Our Lady Star of the Sea School

Parent/Student Handbook

2016-2017

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I. MISSION STATEMENT OF OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL:

Jesus Christ is the center of our school community and the Person by whom we measure our life in its daily, physical, mental, and spiritual activities. It is, therefore, the mission of Our Lady Star of the Sea, in conjunction with the parents and guardians of our children, to build a community which will reflect Gospel values, not only in the smaller school and parish setting, but also in the wider world society. Because we are also an academic institution, we strive for scholastic excellence by providing an organized and integrated curriculum, which responds to the unique ability of each person. It is hoped that by providing a program that encourages spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, and physical growth, the students will be able to meet the challenges that face them as they strive to become members of a democratic society.

II. APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES:

In late January/early February of each year, Our Lady Star of the Sea School will begin hosting Open Houses for prospective families. Announcements regarding Open Houses are published in the bulletins of both OLSS and neighboring Catholic parishes, in the school's weekly newsletters, and on the school website. There will be Open Houses posted each month through May.

When parents register their child/children, they must submit an online TADS Admission Application, including a $150.00 non-refundable registration fee.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Catholic students shall be given preference over non-Catholic students for initial admission into Archdiocesan schools. In all other ways, Archdiocesan schools must comply with Archdiocesan nondiscrimination policies and all applicable local, state and federal regulations.

Archdiocesan schools may not discriminate on the basis of any legally protected status, including race, sex (unless traditionally a single sex school), national origin or age, unless otherwise allowed by law. In the application for admission, parents/guardians are required to acknowledge the Roman Catholic religious nature of the school, and must agree not to publicly repudiate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. All applicants must follow all applicable policies and procedures regarding school-based entrance requirements, health examinations and immunizations before receiving any final admissions decisions.

III. ENTRANCE & TRANSFER POLICIES:

New Admissions:

Children entering Pre-K must be four years of age on or before September 1st, in compliance with the Catholic Schools Office and Calvert County Public Schools policy.
Children entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1st. Students will be conditionally accepted into Kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on displayed readiness on the Kindergarten entrance test administered by the Calvert County Public School System or another authorized evaluator. The Early Prevention of School Failure assessment will be administered to all incoming kindergarten students. Students transferring from other schools will be tested only if report cards show a discrepancy between achievement and grades.

All new students entering Our Lady Star of the Sea School must sign an "Authorization for Release of Information" form so that OLSS can request school records. Also, the school must be apprised of any IEP or 504 plans the child may have before acceptance can be formalized. State health requirements must also be met before a child is accepted at OLSS.

Materials to accompany the Admission application are:
1) Copy of birth certificate;
2) For Catholics only – Copy of Baptismal Certificate;
3) A non-refundable $150 application fee;
4) "Immunization Policy & Health Inventory" form with required attachments (must be submitted before beginning of school year);
5) "Allergy Agreement and Action Plan" (if applicable):
6) Copy of custody order, or other court orders (if applicable); Furthermore, if the applicant is transferring from another school, the following are required:
7) Current report card, including comments, and the two previous years' report cards;

8) Current standardized test scores plus the two previous years' scores, if available.

Re-registration:

In order to get a firm commitment from parents of students already attending OLSS, each family must pay a $150.00 nonrefundable registration fee each Spring for the Fall term. Re-Registration is processed through TADS online. After the posted deadline for re-registration has passed, students who have not re-registered will be considered lapsed and their application will be included among the entire pool of applicants for the following year.

The principal may determine that re-registration of a particular student is not in the best interest of the child, or of the school. Such determination will be communicated to the family in writing. Some reasons for refusal of re- registration include, but are not limited to:

1) Failure to pay tuition, student fees, or other school-related expense;
2) Behavior by a student, parent or guardian that reflects consistent lack of respect for the school, school authorities, policies, procedures, or the faith community teaching and mission of the Roman Catholic Church;
3) Failure of a student, parent or guardian to act in ways that promote the best interests of the church and school;
4) Refusal of a parent or guardian to collaborate with the school on recommendations made in the best interest of the student, such as diagnostic testing, referral to counseling services, behavioral assessments, and/or other educational recommendations necessary to the student's academic success; or
5) Unwillingness of a parent or guardian to grant the school access to confidential information/access necessary for the education of the child. Examples include: information available from existing evaluations or permission to speak to the child's pediatrician, therapist or counselor.

