional fee may be charged when an independent study requires substantial faculty time, specialized materials, or instruction beyond the faculty member's ordinary responsibilities.

Academic Probation

The Administration reviews each student's academic progress following every quarterly grading period and may review a student's standing at any other time when serious academic concerns arise. A student who earns two or more grades below C- will ordinarily be placed on Academic Probation. Academic Probation is intended to provide a structured opportunity for improvement. The student remains responsible for completing the work, seeking assistance, and demonstrating the sustained effort necessary to return to good academic standing. A student may also be placed on probation because of a failing grade, a substantial pattern of missing work, or another serious academic concern, as determined by the Administration.

Parents or guardians will be notified, and the school will establish an Academic Improvement Plan identifying the student's areas of difficulty and the specific steps required for improvement. The plan may include:

- Required meetings with teachers or administrators;
- Mandatory tutoring or academic-support sessions;
- Assignment-completion deadlines;
- Supervised study halls;
- Regular use of the student planner;
- Weekly progress reports;
- Additional expectations established by the Administration.

Extracurricular Eligibility

Students on Academic Probation may not participate in extracurricular activities, including athletic practices or competitions, theatrical rehearsals or performances, clubs, and other nonacademic school activities, unless the Administration expressly determines otherwise. The purpose of this restriction is to ensure that the student's time and attention are directed toward restoring satisfactory academic standing.

Review and Removal from Probation

Academic Probation does not automatically continue until the next quarterly grading period. A student's progress will be reviewed regularly, with the first formal eligibility review ordinarily occurring after ten school days on probation. To be removed from Academic Probation, a student must ordinarily:

- Raise all current course grades to C- or higher;
- Complete all missing major assignments
- Submit current assignments consistently and on time;
- Attend all required tutoring, study halls, meetings, or academic-support sessions;
- Demonstrate satisfactory effort, preparation, attendance, and classroom conduct; and

Teachers will provide relevant information regarding the student's performance and effort, but the Administration will make the final determination regarding removal from probation and restoration of extracurricular eligibility.

When a student has made substantial and sustained progress but still has one course grade below C-, the Administration may remove the student from formal probation and place the student on Academic Watch. A student may not be moved to Academic Watch while earning a failing grade unless exceptional circumstances warrant it.

Academic Watch

Academic Watch provides continued monitoring for a student who has improved sufficiently to leave formal probation but has not yet achieved consistently satisfactory performance in every course. A student on Academic Watch may ordinarily resume extracurricular participation but must continue to follow any remaining academic-support requirements. Failure to maintain progress, accumulation of missing work, or a decline in grades may result in an immediate return to Academic Probation.

Continued or Repeated Academic Difficulty

A student who remains on Academic Probation for an extended period, repeatedly returns to probation, fails to comply with the Academic Improvement Plan, or demonstrates insufficient academic progress may be subject to additional consequences.

These may include:

- Continued suspension of extracurricular privileges;
- Required tutoring or academic intervention;
- Retention in the current grade;
- Repetition of one or more courses;
- Conditions upon continued enrollment; or
- A decision not to invite the student to return for the following academic year.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important and intentional part of a Chelsea Academy education. They extend classroom learning through direct encounters with historical sites, museums, cultural institutions, places of religious significance, the natural world, and other experiences consistent with Chelsea Academy's pillars of Faith, Academics, Friendship, and Adventure. Each grade level will ordinarily participate in a minimum of two school-sponsored field trips during the academic year. Faculty members will work with the Administration to select experiences that meaningfully support the curriculum and are appropriate to the age and formation of the students.

Chelsea Academy is also developing a series of recurring, grade-specific field trips that will become established parts of the student experience. The goal is for each grade to have one or more signature destinations or experiences connected to its curriculum and stage of development. Particular destinations, dates, and activities may change from year to year because of instructional priorities, scheduling, staffing, cost, availability, weather, safety considerations, or other circumstances determined by the Administration.

Families will receive advance notice of school-sponsored field trips. A student may participate only after the school has received all required forms, including a permission form signed by a parent or guardian, and any required payment or medical information. Students must follow all school policies, dress requirements, behavioral expectations, technology restrictions, and directions from faculty members, staff, drivers, and

chaperones throughout the trip. Participation in a field trip is a privilege, and the school may exclude a student when academic, behavioral, medical, safety, or other significant concerns make participation inadvisable.

Students remain responsible for academic work missed because of a field trip. Faculty members and the Administration will coordinate trips to limit unnecessary loss of instructional time, avoid excessive disruption to other classes, and maintain sufficient faculty presence and supervision on campus. The number of field trips scheduled within a particular week may therefore be limited. All field trips remain subject to administrative approval and may be modified, postponed, relocated, or canceled when circumstances require.

Semester Examinations

Upper School students take comprehensive examinations at the conclusion of both semesters in all academic courses unless the Administration has approved a different assessment structure for a particular course. Eighth-grade students enrolled in Upper School courses, including Algebra I, Latin I, and French I, must also take the corresponding semester examinations. Teachers will provide appropriate guidance, review materials, and some class time for preparation. Students are nevertheless responsible for organizing their own study, reviewing the full body of material, and preparing independently. At the teacher's discretion, a senior who has earned a second-semester grade of A- or higher in a course may be exempted from the final examination in that course. Exemption is a privilege, not an entitlement, and may also depend upon attendance, conduct, completion of work, and the nature of the course.

Tests and Major Assignments

Faculty members coordinate major assessments so that students will ordinarily not be assigned more than two tests or major assignments due on the same day. Tests and other major assessments will ordinarily be announced at least five days in advance. This expectation does not apply to ordinary quizzes, short writing assignments, routine homework, or circumstances in which scheduling changes are necessary. Students remain responsible for planning ahead, managing long-term assignments, and preparing appropriately even when multiple academic obligations occur within the same period.

Grade Reports and Academic Communication

The academic year is divided into two semesters and four quarterly grading periods. Full grade reports are issued electronically at the conclusion of each quarter, twice during the fall semester and twice during the spring semester. An interim progress report is also issued after the third full week of the academic year. Teachers or administrators may communicate additional progress concerns at any time. Parents and students are expected to review grade reports carefully and respond promptly when a teacher or administrator identifies missing work, declining performance, or another academic concern.

Grading and Grade Scale

Students in Kindergarten–Grade 2 receive standards- and skills-based reports appropriate to the developmental goals of the Lower School program. Students in Grades 3–12 receive letter and numerical grades according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Grade Points
A	93–100	4.00
A-	90–92	3.67
B+	87–89	3.33
B	83–86	3.00
B-	80–82	2.67

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Grade Points
C+	77–79	2.33
C	73–76	2.00
C-	70–72	1.67
D+	67–69	1.33
D	63–66	1.00
D-	60–62	0.67
F	Below 60	0.00

Approved honors courses receive an additional 0.5 grade point when the student's weighted grade-point average is calculated.

Honor-Roll Recognition

Chelsea Academy may recognize students who demonstrate sustained academic excellence through quarterly or semester honor rolls. The Administration establishes the eligibility standards for each form of recognition. Academic dishonesty, incomplete coursework, or serious disciplinary concerns may render a student ineligible, regardless of numerical grades.

Honors Courses

Chelsea Academy's honors courses are intended for high-achieving, intellectually curious, and academically disciplined students who are prepared to pursue a subject with greater depth and rigor. Because Chelsea's standard curriculum is already demanding, honors designation represents a meaningful increase in academic expectations. Honors students may be required to complete more advanced readings, undertake additional writing or research, attend lectures or seminars, engage more deeply in discussion, or complete assignments beyond those required in the standard course. Honors courses receive an additional 0.5 grade point in the calculation of the weighted grade-point average.

Admission to an Honors Course

A student seeking admission to an honors course must ordinarily:

- Have completed at least one full academic year at Chelsea Academy;
- Have earned a grade of B+ or higher in the relevant prerequisite course;
- Be in good academic and disciplinary standing;
- Demonstrate strong work habits, intellectual curiosity, and the ability to manage additional responsibilities;
- Receive a written recommendation from the teacher of the prerequisite course;
- Receive written parental consent; and
- Receive the approval of the Headmaster.

Admission is not automatic upon satisfaction of the minimum criteria. Final placement depends upon the student's complete academic record, teacher judgment, course capacity, schedule, and the Administration's assessment of whether honors placement will serve the student well. To remain in an honors course, a student must ordinarily maintain at least a B- in the honors course and remain in satisfactory academic standing across the remainder of his or her schedule. The Administration may return a student to the standard course when the honors placement is no longer academically appropriate.

