



ROME
CATHOLIC
SCHOOL

**Student/Parent/Guardian
Handbook**

2023-2024

Mission Statement of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Syracuse carry out the mission of Jesus Christ,
bearing witness while proclaiming the Gospel message.
Together with families and parishes, our schools provide an education
rooted in the Gospel that is “living, conscious, and active”
including values and ideals
that are in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. We
empower our students to live their faith with compassion, integrity and
respect for all life and the diversity of our world.
Our schools are faith-centered communities
focused on promoting academic excellence
while developing a strong moral conscience
and embracing Catholic principles
to enable students to meet lifelong challenges and demands in
our rapidly changing world.

August 21, 2013

The Mission Statement of Rome Catholic School

Rome Catholic School is dedicated to education, empowerment, and acceptance
through a lifelong commitment to Jesus and community.

September 2020



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Principal - Dr. Laura Rouse

Website:

www.romecatholic.org

August 2023

Dear Rome Catholic Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at Rome Catholic! This Handbook provides systems and policies to establish and ensure safety and security procedures that guide a productive student learning process. These procedures help foster and sustain a safe school environment that promotes spirituality, academic success, along with respect for and service to others. Understanding the contents of this resource will help your child succeed at Rome Catholic.

The principal reviews, revises and updates this handbook annually. Any additional needed changes to this handbook during the school year will be communicated through the Principal's Newsletter, the school website, and/or subsequent editions of the Handbook. This includes, but is not limited to, any requirements that may be issued by the New York State Department of Education, the Oneida County Health Department, or the Diocese of Syracuse. Please note, this year we will provide families with a paper copy, as well as posting this information on the website. However, in the future, a paper copy of the handbook will be available upon request by calling the main office.

Please read through this handbook and discuss it with your child. By registering at Rome Catholic School, students and their families agree to abide by this Handbook and parents/guardians agree to assist their children with following the policies and procedures of the school. After reviewing this handbook, please return the required signature page indicating that the handbook has been discussed with your child within the first week of school.

It is truly an honor and blessing to serve the Rome Catholic School community. I look forward to facilitating a great faith-filled and academic learning experience for all students. I look forward to welcoming and meeting our Rome Catholic School families as we embark on this new school year together!

God bless,

Dr. Laura Rouse,
Principal



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ATTENDANCE POLICIES

These attendance policies apply to tuition paying students only. Since the UPK Program is grant-based, the attendance policies outlined in Rome City School District's Early Childhood Program Parent Handbook must be followed by all UPK students to remain in the program.

ATTENDANCE POLICY Diocese of Syracuse, New York

Purpose

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese Syracuse establish this attendance policy to: (1) ensure an accurate documentation and record of student attendance by verifying the attendance of all children at instruction in accordance with Education Law 3205; (2) establish a mechanism for schools to provide accountability for all students throughout each school day; and (3) ensure sufficient pupil attendance at all scheduled periods of actual instruction or supervised student activities.

Attendance Strategies

The strategies to achieve these ends are: the use of daily register of attendance that may be computerized or written. The following information will be recorded: the dates of student entry and withdrawal, attendance at each scheduled day of instruction, incidences of tardiness or early departures, excused and unexcused absences.

Attendance Taken

Attendance will be recorded at the following times for all students enrolled at Rome Catholic School (RCS): daily for self-contained elementary classrooms, period by period at the elementary level that is departmentalized or attend class in special area classrooms, and period by period at the secondary level.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Schools will use the New York State approved Register of Attendance, along with the determination of classifications concerning absences, tardiness and early departure.

Early Dismissal Requests by Parents/Guardians

All early dismissal requests must be received in writing the morning of the dismissal. E-mail notification is acceptable. Teachers will send the note to the office. All students who leave early MUST be signed out by a parent or guardian at the front entrance with the appropriate photo identification.

If an unexpected early dismissal arises, please call the school as soon as possible. This will help us facilitate the student being dismissed with the least amount of disruption to the learning environment. If the child returns to school after the appointment, then the parent or guardian must sign the child back in upon his/her return at the main office front door. Parents picking up a student for early dismissal must wait at the main entrance with the proper photo identification.

Pre-K parents have chosen either Option 1 (1:00 dismissal) or Option 2 (2:25 dismissal). Please adhere to your choice for the benefit of the learning environment. If at any time you wish to change your choice consistently to the other option, you are welcome to do so by notifying the main office. Choice 1 and Choice 2 dismissal times are not to be used as a daily choice option. This helps us maintain the integrity of the academic environment. Please note that students that are Option 2 (2:25 dismissal) will be charged the extended day fee, which is \$750/school year.

Credit

Regular attendance is a critical factor in school success for pupils. Therefore, both pupils and their parents must view regular attendance as the most effective way of meeting course requirements. Course credit is awarded based on satisfactory completion of course requirements.

Incentives and Sanctions

Schools will recognize perfect attendance in an age-appropriate manner. In addition to parental notification by letter, excessive absence may warrant a parent conference and possible referral to civil authorities.

Parent Notification

Parents will be required to notify the school when a student is absent or tardy. If the parent has failed to call by a designated time, the school will initiate a call to the parents. A written request must be submitted when a student is to be excused early. A parent, or person in parental relation or person designate by the parent must come to school to sign the student out with the appropriate photo identification (e.g., driver's license).

Any student who is absent or tardy must present a written excuse for the absence or tardiness. The absence or tardiness will be recorded in the school register according to the designation determined by the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Syracuse.

After a total of three (3) excused and unexcused absences, parents will be notified of the student's status. After a total of ten (10) excused and unexcused absences, a parent conference may be required. The principal may initiate an intervention to insure attendance at any time if in his/her judgment it is indicated.

