

**Student-Parent
Handbook
2016-2017**



Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School

29 Conwell Drive
Maple Glen, PA 19002

Phone: 215-646-0150

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Website: olmcatholicschool.com

We are OLM. We are your future.

Mission Statement

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Mercy, we commit ourselves to living the Good News of Jesus through Works of Mercy. Our rigorous academic program unleashes creative energy for the pursuit of knowledge and nurtures a hope-filled vision for Catholic leadership. We live out our relationship with God by respecting the dignity of others and providing service to the global community that fosters unity, understanding, and compassion.

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School Pledge

Today I promise to keep Jesus:

In my mind

On my lips

And in my heart.

I promise to always do my best and
to treat everyone with respect and kindness.

I promise to take good care of everything
God has given me and to have the courage
to always do what Jesus wants me to do.

I promise to live what
Our Lady of Mercy School teaches.

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Belief Statements

We believe that parents are the first and primary educators of their children. Faculty, staff, and administration partner with parents to provide an authentic Catholic environment where each student is given the opportunity to reach his or her full potential by discovering and developing their God-given gifts. Our Lady of Mercy seeks to form the whole child, providing strong foundations of prayer, knowledge, and service to equip each child for Christian life in the 21st century.

We believe that the ultimate goal of a Catholic school is to help each of its students get to Heaven. In a nurturing community of faith, students at Our Lady of Mercy cultivate Christian virtues and are inspired to become the men and women God calls them to be. The Catholic faith is the fabric of our school and is integrated into all aspects of student life. Through prayer, liturgy, the Sacraments, and Church teachings, students encounter Christ and develop a personal relationship with Him.

We believe that a solid intellectual foundation enables children to reach their potential and prepare for a lifetime of learning. Our Lady of Mercy challenges each child to strive for academic excellence beyond basic skills. Using differentiated instruction and educational technology, teachers engage each unique learner in the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of natural curiosity. As students become active participants in their learning, they develop skills of research and discovery and are equipped to successfully meet the challenges of further education.

We believe that faith is manifested in a life of service. At Our Lady of Mercy, students become aware of their place as citizens of the world, learning that their unique gifts are meant to be shared to build the Kingdom of God. Through service projects, extracurricular activities, athletics, and leadership opportunities, students learn to imitate Christ by serving others and contributing to the good of the community.

Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School Crest

The school crest of Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School embodies the ideals and principles on which the school is founded.

THE COLORS OF OUR CREST

The school crest of Our Lady of Mercy School is emblazoned in our school colors of blue and green. The blue symbolizes the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is Our Lady of Mercy, Patroness of our school. The color green is found in the Bible to be symbolic of new beginnings. Combined, these two colors are fitting for our newly united school that is entrusted to Mary's prayerful care.

THE SHIELD

At the center of the crest is the three-sided shield, which represents the Holy Trinity and the security that our faith provides us with. Our central focus as a Catholic school is to promote a Christian environment and a faith-based education in the Catholic tradition, knowing that God is our strength and support.

THE CROSS

Within the shield, the cross of Christ can be clearly seen as the focal point, just as it is also a focal point of our faith. It was through the cross that Jesus gave us new life and so it is only fitting that within the cross is where we place the symbols of our guiding principles; Faith, Knowledge, Leadership and Service. This is because our lives are a gift from God and what we do with our lives is our gift back to God. When we exemplify these four guiding principles in all that we do, we are offering God a gift and reaching our greatest potential.

THE SYMBOLS OF OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FAITH – In the upper left, the small cross and the letter **M** demonstrate our faith in the best possible way. This is because the letter **M** represents Mary at the foot of the cross. Mary is the perfect role model because she is always faithful, and she always gives good example, even when it is difficult. In our school, we strive to learn about the wonders of our Catholic Faith and to put into practice what we have learned. In so doing, we become heroic examples of faith, just as Mary is to us.

KNOWLEDGE – In the upper right, the book is a symbol of so much more than just book learning. It symbolizes that when we take the effort to learn, it brings not only knowledge, but wisdom as well. The knowledge we wisely strive for benefits the entire person. It leads to the development of our spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual, social, and physical growth.

LEADERSHIP – In the lower right is a crown as a symbol of leadership that we find in Christ’s example. We recognize that in order to be true leaders we need the example of Christ the King to guide us. He shows us that it is not for power that we strive to be leaders. Rather, it is to use our gifts and abilities to serve the greater good. In this way, everyone can be a successful leader.

SERVICE - The two hands in the bottom left corner symbolize service as one person assists another person. This is the fruit of all of our studies, to recognize that God has given each person certain gifts and talents to be developed for the purpose of helping others. For our education to make a lasting difference in the world, we strive to leave each person better off for having met a student or graduate of Our Lady of Mercy School.



Memorandum of Understanding

Every Catholic school student has a right to be treated as a child of God, with the love and respect that implies, regardless of family circumstances. In like manner, the believing community has the right to an education guided by Catholic teaching and identity, unimpeded by pressures contrary to Church teaching.

As parent/guardian of a student in a Catholic school, I understand, affirm, and support the following:

1. The primary purpose of a Catholic school education is two-fold: to strengthen the Catholic community in its faith, and to form students in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.
2. Catholic schools are distinctive religious education institutions guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. They are not simply private schools offering a positive moral code. Rather, they exist to advance the faith mission of the sponsoring Catholic parish(es), Archdiocese, or Catholic religious community.
3. While Catholic education places a high value on academic excellence and extracurricular achievement, its fundamental priority is fidelity to Catholic teaching and identity.
4. Attending a Catholic school is a privilege, not a right. The school and its administration have the responsibility to ensure that Catholic teaching and moral integrity permeate every facet of the school's life and activity and that the school is able to function as a community of faith.
5. In all questions that involve Catholic teaching, morals, and Church law, the final determination rests with the Archbishop.

As a parent/guardian desiring to enroll my child in a Catholic school, I accept this memorandum of understanding. I pledge support for the Catholic identity and mission of this school and by enrolling my child I commit myself to uphold all principles and policies that govern the Catholic School.

This handbook contains certain policies and procedures of the school. The school may change any of its policies and procedures, at any time, and apply them as circumstances dictate. If you have a question about a particular policy or procedure, please contact the principal.

Students and parents must accept and abide by the school's policies and procedures in order for the student to attend Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School.

School Administration 2015-2016

Mr. John C. McGrath, M.Ed.
Principal

215-646-0150 X522
jmcgrath@olmcatholicschool.com

Mrs. Caroline Maher
Assistant to the Principal

Math Department Head
Middle School Academy Math
215-646-0150 X205
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Mrs. Julie Bebey
Director of Advancement

215-646-0150 X113
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Mrs. Kathleen Giacomelli
Business Manager

215-646-0150 X533
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Mrs. Renee Makoid
Executive Assistant

215-646-0150 X501
rmakoid@olmcatholicschool.com

Receptionists

Kim Bell
Robyn Doyle
215-646-0150

The School Office is open on school days from 7:30AM to 3:30PM. The office is open until 12:30PM on early dismissal days.

Our Lady of Mercy Board of Limited Jurisdiction

**Mr. James Morris
CHAIR**

**Mr. James Paul
VICE CHAIR**

**Ms. Michele Abel
SECRETARY**

Mr. William J. Bryers

Mr. Matthew Chiappa

Mr. Brendan Clearkin, Jr.

Mr. Andrew Lafond

Dr. Kimberly Lewinski, Ph.D.