Tutoring and Academic Assistance

Chelsea Academy teachers make themselves reasonably available to answer questions, clarify assignments, and assist students who are experiencing academic difficulty. Students are expected to seek assistance promptly, attend scheduled meetings prepared, and continue making an independent and responsible effort. When a student requires regular, specialized, or intensive assistance beyond the ordinary support provided by the classroom teacher, the school may recommend formal tutoring or another academic intervention. Tutoring arranged or provided beyond a teacher's ordinary responsibilities may require an additional fee to the family. The availability of tutoring depends upon faculty capacity, scheduling, and the student's particular needs.

Senior Awards- Valedictorian and Salutatorian

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian are selected by the faculty from among the graduating seniors. These honors are not determined solely by numerical grade-point average or class rank. The faculty considers the whole of the student's Upper School academic record, including:

- Grade-point average in Grades 9–12;
- The rigor and difficulty of the student's course load;
- Depth of understanding;
- Intellectual curiosity;
- Quality and consistency of effort;
- Academic integrity;
- Classroom leadership; and
- Contributions to the overall intellectual and academic tone of the class.

The faculty and Administration retain final authority over the selection of these recipients.

Character Award

The Character Award is presented to the graduating student who most fully demonstrates exemplary Christian character. The recipient should exhibit qualities including:

- Generosity;
- Humility;
- Charity and concern for others;
- Integrity;
- Diligence;
- Perseverance;
- Self-discipline;
- Leadership;
- Service to the school community; and
- A genuine spirit of adventure.

The award recognizes a student who has participated meaningfully in the life of Chelsea Academy and whose example consistently brings out the best in others.

Student Life

"Since true education must strive for the complete formation of the human person, with a view to his or her final end as well as to the common good of society, children and young people are to be nurtured in such a

way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and the right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life." **—Canon 795, Code of Canon Law (1983)**

Chelsea Academy expects its students to uphold the highest standards of civility, integrity, and comportment. Students are expected to act honestly in all their interactions, show proper respect for those in authority and for their peers, and care responsibly for personal and school property. They must accept responsibility for their actions and faithfully fulfill their duties to the school and to others. The rules and regulations governing student conduct at Chelsea Academy are intended to provide essential standards and expectations; they are not exhaustive. Students are expected to observe both the letter and the spirit of these rules and to contribute to a pleasant and harmonious school environment in which the dignity of every person, faculty member, staff member, and student, is respected.

FINE ARTS

Chelsea Academy seeks to awaken students to beauty through the study and appreciation of the arts and through active artistic participation. All Lower and Middle School students study fine art and participate in the school's music program. All Upper School students are required to complete at least one credit in Fine Arts. The Schola sings at all-school Masses, concerts, and other special occasions. The school also presents a drama production during the spring semester each year. As part of the school's end-of-year activities, art exhibitions showcase the work of students throughout the Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools.

ATHLETICS

Embracing the ancient ideal of *mens sana in corpore sano*, healthy mind in a healthy body, Chelsea Academy encourages participation in athletics as a means of promoting physical development, athletic skill, teamwork, character, discipline, and good sportsmanship. Chelsea Academy offers a variety of interscholastic sports, including soccer, cross-country, volleyball, basketball, and rugby. Students in Grades 6–11 may participate on a school athletic team. Students in Grade 5 may be permitted to participate on a Middle School team on a case-by-case basis. Additional athletic opportunities may also be offered to students in Grades K–4.

Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games. A student who accumulates more than three unexcused absences from practices or games risks dismissal from the team and the loss of credit for participation. Absences resulting from illness or a family emergency will generally be considered excused. Additional athletic policies and expectations will be established by the Athletic Director and communicated to coaches, student-athletes, and families before or during each athletic season.

Athletics, Coaches, and the Cell Phone Policy

Chelsea Academy's technology policy can only succeed if faculty, staff, parents, coaches, and students are united in supporting and consistently enforcing it. Athletics is no exception. The purpose of the policy does not end with the academic day, and participation in practices, games, or other school-sponsored athletic activities does not provide students with an exception to Chelsea's expectations regarding personal devices.

Communication Is the Responsibility of the Adults

Coaches are responsible for timely and consistent communication with the Athletic Director and with the parents of the student-athletes entrusted to their care.

Just as coaches assume responsibility for their players during practices and competitions, they are expected to communicate important logistical information to families, including practice start and finish times, changes or updates to practices or games, departure times for away competitions, notification when the team is departing

an away venue, anticipated return times to Chelsea, appropriate pickup times, and any significant delays or changes while traveling.

This has long been the expectation at Chelsea and remains so under the updated technology policy. In previous years, many coaches have successfully used the Remind app or similar means of parent communication, and coaches should continue to establish a reliable parent communication system in coordination with the Athletic Director.

Because this information is communicated directly by coaches to parents, there should ordinarily be no need for an individual student-athlete to possess or use a cell phone to communicate these logistical details with his or her family. Allowing students to retain phones for this purpose would quickly create exceptions that are difficult to define and even more difficult to enforce consistently.

Practices on the Chelsea Campus

Before any after-school practice begins, student-athletes must turn their phones in to the designated cell phone cart or other secure collection location established by the school.

The coach or coaches overseeing the practice are responsible for ensuring that all student phones have been turned in before practice begins, that the phones are secured in the designated locked storage location for the duration of practice, and that the phones are returned only after practice has concluded.

Once a phone has been returned, the student may not use the device while remaining on Chelsea Academy property.

Because faculty and administrative staff cannot reasonably supervise device use throughout every after-school practice and athletic activity, **coaches are responsible for enforcing Chelsea Academy's technology policy while student-athletes are under their supervision.**

Away Games and Competitions

Before a Chelsea team departs campus for an away competition, all student-athletes must turn their phones over to their coach. Coaches must make appropriate arrangements to keep those devices secure throughout the trip and return them at the appropriate time.

The sole athletic travel exception is for a **senior student who has been authorized to drive independently to or from an away competition**. In that circumstance, the student driver, and only the driver, may possess a phone for GPS navigation and necessary communication with the school, coach, parents, or emergency contacts in the event of a travel-related need such as a breakdown, accident, significant delay, or change of route.

This exception does not permit ordinary cell phone use before, during, or after the competition. Students traveling as passengers, including those riding with an authorized senior driver, do not receive this exception and must turn in their phones with the rest of the team.

Chelsea Students Attending Home Games as Spectators

Chelsea students attending a home athletic competition as spectators remain subject to the school's technology policy while on campus.

Students should not bring personal devices into the gymnasium, athletic field, sidelines, bleachers, or other school facilities during these events. Because the school cannot safely maintain an unattended phone collection point during a public after-school event, coaches and staff will not be expected to collect or safeguard the phones of student spectators.

Students attending with a parent or guardian should leave their phones with that parent or guardian or otherwise make arrangements before arriving on campus.

A limited exception applies to an **authorized student driver who independently drives to an after-school athletic competition or other school-sponsored event**. Such a student may leave his or her phone **powered off, secured out of sight, and locked inside the vehicle** for the duration of the event.

The phone may not be brought into the athletic venue, carried elsewhere on campus, or used while the student remains on school property.

This exception applies only to the unique circumstances of an after-school event when the school's normal secure phone collection procedures are no longer operating. It does **not** alter the school-day requirement that students may not leave phones in their vehicles as a means of avoiding the normal check-in procedure.

Students and families should therefore make transportation, pickup, and communication arrangements before the athletic event begins whenever possible.

The purpose of these expectations is not simply to remove phones for their own sake. Chelsea athletics should be an extension of the culture cultivated throughout the school day: students fully present to their teammates, coaches, classmates, families, and community. Consistent expectations across the classroom, athletic field, gymnasium, and sidelines help protect that culture.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND ADVENTURE

Chelsea Academy seeks to foster physical health, a spirit of adventure, strong friendships, and an appreciation for God's creation. To these ends, the school draws upon the remarkable natural resources of the Shenandoah Valley by incorporating outdoor activities into its educational program. Each year, students participate in the Fall Hike in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The annual canoe trip on the Shenandoah River is a longstanding tradition for students in Grades 5–12. Students in Grades 5–12 also participate in a fall camping trip.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Daily Prayer

Essential to the Catholic mission of Chelsea Academy are both the obligation and the joy of prayer. Our Blessed Lord has revealed that God is our Father, and He has also called us His friends. This is a beautiful reality: we are obliged to worship the God who has given us everything, yet He desires that we approach Him with the confidence of sons and daughters and the love of beloved friends. An essential element and goal of a Chelsea education, therefore, is the cultivation of a daily conversation with the Lord. Convocation at the beginning of each school day provides an opportunity for the entire school community to gather in prayer and offer the day to God under the patronage of Our Lady and St. Thomas More. Students pray the Angelus at noon and conclude the school day with an Act of Contrition. Each class also begins with prayer, as do lunch, school assemblies, and other school events.