Custody Arrangements:

Parents/guardians who are (or become) divorced, separated, unmarried, or who have an other special circumstances regarding the custody of their children must provide the school with a court order or decree of custody for the student's file. This information and documentation must be provided and updated upon applying for admission, re-registration, and whenever a custody arrangement changes. The "Transformation Permission" form must also be updated as needed to reflect all current custody arrangements.

In addition, any specific instructions regarding the release of the child to a parent must be written, signed, and kept in the student's file. Any special requests for school staff to release a child to someone other than the persons indicated in the specific instructions must be written and signed by the custodial parents/guardians of record.

IV. FINANCIAL POLICY:

Tuition:

OLSS School is firmly committed to providing an opportunity for a Catholic education with tuition costs that are reasonable for most families. Tuition is divided into two parts: direct payment and volunteer service payment. Normally, each family will make direct payments to OLSS School each month in accordance with the financial contract (either ten or twelve months). The direct payment will normally constitute the bulk of tuition.

Overdue Accounts:

The direct payments are due monthly as outlined in the financial contract. Tuition payments received more than 30 days late will be assessed at a 10% late fee. Overdue accounts will be handled as follows:

- 30 Days Late: All monies 30 days past due will be charged a 10% late fee.
- 60 Days Late: Families overdue more than 60 days will receive a formal statement and a letter from the principal requesting payment and/or explanation of extenuating circumstances.
- 90 Days Late: Families overdue more than 90 days must meet with the Principal, and/or Pastor to explain any extenuating circumstances.
- 120 Days Late: Families with accounts overdue more than 120 days will not be allowed to return to OLSS School the following year unless arrangements are made with the Principal or Pastor. In the event that it becomes necessary for OLSS to institute legal proceedings to collect tuition, the parents/guardians, will be responsible for any and all legal/attorney fees.

A fee of $25.00 will be charged for all returned checks.

Families withdrawing during the school year must pay the remainder of that month's tuition. The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance.

Volunteer Service Payment:
Each family must also meet a volunteer service payment as outlined in the financial contract. The volunteer service payment may be met in any combination of the following:
- A cash payment to OLSS School. The cash payment may be all or part of the volunteer service payment.
- Fund raising activities, available throughout the year.
- Volunteer service hours credited as outlined in the financial contract.

Acceptable volunteer service hours include Home & School Association, cleaning the church grounds, assisting teachers, and other projects designated for volunteer service by the principal.

The volunteer service payment is a financial obligation. Families that have not completed the volunteer service payment by the last month of school will be billed for the remainder along with the last direct payment.

V. ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to be in school every day that school is in session; however, any student who has signs of fever, sore throat, headache, etc., should not be sent to school. Illnesses for 3 or more days require a physician's note. A student with a rash is not to be sent to school unless a physician's statement indicating that the rash is not contagious is sent with the child.

The following are valid reasons for excused absences from school if properly documented upon the students return to school:
1) Illness of the student (after three days of illness, the student must provide medical documentation indicating the s/he is able to return to school);
2) Medical or dental appointments;
3) Death in the student's immediate family;
4) Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding;
5) Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by the principal;
6) Temporary closing of facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions requiring closing or suspension of classes;
7) Other absences approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of the parent or guardian.

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above categories, or is not properly documented by the student's parent/guardian, is an unexcused absence.

If a student is absent from school, parents should inform the school by phone between 8:00 and 9:00am. Upon return to school, the student will have two school days to make up each day absent.

Habitual tardiness is a habit that needs to be discouraged. It disturbs classroom routine and robs students who are on time for class as well as the latecomer of valuable learning time. A student is considered late if he/she arrives after the 8:00AM bell. A student arriving after 10:30am or leaving before 12:30pm will be marked ½ day absent.