After each incidence of unexcused absence or tardiness from any part of the school day or a student leaving school without the approval of the administration, parents will receive written notification from the school. This notification will include: pupil's name and grade, date of occurrence, portion of day and/or classes missed, date of previous notices, if any, name and address of person to whom notification is sent, and date of notification.

Intervention

School officials will analyze any persistent attendance problems to determine strategies to resolve them. The principal will remediate administrative problems. Student attendance problems will be shared with parents. Additional intervention strategies such as referral to a child study team may be indicated. If necessary, civil authorities such as the county Child Protective Agency will be involved.

Responsible Person

Pupil attendance records will be reviewed by the principal for the purpose of initiating appropriate action to address attendance problems. The principal may designate another school administrator or teacher to assist with the implementation of the school attendance policy. Such designee will be identified by the beginning of the school year and the principal reserves the right to make revisions to such designee during the school year as needed.

Parents/guardians must report absences daily by calling the Main Office at 336-6190 before 8:00 A.M. on the day of the absence. *Excessive absences* (resulting from absences of three or more days consecutively) will require a physician's excuse and/or a conference with the principal and teacher to determine if these absences have cause for concern for the student's academic status. If an effect on a student's academic status is determined, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified and a parent/teacher/principal conference will ensue.

ABSENTEE EXCUSE NOTES

New York State Law requires a note signed by a parent/guardian explaining the reason for a child's absence. The student should present this note to the teacher on the day of his/her return. Without a note, the absence is marked in the Attendance Register as unexcused. Following is an example of the information that should be included:

(Name) _____ has been absent from school on (Date) ____ due to (Reason) _____
Parent/Guardian signature _____

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Requests for permission to miss part or all of a school day must be submitted to the principal. At the discretion of the teachers, assignments and tests may be made up. The school calendar will aid parents in planning trips and appointments. The school strongly discourages vacations which extend into the academic calendar. Excused absences may exist under these conditions:

- Student illness/medical/dental appointment
- Severe illness or death in the family
- Lack of school district transportation
- Impassable roads as determined by the local DPW
- Required court appearances
- Religious observances
- Out of school suspension

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An unexcused absence from school is considered a serious breach of conduct. It impedes your child's ability to receive the lessons needed to learn the curriculum. The principal will be in contact with families who have students with poor attendance. Students may not be allowed to remain at Rome Catholic if attendance becomes an issue.

Typically, absences due to family vacation plans during regular class times are considered unexcused. When children are absent outside of regular scheduled vacation time, students will ordinarily not be given work to be done while they are away due to a possibility that the absence may cause a misconception of the learning objectives.

Upon the student's return, it is the responsibility of the student to complete the missing work, including homework, and assignment after appropriate instruction is given. This policy has the student's best interest and academic preparedness in mind.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Students are covered by an Accident Insurance Policy provided by the Diocese of Syracuse. However, all bills must be submitted through your primary insurance carrier first before the diocesan policy can consider payment. Please call the school office if you have any questions regarding this insurance.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

New York State Education Department (2022) states that “The compulsory attendance law in New York State requires that all children between the ages of six and sixteen be provided with a program of instruction, either at a public school or elsewhere.” (para.1) A child entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age on or before December 1st of that year. For Pre-Kindergarten 3, a child must be three (3) years of age on or before December 1st, and for Pre-Kindergarten 4, a child must be four (4) years of age on or before December 1st.

When registering, parents/guardians are required to present:

- a copy of the birth certificate
- a copy of the baptismal certificate
- a copy of any pertinent legal documents (e.g., separation, divorce, guardian, custodial)
- a copy of immunizations
- an annual student activity fee per student

The initial acceptance of all students for their first year is a conditional acceptance. This means that the student must meet both the academic and conduct standards of the school. Failure to do so may result in the student not being able to continue at the school.

Admission will be denied, according to state law, to un-immunized children unless they are exempt under the provisions of the law. The immunization law applies not only at the usual entry levels, kindergarten or first grade, but also to students transferring into the school at other grade levels.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM

This program is open to Pre-K 3-year-olds through Grade 6 students. Please note, this program is not a daily drop in program, if you choose for your child to attend, you will be assessed fees for a weekly slot. Our program is offered for the convenience of parents of Rome Catholic School to provide a secure, supervised environment for their children after regular school hours.

After-School Care Program:

Time: 2:25pm – 5:30pm sharp

When: Every day when there is a full day session of school.

Fees are assessed by one, two, or three hour slots on a weekly basis. The After-School Care program charges by the hour. You are responsible to pay for the entire hour even though only a portion was used.

Please note: If your child is not picked up by the designated scheduled pick-up time, a late fee will be assessed.

Bills are sent at the end of each month. Payment is due by the 15th of each month. Your account must be current in order for your child to continue attending the After-School Care program.

For more information see the After-School Care Policy/Procedure Handbook.

***NOT offered on Half Days, Snow Days, No After School Activity Days (weather related), or any day that school is not in session.**

Program Costs:

<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Cost per Hour</u>	<u>Weekly Cost</u>
One Child	\$12.00	\$60.00
Two Children	\$15.00	\$75.00
Three Children	\$18.00	\$90.00

Late Fees:

<u>Duration</u>	<u>Fee</u>
15 minutes	\$6.00
45 minutes	\$21.00
1 hour	\$30
More than 1 hour	\$55

Activities While in After-School Care Program:

Includes a snack, arts and crafts, play/learning centers, time to complete homework, and outdoor play/gym time (sneakers are required).

All policies, rules and regulations contained in the Rome Catholic School Handbook apply to the After-School Care Program.