Feast Days

In harmony with the liturgical year, and with the assistance of the Chelsea Parent Association and student volunteers, the school sets aside time for special observances and celebrations. These include Advent and Lenten devotions, St. Joseph's Day, and the feast day of the school's patron, St. Thomas More. Holy Days of Obligation are solemn feasts of the Church and are ordinarily observed as school holidays.

Mass

In cooperation with St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and other area pastors, Chelsea Academy provides all students with the opportunity to attend Mass each week. The school also seeks to make additional opportunities for Mass available to students, faculty, staff, and families whenever possible. The academic year

begins with an all-school Mass of the Holy Spirit. Additional all-school Masses are celebrated on various occasions throughout the year.

Penance

The Sacrament of Penance is made available to students throughout the school year whenever priest availability permits. Whenever possible, students are provided opportunities to receive the sacrament during Advent and Lent, as well as through regularly scheduled monthly opportunities.

Retreats

Students and faculty participate in spiritual retreats each year. These retreats ordinarily take place during the season of Lent.

Sacramental Preparation

Chelsea Academy's religion and theology curriculum has been approved by the Diocese of Arlington and by the pastor of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Front Royal as an accepted program of sacramental preparation for First Confession, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation. The parish may establish additional requirements, including retreats, meetings, forms, or other preparatory activities. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is properly registered with the parish in which the sacrament will be received and that all parish and diocesan requirements have been fulfilled. Chelsea families who belong to other parishes must consult their own pastors to ensure that their children are meeting all parish requirements for the reception of the sacraments.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND ENRICHMENT

Honor Societies

Honor societies provide students with opportunities to deepen their study of and engagement with particular academic disciplines, including mathematics, English, and foreign languages. Each honor society is sponsored by a faculty advisor and offers students opportunities for leadership, service, collaboration, and active participation.

Student Government

Student government provides students with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership, organizational ability, responsibility, and a spirit of service. Seniors and eighth-grade students are especially encouraged to serve as leaders, mentors, and role models within the school community. Seniors exercise this role within the Upper and Lower Schools, while eighth-grade students provide leadership within the Middle and Lower Schools. Through these responsibilities, students are encouraged to grow not only in confidence and initiative, but also in patience, humility, and concern for others.

Our House System

Chelsea Academy's commitment to the formation of the whole person finds one of its most visible expressions in the House System. More than an organizational structure, the House System fosters enduring friendships, spirited competition, student leadership, service, and a profound sense of belonging. It strengthens the bonds of the school community by ensuring that every student is known, valued, and connected to something larger than his or her individual grade or class.

Chelsea Academy is divided into four Houses: two for boys and two for girls. Each boys' House is paired with a girls' House, and siblings ordinarily belong to the same House or paired Houses. This structure reflects many of the best qualities of family life while encouraging friendships and mentorship across grade levels.

Each House includes students from throughout the school. Within the Houses, smaller groups known as Clans provide further opportunities for students of different ages to gather for meals, activities, discussion, and fellowship. Older students are encouraged to serve as mentors and examples for younger students, while younger students benefit from the friendship, encouragement, and guidance of their older peers.

House life includes field days, athletic and academic competitions, poetry recitations, peer tutoring, shared meals, service projects, and other school traditions. Through these experiences, students develop camaraderie, healthy school spirit, responsibility, leadership, and a willingness to serve others. The Houses promote friendly competition while strengthening the unity, morale, and solidarity of the entire school.

The Legacy of the Chelsea Houses

Each Chelsea House is named for an individual closely connected to the life, family, or intellectual and spiritual circle of the school's patron, St. Thomas More. These men and women exemplify the courage, learning, fidelity, friendship, and devotion that Chelsea Academy seeks to cultivate in its students.

Fisher House

Fisher House honors St. John Cardinal Fisher (1469–1535), a trusted friend of Thomas More and one of the most distinguished scholars and churchmen of his age. Fisher served as Bishop of Rochester during the early sixteenth century and enjoyed an international reputation for his learning. He courageously supported Queen Catherine of Aragon in her resistance to King Henry VIII's attempt to annul their marriage in defiance of the authority of the Pope. Fisher later refused to recognize the Act of Supremacy, which declared Henry VIII the supreme head of the Church in England. Although Pope Paul III named him a cardinal while he was imprisoned, Fisher refused to compromise the Catholic Faith and was executed in 1535. In 1935, Pope Pius XI canonized John Fisher and Thomas More together. Students of Fisher House are called to imitate his intellectual seriousness, moral courage, fidelity to the Church, and unwavering integrity.

Colet House

Colet House is named for John Colet (1467–1519), a scholar, priest, and spiritual advisor to the young Thomas More. A man of exceptional learning, Colet studied at Oxford and continued his studies in Florence and Rome before becoming Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Beginning in 1509, Colet devoted his life and much of his considerable inherited fortune to the establishment of St. Paul's School, which became one of England's oldest and most respected secondary schools. His educational vision united intellectual excellence with moral and spiritual formation. Colet House calls students to a deep love of learning, openness to spiritual wisdom, generosity in service, and a commitment to the transformative work of education.

Roper House

Roper House honors Margaret Roper (1505–1544), the devoted and much-loved eldest daughter of Thomas More. More ensured that Margaret received an unusually comprehensive liberal arts education for her time, including literature, languages, history, mathematics, science, philosophy, and theology. She became renowned among her contemporaries for her command of Greek and Latin and was widely respected for her learning, intelligence, and virtue. Margaret remained deeply devoted to her father throughout his imprisonment and martyrdom. Her husband, William Roper (1496–1578), spent considerable time in the More household as a young man and enjoyed a close relationship with his father-in-law. He later served in Parliament during the reign of Queen Mary and wrote the first biography of Thomas More, preserving an invaluable account of More's character, family life, faith, and final witness. Roper House celebrates intellectual depth, familial devotion, friendship, grace, and the pursuit of learning ordered toward truth and holiness.

Pole House

Pole House honors Blessed Margaret Pole (1473–1541), Countess of Salisbury. A woman of royal lineage, she was the sister of Edward Plantagenet, the last male representative of the Yorkist line. Margaret served Queen Catherine of Aragon and later became governess to Catherine's daughter, Princess Mary, who would eventually become Queen of England. Margaret's son, Reginald Pole, became a cardinal and the last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury. His condemnation of Henry VIII's attempt to divorce Catherine of Aragon contributed to the king's hostility toward the Pole family. Although Margaret herself had committed no treasonous act, she was arrested, imprisoned, and eventually executed on charges of treason. Her martyrdom was formally recognized in 1886, when Pope Leo XIII declared her Blessed. Pole House calls students to imitate her fortitude, loyalty, steadfast faith, and commitment to truth in the face of persecution and adversity.

A Living Legacy

The Chelsea House System brings these historical examples into the daily life of the school. The names of Fisher, Colet, Roper, and Pole are not merely labels for teams or student groups. They remind students that courage, scholarship, fidelity, friendship, sacrifice, and service are virtues to be practiced. Through shared traditions, competition, mentorship, prayer, service, and fellowship, the Houses help form students who are confident without being proud, competitive without losing charity, and capable of leading while remaining willing to serve. Rooted in the example of St. Thomas More and those who shared his intellectual, familial, and spiritual world, the House System is truly the heartbeat of Chelsea Academy.

STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

Philosophy

Chelsea Academy seeks to provide students with clear expectations, consistent guidance, and positive models of conduct so that they may gradually internalize the habits of virtue, responsibility, and self-discipline. The school holds students accountable for following its rules and meeting its expectations. At the same time, Chelsea recognizes that young people will make mistakes as they mature, grow in independence, and learn to exercise their freedom responsibly. Discipline is therefore understood not merely as the imposition of consequences, but as an essential part of formation.

Rather than attempting to establish an excessively rigid or exhaustive code for every possible circumstance, Chelsea Academy seeks to cultivate prudence, maturity, personal responsibility, and respect for others. Students are expected to accept responsibility for their choices, make appropriate amends when necessary, and learn from correction.

Disciplinary Responses

All disciplinary responses are intended to correct misconduct, protect the school community, improve character, and lead students toward a life of virtue. Most classroom disciplinary matters are handled directly by the student's teacher. Matters that extend beyond the classroom, involve repeated misconduct, or require broader administrative intervention are ordinarily handled by the Assistant Headmistress, Headmaster, or another designated administrator.

Violations of major school rules are referred promptly to the Administration. Parents will be notified in cases involving serious misconduct or major rule violations. Depending upon the nature, circumstances, and severity of the conduct, disciplinary consequences may include detention, restitution, loss of privileges, a behavioral contract, probation, suspension, denial of re-enrollment, or dismissal. Chelsea Academy reserves the right to place on probation, suspend, deny re-enrollment to, or dismiss any student whose conduct is determined by the Administration to be contrary to the mission, standards, goals, or ideals of the school.