Dr. Jane Longacre, MD

Ms. Diane Melley

**Mr. John C. McGrath, M.Ed.
Ex Officio**

Dr. Margaret Preston

Mrs. Stephanie Sapp

Mr. Steven Smith

Mrs. Kelly Weidner

**Rev. Msgr. Stephen P. McHenry, Ph.D., MA, MDiv
Saint Anthony of Padua
*(occupies pastoral seat)**

**Father Stephen Leva
Saint Alphonsus**

**Father Joseph Rymdeika
Saint Catherine of Siena**

***Pastors occupy one seat, as per operating principles.**

Part I: Academics

1. Academic Responsibilities

Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School encourages all students to reach their fullest potential through the academic program.

Each student is responsible for the timely and satisfactory completion of projects, class work, and homework. Grades on tests and projects should be commensurate with the student's ability.

A student who does not fulfill his/her academic responsibilities will be placed on academic probation during which time the evaluation of the student's progress is monitored.

Conditions and Consequences of Academic Probation

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) and student will confer with the administration and the classroom teacher. The teacher will outline the student's program for improvement.
- The teacher will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's progress. The process will follow the stated format:
 - A) parent contact
 - B) grades posted on online school information management system
 - C) periodic meetings with the student
 - D) report cards

If a student is successful in meeting his/her academic responsibilities, the student will be removed from academic probation and the parent/guardian will be notified in writing.

If the student is unsuccessful in meeting his/her academic responsibilities, the administration will review the student's continued enrollment in the school.

2. Class Participation

Students are expected to:

- Give attention and respect to the teacher at all times
- Show respect and concern for other students by a willingness to share and take turns
- Actively participate in class by responding orally or in writing as circumstances dictate.

3. Class Requests

Requests for a specific teacher will not be acknowledged or honored. Every effort is made to see that your child is placed in the most appropriate class. Assigning a student to a certain class/teacher is a matter not taken lightly. Teachers collaborate in each grade to determine the most beneficial placements for all students, with regard to each child's promotion. Teachers' professional observations help guide their assessment of where each child will best thrive. The observation and collaboration processes take considerable time and are carefully evaluated. Parent requests will not be the determining factor for classroom placement of children. Should you have special circumstances or consideration that we are not aware of, please pass these specific and articulable concerns, **in writing**, to the principal.

4. Curriculum Modification

The Office of Catholic Education established guidelines for modifying and adapting curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students. Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School is committed to providing for the needs of individual students. Classroom Modifications are designed to provide adaptations to the curriculum so that high expectations are maintained for all students. The need for curriculum modifications is determined by educational/psychological testing administered by an agent of the Intermediate Unit or a privately engaged school psychologist. Parents then join with the teachers and/or administration to develop strategies which will best help students achieve specific goals. Any student who receives modifications will have this noted on their report card. All goals and modifications are reviewed and agreed upon by the parent, teacher, and administration. A signed copy of the modification plan is kept in the student's file and is individualized for each year of instruction warranting modifications.

5. Failure Notices

If a student is in danger of failing any subject, the teacher shall, not less than 15 instructional days before the end of that grading period, issue the Notice of Impending Failure.

6. Homework

The teacher gives assignments that will positively reinforce concepts presented in class. Homework includes both written and study assignments, and should be done independently by the student. While this does not preclude parental help or interest, the assignments should not require undue parental assistance or supervision. Ample time should be allowed for the completion of out-of-class research assignments or projects.

The following time per night is suggested for homework: this includes both written and study assignments:

Grade K	15 minutes
Grades 1 and 2	30 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	60 minutes
Grades 5 and 6	90 minutes
Grades 7 and 8	120 minutes

The school realizes that teachers, students, and subjects vary. The objective is not time, but the extension of learning beyond class time.

In the event of absence or suspension, all homework and missed assignments are to be made up.

If a student is absent, parents may call the Main Office to request homework. Student's work may be picked up between **3PM and 4PM**.

➤ Homework Illness Policy

For short absences students should make arrangements with classmates, check assignments online or obtain them when they return to school.

➤ Homework Vacation Policy

Parents are strongly discouraged from planning vacations during the academic year. While family time is certainly valuable time, interruption in the educational process can present difficulties for some children. However, when absences for vacation are unavoidable, the following policy will apply:

- Homework and/or class assignments will not be given prior to the start of the vacation.
- No work will be given so that it may be done during the time of the vacation.

7. Honor Roll

Students in Grades 4-8 may earn honors each trimester. The following is the criteria:

First Honors

- 95 or above in every subject area
- 3 or 4 in Personal and Social Growth, Effort and Study Skills, Special Subjects

Second Honors

- 90 or above in every subject area
- 3 or 4 in Personal and Social Growth, Effort and Study Skills, Special Subjects

Policy for Weighting Courses – Honors Math Program (Grades 5-8)

Elementary and Middle School students who participate in the Honors Math Program (or math enrichment – grade 4) receive a weighted grade in order to accurately determine the overall GPA. The individual course grade for the math course will be given the weight of 0.5 bonus point (based on a 4.0 scale) to reflect the challenging curriculum. Therefore 0.5 equals 5 points on our 100 scale. Therefore, Math honors is based on: First Honors - 90 and above. Second Honors 85 and above.

8. Mathematics – Grades 1-8

The Elementary Mathematics Curriculum is a carefully planned program that focuses on the understanding of basic concepts and mastery of skills, and applying these skills through extensive instruction and practice mathematically, making real-life and content-area connections, and developing reasoning skills.

The Elementary Honors Mathematics Program is intended to meet the needs of those students who are capable of completing the prescribed curriculum in seven (7), instead of eight (8), years. The students in this program are identified in grade four (4), and begin formal instruction in grade five (5), continuing through grade eight (8). The Algebra I course used by the secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is the eighth (8th) grade honors curriculum.

The school administrator and the mathematics coordinator carefully monitor the program with the use of management guidelines prepared by the Joint Elementary/Secondary Mathematics Committee.

Students who complete this program, and satisfactorily master the Algebra I curriculum according to criteria established by the Joint Committee, are able to test to begin their second-year of secondary mathematics in the freshman year.

The principle criteria for admission to this program, as stated in the Archdiocesan guidelines for the Elementary Honors Program, include:

- a. Cognitive Skills Quotient in the 125 range
- b. Standardized test scores: 90 in Mathematics and 80 in Reading
- c. Consistent scores of 85 or better on Archdiocesan Level Evaluations
- d. 90 overall Mathematics average for the year
- e. Periodic evaluation will be used to determine continued participation in this program.

Participation in the Honors Math Program is contingent upon the approval of the Archdiocesan Mathematics Committee.

9. Preparation for Class

Students are responsible for completing all class assignments and homework on time. Failure to do so indicates a lack of preparation for class. Incomplete homework assignments will result in a calendar mark and will ultimately affect the student's effort grade on the report card.

The teacher assesses daily performance of students. Examination of copybooks, workbooks, and worksheets for neatness and completeness of work, as well as class participation are part of the overall report card grade.

All students must be encouraged to use copybooks properly. Students should not tear pages from copybooks, skip pages, or use his/her copybook as a drawing or scribbling pad.

10. Promotion and/or Retention

Student progress is monitored throughout the school year. At the close of the First Trimester report card period, the parent/guardian is informed of the student's academic, social, and emotional progress. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian of a student who continues to experience difficulty to discuss the possibility of retention and support services. By the end of May, the teacher will schedule a follow-up meeting with the parent/guardian. If retention is indicated, the parent/guardian will receive an official notification which must be signed and returned to the school administration. Promotion or retention is at the discretion of the administration in consultation with the teacher(s).

11. Remedial Services

MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

ACT 89 / TITLE I

These programs provide remedial, corrective, or developmental reading skill reinforcement for the students of Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School. Students are considered for these programs based on their performance in the Terra Nova Test, assessments given by the MCIU, and classroom teacher recommendation, and/or parental request. These services are coordinated with the classroom teacher to maximize reading, thinking, and learning potential.