Doctor/Dental appointments and family vacations should be after school hours or on days scheduled as school holidays. Family vacation during the school year is extremely disruptive to the student and teacher. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. If parents choose to remove students from school, the assignments missed must be made up upon return to school.

VI. CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES:

Child Protection (Virtus):
The Archdiocese of Washington has implemented a Child Protection Policy for the safety of the children in our diocesan schools and parish ministries. As part of the policy, ADW mandates that anyone who wishes to volunteer in any way that involves contact with the children (coaching, chaperoning field trips, classroom and cafeteria helpers, etc.) must complete the Virtus process. This involves:
1) Setting up an account on the Virtus website,
2) Completing and submitting a "Volunteer Application" form,
3) Attending a training session on the Child Protection Policy and submitting the acknowledgement form from the back of the book,

4) Having an electronic background check run through the Archdiocese of Washington; the cost is $13.50

By law, any instance of known or suspected child abuse must be reported to civil and Archdiocesan authorities.

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect:
The Code of the State of Maryland requires any childcare worker or teacher to report a suspected case of child abuse or neglect to the local social service agency. This is required even if there is no proof of abuse. The law specifically provides that any person participating in good faith in the making of a report of suspected child abuse shall be immune from liability, civil or criminal, which might be incurred with respect to the making of such a report.

VII. HEALTH:

Health Regulations:
State law requires that all children be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, and rubella. Families who do not submit written proof of proper immunizations will not be admitted to school.

Whenever a child has a communicable disease, the parents must notify the school office, so that health records may be kept up to date. Following certain communicable diseases, a definite period of absence from school is required. Since cases vary greatly, it is recommended that a child see the family physician who will determine if the child is ready to return to school.

In the event that a child becomes ill at school, the teacher will send the child to the office where the school Med Tech or Nurse will examine the child. The school secretary will notify the parents. If the child is running a fever, the parent must come to the school in a reasonable amount of time (usually within an hour's time) and transport the child home. In the case of accident or emergency the parent also must pick the child up in a reasonable amount of time, or the school will call 911 to have the child transported to the Emergency Room at Calvert Memorial Hospital.

A note is required from the parent and doctor if a student is able to come to school but unable to participate in school activities.

If a child is allergic to bee stings, the parent must provide a bee sting kit to be kept in the school office.

Administration of Medication:
The Archdiocese of Washington in compliance with the State of Maryland mandates that schools must have proper documentation from a physician to administer ANY prescription or OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION. "In the event that ANY medication must be administered during the school day, the parent must complete a Student Medication Authorization before school personnel can comply with their request."

If a child must take medicine during the school day:
1) Parents must obtain a "Student Medication Authorization" form from the school office.
2) The "Student Medication Authorization" form must be completed and signed by a physician. The parent must sign the bottom of the form.

Students may not carry medication to or from the school. Any medication found with a student will be confiscated and kept in the school office until a parent claims it.

VIII. ACADEMICS:

Curriculum:
The curriculum at Our Lady Star of the Sea, guided by the teaching of the Church, will enable each student to reach his or her full potential. The curriculum is aligned to the standards of the Archdiocese of Washington. OLSS follows the curriculum guidelines formulated under the direction of the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Washington. This includes the curriculum guidelines on religious education, each subject area, drug education, human sexuality, environmental education, and AIDS education. Formal and informal instruction is provided to help each student grow in knowledge, skills, personal and social traits, and service to the Church and community. Each child enrolled in Our Lady Star of the Sea School will participate in regular religion classes, weekly liturgy, and paraliturgical celebrations that commemorate the seasons of the Church year.

Homework
The purpose of homework is:
1) To reinforce learning that has taken place in school.

2) To foster habits of independent study.
3) To relate school learning to out-of-school experiences.
4) To foster unity between home and school.

Generally, students will have homework each weeknight. There will be occasions when students do not have written assignments, but they are expected to study or practice each school night. It is highly recommended that parents check homework each evening. For the average student, the following time allotment should be expected:

- Grade 1: approximately 10 minutes
- Grade 2: approximately 20 minutes
- Grade 3: approximately 30 minutes
- Grade 4: approximately 40 minutes
- Grade 5: approximately 50 minutes
- Grade 6: approximately 1 hour
- Grade 7: approximately 1 hour 30 minutes
- Grade 8: approximately 2 hours

In case of absence, students will have two days to make up class work and homework for each day absent. Missed tests will be administered upon consultation with the teacher. If family vacations are taken during scheduled school days, the student will be responsible for making up missed work upon return. Homework and schoolwork will not be provided by the classroom teacher during the vacation.