Disciplinary Process

When an alleged violation of a major school rule occurs, the Assistant Headmistress, Headmaster, or designated administrator will take the steps reasonably necessary to investigate and resolve the matter. This process may include speaking with the student or students involved, interviewing witnesses, reviewing relevant evidence, consulting faculty or staff members, and considering the circumstances surrounding the incident.

A student alleged to have committed a major violation will ordinarily be given an opportunity to explain what occurred before a final disciplinary decision is made. Parents will be notified when a major rule violation has been substantiated or when the seriousness of the allegation warrants their immediate involvement.

Disciplinary decisions will take into account the nature and gravity of the offense, the student's age and maturity, the surrounding circumstances, the effect of the conduct upon others, the student's honesty and cooperation, and any relevant pattern of prior behavior. The Administration retains discretion to determine the appropriate response in light of the particular facts of each case. Consistent with prudence, confidentiality, and respect for the reputations of all involved, the Administration will not discuss a student's disciplinary matter with persons other than the affected student, the student's parents or guardians, appropriate school personnel, and others whose involvement is reasonably necessary.

A parent or student who believes that a serious disciplinary decision was based upon materially incomplete or inaccurate information may request that the Headmaster review the matter. Any further appeal to the Board of Directors must be made in accordance with the school's governing policies. The Board will not ordinarily reconsider routine disciplinary judgments or substitute its judgment for that of the Headmaster.

Major School Rules

The following rules address conduct that is fundamentally inconsistent with the safety, integrity, and mission of Chelsea Academy. This list is not exhaustive. The Administration may treat other conduct of comparable seriousness as a major rule violation.

Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, Tobacco, and Vaping

Chelsea Academy **prohibits** the use, possession, distribution, sale, or transfer of alcohol, illegal drugs, unauthorized controlled substances, tobacco products, vaping products, and related paraphernalia by students on school property or at any school-sponsored activity. A violation of this policy may result in suspension or immediate dismissal from the school. When required by law or warranted by the circumstances, the school may also contact law enforcement or other appropriate authorities. Students may not possess or distribute prescription or over-the-counter medication except in accordance with the school's medication policies.

Energy Drinks

Energy drinks are not permitted on campus or at school-sponsored activities. This prohibition reflects concerns regarding their effects upon the health, behavior, and well-being of children and adolescents.

Fighting, Harassment, and Bullying

Every member of the Chelsea Academy community is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. Fighting, bullying, harassment, intimidation, threats, hazing, and deliberately humiliating or degrading conduct are prohibited. This policy applies to conduct occurring on school property, at school-sponsored activities, through electronic communications, or away from campus when the conduct has a substantial effect upon a student, the school community, or the school's ability to carry out its mission. Students involved in such conduct will be referred to the Administration. Particularly grave, threatening, persistent, or harmful conduct may result in suspension or dismissal.

Leaving Campus

No student may leave campus during the school day without parental permission and authorization from the Administration. This rule applies to all students, including those who are eighteen years of age or older. Students may leave only through the procedures established by the school and must sign out through the Main Office when required.

Dishonesty, Academic Misconduct, and Theft

A school community depends upon trust. Students are therefore expected to tell the truth, complete their own work, represent their work honestly, and respect the property of others. Lying, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, theft, forgery, deliberate misrepresentation, and other forms of dishonesty are serious violations of school expectations.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting another person's work as one's own;
- Copying or providing answers without authorization;
- Using unauthorized notes, materials, devices, websites, or resources;
- Failing to cite sources properly;
- Fabricating quotations, data, sources, or research;
- Obtaining or sharing assessments without permission; and
- Using artificial intelligence or other digital tools in a manner not expressly authorized by the teacher.

Teachers will provide age-appropriate instruction regarding plagiarism, citation, collaboration, and the appropriate use of sources and technology. Nevertheless, students remain responsible for ensuring that the work they submit is honestly their own. Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment or assessment, additional academic consequences, detention, probation, suspension, or dismissal, depending upon the seriousness or frequency of the violation.

Safety and Dangerous Objects

Students may **not** possess, use, display, or distribute weapons or dangerous objects on school property or at school-sponsored activities. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to, firearms, ammunition, knives, explosive or incendiary devices, realistic imitation weapons, and any object used or intended to threaten, intimidate, or cause harm. Any such incident will be referred immediately to the Administration. Depending upon the circumstances, the school may contact law enforcement, impose an immediate suspension, or dismiss the student. The Administration retains discretion to distinguish between an inadvertently possessed ordinary object and an object brought, displayed, or used in a dangerous or threatening manner.

School and Personal Property

Students are expected to respect school property and the personal property of others. Deliberate vandalism, destruction, defacement, theft, or misuse of property is considered a serious disciplinary offense. A student responsible for damaging or destroying property may be required to make restitution in addition to receiving other disciplinary consequences. Chelsea Academy will make reasonable efforts to investigate reports of theft or damage. The school, however, does not assume responsibility for personal property that is lost, stolen, or damaged. Students are strongly discouraged from bringing unnecessary valuables to school.

Detention and Corrective Consequences

Teachers and staff members are authorized and expected to correct student misconduct. Minor first offenses and low-level violations may ordinarily be addressed through verbal correction, redirection, a conference with the student, communication with parents, loss of a privilege, or another proportionate consequence. Examples

of lower-level infractions may include failure to follow classroom procedures, or other conduct that does not constitute a major rule violation.

Faculty and staff members are expected to enforce school policies consistently while exercising prudence and sound judgment. When the appropriate response is unclear, or when conduct is repeated, serious, or potentially dangerous, the matter should be referred to the Assistant Headmistress, Headmaster, or designated administrator. A detention may be assigned when misconduct is repeated, deliberate, disruptive, disrespectful, or sufficiently serious to warrant a formal consequence.

School Detention

Detention is held during lunch each school day. When an infraction occurs and detention is assigned before the beginning of lunch, the student will ordinarily serve the detention that same day. When the infraction occurs or the detention is assigned after lunch has begun, the student will ordinarily serve the detention during lunch on the next school day. Accordingly, a detention assigned after lunch on a Friday will be served during lunch on the following Monday, or on the next day school is in session.

A student in detention may be required to complete academic work, reflect in writing upon the misconduct, perform an appropriate service task, or undertake another constructive assignment determined by the supervising faculty member or administrator. Appropriate service tasks may include assisting with the orderly care of the campus, cleaning an area affected by the student's conduct, or performing another duty reasonably related to responsibility and restitution. Such tasks will not be degrading, unsafe, or imposed merely for humiliation. Unexcused failure to report to detention, failure to cooperate during detention, or the repeated accumulation of detentions may result in further disciplinary action.

Suspension

The Administration may suspend a student for repeated violations of school rules, failure to respond to prior correction, or a serious infraction warranting a consequence greater than detention. Whenever practicable, the Assistant Headmistress, Headmaster, or designated administrator will confer with the student's parents before or promptly after a suspension is imposed.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-school suspension is a serious disciplinary measure. During the period of suspension, the student may not attend classes, participate in athletics or extracurricular activities, attend school events, or enter school property without the express permission of the Administration. Before the student returns, the Administration may require a conference with the student and parents. The school may also establish conditions for readmission, including completion of missed work, an apology, restitution, counseling, a behavioral contract, or another appropriate corrective measure. Unless otherwise determined by the Administration, a suspended student remains responsible for academic work missed during the suspension. The school may establish academic penalties or limitations appropriate to the circumstances.

Behavioral Contracts and Disciplinary Probation

When a student has demonstrated a serious or continuing pattern of misconduct, the Headmaster may place the student on a behavioral contract or disciplinary probation as a condition of continued enrollment. The school will ordinarily arrange a conference with the student's parents so that the expectations, conditions, duration, and consequences of the contract or probation are clearly understood. A behavioral contract may include specific expectations concerning conduct, attendance, academic responsibility, cooperation with faculty, participation in activities, restitution, communication with parents, or other matters relevant to the student's continued enrollment. Failure to fulfill the conditions of a behavioral contract or disciplinary probation may result in suspension, denial of re-enrollment, or dismissal.

Student Discipline and Detention

Amended November 13, 2026

Purpose of Discipline

Discipline at Chelsea Academy is directed toward the formation of character, the cultivation of virtue, and the preservation of an orderly environment conducive to learning. Its purpose is not punishment for its own sake, but the correction of misconduct and the development of responsibility, self-command, respect for legitimate authority, and consideration for others. Students are expected to respond constructively to correction and to demonstrate meaningful improvement in conduct.