➤ Speech and Language Services

Speech and language services are provided by Act 89 through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

Children are selected to receive services when standards of sound production, fluency, language use, form, or content fall below normal standards for the child's age and ability. Referrals for evaluations are initiated by staff, parents/guardians, or the children themselves. Evaluation and therapy are only provided following the consent of the parent/guardian.

➤ Reading and Math Services

Remedial services are provided by Act 89 for students on those days authorized through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. Students are considered for this program based upon classroom teacher recommendation, performance in the Terra Nova test, and informal diagnostic tests administered by the I.U. teacher. These services are coordinated with the classroom teacher to provide the maximum benefit for the student. Service is only provided following the consent of the parent /guardian.

➤ Counseling and Psychological Services

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides counseling and psychological services through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

The school counselor provides quality service to Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School community by consulting with the school administration, faculty, and parents/guardians regarding individual students. Both individual and group counseling are available to the students. The counselor recommends suitable referrals when needed.

After appropriate consultation, individual students are eligible for educational and psychological testing. The school psychologist consults with the school administration, faculty, and parents/ guardians in order to prepare for the testing procedure. Following the testing, the school psychologist meets with the student's parents/guardians to review the complete report. After parental permission is secured, the school psychologist shares recommendations with the school administration and the faculty in order to provide the student with the assistance needed.

12. Standardized Testing

The Terra Nova Test is administered in the spring each year to students in Grade 3-7. The results are communicated to the parents and are utilized by the school for curriculum planning. Parents are asked not to take vacation or schedule doctor appointments during days of this testing.

13. Student Books and Materials

Every student must carry books to and from school in a suitable book bag. Books, copybooks and materials are to be properly identified with by name and room number. The student and parents/guardians must pay for all lost or damaged schoolbooks in full. A charge will be made at the rate at which the books were purchased.

Students are expected to take care of personal belongings, books, and clothing. They are also asked to help care for the school buildings and the adjoining property. Any malicious damage will necessitate compensation.

The school reserves the right to examine students' personal property and/or materials on campus when necessitated.

14. Student Progress, Report Cards, and Conferences

Progress reports are available on-line, six weeks into each trimester for grades 1 to 8. The progress reports can be accessed through the school's online information management system. The school provides you with a User ID and Password.

Report Cards are issued three times a year, in grades K through 8. Each student is responsible for his/her grade, based on satisfactorily fulfilling the following requirements:

- Test
- Quizzes
- Oral Reports
- Independent Classroom Work
- Participation in classroom lessons and/or activities
- Group Work/Projects

OLM's assessment policy is based upon educational "best practices" as researched by the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

In grades 1 through 8, parents are asked to sign the report card envelope and return the envelope to school. In kindergarten, the report card and envelope need to be signed and returned to school.

Conferences take place during the first trimester in all grades. If necessary, a teacher or parent may request additional conferences.

15. Technology

Students have the use of many types of technology throughout the school year. Every parent signs a release form explaining the use of the computer. Each child is expected to use the technology in a respectful and responsible manner.

It is the intent of our school to provide the students with the most up-to-date technology for maximum learning. Any child found tampering with another child's work will be held accountable to the Principal immediately. Any type of vandalism to the many media forms will also result in the student being sent to the Principal for disciplinary action.

The use of cell phones, Ipods, or electronic devices during the school day is strictly prohibited. If electronics are found in use, they will be taken immediately by the teacher/staff and may be reclaimed by the parent, in person. Cell phones may be in school bags, but must be turned off during the school day.

Part II: Activities

1. Children Are Receiving Extended Services (CARES) Program

Before/After school care is available for students in grades K through 8. The program runs from 6:30AM-8AM & dismissal until 6:30PM. An application and information on registration/fees are available on the school website or a hard copy is available at the school office.

2. Field Trips

The purpose of every field trip is to broaden the intellectual, cultural, and social experiences of each child. In order to attend the field trip, a written permission slip must be signed by a parent/guardian prior to the scheduled trip. If a parent/guardian does not want their child to attend the field trip, the school must be notified in writing. It is important to remember that a field trip is a privilege, which the teacher and/or Principal may take away, if deemed appropriate.

3. Student Council

Seventh grade students may run for Student Council at the end of the year. All students are permitted to run for election based on the following criteria:

- **President/Vice President** must maintain a 90 or above general average; have and maintain a cumulative average of a 3 or above in conduct and effort and all “Specials” classes; been in the school at least two years; maintain an attitude and appearance that sets a good example for the student body.
- **Treasurer:** must maintain an 85 or above general average, with a 90 or above in mathematics; have and maintain a cumulative average of a 3 or above in conduct and effort and all “Specials” classes; maintain an attitude and appearance that sets a good example for the student body.
- **Commissioner of Religious Activities and Spirit:** must maintain an 85 or above general average, with a 90 or above in religion; have and maintain a cumulative average of a 3 or above in conduct and effort and all “Specials” classes; active member of the parish; regularly serves as altar server; maintains an attitude and appearance that sets a good example for the student body.
- **School Historian:** must maintain an 85 or above general average; have and maintain a cumulative average of a 3 or above in conduct and effort and all “Specials” classes; maintain an attitude and appearance that sets a good example for the student body.
- **Secretary:** must maintain an 85 or above general average, with a 90 or above in ELA; have and maintain a cumulative average of a 3 or above in conduct and effort and all “Specials” classes; maintain an attitude and appearance that sets a good example for the student body.

Note: Once elected, the criteria and grade requirements listed above must be maintained throughout the officers’ 8th grade year. If an officer receives a 2 in

conduct and/or effort, this may result in a period of suspension from student council office.

All student Council officers are role models to the school. They are held up to a very high standard in order to be POSITIVE role models for the entire school. This includes following all school rules in academics, conduct and effort, and dress code. They must be very responsible since there will be times when you will miss a class to fulfill duties. It will be their responsibility to make up all missed work on their own. Although it is fun, it also requires sacrifice and initiative.

4. Transportation

In the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are asked how their child/children will arrive at and leave school. Any change in transportation arrangements must be made in writing, even if it is a change for only one day. Transportation changes will **not** be made over the phone.

- **Bus**
The local public school districts provide bus transportation for students. Children who ride the bus are expected to behave in a safe and orderly manner at all times. Failure to do so will result in their being denied the privilege of riding the bus. Children must ride the same bus both morning and afternoon as assigned to them by the school district. Please do not request permission, written or verbal, from the Principal for a student who is a non-rider to take the bus to any location on a given day. The school is not in a position to grant such a request. If you wish to pursue such a change, you may call the transportation office of the local public school district.
- **Car Line Procedures**
Drop-off Guidelines
 - The speed limit is 10 MPH while driving on any part of the school property.
 - Use of a car phone while driving in the parking lot is NOT permitted.
 - All traffic must enter from Temple Drive and proceed across the back of the yard past the Narthex and Holy Family Statue to the school side of the parking lot where students are to exit the vehicles. Please move all the way up in the drop off area so that several cars can unload at the same time. Children may never be dropped or picked up on Temple Drive, the soccer field or church side of the lot.
 - When pulling up behind another car, please be aware of children retrieving school bags from the trunk of the car in front of you.
- Pick-up Guidelines
 - All traffic must enter from Temple Drive and proceed across the back of the yard past the Narthex and Holy Family Statue to the school side of the parking lot where the cars should form a line against the curb beginning at the entrance of the school office. This is designated as lane 1; once this lane is filled, cars continue to form lanes until all 6 are filled. Any additional cars arriving after all 6 lanes are filled should only enter lane 6 (lane closest to the basketball court).
 - Children should only enter the vehicle from the curb side.
 - All traffic must exit via Conwell Drive.