Promotion/Retention

A student will be promoted to the next grade when he/she has successfully completed the previous grade. A student may be retained in Grades K-3 if he/she has not mastered the skills necessary for success in the next grade. Retention in the primary grades is normally dependent upon the development of reading and language arts skills. If a child is to be retained, report cards and daily papers must consistently show marks, which indicate failure. A conference with parents to advise them of the possibility of retention and to discuss possible remedial actions should be held no later than the end of the first semester. Follow up teacher-parent conferences to evaluate academic progress of the child must be held. The principal, after consultation with appropriate staff members and parents, will make the decision as to whether or not a pupil is retained. Students in grade 4 through 8 who do not maintain a 70% average for the year MUST successfully complete an approved summer school program in order to be considered for promotion to the following grade.

Report of Academic Progress

Report cards are distributed four times a year. Parent-Teacher conferences are held for all parents at the end of the 1st quarter. At this time parents will pick up the child's report card. If a child experiences difficulty, a conference between the parent and teachers can be arranged at any time. This may be done by writing a note to the teacher or by calling the school office. Please do not call teachers' homes unless a teacher specifically desires it.

Kindergarten students receive two reports cards a year, at the end of each semester. Parent-Teacher conferences are held for parents of Kindergarten students at the end of the first quarter. At mid-quarter, each student in grades 1 - 8 will receive an interim progress report, which will give parents a report of student achievement to date. The final report card will be mailed after the end of the school year.

Grading Systems:

Kindergarten	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-8
+ Progressing normally	E =Excellent	A = 93% - 100%
-- Needs more time	G=Good	B = 85% - 92%
* See comments	S=Satisfactory	C = 77% - 84%
	I =Improvement Needed	D = 70% - 76%
	U =Unsatisfactory	F = Below 70%

Honor Roll:

Students in Grades 4 - 8 are eligible for the Honor Roll. A student must have all A's to achieve first honors. To receive second honors, a student must have all A's and B's. Good or Excellent must be earned in special subjects to receive honors.

Accelerated Classes:

Students in accelerated Math or Reading classes must maintain a 90% average or above to remain in those classes.

Students taking Algebra must maintain a 95% average to remain in that class. At the beginning of the school year, students will be evaluated using a Scantron evaluation to determine their readiness in reading/math for an accelerated program.

Academic Eligibility

Students in grades 4–8 who are otherwise eligible to participate in extracurricular activities (e.g,, student council, basketball, robotics, and vex) must maintain at least a 'C' in each academic subject and an 'S' in each special subject (i.e., Spanish, Music, PE, Art, Computer, and Library) to remain academically eligible. In addition, receiving a 'comment code' number of 21, 22, or 23 in three or more areas will render the student academically ineligible. Academic eligibility will be determined at interim and quarterly marking periods.

Testing Program

The testing program is designed to provide information concerning each child for the purpose of planning for his/her total education and development. In accordance with the Archdiocesan Office of Education's regulation on testing, the Scantron Program is administered online to students Kindergarten through 8th grade.

A high school placement test is given to the eighth grade students in December.

A religious education assessment based on Archdiocesan standards will be administered to students in grades 3—8.

A child's scores on standardized tests will be shared with the parent and will also be filed in student's cumulative folder. No individual or agency outside of the school system will be permitted to inspect a child's school records without the written permission of the parent and in the presence of school personnel.

PROCEDURES

Arrival and Dismissal

Regular school hours are Monday-Friday, 7:45am – 3:00pm. Before care opens daily at 6:45am and is available until 7:30am. All students are expected to be in their homerooms by 7:45am. After 7:55am, they are marked tardy. Students are dismissed at 3:00pm daily.