Rome Catholic School reserves the right to modify these policies, rules and regulations when the school deems it necessary.

BIRTHDAY (AND OTHER CLASS PARTY) TREATS

The purpose of the in-school birthday celebration is for the class to celebrate. We ask that parents deliver birthday treats in the morning at drop off time with their child. A faculty member will be available to help if necessary. It is not the intention for parents to be in attendance at these parties as the teachers will use their discretion to hold the party at an appropriate time depending on the daily schedule. All food items must be store bought and have an ingredient label on the packaging due to food allergies. Homemade items will not be served. Please keep the celebration as simple as possible.

We strongly encourage that you do not send in brightly colored frosting on food items as it stains uniforms, other clothing, faces and even furniture. Please choose pale colors or chocolate with colored sprinkles.

Deliveries of flowers and balloons is not permitted due to potential allergies and disruption of learning time.

Invitations for private at home parties may be distributed through school only if there is an invitation for each child in the classroom. Please send those to the attention of your child's teacher.


Individual invitations for **all** classroom students without exclusion can be brought to the teacher's attention to be distributed in each child's to-go-home red folder.

Please note: It is against school policy for the school to give out any names, personal information and/or addresses of any students.

BUS REGULATIONS

Students are expected to act in a respectful and proper manner at all times during school related transportation. Buses provided for student transportation are extensions of the school and students are to comply with the student discipline code at such times. Because transportation to and from a child's home is provided by the public school district in which the child resides, students are required to abide by the rules and regulations for bus conduct established by the public school district as well as by RCS. Penalties for violations of said rules and regulations may result in restricted privileges and the loss of service.

Students must observe the following rules:

- Be ready when the bus arrives
- Do not enter or leave bus while it is in motion
- pass 10-feet in front of bus and **NEVER** pass behind the bus
- Use the seat assigned by the bus driver
- Follow the directions given by the bus driver
- Remain seated when the bus is in motion
- Use of electronics is at the discretion of the bus driver
- No food or drink may be consumed on the bus
-  Pick-up any materials or items left by the student in the assigned seating area

Infractions while riding the bus will be reported to the school administration. Students may be suspended from their busing privileges for violations of the above rules. If a student has their bus privileges suspended, the parent or guardian is responsible for transporting their child to and from school.

BUS TRANSPORTATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Bus transportation is available to students from the districts of Rome, Adirondack, Camden, Holland Patent, Clinton, Whitesboro, Oriskany, VVS and Westmoreland. All students must reside within the boundaries established by the state guidelines. Listed are the telephone numbers for the various districts:

Rome	523-7236	Adirondack	942-9241	Camden	245-0878
Whitesboro	768-9740	Oriskany	768-2060	Holland Patent	865-4103
VVS	829-2520	Westmoreland	557-2664	Clinton	404-2763

CAFETERIA

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Mr. Whitmore from Rome City School District worked very hard and secured funding in the Community Eligibility Program to offer free breakfast and lunch for all students.

- Breakfast will be provided in person this year in your child's classroom. Breakfast time for K-6 students is 7:30. If you wish for your child to eat breakfast at school, they must arrive at this time. **Please indicate in a note to your child's teacher they will be participating in the breakfast program.**
- Breakfast for all participating UPK students will begin at 8:00 in your child's classroom. **Please indicate in a note to your child's teacher they will be participating in the breakfast program.**
- Please read the menu daily and decide if your child will need a school lunch. PreK parents should indicate in a note to the child's teacher what they will be eating for lunch. There is one lunch offered on the menu or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich as an alternative. Children arriving without a lunch will be served a school lunch of the day.

Children are expected to practice good manners while eating. Students must follow all cafeteria rules. All supervisory adults are to be respected and obeyed. Lunchroom rules are to be followed by everyone at all times. Students are required to:

- sit in assigned seats or areas
- remain seated until dismissed
- use indoor voices
- listen for announcements and follow directions by supervisory adults
- pick up their own trash and/or place tray in appropriate designated area when finished

Food from outside vendors **may not be delivered or brought into** the school during the school day without the permission of the principal; this includes dropping off a lunch that is purchased from a restaurant.

CALENDAR

Please follow the link below for up-to-date events on our 2022-2023 school calendar. [Website Calendar Link](#)

CELLULAR PHONES

Note: Each classroom is equipped with a phone for emergency purposes and students can be contacted through the main office if families need to reach them during the school day.

Possession of a cell phone is a privilege on the RCS Campus. Students are not permitted to have cell phones in class at any time for use, unless approved by the principal. Any cell phones brought to school must be turned off and put away until the close of the day. (RCS is not responsible for any lost or stolen cell phones or any other items.)

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

In addition to our website, www.romecatholic.org, we also have a Facebook page and the FACTS Family Portal. At the beginning of every month, the lunch menu will be posted on the website and in the Parent Portals as well. Please be sure to check these sites frequently for these and other communications. We will continue to communicate with parents/guardians mostly via email, phone class and through FACTS (login at www.factsmtg.com). **Please make sure an updated email address and phone number are provided to the office at the beginning of the school year and reflected on the Emergency Contact Form. Updates must be provided to the school if changes occur.**

Teachers will establish other direct communication to parents for their own classes such as notes in the communication folder, through See Saw, or the FACTS Family Portal. Teachers will notify parents of the application process for their individual See Saw accounts when the school year begins. If you have questions or concerns about See Saw, please contact your child's teacher. Parents/guardians need to check backpacks for notes, notices, forms and various permission slips on a daily basis.