- If all of the children you are picking up are not ready at the same time, then please pull into a parking spot until all children are accounted for.
- Do not encourage children to walk between cars through the parking lot.
- Please do not pass other vehicles in the car line.

5. Visitors

Visitors are welcomed by appointment. To arrange a meeting, visitors should contact the School Office. Parents coming to school to bring forgotten articles or to relay messages should come to the School Office. Classes may not be disturbed for these reasons. Parents may not confer with a teacher or visit a classroom between the hours of 7:30AM and 3:15PM, unless the Principal gives permission for such a visit. All visitors must report to the School Office and sign the Visitors' Log when entering the building. An atmosphere of quiet respect for the learning rights of others should prevail throughout the school building.

6. Volunteers

The assistance of parent volunteers is greatly appreciated and encouraged. We recognize the invaluable assistance given by our students' families, which helps in building a strong learning community. Parents are urged to take an active role in their child's education by volunteering whenever and wherever possible. All students are expected to show courtesy and respect to all volunteers.

Anyone who works with children (including field trip chaperones) must attend a Safe Environment Program and obtain Criminal History and Child Abuse Clearances. To register for the Program, go to www.virtus.org and click on registration. The forms for clearances are available in the School Office, and generally take two to three weeks once completed.

Part III. Code of Conduct

1. Arrival and Dismissal Times

School begins promptly at 8:00 AM. Students may enter the building after 7:30AM and should be in the gym for morning assembly no later than 8:00am. Dismissal begins at 2:50PM and 11:50AM on early dismissal days. Students may NOT be picked up for early dismissal after 2:30PM. Please check the school website and calendar for days off and early dismissals.

We work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. Various classes invite parent involvement or visits on particular occasions. Teachers are not available to conference with parents before school or during the school day while children are present in the classroom.

2. Assemblies

The primary purpose of school assemblies is educational. Being a part of an appreciative audience is a learning experience; therefore, every student is expected to show proper respect and courtesy at this time.

3. Attendance

Regular school attendance impacts positively on the child's academic development. The total amount of days that school is in session is prescribed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

a. Absences - The policies regarding this area are as follows:

- i. A student who has been absent from school, even for one day, is required to present a written note to his homeroom teacher.
- ii. A doctor's certificate may be required for absence of an extended nature (3+ days).
- iii. If your child is going to be absent, or arrive late at school, you are required to call the school. Please leave a message on voice mail. The number to call to report an absence or lateness is listed at the front of the handbook. Please call by 7:30AM. If your child's name appears on an attendance report from the homeroom teacher and you have not phoned in to let us know, please expect a call from the school to verify the absence or check on your child's whereabouts. Please help us in this endeavor by calling. Your child's safety and welfare are of great importance to us.
- iv. In the case of illness, a school official will contact the parents or adult whose name has been submitted to the office with an emergency phone number.
- v. Any child who stays home without his/her parent's knowledge is liable for suspension. Any child who leaves school without permission will be suspended.

vi. Absences due to a funeral will be recorded except in the case of a parent, sibling or grandparent through the day of the funeral only.

vii. One absence due to a high school visit will be excused during the 8th grade year.

b. Appointments

Student appointments should not be made during school hours.

c. Lateness

Student who are late must report directly to the office.

d. Perfect Attendance

Students who incur no absences, either full or half day, and have not been late, are eligible for a Perfect Attendance Certificate on the last day of school for the year.

4. Computer Acceptable Use Policy

An Acceptable Use Policy must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school.

a. Purpose and Goals

Computers are a valuable tool for education. Students, and all users of computer technology, have a responsibility to use these tools properly and in accordance with the school policy.

b. Responsibilities of User

With the right of access comes the responsibility to use the source both correctly and wisely. Access to the Internet may mean that some material found will not meet guidelines set in our Acceptable Use Policy. Monitoring and controlling all such materials is impossible. The school will make every effort to discourage the appearance of such material; however, the opportunities and information made available by the Internet make it necessary to provide access in order that our students can take advantage of the many resources on the information superhighway.

c. General Requirements for Use of the Internet

- All users are required to take simple Internet training from the computer coordinator.
- All users and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign a student access contract governing use of computer resources, which is provided by the school and set forth below.
- Transferring copyrighted material to or from the school without express permission of the owner may be a violation of federal law. The user must ensure that this does not occur.
- Use of electronic mail and other Internet facilities to harass, offend, or annoy other users is forbidden. Any breach in this area will result in suspension with possible intent to dismiss.

- E-mail accounts through the school may be restricted and will be monitored.
- Any attempt to circumvent system security, guess passwords, or in any way gain access to secured resources is forbidden.
- Use of the Internet for commercial gain or profit is not allowed.
- Users will not move, repair, reconfigure, modify or attach external devices, or load software on the system without the express, prior written consent of the school.
- The system operator has the right to monitor all computer activity without prior notice to the user.
- The school may impose additional rules and restrictions at any time.

d. Discipline

Violators will be subject to suspension of computer privileges.

e. Student Rules

- For reasons of personal safety, students must never post or transmit personal information about themselves or other people. This includes name, address, telephone/fax number, school address, social security number, etc.
- Students must not access material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography) or that advocates illegal acts, violence, harassment or discrimination toward other people.
- Students must not plagiarize works they find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of another and presenting them as if they were one's own.
- Students must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude or threatening language. Nor will they, through means of the Internet, harass or annoy other users via writing or photographs.
- Students must not knowingly or recklessly post or transmit information about persons or organizations that is false or private.
- Students must not make deliberate attempts to disrupt computer systems or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by other means. These actions are illegal.
- The illegal downloading of copyrighted software or other written works for use on home or school computers is prohibited.

Engagement in cellular phone texting and on-line blogs such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, etc. may result in disciplinary action if the content of the student's messaging includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish(es).

Violations of any of these rules may result in either or both of the following:

- Loss of Internet access privileges
- Disciplinary and/or legal action by the school, law enforcement or other involved parties.

5. Discipline

We believe that discipline is fundamental to life. Discipline is a necessary reflection of the philosophy of a Catholic School, which attempts to develop a fully-committed Christian – a Christian committed to the observance of just rules and regulations, which will assist the individual in responding to his/her responsibilities and obligations to his/herself and others.

Correct training in discipline means that a child learns to accept rules and regulations presented by lawful authority. Students are expected to act in such fashion that their behavior will reflect favorably on themselves and the school. They are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students and teachers; thus, creating a harmonious atmosphere within the school. All students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations. Children who fail to comply with school policies and regulations must accept the consequences.

The discipline code applies to students and parents/guardians in school, and at school-sponsored events, as well as on school buses (coming/going), in the school/parish community and outside the school/parish community where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school.

A) Disciplinary Procedures

A calendar mark is issued for actions so warranting. Accumulated calendar marks result in an after-school detention held twice a month from 3PM-4PM.

Three detentions result in a child-study meeting to ascertain the student's difficulties. A student suspended a second time within a single school year is eligible for dismissal from the school.

➤ Procedure for Calendar Marks

When a student receives a mark on the calendar, the parent/guardian on the night issued must sign their child's calendar, **indicating knowledge of the mark**. The next school day, the student must then show the signed mark to the teacher who issued the mark. A parent/guardian's signature indicates that the parent/guardian has seen the mark. It does not indicate the parent/guardian's permission for the student to receive the calendar mark. The teacher issuing the calendar mark and the Principal have already made that decision.

B) Calendar Marks

The following chart is only a guideline for the classroom teacher in the issuance of calendar marks. It is not an all-inclusive list of conduct that violates the Discipline Code. The teacher/Principal may adjust the marks accordingly.