Detention Procedures

Detention is a formal disciplinary consequence and must be treated as such. During detention, students are expected to remain quiet, follow all instructions, and complete any assigned academic, reflective, or otherwise appropriate tasks. Conversation, socializing, and other activities inconsistent with the corrective purpose of detention are prohibited unless specifically authorized by the supervising faculty member.

Where appropriate, students may be assigned supervised, age-appropriate service duties that promote responsibility and respect for school property. Such duties must be safe, proportionate, and consistent with the student’s dignity. Hazardous cleaning, handling of bodily waste or dangerous chemicals, and tasks intended to humiliate students are of course prohibited.

Failure to Attend Detention

Students are required to attend assigned detentions at the designated time. A student who cannot attend for a legitimate reason must obtain authorization for rescheduling through the appropriate school administrator. An unexcused failure to attend an assigned detention constitutes a separate disciplinary infraction and may result in additional consequences, including a higher level of detention. A detention missed because of an administrative scheduling error or another circumstance outside the student’s control shall not be treated as an unexcused disciplinary violation.

Student Discipline and Detention (continued)

Amended November 13, 2026

Repeated Misconduct and Escalation

Where a student repeatedly commits the same or substantially similar infractions, the Administration shall review whether continued assignment of the same disciplinary consequence is achieving meaningful behavioral improvement. Repeated misconduct may warrant progressively more serious intervention, including:

- Formal notification of parents or guardians.
- A mandatory conference involving the student, parents or guardians, and appropriate school administrators.
- A written Behavioral Improvement Plan identifying the conduct requiring correction, the standards of improvement expected, and a specified review period.
- Temporary restriction of designated extracurricular or nonacademic privileges.
- Disciplinary probation, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or other consequences authorized by the handbook.

The Administration is not required to exhaust every lesser measure before imposing a more serious consequence where the gravity, frequency, or circumstances of the misconduct justify immediate intervention. Disciplinary decisions shall be proportionate to the conduct involved and informed by the student's disciplinary history, individual circumstances, and response to previous corrective measures.

Students and parents shall receive appropriate notice of significant disciplinary concerns and an opportunity to respond in accordance with the school's established disciplinary procedures.

Administrative Authority

The Headmaster, or an administrator acting under his authority, retains responsibility for the interpretation and consistent application of the school's disciplinary policies. Faculty members are expected to enforce established standards faithfully and refer persistent or significant concerns to the Administration.

The school reserves the right to impose appropriate disciplinary measures, up to and including suspension, denial of re-enrollment, or expulsion, when student conduct is materially inconsistent with the standards, mission, or orderly operation of Chelsea Academy, subject to applicable law and the school's established procedures.

Denial of Re-Enrollment

Enrollment at Chelsea Academy is granted for a specific academic year or enrollment period and does not create an automatic entitlement to enrollment in a future semester or academic year. At the discretion of the Administration, a student may be denied re-enrollment because of disciplinary, academic, attendance, financial, behavioral, parental-cooperation, or other significant concerns affecting the student's welfare or the good of the school community.

When practicable, the school will communicate significant concerns to the family before making a final decision regarding re-enrollment. Chelsea Academy nevertheless reserves the right to decline re-enrollment whenever the Administration determines that continued enrollment would not serve the best interests of the student or the school.

Dismissal and Expulsion

A student may be dismissed or expelled when the student's conduct is gravely contrary to the mission or standards of Chelsea Academy, threatens the safety or welfare of others, seriously damages the trust necessary for membership in the school community, or demonstrates a persistent refusal to cooperate with legitimate school authority. Dismissal may follow a pattern of misconduct despite prior interventions, or it may result from a single incident of sufficient gravity. The Headmaster has final administrative authority to dismiss or expel a student, subject to any applicable governing policies of the Board of Directors. Chelsea Academy is not required to exhaust every lesser disciplinary measure before dismissing a student when the seriousness of the conduct warrants immediate action.

Cooperation Between the School and Parents

The education and formation of a student require a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation between the school and the student's parents or guardians. Parents are expected to support reasonable school policies, communicate respectfully with faculty and administrators, and cooperate in addressing academic, behavioral, disciplinary, or safety concerns. Conduct by a parent or guardian that seriously undermines the school's mission, disrupts its operations, threatens or harasses members of the community, or makes a constructive school-family relationship impossible may affect the student's continued enrollment or eligibility for re-enrollment.

Administrative Authority and Handbook Amendments

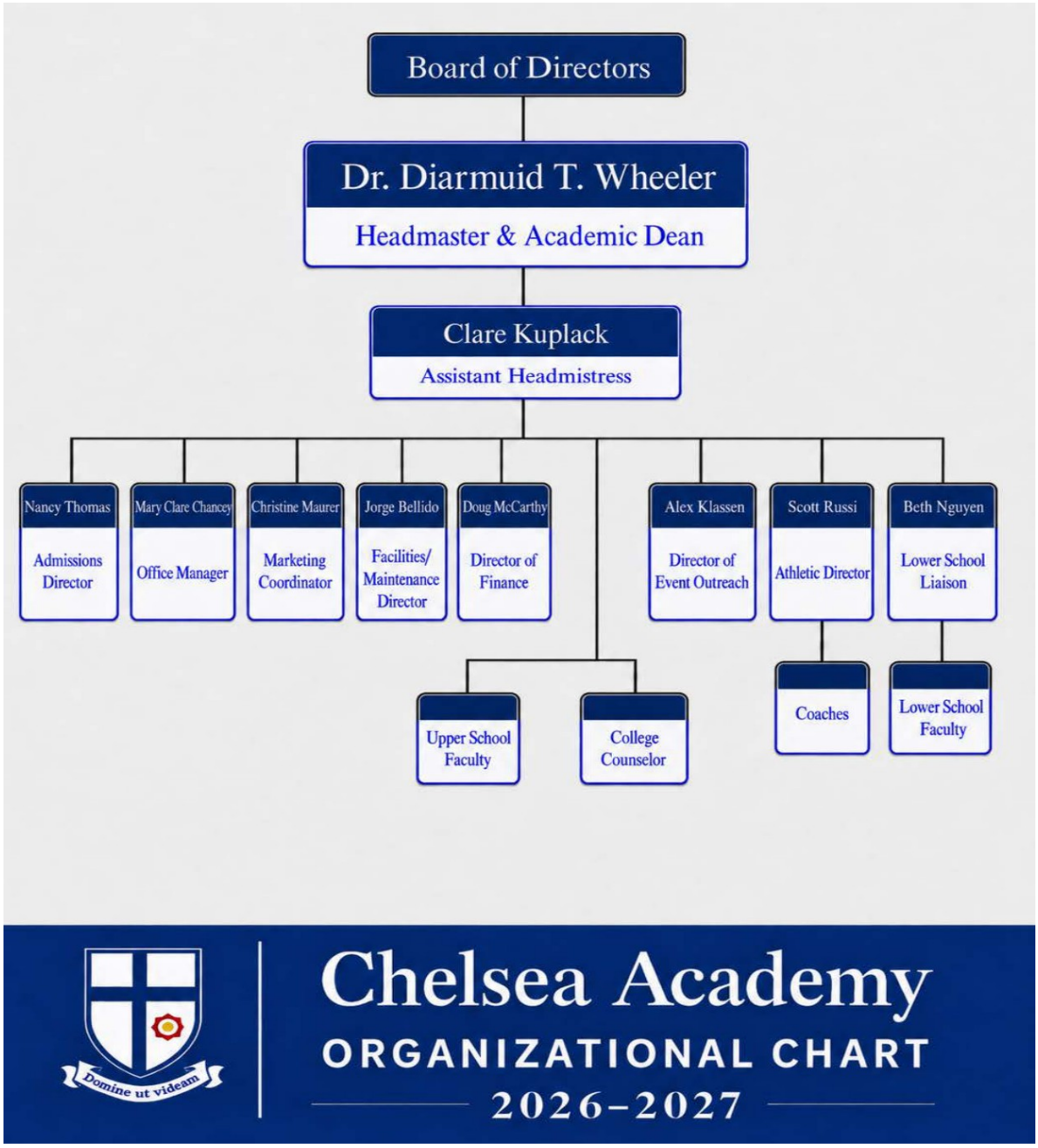
No handbook can anticipate every circumstance that may arise in the life of a school. The Administration therefore retains the authority to interpret and apply the provisions of this handbook, address conduct not expressly described herein, and take actions reasonably necessary to protect students, preserve good order, and advance the mission of Chelsea Academy. Chelsea Academy reserves the right to amend, revise, suspend, or add to the policies contained in this handbook for just cause or in response to changing circumstances. When a material change is made, the Administration will make reasonable efforts to notify the students, parents, faculty, or staff members affected by the change.