Rome Catholic utilizes a telephone messaging system referred to as **Parent Alert**. This is a great resource to disseminate information quickly to our families regarding emergency issues, school information, etc. Parent Alert is an automated phone call that will leave a voice message. Please make sure we have the most current telephone information on record so that you can receive this information.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

At Rome School we believe that all students have a right to be an active part of a safe and orderly learning environment. As a Catholic school, we emphasize the development of the whole child. Spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical growth are fostered. The school staff aims to see all children develop an ever-increasing awareness of their own self-worth and the worth of others with a reverence for each person.

The school environment attempts to emphasize the need for an increasing sense of responsibility and self-discipline, not imposed control, on the part of all students. Justice and charity are the two guiding virtues. Discipline is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. Good discipline is maintained by recognizing and praising good behavior, while also taking corrective action when necessary. Students must take responsibility for their own actions. Students are expected to put forth their best effort and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will promote a safe, orderly learning environment. School/classroom rules and expected behaviors are explained to children. Full parental cooperation in upholding the following standards of conduct is a prerequisite for participation in the educational programs of Rome Catholic School.

Standards of Conduct:

Students are expected to demonstrate mature, responsible, and charitable behavior. They will:

1. Treat self, all staff members, and others with courtesy and respect.
2. Demonstrate Catholic values in speech and action.
3. Greet and respond to everyone in a polite manner.
4. Be considerate of the needs of others.
5. Contribute in a positive manner to the classroom and school environment.
6. Maintain good attendance. Arrive to school and classes on time.
7. Follow any additional standards requested by the teachers and staff.
8. Comply with all policies, rules, and regulations as specified or implied in this Handbook.

The full Diocesan policy is available [here](#) and may be used for severe cases of behavioral infractions.

CUSTODY

The school assumes that both parents have full custody unless the school receives a copy of that portion of the Separation Agreement or Divorce Decree that outlines any other custody arrangements. This information may also be provided to the school on official stationery signed by an attorney. Non-custodial parents retain their parental rights and have a right to information about the student's academic progress unless the school receives a court order that directs it not to release this information to a non-custodial parent. If non-custodial parents reside at a different address than the primary address of the student and wish to receive academic updates, they should contact the office to be put on the email list.

CYBER BULLYING

Students may not use the computer or any other form of communication to intimidate, harass and or bully another person. This includes but is not limited to instant messaging, other internet postings, email, phone calls, cell phone calls or text messaging. Use of communication devices whether on or off campus must be consistent with the Mission Statement of RCS. The Administration reserves the right to review materials it feels are not in compliance with this policy and to proceed as necessary with the Diocesan Code of Conduct which follows in this handbook.

DETENTION

Recess or Lunch Detention: Students may be assigned detention during lunch and/or recess. Either by their classroom Teacher or Administration.

DISMISSAL AT THE END OF THE DAY

Please send in a note at the beginning of the school year with information about how your child will be getting home each day. **Please send a separate note for each child.** If there is a change in the normal routine, please send in a note each time that there is a change. If there is a need to make changes during the school day, please call the office **as soon as possible.** **Please note that no child will be released to anyone who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Area of the FACTS Family portal or on the Students Emergency Contact Card. Anyone listed to pick up a student from Rome Catholic School is required to present a photo identification.**

DRESS CODE FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 6

- The principal may adjust the dress code at any point during the course of the school year.
- Spirit wear will be permitted at the administration's discretion or upon special requests from clubs.
- Final decisions concerning appropriateness of a student's appearance are at the principal's discretion.
- Gently used uniforms are available in our Uniform Closet at no cost, by appointment.
- New vests/sweaters must be purchased through [FlynnO'Hara Uniforms](#).
- Polo shirts must have the Rome Catholic School logo and are purchased through a local vendor, Winning Promotions. The online store for ordering PE clothes and polo shirts will be open quarterly. Please call the school for more information.

DRESS CODE COMPLIANCE

It is required that parents/guardians and students ensure compliance with the school dress code every day. All faculty and staff are required to enforce the dress code out of fairness to each student. **Final decisions concerning appropriateness of students' appearance are at the principal's discretion.**

Boys Dress Code for Students in Grades K-6 (can be worn all year, must be worn to mass)

- Shirts:** Plain white dress shirts, short or long sleeves: not a polo shirt, no logos, emblems, patterns, or designs. Available online at various retailers (Jcpenney.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com or through FlynnO'Hara Uniforms)
- Pants:** Navy blue dress pants (no cargo, corduroy, knit pants, or jeans)
- Shoes:** Dress shoes, black or brown
- Socks:** White, black or navy blue. Ankle socks or higher may be worn.
- Sweaters:** Red sweater vest or long sleeve V-neck with logo from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms

Girls Dress Code for Students in Grades K-4 (can be worn all year, must be worn to mass)

- Jumpers:** Knee length, from [FlynnO'Hara Uniforms](#)
- Blouses:** Plain white button front round "Peter Pan" collar dress shirt, short or long sleeves: not a polo shirt, no logos, emblems, patterns, designs, lace. Available online at various retailers (Jcpenney.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com or through FlynnO'Hara Uniforms)
- Slacks:** Navy blue dress slacks (no cargo, corduroy, knit pants, leggings, or jeans)
- Shoes:** Dress shoes, black or brown with low heel. (no higher than 1 inch)
- Socks:** White, black, red, or navy ankle, knee high or tights
- Sweaters:** Red cardigan sweater with logo from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms may be worn if needed. Please note vests are never worn with a jumper.