If a child receives three major marks or the accumulation of three major marks on the calendar during a two-month period, a detention will be issued. Five minor marks on the calendar = one major mark.

If a child receives a detention during the trimester, they will receive a 2 on their report card in either Personal and Social Growth or Effort and Study Skills, depending upon what the calendar marks were issued for. A 2 on the report card results in ineligibility to receive first or second honors. In the case of seventh grade students, a 2 on the report card would constitute ineligibility to run for Student Council.

If behavior warrants, a student may receive a 2 on the report card regardless of whether or not they received a detention.

The following infractions will warrant a major mark on the calendar:

1. Uncharitable behavior
2. Uncooperative

3. Disrespectful
4. Fighting
5. Disruptive in class
6. Cell phone

The following infractions will warrant a minor comment on the calendar:

1. Uniform not according to code (after first uniform violation form)
2. No homework/Incomplete homework
3. Unprepared for class (study)
4. Unprepared for class (materials)
5. Not listening/following directions
6. Gum

Serious Infractions

Serious infractions may result in an immediate suspension or dismissal and apply when students are on school grounds, on a bus, or at school-sponsored functions.

Examples of Serious Infractions include the following:

- Truancy – unexcused absences
- Violent behavior – any fighting or behavior that causes physical injury
- Blatant disrespect for authority – to any adult in the building
- Possession and/or use of drugs, narcotics, tobacco, or alcoholic beverages on the campus or on the bus
- Irreverence
- Vandalism – destruction or defacing of parish or school property
- Profane/obscene language or gestures or engaging in immoral conduct
- Possession of any item which may present a danger to others in school or out
- Cutting class
- Leaving school grounds without permission from a school authority
- Violent/Threatening/Harassing and Inappropriate Conduct

It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility, and offensive and inappropriate behavior. Such improper conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct, verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, and behavior not otherwise conducive to the educational and religious mission of the school.

Unacceptable Conduct – either by a student **or a parent/guardian** - includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disrespectful behavior of any kind toward any or about any staff, parent, volunteer, or student
- Insubordination

- Fighting
- Bomb scares or triggering other false alarms
- Use or possession of drugs or alcohol
- Smoking
- Stealing
- Intimidation, harassment, or threats of any kind
- Possession of any weapon
- Internet/text messaging, bullying

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The school will determine which behavior is inappropriate. This policy applies both in and out of the classroom, in the school community and outside the school community, where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school.

It should be noted that every effort is taken to follow a prescribed course of action in regard to consequences related to student's behavior and responsibilities. **However, each situation is handled on an individual basis taking all factors into consideration. Comparisons should not be made.**

Conduct by students or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school, is grounds for disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities, where appropriate.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment, in any form, including oral, written, or electronic by a student against any member of the school community, the student, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school.

Suspension and Dismissal

The Principal will inform the parents/guardians of the seriousness of suspension and seek their immediate cooperation in a corrective program designed to resolve the student's problem, if possible. A suspension may lead to dismissal from the school.

Procedures for Student Suspension

- Parents/guardians of the student will be informed of the suspension as soon as possible.
- Suspensions will be implemented at the discretion of the Principal.
- Following suspension, the appropriate school official will interview parents/ guardians. Students removed from the school community will not be readmitted before a parental interview has been conducted and all other conditions for readmittance have been satisfied.
- Parents and students are to sign a formal agreement in which they signify their understanding and agree to assume the responsibility for future behavior. Where possible, a student will be referred to a counselor or a teacher for counseling.
- Signed agreement by parents/guardians, and a written report of the suspension, will be filed in the student's record.
- Suspension records are not a part of the student's permanent or cumulative record. Ordinarily, suspension records will be made available to authorized school personnel and parents/guardians.

Procedures for Student Dismissal

- After two formal suspensions, a student may be dismissed. Students who are dismissed may apply for readmission after one full year.
- The school will determine whether readmittance is appropriate.
- In certain instances, the infraction may warrant immediate dismissal. The school reserves the right to dismiss any student, at any time, where the school considers the conduct of the student or parent/guardian to be inconsistent with school policy, the good school community and/or Catholic teachings.
- Parents/guardians of the student will be informed of the dismissal as soon as possible.

C) **Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation, and Hazing**

A safe, secure, and respectful educational environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards and build appropriate relationships with others. A Catholic School environment refuses to accept any such behaviors. Therefore, acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying (including cyberbullying and the like) are unacceptable behaviors and are prohibited. School personnel cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under their direct supervision. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school and the rights and welfare of the students, and is within the control of the school in its normal operations, it is the school's intent to prevent bullying. Action will be taken to investigate, respond, discipline, and remediate those acts of bullying. Administration, faculty, staff, and volunteers are to demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating others with civility and respect, and being aware of and not tolerating harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying, etc. If incidents do occur, students should be able to report and know that the inappropriate behavior will be dealt with promptly and effectively. There will be no retaliation against a victim, reporter, or witness.

According to Section 1303.1-A of the Pennsylvania School Code, non-public school students would be required to follow the bullying policy anytime they are in what is defined as the "school setting."

"School setting" shall mean: in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at any sponsored activity supervised or sanctioned by the school.

Policy also applies to off-campus behavior that somehow brings discredit or scandal to the school and/or causes substantial disruption to the learning environment.

- **Bullying**

Bullying involves actions or words against another person for the purpose of inflicting physical or emotional harm, discomfort, or damage to a person's reputation that is intimidating or threatening and affects the learning and school environments. If the bully is threatening harm, a student should tell a teacher or the Principal immediately. Once the report is made, the following will occur:

- A written report will be made using the bullying form.
- An investigation of the incident will occur.
- A decision will be made upon completion of the investigation including actions to be taken.

Communications Electronic and/or digital communications with students should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and employ only school-sanctioned methods of communication. The school-sanctioned methods of communications include:

- Teacher school web page
- Teacher school email
- School phone number
- Educationally-focused networking sites

Electronic and Mobile Devices

Use of any technology-oriented device should have an educational focus. Users must adhere to school policy regarding the use of additional electronic devices including, but not limited to, iPads, calculators, gaming devices, and cellular phones.

Unacceptable Uses of Electronic and Mobile Devices:

- Users may not use equipment to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
- Users may not post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually-oriented material.
- Users may not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language.
- Users may not knowingly or recklessly post false information about any persons, students, staff, or any other organization.
- Users may not use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any student, or employee without express permission of that individual and of the Principal.
- Users may not use school equipment to create any site, post any photo, image or video of another except with express permission of that individual and the Principal. Maintaining or posting material to a web site or blog that threatens a likelihood of substantial disruption in school, including harming or interfering with the rights of other students or teachers to participate fully in school or extracurricular activities is a violation of the Acceptable Use Policy and subject to the disciplinary measure found herein.
- Users may not attempt to circumvent system security, guess passwords or, in any way, gain access to secured resources, another person's files or another person's password.
- Users may not install, move, delete, download, upload, reconfigure, or modify any software or files on school equipment without permission. Users may not deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives. Users may not access social networking sites or gaming sites, except for educational purposes, under teacher supervision.
- Users may not plagiarize content and may not present the work of another as their own without properly citing that work. Users may not violate license agreements, copy disks, CD-ROMs, or other protected media.
- Users may not use technology for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.

- Reporting Users must immediately report any damage or change to the school's hardware/ software that is noticed by the user.

Administrative Rights

The school has the right to monitor both student and employee use of school computers and computer-accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of technology, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Office of Catholic Education reserves the right to amend or add to this policy, at any time, without notice.