Implementation and Interpretation *(Amended November 13, 2026)*

These amendments shall take effect on the date specified in the Administration's written notice to families. They supplement and, where expressly inconsistent, supersede the corresponding provisions of the existing Parent-Student Handbook. All other handbook requirements remain in full force and effect, including any separate disciplinary provisions governing particular categories of serious misconduct.

The Headmaster retains authority to interpret and administer these provisions consistently with Chelsea Academy's mission, applicable law, and the school's established governance procedures. Changes shall be communicated to students, parents, faculty, and staff through the school's official channels.

A. Chelsea Organizational Chart 2026-2027



B. Resources on Technology

Books

Carr, Nicholas. The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains

(ISBN: 9780393339758)

Lynch, Jonah. The Scent of Lemons: Technology and Relationships in the Age of Facebook

(ISBN: 0232529582)

Newport, Cal. Digital Minimalism

(ISBN: 978-0525536512)

Turkle, Sherri. Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet

(ISBN: 9780684833484)

Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other

(ISBN: 978-0465093656)

Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age

(ISBN: 9780143109792)

Articles/Lectures

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Covenant Eyes (https://www.covenanteyes.com)

Covenant Eyes is a filtering and screen monitoring system that encourages accountability through screenshot monitoring and activity reporting. Protect your own device, or protect what your children see on shared, family devices.

Integrity Restored (https://integrityrestored.com)

Founded by Dr. Peter Kleponis, author of the book *Integrity Restored: Helping Catholic Families Win the Battle Against Pornography*, Integrity Restored is an organization dedicated to helping Catholics fight pornography at all levels. Dr. Kleponis and his Integrity Restored Team – Matt Fradd, Fr. Sean Kilcawley and Ryan Foley – provide valuable resources and advice on how to protect individuals, couples and families from the dangers of pornography. Resources are also available for clergy. In addition, information is provided on the *Integrity Starts Here Recovery Program*, the first comprehensive recovery program for Catholics struggling with pornography addiction and their loved ones.

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C. Bishop Michael Burbidge, “A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Ideology”

A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Ideology Most Rev. Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington

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Introduction

In the past decade our culture has seen growing acceptance of transgender ideology-that is, the claim that a person's biological sex and personal identity have no necessary connection and could in fact contradict each other. According to this view, “human identity” is self-defined and “becomes the choice of the individual.” [1] Consequently, our culture is experiencing a rapid rise in the number of persons claiming an identity contrary to their biological sex. Attempts to accommodate such claims already have resulted in tremendous upheavals in our social, legal, and medical systems. This situation presents a serious challenge for all members of the Church because it presents a view of the human person contrary to the truth. It is of particular concern for our young people, as Pope Francis has warned: *Today children-children!-are taught in school that everyone can choose his or her sex. Why are they teaching this?* [2] *Let us not play with truths. It's true that behind all this we find gender ideology. In books, kids learn that it's possible to change one's sex. Could gender, to be a woman or to be a man, be an option and not a fact of nature? This leads to this error. Let us call things by their names.* [3]

“Gender dysphoria” is a psychological condition in which a biological male or female comes to feel that his or her emotional and/or psychological identity does not match his or her biological sex and “experiences clinically significant distress” as a result. [4] Situations involving gender dysphoria must always be addressed with pastoral charity and compassion rooted in the truth. Any unjust discrimination or needless insensitivity in addressing such situations must be avoided and/or corrected.

At the same time, in responding to this question justly and charitably, one cannot deny or obscure the truth of our created nature and human sexuality. Indeed, charity always requires the clear presentation of the truth. As Pope Saint Paul VI observed, “[I]t is an outstanding manifestation of charity toward souls to omit nothing from the saving doctrine of Christ.” [5] From medicine, natural law, and divine revelation, we know that each person is created either male or female, from the moment of conception. “It needs to be emphasized,” writes Pope Francis, that “biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated … It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality.” [6]

This document presents the teaching of the Catholic Church on sexual identity and the transgender issue and offers some pastoral observations. It is not intended to anticipate or address every situation. Rather, it provides the principles of Catholic teaching to encourage the faithful and to guide them in responding to an increasingly difficult cultural situation.

Goodness/Gift of the Human Person and Human Sexuality

The human person, created in the image of God, is a being at once corporeal and spiritual. The biblical account expresses this reality in symbolic language when it affirms that "then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." Man, whole and entire, is therefore willed by God. The human body shares in the dignity of "the image of God": it is a human body precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul, and it is the whole human person that is intended to become, in the body of Christ, a temple of the Spirit… The unity of soul and body is so profound that one has to consider the soul to be the "form" of the body: i.e., it is because of its spiritual soul that the

body made of matter becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature.[7]

The Church's teaching rests on three principles, all knowable by way of human reason. First, the human person is an “embodied soul,” the composite of the spiritual and physical. The human soul is created to animate one particular body. To be a human person means to be a unity of body and soul from the moment of conception. Thus, the body reveals not only the soul, but the person; the person, as a unity of body and soul, acts through the body. Thus, each person's body, given by God from the moment of conception, is neither foreign nor a burden, but an integral part of the person.

Second, and in keeping with the authoritative witness of Scripture (cf. Gen 1:27), the human person is created male or female. The human soul is created to animate and be embodied by one particular, specifically male or female, body. A person's sex is an immutable biological reality, determined at conception. The sexed body reveals God's design not only for each individual person, but also for all human beings, by “establishing us in a relationship with other living beings.” [8] As Pope Francis reminds us, “valuing one's own body in its femininity or masculinity is necessary if I am going to be able to recognize myself in an encounter with someone who is different.” [9] Thus, realizing that human persons are part of “human ecology” reminds us that “man too has a nature that he must respect and that he cannot manipulate at will.” [10/11] The human body has intrinsic meaning. Through the body, we encounter not only other human beings but also “the moral law, which is inscribed in our nature.” [12]

Sexuality affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity.[13]

It is important to note that there may be a variety of ways in which a person may express his or her sexual identity as male or female, according to the norms and practices of a particular time or culture. Moreover, a person may have atypical interests, but this does not change the person's sexual identity as either male or female.

Third, the differences between man and woman are ordered towards their complementary union in marriage. Indeed, the differences between man and woman, male and female, are unintelligible apart from such a union.

Man and woman were made "for each other" - not that God left them half-made and incomplete: he created them to be a communion of persons, in which each can be "helpmate" to the other, for they are equal as persons ("bone of my bones ...") and complementary as masculine and feminine. In marriage, God unites them in such a way that, by forming "one flesh," they can transmit human life: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." By transmitting human life to their descendants, man and woman as spouses and parents co-operate in a unique way in the Creator's work.[14] *Physical, moral, and spiritual difference and complementarity are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarity, needs, and mutual support between the sexes are lived out.*[15] Sexual difference is at the heart of family life. Children need, and have a right to, a father and a mother.

Our Transcendent Purpose

These truths about the human person, accessible to natural reason, attain an extraordinary dignity and calling in the Christian view of the world. The body is not a limitation or confinement but one with the soul in the life of grace and glory to which the human person is called.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body (1 Cor 6:19-20).

Likewise, the relationship between man and woman as masculine and feminine has transcendent significance. Their complementary union serves as an icon of the marriage between Christ and the Church (cf. Eph 5:31-32). Through procreation, spouses welcome new life into the world and become a community of persons that images the Trinity.

Our Wounded Human Nature

Unfortunately, we experience our human nature not as the original harmony intended by the Creator but as fallen and wounded. One of the legacies of original sin is the disharmony and alienation between body and soul. Immediately after sinning, Adam and Eve "sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons" (Gen 3:7). They evidenced their sense of alienation from their own bodies by seeking to conceal them.

Everyone experiences this disharmony in various ways and to varying degrees. Nevertheless, it does not negate the profound oneness of the human person's body and soul. The truth of Christ's Church confirms us in the knowledge of this oneness so often obscured by our brokenness. The restoration of that original harmony, begun here by the action of Christ's grace, realizes its fulfillment in the resurrection of the body on the last day.

Gender Dysphoria

A person may experience this tension and alienation between body and soul so profoundly that the person claims an "internal sense" of sexual identity different from his or her biological sex. This condition was labeled by the American Psychiatric Association in 2013 as "gender dysphoria." [16] From a theological perspective, the experience of this interior conflict is not sinful in itself but must be understood as a disorder reflecting the broader disharmony caused by original sin. It is a particularly painful experience of the wounds we all suffer as a result of original sin. Every individual experiencing this condition should be treated with respect, justice, and charity.