Girls Dress Code for Students in Grades 5-6 (can be worn all year, must be worn to mass)

- Skirts:** Knee length, from [FlynnO'Hara Uniforms](#)
- Blouses:** Plain white button-down collared dress shirt, short or long sleeves not a polo shirt, no logos, emblems, patterns, designs, lace. Available online at various retailers (Jcpenney.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com or through FlynnO'Hara Uniforms)
- Slacks:** Navy blue dress slacks (no cargo, corduroy, knit pants, leggings, or jeans)
- Shoes:** Dress shoes, black or brown with low heels. (no higher than 1 inch)
- Socks:** White, black, red, or navy ankle, knee high or tights
- Sweaters:** Red V-neck vest or long sleeve sweater with logo from FlynnO'Hara Uniforms required. A vest or V-neck sweater must be worn at all times.

SEASONAL DRESS CODE FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 6

Fall and Spring Options for Girls and Boys:

Dates: Beginning of school through October 14th **and** beginning April 1st through the end of the year, the following applies:

- White or red polo shirt with either the Rome Catholic logo or Rome Catholic mascot (cardinal) purchased through Winning Promotions.
- While wearing a polo, the red vest sweaters with the logo/mascot are optional over these shirts.
- Navy blue knee-length walking shorts may be worn.

Winter Options for Girls and Boys:

Dates: Beginning Oct 15th through and until April 1st

- Plain white turtlenecks may be worn. No logos, patterns, emblems or designs may be on them.
 - K-4 Girls - under the jumper
 - 5-6 Girls - worn with skirt and vest or sweater
- Red cardigan (K-4) or long sleeve V-neck pullover sweater with logo or mascot (K-6 Boys, 5-6 Girls), that is purchased from Flynn O'Hara Uniforms, must be worn over turtlenecks.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM

Gym uniforms and polo shirts must be purchased through [Winning Promotions](#). In addition to the RCS gym t-shirt and sweatshirt, RCS spirit wear shirts are acceptable as part of our gym uniform. Gym uniform orders are open quarterly via a website link to Winning Promotions. The school will have the online store accessible in August with a bulk back-to-school discount available. Please call the school for dates the on-line store will be accessible. All gym uniforms must have the Rome Catholic School logo.

- Non-marking SNEAKERS and white SOCKS are required year-round
- RCS t-shirt and/or sweatshirt
- RCS shorts September until October 14th and after April 1st
- RCS sweatpants October 15th through April 1st

ADDITIONAL DRESS CODE ITEMS

Hairstyles: Hair must be a natural color

Neat, clean and acceptably styled, no fad hairstyles

Hair ornaments that are a distraction are not permitted (this includes animal headbands, tiaras, etc.)

Miscellaneous: Hats and sunglasses are not permitted inside

Excessive earrings/jewelry that are a distraction are not permitted

Excessive makeup is not permitted.

Spirit Day Dress Code: Periodically, Spirit Days will be granted to students at RCS. Appropriate attire consistent with our school mission is expected; any question may be directed to your child's teacher first, and then to school administration. Additional details pertaining to specific spirit day dress code will be provided prior to the event.

DROP OFF/PICK UP

At this time, K-6 grade students and UPK students will be dropped off at the side parking lot St. Paul's door.

Drop off time begins at 7:30am and ends promptly at 7:50am. For the safety of all children, the doors are locked and any student(s) arriving after 7:50 is tardy and **must** be signed in by a parent in the foyer by an office staff member.

- **Morning Drop Off Procedures:**

At this time K-6 car rider students will be dropped off at the side lot door, known as the St. Paul's parking lot door. It is the responsibility of all adults participating in drop off to maintain social distancing while waiting outside for drop off.

7:30-7:50 Drop Off Times for both K-6 and UPK Option 2 students (7:30 – 2:25):

- **Car Drop-off:** You are welcome to drop your child at the side lot door beginning at 7:30am. For the first week of school, parents are welcome to walk their child/children to their classrooms. Please use this time to help your child get settled and comfortable with the morning routine. After the first full week of school, parents will drop students at the door (St. Paul's parking lot). We believe this allows the children the opportunity to develop independence and to socialize with friends. We appreciate your support of this process. Arrival time ends promptly at 7:50am and the school day begins with prayers. This year prayers will take place in the gym so that we can gather to start our day with prayers, songs, and celebrations of special days such as birthdays. Tardy students must ring the bell at the front door. Students will be signed in at the main office and escorted to class by a staff member. **If you do not arrive by 7:50, you must wait until the doors reopen at 8:00am as the entire school will be in prayers at that time. Please wait until 8:00 am to enter the school building at the assigned drop-off points.**
- **Bus Drop-off:** These drop-offs are always located in the front circle. We ask that **no car riders use** the front door or park in the circle as it is reserved until 8:00 am - 2:30 pm for buses only. All students that are bus riders will remain seated on the bus until they are told to exit the bus. Your child will be greeted by a staff member upon entering the building and directed to their classroom.

8:00 am PK Option 1 Drop-off:

- If your child is **not** attending religious time at Rome Catholic, your drop-off time is 8:00 am at the St. Paul's door (front parking lot at the right-hand side of the building). A staff member will greet you and doors will close promptly at 8:10 am. Students arriving after 8:10 am are considered tardy and must be walked to the front door and sign-in with an adult with the appropriate photo identification. **Please note early arrivals are not permitted during our prayer time.**

Afternoon Pick-up Procedures

- **Students will be dismissed from the St. Paul's side parking lot beginning at 2:25 pm. The dismissal begins with UPK students. Not all students will be dismissed at the same time for safety reasons. Please expect wait time as classes are dismissed and please be prepared to step forward with a photo identification when you see your child's teacher at the door.**

Please drive carefully in the parking lot and please have patience as we work through the system of dismissal the first few weeks. Expect wait time as classes are only dismissed three at a time. To help facilitate the pickup process, please step forward when you see your child's teacher at the door.

