

SAINT ANTHONY ACADEMY



Parent/Student Handbook

A Manual of Rules, Policies and Procedures

Revised 02/2016

PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION

The Academy was founded to provide the student with an education that is one with the mind of Holy Church. The Church teaches that the natural world is God's creation and the more a student knows about the world, the more he will know, love and serve God. A true Catholic education must reject modernism and be based on Sacred Tradition as embodied in the Traditional Latin Mass. Consistent with the mind of the Church, the Academy seeks to deliver to the student an academically rigorous course of study such that the student is prepared to undertake further studies at the college level if desired. The Academy accepts the duty of preparing the student to conduct his life in conformance with God's plan for him.

As Pope Pius XI stated in *Divini Illius Magistri*, "It is therefore as important to make no mistake in education, as it is to make no mistake in the pursuit of the last end, with which the whole work of education is intimately and necessarily connected. In fact, since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, and that in the present order of providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten son, who alone is 'the Way, the Truth and the Life,' there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian education."

Hence, the mission of the Academy is to provide the student with a Catholic education, both moral and intellectual, preparing him to be *in the world but not of the world*.

HISTORY

St. Anthony Academy, Ltd. (“The Academy”) was founded in October 2003 by parishioners of Saint Athanasius Roman Catholic Church in Vienna, Virginia, with the purpose of providing a rigorous curriculum, centered on the Traditional Magisterium of the Holy Roman Catholic Church and the classical tradition of Western Civilization. Fidelity to the Traditional Roman Catholic Faith is the standard against which all aspects of the Academy’s curriculum and policies are measured.

LEGAL STATUS

The Academy is a non-profit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and Chapter 10 of Title 13.1. of the Code of Virginia. It is governed by a Board of Directors, presently consisting of five members who are responsible for all school programs and functions including but not limited to curriculum, staffing, calendar, operations, long-term governance and planning.

AFFILIATION

The Academy is affiliated with St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church, an independent, traditional parish where the Mass and sacraments are offered according to the Traditional Latin Rites. The Academy places itself under the spiritual direction of the pastor of St. Athanasius Church.

ADMISSION POLICY

Requirements for admission to the Academy are as follows:

1. Submission of a completed application form;
2. Submission of photocopies of all necessary sacramental certificates and recent report card;

3. Completion of a parental interview with the Principal and/or Director of the Board;
4. Submission to Academy testing if it is necessary;
5. Presentation of materials regarding satisfactory completion of appropriate grade levels;
6. Submission of all required forms, including the Contract.

THE ROLE OF THE HOME IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

In the effort to provide true Catholic formation of children, there must be cooperation between the school and the home. The school fulfills only a supplementary role; it is an extension of the home and is intended to be a help to parents and to confirm the formation given in the home. *The school cannot make up for the lack of a Catholic environment at home.*

The child's religious attitude and practice, therefore, must be learned and habits must be formed primarily in the home. If there is no prayer and religious practice in the home, or if there is bad example in the home, the school will not be able to undo or effectively counteract that indifference or evil. Therefore, we ask parents to cooperate with us in providing a well-rounded religious setting.

The modern culture is completely opposed to Catholic teaching in that it encourages sexual impurity, adultery, disrespect for authority, worldliness and violence. All of these things are to be found in today's movies, television, music and art. Children must be protected from this culture outside of school, as well as inside school. Parents have a grave obligation to see to it that their children are not exposed to these things that will work to weaken their faith, *with the understanding that doing so not only endangers their own children, but also the other children at the school.*

With this in mind, we have written the following guidelines that we *strongly encourage* parents to follow outside school hours:

1) Watching broadcast and cable television, if permitted, should be carefully supervised:

While television is not intrinsically evil, most programs today are in opposition to Catholic morality. And even if a program is good, the commercials are offensive and indecent.

2) Rock music should not be listened to at home or in the car:

Much of the music in the modern culture is inappropriate for children, not only because of the rock beat, but also because of the lyrics. Great care should be exercised in choosing the music which you permit your children to listen to.