Violation of the above rules will be dealt with by the administration of the school.

Violation of these rules may result in any or all of the following:

- Loss of use of the school network, computers and software, including Internet access. The student will be expected to complete work on a non-networked, stand-alone computer system.
- Issuance of demerits/detentions, if applicable.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.

6. Dress Code/Uniform

Neatness and cleanliness in personal attire are part of a child's education and the responsibility of the parents. When a child looks and feels good about him/herself, he/she acts and works accordingly.

The following constitute a distraction and are not permitted:

- Colored nail polish
- Make-up
- Non-religious necklaces, bracelets or rings
- Scarves or head coverings. Hair accessories are limited to barrettes, pony tail elastics, and headbands. No hair extensions, feathers, scarves, or thread wrappings are permitted
- Hair dye and tattoos

Additionally:

- Girls are limited to no more than 2 non-hoop, non-dangling, post earrings in each earlobe. No part of the earring may extend below the earlobe. Boys may not wear earrings.
- Girls may wear neutral or clear nail polish. Boys may not wear nail polish.
- Boys' hair must be neat with length not past the eyebrows or touching the collar.
- Girls' hair must be neat and out of the face.
- Belts must be worn with pants or shorts by both boys and girls.
- All shirts without the banded bottom must be tucked in.
- Only the neckline of a **plain white undershirt** may be visible under the shirt.
- All students must wear OLM uniforms with logos (old or new crest version)
- Yogo pants are not part of the school uniform.

	Fall/Spring Uniform 09/08 to 10/30	Winter Uniform 11/02 to 04/01
Kindergarten Boys & Girls	<p>Light steel grey tee shirt (with logo)</p> <p>Navy micromesh nylon gym shorts (with logo)</p> <p>Sports socks</p> <p>Sneakers</p>	<p>Light steel grey tee shirt (with logo) -or- Light steel grey long-sleeve tee shirt (with logo) - -or-Grey heavyweight sweatshirt (with logo)</p> <p>Navy heavyweight sweatpants -or- Navy heavyweight open bottom sweatpants</p> <p>Sport Socks</p> <p>Sneakers</p>
Girls Grades 1 - 4	<p>Blackwatch plaid drop waist jumper with</p> <p>White short sleeve Peterpan collar blouse -or- White long sleeve Peterpan collar blouse</p> <p>Option: Black cotton / Lycra shorts (to be worn under jumper)</p> <p>OR –</p> <p>Khaki twill walking shorts -or- Khaki skort with</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or-Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Navy opaque or ribbed tights or Navy opaque nylon or Orlon navy knee-hi Solid navy, white or black crew socks (no logo)</p>	<p>Blackwatch plaid drop waist jumper with</p> <p>White short sleeve Peterpan collar blouse -or- White long sleeve Peterpan collar blouse</p> <p>Option: Black cotton / Lycra short (to be worn under jumper)</p> <p>OR –</p> <p>Khaki flat front girls slacks with</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or-Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Navy crew neck cardigan sweater (with logo)</p> <p>Navy opaque or ribbed tights or Navy opaque nylon or Orlon knee-hi</p>
Girls Grade 4 - 8	<p>Blackwatch plaid wrap-around kilt with</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or-Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Option: Black cotton / Lycra shorts (to be worn under kilt)</p> <p>OR –</p> <p>Khaki twill walking shorts -or- Khaki skort</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or-Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Navy opaque nylon or Orlon navy knee-hi Solid navy, white or black crew socks (no logo)</p>	<p>Blackwatch plaid wrap-around kilt with</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or-Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Option: Black cotton / Lycra short (to be worn under kilt)</p> <p>OR –</p> <p>Khaki flat front girls slacks –or- mid-rise slacks with</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or-Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Navy V Neck sweater or vest (with logo) - Optional</p> <p>Navy opaque or ribbed tights or Navy opaque nylon or Orlon knee-hi</p>

	Fall/Spring Uniform 09/08 to 10/30	Winter Uniform 11/02 to 04/01
Boys Grades 1 -8	<p>Khaki twill walking shorts -or- Khaki twill pants with</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or- Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Solid navy, white or black crew socks (no logo)</p> <p>Black or brown leather belt</p>	<p>Khaki twill pants</p> <p>Dark navy or white short sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo) -or- Dark navy or white long sleeve banded bottom polo shirt (w/ logo)</p> <p>Navy V Neck sweater or vest (with logo)- Optional</p> <p>Solid navy, white or black crew socks (no logo)</p> <p>Black or brown leather belt</p>
Gym Uniform Grades 1 -8 Boys & Girls	<p>Light steel grey tee shirt (with logo)</p> <p>Navy micromesh nylon gym shorts (with logo)</p> <p>Sports socks</p> <p>*OLM logo wear is permitted with gym uniform.</p>	<p>Light steel grey tee shirt (with logo) -or- Light steel grey long-sleeve tee shirt (with logo) -or- Grey heavyweight sweatshirt (with logo)</p> <p>Navy heavyweight sweatpants -or- Navy heavyweight open bottom sweatpants</p> <p>Sport Socks</p> <p>*OLM logo wear is permitted with gym uniform.</p>

SHOES

Grades 1 – 8	Academic School Issue Buc/Bass (tan) Hush Puppies Tuft (brown scuff)
OPTIONAL FOR GRADES 1 – 3 ONLY	Merrell Jungle Moc (brown) – BOYS Strite Rite Strap (navy blue) - GIRLS

General Rules:

- All students must wear OLM uniform pieces with logos.
- NO LOGOS, Nike Elite sport socks, or the like, are permitted with the school uniform with the exception being on gym days.
- Girls may wear post earrings. No dangling earrings are permitted.
- Girls may wear clear or neutral nail polish.
- Girls may not wear make-up.
- Boys' hair must be kept trimmed and above the eyes and collar.
- All shirts (without the banded bottoms) MUST BE TUCKED IN AT ALL TIMES.
- Girls uniform jumpers/kilt must be at least fingertip length.
- Students (6-8) may opt to wear OLM logo wear with their school uniform.

Dress Down Days

These days occur occasionally throughout the year. Participation is a privilege and is subject to proper attire. Midsections, backs and shoulders must be covered. All tops must be short sleeve or longer and must cover all undergarments. Tops must be uniform in length. Scoop or V necked tops must not be so low as to expose cleavage. Pajamas are not acceptable at any time. T-shirts with words or images deemed inappropriate by school staff will be confiscated. Shoes must be flat and have a backing or strap at the heel for recess and stairwell safety. Students in Grades 4-8 may only wear shorts of Bermuda length, slightly above the knee, or longer. Capris are also an option for girls. Any student in Grades 4-8 wearing shorts not of Bermuda length or longer will be required to call home for a change or purchase OLM gym shorts that day. Skirt length requirements mirror those of the regular uniform. **Leggings may only be worn with a longer top at least fingertip length. Dress Down Days are a special privilege and warrant everyone's full cooperation.**

7. Early Dismissal

Scheduled

Planned early dismissals are usually at 12:00PM. Please check the school calendar for dates.

Emergency Dismissal

We have an enhanced communication system to alert parents both during emergency dismissal situations and after regular school hours. Parents are asked to provide updated telephone and e-mail contact information to support use of this system. After hours and before school closings will also be posted on the website and announced on KYW 1060 AM as well. Our school closing number is 1382.

8. False Alarms

The family of the student/child responsible for a false fire alarm will be fined \$300.00. The child will also be subject to suspension and 10 community service hours. The township charges the school \$300.00 each time a false alarm is activated.

9. Harassment/Violence

The school follows the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Policy prohibiting harassment including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual attention, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Any student or parent/guardian who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal of the student.

Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School is committed to providing a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal/written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously, in jest, in person, in writing, or on-line) face detention, suspension and or expulsion.

10. Home and School Association

Please check the website for ongoing information about this important organization.

Part IV: School Policies and Procedures

1. Accident / Illness at School

Accidents or unusual illness occurring at school are reported immediately to the Health Office personnel. When a student becomes ill, or meets with an accident, the parent/guardian is contacted. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. Only basic first aid may be administered. Parents must be contacted immediately if there is any question regarding an injury.

2. Address Changes

Please notify the office of address or phone number changes.

3. Admission

Our school admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, its admission policy, or in any school-administered program.

The school endeavors to accommodate students with special needs as the school's resources and capabilities reasonably permit. The school reserves the right to decline admission or impose reasonable conditions of attendance where indicated under the circumstances. The necessary forms and certificates for admission are:

- a. Birth Certificate.
- b. Baptismal certificate (regardless of home parish).
- c. A certificate of immunization that must be updated and available for confirmation.

Students must be five years of age by September 1 of the year they are entering kindergarten and six years of age to enter grade one (1). In other grades, if the child's age does not meet the September 1 requirement, admission to the grade requested is determined by the principal after review of academic records from the previous year.

Testing in some academic areas may be held for new incoming students in Grades 3 – 8.

Admission of Non-Catholics

The primary purpose of our school is religious education and faith formation. We exist for the purpose of evangelization and catechesis, that is, the proclamation of the Gospel and formation of the entire school community of faith. Our school offers a complete Catholic religious education program and makes every effort to develop the Faith in all the students so that they may live a full Christian life.

Non-Catholic students may be admitted to our school under the following conditions:

- a) Adequate facilities and space are available, without denying the admission of eligible Catholic students.
- b) The parents/guardians agree to permit their child(ren) to attend religion classes and religious functions that are offered as part of the school program.
- c) The parents/guardians commit themselves to accept and promote the philosophy, goals, and regulations of the school.
- d) The parents/guardians agree to assume responsibility for all financial obligations.

4. Cold Weather

Keeping students inside when the temperature is below 32 degrees is not consistent with current Health Department or Department of Education policy. According to the American Association of Pediatrics, children benefit from vigorous exercise and should be given the opportunity to play outside whenever possible - unless it is snowing or there is ice on the ground, low temperatures should not be a barrier to outside play. Children should be appropriately attired. OLM will remain inside when the real feel temperature is below 20 degrees F.

5. Communicable Diseases

No student, absent from school because of conditions listed below, may return to school before the specified time period.

CHICKEN POX	When all pox have scabs that are dried up
FEVER	Fever free for 24 hours
LICE	After treatment is given and no nits are present
MEASLES/RUBELLA/ GERMAN MEASLES	4 days from onset of rash
MUMPS	9 days from onset of swelling
PINK EYE	24 hours after medication is started
SCARLET FEVER	24 hours after medication is started
STREP	24 hours on medication
WHOOPING COUGH	7 days after medication is started

6. Communications

The faculty members of Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School are experienced professionals and consider themselves partners with parents in their child's education. Mutual respect is essential and good communication is indispensable. If at any time parents would like to discuss any aspect of the child's development, please contact the teacher through e-mail or call the office directly to leave a message.

Written notes, signed by the parents are required for the following (for security reasons, faxes and e-mails are not acceptable):

- Absence from school
- Attendance as spectators at after school games
- Early dismissal
- Leaving the school premises during school hours

- Lateness
- Field trips
- Medication taken during the school day
- Changing the usual transportation home

Communications from school are conveyed via My Students Progress (MSP) which are emailed home each Wednesday and Sunday. Parents are asked to carefully read this information and respond to it if required. Parent email updates are requested so that no parent's school communication is interrupted. If you have a change in email, please contact rmakoid@olmcatholicschool.com

7. Emergency Contact Forms

Information necessary to address student emergencies is required at the beginning of each school year.

8. Fire/Emergency/Crisis Drills

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis. The students are instructed to leave the building quickly and quietly when the alarm rings according to directions posted in each area. Failure to cooperate is considered a serious matter.

Protocol for Emergency/Crisis drills is reviewed and practiced annually.

All staff and volunteers must evacuate the building for any drill.

8. Legal Custody Issues

It is important for the school to have a current copy of any custody decree. This will help school personnel to make effective decisions when the need arises. Custodial parents are likewise asked to supply the school with copies of restraining orders if the need arises.

Those individuals who have legal custody of the student may attend school meetings, participate in educational decisions, and review educational records regarding that student. Persons who do not have legal custody (including those with visitation rights but not legal custody) have no such educational rights and may not participate in these matters.

9. Medical Records/Immunization

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has mandated that all children entering Kindergarten or First Grade present documented proof that the following immunizations have been received:

DT (Diphtheria/Tetanus) 4 doses - one after the fourth birthday

Polio, 3 doses

MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) 2 doses –one dose after 12 months of age

Hepatitis B, 3 doses of vaccine- last dose after 6 months

Varivax (Chicken Pox) - 2 doses (or documentation of live disease)

After the basic series of three Oral Polio Vaccine, Diphtheria and Tetanus, boosters are due between four and six years of age. For students entering 7th grade, one dose of tetanus,

diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) is required if it has been more than 5 years since the last tetanus immunization and one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) is also necessary. Please inform the school nurse, in writing, when boosters are given. Other immunizations may be required.

Dentist and Physician Reports, along with an Elementary School Student Health History form, are required for students entering Kindergarten or any student entering from out of state. Subsequent examinations and forms are required from the Dentist in grades 3 and 7 and from the Physician in grade 6 (scoliosis exam is also due at this time).

10. Medications

It is generally recommended that prescription medicines be given to the student before and/or after school in accordance with the physician's directions. In those rare instances where the medication must be given during the school day, it will be administered by the nurse or in the main office. Parents/guardians are required to sign a medication authorization form, which is available from school, if the student must take medication at the school.

Prescription and non-prescription over the counter medications must be in the original container with a note from the parent and physician to include: name of medicine, dosage, time of administration, dates to be given, and reason for medication. Medications may be sent in by the day or week. It is recommended that students not carry a full prescription bottle to be taken back and forth daily.

11. Nurse

A registered nurse is provided by the Upper Dublin School District on days selected by the district. Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School provides nursing service on those days not covered by the Upper Dublin School District. These nurses administer care at school limited to first aid in accidents or illness until the parents can be reached. The nurse is not to replace the family doctor for medical/dental exam requirements. Please do not advise your child to seek the nurse to diagnose illnesses or injuries that occur at home.

The nurse is responsible for checking the height, weight, hearing, and vision of every child and for making referral to parents when problems are found. The nurse maintains all health records. Care given in the school is limited to first aid, in accidents or illness, until the parents can be reached to take the child home, to the doctor, or to the hospital. In an emergency, the nurse will arrange to have the student transported to the hospital.

All students are screened yearly under the state-mandated program.

If your child has a specific medical problem, please notify the homeroom teacher and the nurse of the problem. Medic-Alert bracelets are strongly recommended for any child with a medical problem. Emergency cards are kept on file for each student. Please be sure that we have up-to-date emergency numbers on file in case of an emergency during the school day involving your child.

12. Peanut/Nut Allergies

OLM Peanut Aware Policy: It is the goal of OLM to partner with parents to ensure a safe environment while children are attending school. With the understanding that OLM is not a

“peanut free” school, if a student with a peanut allergy attends OLM, the school will partner with the student’s parents to educate teachers, students, and other parents.

Teachers and staff have been trained on what it means to have a life-threatening allergy, precautions, and treatment. They also have procedures to adhere to and are familiar with students who have life-threatening allergies. They have also been trained on the use of the epipen.