EARLY DISMISSAL REQUESTS BY PARENTS

All early dismissal requests must be received in writing the morning of the dismissal. E-mail notification is acceptable. Teachers will send the note to the office. All students who leave early MUST be signed out by a parent or guardian at the front entrance.

If an unexpected early dismissal arises, please call the school as soon as possible. This will help us facilitate the student being dismissed with the least amount of disruption to the learning environment. If the child returns to school after the appointment, then the parent or guardian must sign the child back in upon his/her return. Parents picking up a student for early dismissal must wait at the main entrance.

Pre-K parents have chosen either Option 1 (1:00 dismissal) or Option 2 (2:25 dismissal). Please adhere to your choice for the benefit of the learning environment. If at any time you wish to change your choice consistently to the other option, you are welcome to do so by notifying the main office. Choice 1 and Choice 2 dismissal times are not intended to be daily choices. This helps us maintain the integrity of the academic environment. Please note that students that are Option 2 (2:25 dismissal) will be charged the extended day fee, which is \$500/school year.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices (including, but not limited to, cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, cameras, portable gaming devices, etc.) are not permitted to be used, displayed or turned on without permission from the principal. Students must turn off cell phones and electronic devices before they enter the school. Use of electronic devices on buses is at the discretion of the driver. Students that do not adhere to these rules are subject to disciplinary actions.

EMERGENCY CLOSING/DELAYED OPENING OF SCHOOL

In the event of a building emergency causing a closing or delayed opening, Rome Catholic School will notify parents via **Parent Alert**, our notification system, along with our Rome Catholic School Facebook page.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a privilege, not an entitlement or a right. Students who consistently choose to behave in a manner that does not comply with our behavior expectation may be refused the privilege of attending a field trip. Field trips are planned by individual teachers after consultation with the principal. Field trips are designed to enhance our curriculum. Permission slips are required. A note will be sent home stating the purpose of the trip, the destination, date, time of departure and return and any other pertinent information. Due to insurance regulations and policies, transportation for trips will be provided by bus. Students are to ride the bus to and from the field trip. With all this in mind, we state the following:

“In order to participate in any field trip sponsored by Rome Catholic School, the student must present a consent form, completed and signed by his/her parent/guardian on or before the date established by the teacher or principal. Consent of one parent/guardian is sufficient to authorize the student’s participation. If a child becomes ill while on a field trip, parents will be contacted. Each time their child attends a trip, parents must be prepared to pick up their child from the field trip location, should they become ill. If deemed appropriate, the school may authorize emergency medical care for the student in the event the parent/guardian cannot be contacted.”

At times, parents may participate as chaperones for field trips. Parents will be responsible for other children in addition to their own. **Parents may not bring younger siblings with them on the trip due to insurance purposes.** Also, all parents choosing to chaperone must be **Safe Environment** trained in accordance with the policies set forth by the Diocese of Syracuse. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available only to registered students in Grades K-6. No awards will be made until the school has accepted all paperwork and all appropriate application fees have been paid. In addition, a financial aid application must be filed through FACTS to be considered for **any** aid. Some organizations providing financial aid require additional forms to be completed. Diocesan aid is applied for by completing the FACTS financial aid form each school year. (Online application is open for RCS during Open Registration the last week in January of each year.)

FIRE/LOCK DOWN DRILLS

By New York State Law, we must conduct eight fire drills and four lock down drills each year. Teachers will review the procedures and rules for fire drills. The first few drills will receive advance warning.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising events are an integral part of our school budget and are used to support school programs. All group fundraising is done on a family basis. All parents/guardians are asked to support the RCS fundraising efforts. Fundraising efforts within the school should be done only in consultation of the principal.

GUM CHEWING

Students are not permitted to chew gum in the school building. The expense of removing gum as well as the health issues associated with the improper disposal of gum requires strict enforcement of this rule.

HOMEWORK

In order to maintain acceptable grades, good study habits are necessary, both in school and at home. Research shows that completing homework assignments helps to improve student learning and achievement.

Parents/guardians and teachers work together to support one another regarding homework assignments that are necessary for the continuity of our academic programs. Homework is designed to reflect our school's curricular planning by reinforcing academic skills previously taught in the classroom, while also developing a sense of responsibility for children. Students may receive homework each day, Monday through Thursday, with occasional weekend assignments.

If a child does not complete a homework assignment, the parent/guardian should send a written reason to the teacher. If a child appears to be spending an unreasonable amount of time on schoolwork at home, please contact the teacher as soon as possible. Together the teacher and parent/guardian may work out adjustments to the assignments. If your student is out due to illness and you would like to pick up their missed assignments, please contact the main office to give the teacher time to put the assignments together.

ILLNESS WHILE IN SCHOOL

If your child becomes ill or injured at school, the nurse will notify the parent/guardian or emergency contact person. A child may be released from school only to the parents/guardian or person authorized by the parents/guardians on the Emergency Card. Photo identification is required for adults not known by school personnel. NO child will be allowed to leave school without parental permission. Students who are sent home from school with symptoms of illness will be instructed by the school nurse as per the Department of Health guidelines on a case-by-case basis when it will be appropriate for them to return to school and under what circumstances they can return.

LEAVING SCHOOL PROPERTY

RCS is a closed campus. Under no circumstances may any student leave school property during the school day without parental/guardian, teacher and principal permission and they must be in the care of an authorized adult.

LIBRARY BOOKS

All students have access to the library/media center. Proper care of the books and materials, when either in use in the library or borrowed from the library, is the responsibility of all students who use these resources. Damaged or lost books must be replaced by the student/parent/guardian at the current book price. A library schedule will be communicated during the first week of school. Any books borrowed from the library must be returned by the return date and is the responsibility of the student to do so. Classroom library resources and periodic book fairs held at school are additional resources to support your child's reading skills and interests.