3) Movies

Like television, most modern movies contain themes which are completely contrary to the Catholic morality. Great care should be given to the selection of movies that send a positive, moral message to the viewer. Movie ratings and online “family reviews” should be used in making the decision about whether or not to let your children watch a particular movie.

4) Electronic Devices

No student younger than high school should be allowed to have an iPod or similar mp3 player. It is too often the case that objectionable music, of which parents are totally unaware, will be listened to.

If high school students are permitted one of these devices, parents should instruct them as to how to choose

appropriate music, and should periodically check to make sure these guidelines are being followed.

Under no circumstance is one of these devices to be listened to at school.

5) Cell phones

No student younger than high school should be permitted to own a cell phone. Not only is it unnecessary, but children this age do not have the maturity to use it properly and can allow it to become a perpetual source of distraction.

High school students could be allowed the use of a “dumb” phone out of necessity such as driving, but if texting is permitted, parents should make it clear that they will periodically check text messages to make sure that they are being used only for appropriate communication.

“Smart phones” should not be permitted until a student has graduated from high school.

Under no circumstance is a cell phone to be used at school.

6) Internet

Children younger than high school should not have access to the internet except for educational purposes, and then only with a parent present.

High school students also should only access the internet for educational purposes, and though an adult need not necessarily be looking over their shoulder during its use, it should only be used in a public area of the home where the parent can periodically see what is being viewed. Use of the internet for social networking by high school students should only be allowed with vigilant parental oversight.

7) Video Games

Video games should be carefully selected as to their appropriateness for the age of the child. Caution must be

taken to see that an addiction does not develop and, in no case, should their use be permitted on school nights.

8) Playmates

Great care should be exercised in choices of friends for your children. Allowing them to play with children who are permitted to see and do things that you do not permit, is the same as allowing it yourself.

IMPORTANCE OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS

In the interest of God's order in the family, familial authority, and the hierarchy of Catholic fatherhood, fathers, in particular, should impose upon themselves the duty to oversee seriously the education of their children. They should take an active interest in the school activities, the curriculum taught, and the progress made by their children.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Academy curriculum is based on the Classical *Trivium* as understood by Holy Church. Three stages of the *Trivium* are *Grammar*, *Dialectic* (i.e. Logic), and *Rhetoric*. In the Middle Ages, the zenith of Catholic Civilization, the *Trivium* supplied the student for what was called the *Quadrivium*.

In the *Grammar* stage, the student learns particulars, facts. It is important to note that *Grammar* is more than language studies. Every academic subject has a "grammar". For example, in Mathematics, the grammar would include division and multiplication tables. In the study of History, it would include kings, battles, wars, important dates, etc. In Geography, grammar would include identifying continents, rivers, mountains and the like.

Children in this younger stage love the chance to memorize and it is foolish not to take advantage of this opportunity. Public education, with all its “bells and whistles”, rejects this basic psychological truth. It is just as agreeable for youngsters to chant, “Amo, Amas, Amat,” as it is to recite “Hickory, Dickory, Dock!” Mastery of the *Grammar* stage requires large amounts of memorization and this should be done when memorization is easy and agreeable. Thus, our younger students are taught to store away in memory large amounts of information which they do not yet understand completely. That comes at the next stage.

The *Dialectic*, or Logic, stage is when the student begins examining the relationship between and among particulars. For example, what is the relationship between the geography of Virginia and the Battle of First Manassas? The revelation contained in the Book of Genesis and the theory of evolution? Now the student learns the laws of logic and proper argumentation. The study of formal Logic teaches correct thinking and its application to all other subjects.

The third stage of the *Trivium* is the *Rhetorical*. Here students learn how to communicate what they know and believe in a worthy and convincing fashion. From Aristotle to Cicero and then to the Church Fathers, the student studies the finest examples of argumentation in service to the Truth.