Our classrooms are “peanut free” for the safety of some of our students. Please do not send foods with peanut products in them. In the lunch room, there is a designated “peanut free zone”. OLM cannot prohibit peanut products at lunch or police the lunches of students. OLM asks parents to make careful and prayerful decisions about sending peanut products to school. Our website lists “nut safe treats recommendations for the classroom”.

OLM will require that an Emergency Action Plan be completed by the parents and the health care provider. The plan will include signs and symptoms of a reaction as well and interventions to minimize the reaction. Any required medications, such as an epipen or Benadryl, will need to be prescribed by the child’s physician and attached to the Emergency Action Plan.

13. Registration

Registration Guidelines

Families are accepted into the school in the following preferential order:

- a. Siblings of current Our Lady of Mercy families and parishioners of St. Alphonsus, St. Anthony and St. Catherine parishes.
- b. Other families (non-parishioner) with children currently registered in our school.
- c. Parish families sending their first child to our school
- d. Students transferring from other Catholic schools
- e. Families residing out of our parish
 - (1) Catholic students coming from a parish without a school
 - (2) Catholic students coming from a parish that has closed its school enrollment
 - (3) Catholic students coming from another parish school for other reasons
*A letter of release is required from the pastor of your current parish.
 - (4) Non-Catholic students
- f. When a grade is filled, a wait list is established. This is listed in chronological order (upon receipt of registration form and fee) and respects the criteria as stated above. The registration fee is returned if there are not openings in a specific grade.

14. Release of a Child

A child will not be released to a parent/guardian who does not have physical custody, without the written consent of the custodial parent/guardian. To determine the custodial parent/guardian, all separated or divorced parents of children enrolled in the parish school must provide the school with a copy of the court order or custodial agreement adjudicating that determination of custody. This Court Order/Custodial Agreement is placed in a confidential file.

15. Safety Regulations

The following regulations have been established to ensure the safety of our students and must be adhered to by each student:

- Running is not permitted at any time within the school building or in moving from one place to another on the school premises.
- Entry is not permitted into the school building at recess or lunch, or after dismissal at any time, unless a member of the school staff gives explicit permission to do so.
- No student may leave the school premises at any time without permission. Every student must stay within the established boundaries when outdoors for lunch recess.
- All visitors and volunteers must report to the school office.

16. Smoking

The school premises are a smoke-free environment. No smoking is allowed on school property.

17. Spitting/Biting

Spitting and biting are behaviors that are health related and are strictly prohibited. However, children over the age of three may occasionally be involved in a biting or spitting incident. The staff will observe the child to determine what elicits this inappropriate behavior in an effort to avert it from recurring. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. If the child's behavior persists in being harmful to the individual child or to other children, the parent will be asked to remove the child from school for the day. The parent/parents must be in communication with administration before the child can return to school.

18. Tuition Policy (adopted and approved by the Board of Directors on 09-10-2015)

Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School Board (The Board) with the advice and consultation of the principal is responsible for setting the Tuition as well as any non-refundable fees. We believe that the tuition is an investment in your child's education and religious formation. The Board intends to ensure that sufficient financial resources are available for Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School, and that enrollment is as available and affordable as possible to all families who desire to apply and abide by the rules regulations and policies established for the school.

The Board has established the following tuition goals:

- A. To make a Catholic School education at Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School affordable to all who truly desire and value it for their children.
- B. To foster a trusting, Catholic community relationship among The Archdiocese, the supporting parishes, Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School and your family.
- C. To generate funds so that Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School has a solid financial base in order to effectively improve programs and services to our students.

The tuition policy of Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School requires that the parents and/or guardians must arrange to pay the total tuition charged for the current school year. All

families are required to make tuition payments using the FACTS Tuition Management Plan. Each family's preferred manner of payment must be submitted each year at the time of student registration. Through this plan, the family authorizes the bank to transfer the tuition payment from a checking or savings account. It shall be the responsibility of each parent and/or guardian to keep the Business Manager of the school office informed of their need to make any changes in their preferred tuition payment plan. It shall be the responsibility of each parent and/or guardian to make the necessary arrangements with FACTS to facilitate any changes in their preferred tuition payment plan. It is NOT the responsibility of anyone at the school to change the parent and/or guardian's chosen option with FACTS.

FACTS Tuition Management Plan Options for payment include:

- A. Full Payment. Under this plan the entire amount of tuition is paid through the FACTS plan on July 1.
- B. Semester Payment. Under this plan the entire amount of tuition is paid through the FACTS Plan in two installments due in July and December.
- C. Monthly Payments. Under this plan the entire amount of tuition is paid in ten (10) monthly payments beginning July 1.

REGISTRATION: Parents and/or Guardians will be required to complete a registration form for each child. Each registration form must be complete prior to the start of school at such time as is determined by The Board.

LATE REGISTRATIONS:

- A. Families registering after the registration deadline shall fulfill their tuition obligations according to the tuition policy stated previously.
- B. Tuition for students registering after the first day of school shall be prorated over the number of school days they will be in attendance plus an additional month of tuition.
- C. A late re-registration fee of \$300.00 will apply to families registering after the registration deadline as established each school year.

FEES: Fees determined by The Board are in addition to the tuition.

All fees are:

- Mandatory;
- Not applied to the tuition; and
- Non-refundable.

The fees and the dates when they are due are published on the School's website. Fees charged by FACTS or a financial institution are not controlled or determined by The Board and are the responsibility of each School Family to address without involvement of the school's administration, staff or The Board.

DIFFICULTY IN PAYMENT OF TUITION:

For the sake of your family's security and peace of mind, and for the general financial stability of our school, it is the obligation of and we encourage each parent and/or guardian to contact the school as soon as possible when they are experiencing economic difficulties or changes in life situation. Families who experience these problems may contact the business manager of Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School who will contact the Finance Committee of The Board to arrange for a confidential meeting to discuss special arrangements. It is not the Policy of The Board to turn away families who are genuinely in need. All Requests shall be held in strict confidence by the Business Manager and The Finance Committee of The Board.

TUITION AND FEE DELINQUENCY:

School families know that their child/children will not be allowed to attend our school if they fail to pay tuition according to the agreement that they have made with FACTS and who have been unwilling to make suitable alternative arrangements with the Finance Committee of The Board. In addition, school families 60 days in arrears for fees or tuition who have not made suitable arrangements with the Finance Committee of The Board to have the arrears paid in full will be informed that their child/children will not be permitted to attend school.

EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS AND/OR STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM OUR LADY OF MERCY REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

- Tuition and fee obligations for transferring students must be paid in full before the school must complete and transmit any materials to accomplish the transfer.
- Tuition and fee obligations for eighth grade students must be paid in full one month prior to graduation.
- Eighth grade and transferring students whose tuition and fees are not paid in full will have report cards, term reports, and school records withheld until all tuition and fees are satisfied.
- In addition, eighth grade families in arrears will not have their child/children participate in graduation ceremonies or receive their diploma until all tuition and fees are satisfied.

TUITION ASSISTANCE:

Tuition assistance is available through BLOCS and Our Lady of Mercy. Families may apply online at www.blocs.org.

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES: The cost of books, notebooks, pens, pencils, paper and other consumable supplies is not included in the total tuition fee. Our Lady of Mercy Regional Catholic School administration may request that parents provide additional supplies specific to their student's grade level. A supply list will be sent to families and be posted on the school's website. Parents are expected to provide such additional supplies and a nominal fee.

19. Transfer

If a student is transferring to another school, parents should supply the school office with a permission form for release of records to the new school. Records are not forwarded to another school until this form has been signed by a parent and all financial obligations have been met.