MEDIA COVERAGE

At times during the school year, the media such as the Catholic Sun, The Rome Sentinel or The Observer Dispatch, YNN, WKTV, etc. come to the school to report on activities at the school. If parents do not wish to have their child/ren participate in the coverage, they should make this known to the principal during the application process. Videotaping, audio recordings, taking pictures or any type of recording devices of Rome Catholic students is **strictly prohibited** unless otherwise approved and directed by the principal. Photographs and/or videos of minors are taken periodically for use in parish/parochial publications and to celebrate your child's and his/her fellow students' participation and accomplishments when prior parental consent is given to do so. A publicity release permission form is given to parents to sign at the time of re-enrollment or application in the online process. These forms are kept on file for (10) years. A change in permission request must be made in writing and given to the main office.

MEDICATION

Should it be necessary for your child to take medication during the school day, the following procedure must be followed:

- A written, signed notice from the doctor **MUST** be submitted stating the student's name, the name of the medication, dosage, times and dates to be given. Medication will be kept secure in the nurse's office and administered at the proper time.
- A written, signed request to administer medication from the parent/guardian to the school **MUST** be submitted.
- All medications must be in the original container bearing the original pharmacy or manufacturer's label and given to the nurse by the parent/guardian. Students may NOT keep or be in the possession of medications.
- **No medicines** (including aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops, etc.) will be dispensed unless the above three conditions have been met.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

- Teachers endeavor to keep parents/guardians informed as much as possible as to their child/ren's progress. To this end, one formal parent/teacher conference is scheduled.
- At various times throughout the year, parent/guardian conferences concerning individual students may be arranged. The teacher, the parent/guardian, or the principal may initiate these conferences.

PARENT/TEACHER GROUP

Parent/Teacher Group (PTG) consists of all parents, guardians, teachers, and school staff members of Rome Catholic School. This organization exists to:

- develop a closer relationship between home and school
- foster communication and build relationships between parents/guardians, teachers and administration
- assist faculty members with school related activities
- help with fundraising events

The PTG group notifies parents/guardians about PTG supported events via the school calendar, Family Portal, and/or the Principal newsletter. Involvement from our school community provides continual support for student learning and success.

PARKING FOR EVENTS

Parent and visitor parking is located on the east, front right side of the school, along with the parking lot located in the back of the building. ***Due to fire codes, there is no parking in the front circle, which includes any overflow parking for large events.*** Parking on Cypress Street is allowed. All admittance into the building for school events must use the front door for entrance. Please note the handicap parking is located in the back parking lot. Please do not park in the Hannaford parking lot.

PRAYER

Rome Catholic School provides a spiritually enriched, academic environment that permeates a faith-filled atmosphere through the entire day. Religious doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is taught as a subject as well as lived out in the lives of our faith community.

Concepts of morality and various types of prayer are an integral part of our school. Our students have opportunities to plan and participate in school wide liturgies and other liturgical expressions of our faith. All students actively participate in our religion program and the faith dimension of the school. We require that all of our RCS students be in attendance for liturgy and other religious activities. We require that everyone show reverence and respect, follow procedures and act in an appropriate manner.

Morning prayers are held in the Gym and begin at 7:50am. All students (including UPK students who arrive before 8:00am) will attend morning prayers. Afternoon prayers are said within the classrooms over the PA system immediately before dismissal announcements.

RETENTION POLICY

Students who encounter academic difficulty are monitored carefully throughout the school year. Parents/guardians are contacted and notified by the school if a lack of student achievement is evident during this time. Individual academic achievement, lack of maturity and/or readiness for a particular grade may indicate the need of educational assistance. The final decision to retain a student is made by the principal after careful consideration and consultations with the parents/guardians and teacher on or by April 1st. Retention is a serious matter and ultimately may impact the child's future educational experiences. Therefore, all aspects of the child's academic and social learning achievement will be considered before making a decision to retain a student.

SCHOOL HOURS

While students are in a school's custody, the school must exercise the same degree of care and supervision that a reasonable, prudent adult would employ in any given circumstance. Schools are not responsible for their children until they accept custody of them. Such responsibility ends when the school relinquishes custody. The school day begins at 7:50am and ends at 2:25pm. Our policy for supervision is as follows:

- Rome Catholic School will not accept custody of school students before 7:30am each day.
- K-6 Students who are not in their classrooms at 7:50am are marked TARDY.
- Option 1 UPK students must arrive between 8:00 and 8:10 are marked TARDY.
- Option 2 Student must arrive between 7:30 and 7:50 am are marked TARDY.
- Dismissal time for students being picked up begins at 2:25pm.
- Bus students leave the school between 2:25pm and 2:38pm.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Diocese of Syracuse and Rome Catholic School that all students be free from all forms of sex discrimination including sexual harassment in the school environment. Any allegation that a student has been sexually harassed, or has been involved in sexually harassing another, will be fully investigated. If the allegations are determined to be valid, appropriate action will be taken. Sexual harassment may occur in several ways, including: · Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature · Situations where a student's submission to or rejection of such conduct becomes a basis for academic decisions affecting the student and/or impacts the learning environment. · When such conduct creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive learning environment.

For more information click [here](#).

SMOKE-FREE POLICY

New York State law prohibits smoking in schools or on school grounds. As such, smoking or possession of tobacco products is not permitted by anyone on school property or adjacent property. The use of chewing tobacco is forbidden at any school event.

TARDINESS

Students who are not in school on time are considered tardy. See the **School Hours** section above. Occasional tardiness is understood; habitual tardiness is disruptive to the school day for both your child and the classroom. Habitual tardiness will be addressed on a case by case basis by the principal.