What is new in our times, however, is the growing cultural acceptance of the erroneous claim that some people, including children and adolescents, are "in" the "wrong body" and therefore must undergo "gender transition," either to relieve distress or as an expression of personal autonomy. Sometimes this involves psycho-social changes: The person asserts a new identity, reinforced by a different name, pronouns, and wardrobe. At other times it involves a medical or surgical change: The person seeks chemical or surgical interventions that alter the body's function and appearance and even impair or destroy otherwise healthy reproductive organs.

At its core, this belief in a "transgender" identity rejects the significance of the sexed body and seeks cultural, medical, and legal validation of the person's self-defined identity-an approach called "gender affirmation." Culturally, these claims have brought challenges to law, medicine, education, business, and religious freedom. They also raise significant pastoral challenges for both the shepherds and the faithful of the Diocese.

The Witness of Science

We know from biology that a person's sex is genetically determined at conception and present in every cell of the body. Because the body tells us about ourselves, our biological sex does in fact indicate our inalienable identity as male or female. Thus, so-called "transitioning" might change a person's appearance and physical traits (hormones, breasts, genitalia, etc.) but does not in fact change the truth of the person's identity as male or female, a truth reflected in every cell of the body. Indeed, no amount of "masculinizing" or "feminizing" hormones or surgery can make a man into a woman, or a woman into a man.

The Christian Response

A disciple of Christ desires to love all people and to seek their good actively. Denigration or bullying of any person, including those struggling with gender dysphoria, is to be rejected as completely incompatible with the Gospel. In this sensitive area of identity, however, there is a great danger of a misguided charity and false

compassion. In this regard, we must recall, “Only what is true can ultimately be pastoral.” [17] Christians must always speak and act with both charity and truth. After the example of the Apostle Paul, they are to seek to speak the truth in love (cf. Eph 4:15). The claim to “be transgender” or the desire to seek “transition” rests on a mistaken view of the human person, rejects the body as a gift from God, and leads to grave harm. To affirm someone in an identity at odds with biological sex or to affirm a person's desired “transition” is to mislead that person. It involves speaking and interacting with that person in an untruthful manner. Although the law of gradualness [18] might prompt us to discern the best time to communicate the fullness of the truth, in no circumstances can we confirm a person in error.

Indeed, there is ample evidence that “gender affirmation” not only does not resolve a person's struggles but also can in fact exacerbate them. The acceptance and/or approval of a person's claimed transgender identity is particularly dangerous in the case of children, whose psychological development is both delicate and incomplete. First and foremost, a child needs to know the truth: He or she has been created male or female, forever. Affirming a child's distorted self-perception or supporting a child's desire to “be” someone other than the person (male or female) God created, gravely misleads and confuses the child about “who” he or she is.

In addition, “gender-affirming” medical or surgical interventions cause significant, even irreparable, bodily harm to children and adolescents. These include the use of puberty blockers (in effect, chemical castration) to arrest the natural psychological and physical development of a healthy child, cross-sex hormones to induce the development of opposite-sex, secondary sex characteristics, and surgery to remove an adolescent's healthy breasts, organs, and/or genitals. These kinds of interventions involve serious mutilations of the human body, and are morally unacceptable.

Although some advocates justify “gender affirmation” as necessary to reduce the risk of suicide, such measures appear to offer only temporary psychological relief, and suicidal risks remain significantly elevated following gender-transitioning measures.[19] Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to claims that “gender transition” will resolve their difficulties. Long-term studies show “higher rates of mortality, suicidal behavior and psychiatric morbidity in gender-transitioned individuals compared to the general population.” [20/21] In addition, studies show that children and adolescents diagnosed with gender dysphoria have high rates of comorbid mental health disorders, such as depression or anxiety, are three to four times more likely to be on the autism spectrum, and are more likely to have suffered from adverse childhood events, including unresolved loss or trauma or abuse.[22]Psychotherapeutic treatments that incorporate “ongoing therapeutic work … to address unresolved trauma and loss, the maintenance of subjective well-being, and the development of the self,” along with established treatments addressing suicidal ideation are appropriate interventions.[23] Gender transition is not the solution.

Indeed, to disregard or withhold information about the harms of pursuing “transition” or about the benefits of alternative, psychotherapeutic treatments constitutes a failure in both justice and charity.

Language

Those asserting a transgender identity and/or seeking to “transition” often adopt new names and pronouns that reflect their desired identity and insist that others must use the chosen names and pronouns. Such use might seem innocuous and even appear to be an innocent way of signaling love and acceptance of a person. In reality, however, it presents a profound crisis: We can never say something contrary to what we know to be true. To use names and pronouns that contradict the person's God-given identity is to speak falsely.

The faithful should avoid using “gender-affirming” terms or pronouns that convey approval of or reinforce the person's rejection of the truth. It is not harsh or judgmental to decline to use such language. In the broader culture, Catholics may experience significant pressure to adopt culturally-approved terminology. However, in no circumstances should anyone be compelled to use language contrary to the truth. The right to speak the truth inheres in the human person and cannot be taken away by any human institution. Attempts by the state,

corporations, or employers to compel such language, particularly by threats of legal action or job loss, are unjust. We must love in the truth, and truth must be accurately conveyed by our words. At the same time, clarity must always be at the service of charity, as part of a broader desire to move people towards the fulness of the truth.

For Clergy, Catechists, and Teachers

The transgender issue presents a particular challenge to the handing on of the faith. So much of our faith rests on the natural truths of the human person, the body/soul unity, and the complementarity of man and woman. Jesus our Redeemer, the Son of God, assumes the body/soul unity of our human nature, sacrifices Himself and nourishes us by His Body, and is worshipped as the Bridegroom of the Church. The rejection of core natural truths regarding our humanity damages the “template” that God uses to reveal Himself to us and to manifest His salvific plan for us.

When teaching on this issue, it is essential to situate it within the broader context of the nature of the human person, the body/soul unity, and the sanctity of the body. Transgender ideology does not exist in isolation but is part of our culture's broader confusion about the body, sexuality, man, woman, etc.

Further, it is always important to distinguish between a person's subjective experience and his or her moral culpability. The Church teaches that a person is created male or female. No one “is” transgender. A person who identifies as transgender may experience troubling feelings, confusion, or a mistaken belief that he or she is or can “become” someone different. The Church does not teach that people who experience gender dysphoria or confusion are immoral or bad. At the same time, a person who deliberately rejects his or her given identity or the sexed body and seeks harmful medical or surgical interventions is pursuing a path that is objectively wrong and harmful on many levels. The Church has a special solicitude for those who are suffering and desires to lead them to the truth and to healing.

Thus, when speaking with those who experience gender dysphoria or who claim a “transgender” identity, it is essential to listen and seek to understand their experiences. They need to know they are loved and valued, and that the Church hears their concerns and takes them seriously. In every case, the person's dignity as a person beloved by God should be affirmed. Only in the context of an authentic dialogue will people be able to receive the truth, particularly truths that challenge their feelings or other beliefs.

Special care must be taken when interacting with children who experience gender dysphoria or who express a belief in an identity incongruent with biological sex. Authentic accompaniment requires remaining firm in the truth of the human person while patiently guiding children towards that truth. Parents must always, and immediately, be involved in any discussions with a child about such sensitive topics.

For Parents

You are the first and the best teachers of your children. They will believe, pray, and love according to what they see, hear, and experience in your home. From you they will learn the truth of who they are, the dignity of the human body, the meaning of human sexuality, and the glory of their being children of God. Nothing can substitute for the school of the family.

Still, you cannot fulfill this vocation by yourselves. The Church provides her teachings and pastoral care so that you can draw upon her wisdom and grace in teaching and caring for your children.

In addition to your good example and teaching, raising your children also requires vigilance against dangerous ideas and influences. This means the close monitoring of what your children receive via the internet and social media. Transgender ideology is being celebrated, promoted, and pushed out over all social media platforms and even children's programming. Much of your good work and witness can be undone quickly by a child's unsupervised or unrestricted internet access.

Another strong source of misinformation about the nature of the person, and the meaning of the body is, regrettably, the public education system. Our region's public schools provide an excellent education in many regards. However, many also aggressively promote a false understanding of the human person in their advocacy of gender ideology. Current policies compel the use of chosen names and/or pronouns. Staff in many schools are required to affirm a child's declared “gender identity” and facilitate a child's “transition,” even in the absence of parental notice or permission.[24] Parents with children in public school must therefore discuss specific Catholic teaching on these issues with their children and be even more vigilant and vocal against this false and harmful ideology.

The Church extends her pastoral care especially to those parents whose children suffer gender dysphoria or feel distress over their God-given identity as male or female. Parents in such situations experience a profound sorrow as they witness their children's suffering. Their sorrow is deepened if their children pursue “gender affirming” therapy, a harmful and life-altering path. Parents are encouraged to find strength and wisdom through the grace of the Sacraments of Communion and Confession, and to seek pastoral support in the parish or diocese.