The Board and Directors of the Academy, with the assistance of the Academy staff, has developed a curriculum that embodies these principles. The Academy, however, reserves the right to refine the curriculum in light of our actual experience. The Board will never approve any subject, books, or other academic material that departs from the teaching of Holy Church.

POLICIES, RULES, AND PROCEDURES

Peace, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, in the tranquility of order. To have peace, we must have order; and to have order, there must be rules. Students are required to follow the Student Behavioral Code of Conduct and the Discipline and Honor Code.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL CODE OF CONDUCT

The environment at St. Anthony Academy is one that is dedicated to teaching and learning, not only academics, but also Catholic charity. As such, all students are expected to abide by a behavioral code of conduct, which requires that they:

- be honest and committed to integrity
- be respectful and courteous to all teachers, adults and fellow students
- be respectful of school property and the property of others
- remain silent and seated during class unless permitted otherwise by the teacher, with the knowledge that deliberate disruption compromises the learning environment for all students
- refrain from behavior that is hurtful to others such as name-calling, ridiculing, mean-spirited teasing, or the intentional exclusion of others
- refrain from physically harassing other students by fighting, pushing, shoving, kicking, bullying or threatening
- demonstrate good sportsmanship while engaged in all school related sports, games, or playground activities, and will never make fun of fellow students with varying degrees of athletic ability

- set a good example of Catholic charity for younger students, and come to the aid of any student who may need help or assistance when a teacher is not readily available
- refrain from speaking about modern movies, television shows, music, computer games or video games while at school
- at all times, whether at school or in the community, exhibit conduct that reflects the Catholic values and principles of St. Anthony Academy

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed with all students the first week of school. Students in grades three and up will be expected to agree to it by signing a copy of it.

CHURCH CONDUCT

On any occasion in which the student is inside St. Athanasius Church, the student is expected to follow these rules:

- maintain silence and a spirit of reverence
- kneel, stand and sit straight, no slouching
- remember to bring missals, rosaries, etc.
- girls wear provided head coverings
- use the restrooms before going to church

DISCIPLINE CODE

Students need to be aware that bad behavior will have consequences, and thus are expected to review and sign the *St. Anthony Academy Discipline and Honor Code* every year.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION

If a child expresses any dissatisfaction or problem he may be having at school or with the teacher, parents are asked to withhold judgment until the “other side of the story” is obtained. The student should not immediately be believed to be in the right. The parents should, therefore, go directly to the teacher involved or the principal to get the complete story so that appropriate action may be taken.

Parents are asked not to discuss with, or in the presence of, the student any faults, difficulties, or problems with the Academy or any of its staff. Doing so only serves to undermine the authority of the teachers and staff at the Academy. Problems should be resolved in private by the parents and the Academy staff together.

UNIFORMS

St. Anthony Academy has its own proper school uniform. Every student must wear the complete and proper uniform for his grade while on school property. The standard uniform requirements demand that clothes and shoes be clean, socks up, shirts and blouses tucked in, and ties on and at proper length. Girls must wear their hair pulled back off the face and secured with a headband or rubber band. Long hair may not be worn down. Long bangs must be pinned or clipped back.

Uniform violations result in disciplinary action as noted in the Academy Discipline Code. Please consult the Academy Uniform Code for the proper school uniform.

All articles of the uniform are to be labeled with the student’s name.

DAILY SCHEDULE

School begins at 8:00 every morning. Dismissal occurs at 3:05 in the afternoon, Monday through Friday. Students are to arrive at school between 7:45 and 8:00. They are to quietly unpack their bags and take their seats in their assigned classrooms until the first bell.

On the First Friday of every month, students are expected to attend 9 AM Mass at St. Athanasius Church. Confessions begin at 8:30 AM. Students are to arrive between 8:30 and 8:45 AM in the church basement and either get in line for confession or take a seat. Silence is to be maintained.