TESTING

During the course of the year several assessments are administered to the students at various grade levels:

- **NEW YORK STATE TESTS and ASSESSMENTS:** These are mandated by the New York State Education Department and given annually to students in grades 3 - 6.
- Various school tests will be administered in each grade as part of progress monitoring of academic skills.
- iReady assessments are administered in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

TEXTBOOKS

Students receive textbooks through the New York Textbook Loan Act. At the end of the school year, when books are collected, the student/parent/guardian is responsible to RCS for any damages or lost textbooks.

TUITION

Tuition for each school year is decided by the Board of Trustees and set by the re-enrollment period in the last week of January. Current rates are available by calling the school at 315 336-6190. In the process of applying to attend there will be fees in addition to tuition that are charged by FACTS Grant and Aid, our tuition management company. Rome Catholic School charges a yearly Student Activity Fee in the amount of \$100.00 per student at the time of enrollment that is non-refundable. The SAF covers the cost of student activities such as field trips, presentations, and also a copy of the school yearbook for each student.

DIOCESAN TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

When tuition payments are delinquent, the school reserves the right to decline to enroll a student for subsequent semesters until such payments are made or an alternate agreement is reached with respect to such payment. In addition, one or all of the following sanctions will occur for failure to pay tuition according to the tuition schedule. Rome Catholic School adheres to the following tuition payment policy:

- A student may not begin school in September if there is past due tuition owed.
- A tuition payment plan must be in place in order for a student to start the new school year.
- In the event that tuition is left unpaid, the school will refer the tuition account to a collection attorney or collection agency and all related collection fees will be the responsibility of the client.

Administrators need to be informed about any unusual circumstances that may delay tuition payment. Also, limited tuition assistance is available through the diocesan programs to aid families in financial need. Applications must be made in the spring prior to the next school year.

Payments are to be mailed, e-mailed or telephoned to Smart Tuition (888-868-8828) or automatically withdrawn from your account.

VIRTUS TRAINING (SAFE ENVIRONMENT)

The Office of Safe Environment educates clergy, religious, employees and volunteers of the Diocese of Syracuse on how to prevent sexual abuse and create safe environments for children, young people and vulnerable adults. All staff and volunteers of Rome Catholic School, and all Catholic Schools and Churches in the United States, must be trained.

In order for a parent to go on a field trip they must be trained. To find out more information on dates and times, please visit <https://www.syracusediocese.org/safe-environment/>

Please allow 2-3 weeks processing time after taking the class to receive your clearance. Taking the class is only the first step. You will receive a card in the mail when you have successfully completed the training and background clearance check. This includes coaches who enter into gym rental agreements with the school that will be working with children.

Periodically the school will send an email informing parents of upcoming training sessions, both initial and recertification. Please note these sessions are for adults only, no children are allowed to attend.

VISITORS (including parents and guardians)

All visitors (including parents, grandparents, graduates, etc.) must report to the main office upon arrival at school. Visitors must sign in and wear a visitor pass. Before leaving, visitors are asked to return to the main office and sign out. Visitation to any classroom for any reason requires permission, in advance, from the principal. Please do not go to the classrooms until approved by the office.

When classrooms have special activities scheduled and visitors are invited, please plan to arrive within 5 to 10 minutes before the start of the event to sign in and take an I.D. label. Teachers set specific times so they can plan and organize their event prior to their guests arriving.

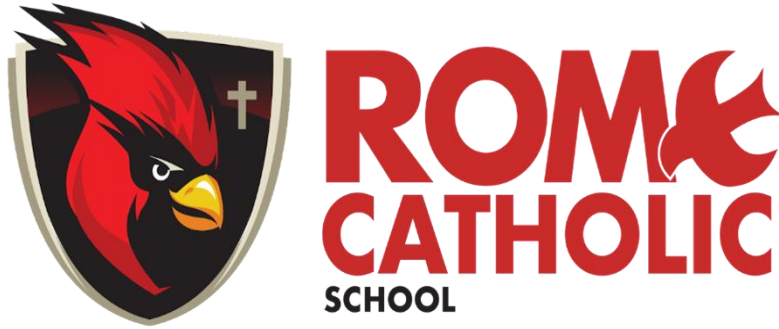
At Rome Catholic we strive to maintain the integrity of academic learning time in the classroom. Therefore, visitors are reminded that school events are not appropriate times to discuss student progress or concerns. Please request an appointment with the teacher to discuss any issues you would like to address by sending a note, email or calling the school.

VOLUNTEERS

At the request of teachers and/or administrators parents may be invited to come in to provide classroom or other assistance, or to help with an event. The Parent/Teacher Group is a great place to start volunteering. As we say at Rome Catholic, many hands make light work. **All volunteers must be Safe Environment trained. There are no exceptions to this policy.** Sign in and wear a visitors tag. Before leaving, visitors are asked to return to the main office to sign out. Visitation to any classroom for any reason requires permission, in advance, from the principal. Please do not go to the classrooms until approved by the office.

Reference:

New York State Education Department (17Aug, 2022). State requirement and programs.
<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/nonpub/manualfornewadministratorsofnps/statereqs.htm>



Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is important that you are aware of the school's policies. Please read and familiarize yourself with these and use them as a reference in cases such as a child's illness, lunch and other day-to-day functions.

Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read and am familiar with The Rome Catholic School Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook policies and regulations.

Child's Name _____

Parents/Guardians Name _____

Parents/Guardians Signature _____

Classroom _____

Date _____

The faculty and staff at Rome Catholic School look forward to seeing you in the upcoming school year!



ROME
CATHOLIC
SCHOOL