In difficult circumstances, parents are often tempted to think-or are made to feel-that their Catholic faith is at odds with what is good for their child. In fact, authentic love for their children is always aligned with the truth. In the case of gender dysphoria, this means recognizing that happiness and peace will not be found in rejecting the truth of the human person and the human body. Thus parents must resist simplistic solutions presented by advocates of gender ideology and strive to discover and address the real reasons for their children's pain and unhappiness. They should seek out trustworthy clinicians for sound counsel. Meeting with other parents who have been through similar trials also can be a source of strength and support. Under no circumstances should parents seek “gender-affirming” therapy for their children, as it is fundamentally incompatible with the truth of the human person. They should not seek, encourage, or approve any counseling or medical procedures that would confirm mistaken understandings of human sexuality and identity, or lead to (often irreversible) bodily mutilation. Trusting God, parents need to be confident that a child's ultimate happiness lies in accepting the body as God's gift and discovering his or her true identity as a son or daughter of God.

For those struggling

Finally, a word to those struggling with gender dysphoria.

Every one of us has a struggle that is unique. But none of us should feel alone or abandoned in his or her struggles. Like many others, you may feel alienated from your body, as though you are supposed to have a different one. Please know that, although you may struggle with your body or self-image, God's unrelenting love for you means that He loves you in the totality of your body as well. Our basic obligation to respect and care for the body comes from the fact that your body is part of the person-you-whom God loves.

Be on guard against simplistic solutions that promise relief from your struggles by the change of name, pronouns, or even the appearance of your body. There are many who have walked that path before you only to regret it. The difficult but more promising path to joy and peace is to work with a trusted counselor, therapist, priest, and/or friend to come to an awareness of the goodness of your body and of your identity as male or female.

More than anything else, the Church desires to bring you the love of Jesus Christ Himself. That love is inseparable from the truth of who you are as one created in God's image, reborn as a child of God, and destined for His glory. Christ suffered for our sake, not to exempt us from all suffering but to be with us in the midst of those struggles. The Church is here to assist and accompany you on this journey, so that you will know the beauty of the body and soul that God gave you and come to enjoy “the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).

Further resources Support:

- Courage and EnCourage: https://couragerc.org/. EnCourage in the Diocese of Arlington -encourage@arlingtondiocese.org
- Partners for Ethical Care: https://www.partnersforethicalcare.com/.
- Person and Identity: https://personandidentity.com/.
- Sex Change Regret: https://sexchangeregret.com/.
- Society for Evidence-Based Gender Medicine: https://segm.org/.
- Truth and Love: https://truthandlove.com/.

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6. *AL*, no. 56.

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8. *Laudato Sí* (LS), no. 155. http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-

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D. AI Program Use & Plagiarism Policy

Chelsea Academy's Policy Regarding the use of "AI" programs or services to assist in writing, such as Grammarly or ChatGPT

Being able to write well has always been a trait of the Liberal Arts school. Writing takes years of hard work and practice for an individual to learn the art of writing well. It goes without saying that the benefits of being able to write well do not just include the academic realm, but all areas of life, including the personal and professional. Chelsea Academy is committed to developing in our students the ability to write well throughout their time at Chelsea.

That said, throughout the history of education, schools have had to wrestle with influences and forces outside of the physical school that exist in the culture that surrounds it. Perhaps more than ever, the forces outside a physical school may impact things inside the school. This is especially the case regarding the use of electronic devices such as laptops, iPads and smartphones.

However, even more significant is the growing invasion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education. This is specifically related to learning through research and the writing of documents. The current "AI" landscape as it relates to "assisting" individuals in research and writing is extremely involved and potentially dangerous. This is because, simply stated, these "services" not only undermine but also prevent the student from learning or honing the following: a) Basic writing skills, including knowledge of spelling and grammar; b) The ability to organize and outline their own thoughts and arguments; c) To develop strong research and note-taking skills; and d) To write with a mature and clear voice that expresses their unique and individual thoughts and personality.

At both the secondary and tertiary levels of education, many students are now resorting to generative AI entities to write their papers. As mentioned above, they are failing to master basic academic skills, thus stunting their own intellectual growth as well as causing their cognitive abilities to atrophy. Their critical thinking and problem-solving skills are being steadily dulled. Intellectual work, especially organized written work, has never been "quick" and "easy." Rather, it is time-intensive, demanding a diligent day-by-day effort on the part of the student. As students receive regular feedback from their teachers on their written work, they are given the opportunity to assimilate and implement that feedback, thus acquiring a solid mastery over grammar, as well as concretely developing their own composition and written communication skills. Those who resort to AI entities are really "subcontracting" their cognition—these "shortcuts" do have serious, debilitating, intellectual consequences. While such students may have the facade of cognition, they have not the reality. In a very real way they are abdicating their own proper and distinctive "human" capabilities.

Some of these programs and services present themselves as merely "editing" programs, like Grammarly or even Google Docs and Word. However, after further examination, it is quite obvious that programs such as these do not just add a comma or adjust punctuation, but rather they will change the entire sentence structure, to include replacement of words or even to develop or change ideas to mean different things. Other programs such as "ChaptGPT" are quite obviously meant to do all the work related to writing a paper. This includes researching and writing. Just as plagiarism takes someone else's work (from a book/magazine, etc) and presents it as the individual's, so these services do the work and the individual takes the credit. In addition many of these "services" oftentimes are actually wrong in their "research" of a given topic completed on the Internet.

As a result Chelsea Academy views any use of services or programs whether noted specifically as "AI", like HyperWrite, Chat GPT, Llama, Qwen, DeepSeek, Gemini, Grok, Microsoft Copilot, or not, like Grammarly, as forms of plagiarism and cheating. As a result, this is a significant violation of the Chelsea Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. Violations of this will normally result in a zero for the

assignment, discussion with the Academic Dean and/or Headmaster, and may result in further disciplinary action. Repeat offenses may result in suspension or expulsion from Chelsea Academy. In addition, any violation of this policy on a senior's thesis may result in a failing grade for the thesis and potential immediate expulsion from Chelsea Academy.

In addition as technology in this area continues to grow, "word processing" programs such as Google Docs and Microsoft Word have also changed to incorporate more elements than just simple spell or grammar check. Students and parents need to be extremely careful and vigilant to ensure something submitted by a student is in fact their own compilation of various academic skills, including researching, word examination, sentence and paragraph structuring and, in fact, overall word choice and expression.

With the guidance of their parents and teachers, and without the undue interference of AI and other AI-like programs, students at Chelsea Academy will have the opportunity to become, not only accomplished writers, but also clear thinkers, firmly grounded in and supported by their knowledge of the Western tradition, gained through both in class instruction and more independent research.

E. Family School Agreement & Acknowledgement and Receipt of Handbook

FAMILY-SCHOOL AGREEMENT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

When enrolling their child(ren) in Chelsea Academy, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) (hereafter, "parents") are asked to sign the Family-School Agreement. In signing the Family-School Agreement, it is understood that:

1. All children are welcome to Chelsea Academy. As part of enrollment, parents must sign the Family-School Agreement.
2. Our schools exist to pass on the Catholic faith in its fullness to students and to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Parents and schools are partners in this mission; parents are expected to cooperate fully in it and shall supervise their children in accordance with this agreement.
3. As partners in this mission, students and their parents are all part of the school community. As such, students and their parents agree to live their lives in a way that supports, rather than opposes, the mission of the school.

The school joyfully exercises its responsibility to teach Catholic faith and morals in all fullness. Parents whose religious practices and beliefs run counter to Church teaching might experience conflicts as we maintain mission integrity. Sincere questioning of the practices and doctrines of the Catholic faith—whether by students or their parents—in order to more deeply understand them are welcome; but openly hostile or persistent defiance of Catholic truths or morality are a violation of the Family-School Agreement and may result in denial of admission or dismissal from the school.

I acknowledge receipt of the 2026-2027 Chelsea Academy Parent-Student Handbook containing policies, rules, and regulations for Chelsea Academy. I understand and agree that the administration of Chelsea Academy will have the authority set forth in the Handbook.

I understand that the policies, rules, and regulations contained in the Handbook are established for the welfare and benefit of the students.

I will discuss the policies with my child(ren) to ensure their understanding of the policies.

I understand my responsibility to support Chelsea Academy in the policies it has established, and to see that my child adheres to the rules and regulations set forth in the Handbook.

I/We hereby acknowledge that I/we have read and understand the Family-School Agreement and the policies set forth in the Parent-Student Handbook:

My/Our signature below indicates my/our agreement to abide by the terms set forth by both the Agreement and in the Handbook. This form is due on or before the first day of classes.

Parent(s) signature(s) _____ *Date* _____

_____ *Date* _____