LUNCH

All students should bring lunches to school each day. Please mark all containers with the family name. Good manners are expected at the table. During the first few minutes of lunch, students are to eat silently. These minutes of silence help ensure that the students eat the lunch provided them. Students are not to share or trade their lunches.

Teachers will not be able heat up your child's lunch due to limited time. Parents are asked to send meals that do not need to be heated or to use a container that will help retain the heat for the food.

RECESS

Recess is held outside most days of the school year. Students will go outside as long as it is not raining, or it is not exceptionally cold. Parents are to ensure that their child is appropriately dressed for the weather when coming to school.

HEALTH POLICIES

Communicable Disease/Exclusion from School

A student suffering from a contagious illness such as the flu, pink eye, chicken pox, mumps, measles, strep throat, etc. will not be admitted to school. Students suffering from a bad cold are also to be kept at home.

Please report all communicable diseases to the school. Communicable diseases include but are not limited to: chicken pox, pink eye, flu, impetigo, head lice, scabies, measles, mumps, whooping cough, ring worm, roseola, strep throat, German measles, mononucleosis, scarlet fever, etc. Please call the school office before sending your child if you are unsure if the illness is communicable or not. When in doubt, keep the child home.

Food Allergies

Food allergies are potentially dangerous. It is the family's responsibility to notify the school of any allergies.

Illness and Injury

Parents will be notified immediately in the case of serious illness or injury that occurs at school. Children will be sent home only in the care of the parent or the person designated by the parent.

Immunizations

State law requires children enrolled in a Virginia school to be immunized against certain diseases, allowing for certain exceptions, including conscientious objection. A pupil immunization record must therefore be submitted upon enrollment of a child in the Academy, and updated as required.

Medications

Students may not self-medicate, and the school may not dispense medication on its own authority. Students who need to take medications while at school will need to have a written permission signed by the parents.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES AND GUIDELINES

Birthdays

While birthdays are a special day in a child's life, a uniform treatment of birthdays is important for purposes of harmony in the school and with school families. All arrangements for individual birthdays must be approved by the principal.

Respect for School Property

Vandalism (including defacing of desks or books) and any abuse of school property will not be tolerated. Parents will be billed for damages and the student will be expected to do any necessary clean-up work.

Students will help maintain an orderly environment in the school by properly looking after their own belongings and by cleaning up after themselves.

There should be no expectation of locker or desk privacy. Students are advised that lockers, desks, and any property of the premises are considered school property.

Rest Room Use

Unless an emergency arises, the restrooms are to be used only at designated times and always under the supervision of a teacher or another adult. Restroom breaks will be more frequent for the younger students.

When Mass is celebrated, students will use the restroom beforehand. Students will not be permitted to visit the restroom during Mass.

Miscellaneous Items

Silence is to be maintained in classrooms, hallways, and bathrooms, at all times, except during recess and break time when moderate noise is permitted.

Running, jumping, and rough housing are not permitted in any part of the school.

Electronic equipment of any nature, including cell phones, is not permitted on school property unless previously approved.

Gum chewing is not permitted on school property.

Use of the school phone will be permitted only in emergencies, and permission must be obtained from the Principal.

Under no circumstances will students be allowed to leave school premises during the school day without written permission.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are valuable and fun learning experiences for students. At the beginning of the year, parents are required to fill out a general field trip permission form with health and emergency information on it. This permission form will be kept on file for the complete academic year.

Field trips are considered a student privilege and not a right. Students must be performing well academically and behaviorally. Students may be denied field trip privileges in certain behavioral and/or academic circumstances.

There may be certain instances in which parents decide that their student will not participate in a given field trip. This is their prerogative; however, if the student does not participate in the field trip, he will be marked absent for that day.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event of inclement weather, it is sometimes necessary to close the school or to delay its opening. The Academy follows the Fairfax County Public School System for closings and delayed openings.

In the case of bad weather on a First Friday, Father Ringrose will never cancel Mass. Therefore, regardless of what the Fairfax County Public Schools are doing that day, we ask parents to make every reasonable attempt to bring their students to Mass.

ABSENCES/TARDINESS

Absences or tardiness can be of an excused or unexcused nature. Parents must call the school or send in a note explaining the reason for the absence. Students are not to report absences for siblings.

Illness and family emergencies are classified as excused absences. Family vacations may be considered excused absences at the discretion of the Principal and provided the student has given a two-week advance notice of said vacation.

Should it be necessary for a student to be dismissed from classes (for doctor's appointments, etc.), the student must submit a note signed by the parent. We request that parents

make an effort to schedule appointments on days off whenever possible.

Students are responsible for all material covered and work assigned during the time they miss class.

Parents of students who are excessively tardy, or have more than five unexcused absences, will be requested to meet with the principal to address the problem.

HOMEWORK

Teachers will daily write the assignments for each subject on the 'Assignment Board' in the classroom. Students will be given time at the end of each day to write these assignments in their assignment notebook and to pack up necessary books. If a student comes to school the next day missing any of the homework that was written on the board, he will incur a penalty, as defined in the *Discipline Code*.

Advance notice will be given to the students for tests and projects that require extra preparation time. For some classes, it will even be possible to have a long-term schedule of homework and tests, but this is not practical for all classes.

Parents should encourage their children to be responsible in writing down the assignments, bringing home the appropriate books, completing the assignments and then bringing them back to school the next day. During the first semester of second grade, the teacher will try to see to it that each student writes down the assignments and takes home the appropriate books. The parents should then make sure the student completes the work and takes it back to school; however, by the second semester of second grade, and thereafter, the ultimate responsibility should be with the

student. If a student is incapable of following these procedures, it may be necessary for a parent to work out a system with the teacher that encourages responsibility, but not dependence. The ultimate objective is for the student to be individually responsible, requiring minimal assistance from parents. The best way to achieve this responsibility is usually to allow the student to suffer the consequences for incomplete work.

Students who are absent are expected to obtain their assignments from their teacher or fellow students.

Though each child may complete his homework at a different rate, the Academy has determined an estimated amount of time that a student should spend on his nightly homework assignments. Beginning in first grade, the student should expect to spend no more than 15 minutes on take-home assignments. This time-frame increases incrementally with each grade level by 15 minutes, such that the second-grade can expect to spend 30 minutes, the third-grade 45 minutes, etc.

If a parent discovers that his child, working at a reasonable rate, is spending 15 or more minutes above this estimation for K-4 students, or 30 or more minutes for 5-12 students, the parent should send a note to the teacher indicating the extra time spent. If the problem persists, the parent should make an appointment to talk with the teacher.

Parents must see that their children complete their homework properly. Any assistance they can give their younger children, especially in drilling them in their catechism, spelling, and vocabulary would be most welcome, but they must not do the homework for them.

REPORT CARDS/PARENT CONFERENCES

Report cards are issued four times a year, at the end of each academic quarter. The report card is to be signed by the parent and returned to the student's teacher within three days after issue, with the exception of the fourth-quarter report card.

Conferences are required at the end of the first quarter, and are on an as needed basis for subsequent quarters. They may also be requested by a parent at any time during the school year.

PROMOTION

Promotion to the next academic level depends upon the evaluation of the faculty and Principal as to the student's readiness for more rigorous work. However, in no case will any student who fails two or more subjects at the end of the academic year advance to the next level.

TUITION AND FUNDRAISING

Tuition

Parents are expected to take their tuition obligations seriously; as it is a matter of justice and indispensable to the financial stability of the school.

Parents, who for a valid reason cannot meet their monthly obligation as agreed upon in the tuition contract, are asked to contact the Principal to inform him of the difficulty and make alternative arrangements.

Fundraising Obligations

All families are expected to participate in fundraising throughout the year. Fundraising helps keep tuition costs

lower than the average in the area. As a result, they are absolutely necessary and are not optional. Therefore, if one fails to participate in our fundraising efforts, they may be required to pay additional fees.