Transportation

Parents should notify the school in writing if someone other than the usual driver is picking up the student. A parent may not transport a child, other than his/her own, unless written or verbal permission (in person or by phone to the School Office) is available from the other parent.

Students who are usually bus riders will ride the bus unless a note or phone call from a parent states otherwise. If someone other than the parent picks up a regular bus rider, the parent needs to state who will be transporting the student.

Parents who carpool are expected to pick up their child in the parking lot behind the school. The parking area between the convent and rectory as well as Sedwick Street and the gravel lot are off-limits to parents of OLSS children. The former is reserved for Our Lady Star of the Sea parishioners who have appointments at the rectory, and the latter is for teacher parking. Students are not to be dropped off or met in any area other than the main parking lot. At the end of the school day, students who carpool become the responsibility of their parents; consequently, it is imperative that children be met promptly. After dismissal, teachers are not responsible for students. Parents picking up children late, who have not called the school, are to come into the school to meet and sign out their child/ren.

Habitual late pick-ups may result in financial consequences.
Students leaving before the end of the school day must present a handwritten note (not e-mail) to that effect to the homeroom teacher.

Parents, visitors, and regular volunteers coming into school must report to the office, sign in, and receive a volunteer/visitor nametag.

Emergency School Closings

Our Lady Star of the Sea follows the same procedures as Calvert County Public Schools in inclement weather. In the event that OLSS must deviate from the above policy, special announcements will be made through SchoolReach, an emergency communication program (phone and e-mail) set up by the Archdiocese of Washington. Please do not call teachers' homes or the convent for school closing information.

Field Trips

In the event that a teacher arranges an educational field trip for students, parents must sign the Archdiocesan "Field Trip" permission form and pay the specified cost. No child may participate without the proper signed consent form. The school will exercise care in planning and following safety procedures for such trips. Such trips are considered part of the educational program, and every student is expected to participate. A student who does not participate in a field trip will be marked absent if s/he does not attend school on the day of the field trip. The school has the right to refuse to take a child on a field trip if the child fails to meet academic or behavioral requirements. On all field trips, the students must travel with the class to and from the destination.

Lunch/Recess

All children in OLSS will have two regular breaks; one in the morning when a small, healthy snack may be eaten and one at the lunch period. Children in K-2 have recess periods that are 15 minutes long and are times of exercise and play for the children.

All children should bring a morning snack, lunch, and drink. Glass-bottled drinks and sodas are not permitted at any time. Milk is available to any student who is interested at the cost of 55¢. Hot lunch is served each day for those who choose to order at a cost of $4.00.

During lunch time students are required to:

- Sit at the table while eating.
- Talk quietly with the people at their table.
- Clean up any spills, pick up any paper, and put all trash in proper bins.
- Stay at the table until dismissed by the lunch monitor.

Records

A parent/guardian may request to review/inspect information in their child's permanent and temporary records within a reasonable amount of time (never more than 45 days after the request is made). Parents of students transferring to other schools must notify Our Lady Star of the Sea School in writing and must sign an official release form before records are forwarded to the receiving school. The transfer of any student's records shall be contingent upon fulfillment of all financial obligations.

OLSS abides by the provision of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, OLSS will provide a non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and other school-related information regarding the child.

School Supplies

Students are expected to have the necessary supplies for every day. The Student Council will sell basic supplies before school. The students are not permitted to have liquid correction fluid.

Event Invitations

If your child is planning a party outside of school, invitations may only be given out at school if every child in the class is invited (or all the boys / all the girls.) Please follow rules of common courtesy during school to prevent hurt feelings.

COMMUNICATION

The primary method of communication from the school is by SchoolReach School Notification System emails. Every Wednesday, a SchoolReach will be sent to all families with the weekly newsletter from the principal, and additional school-related information. Any hard copy items, including the monthly tuition bill, quarterly progress, report cards, and field trip forms will be given to students by their teacher to bring home.

Communication between teachers and parents is highly valued at OLSS. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers if there is a problem or concern. The options for communication are:

- Call the school office to make an appointment or to contact a teacher. The teacher will return the phone call as soon as possible
- Send a note for the teacher in with your child, or to the school office
- Email the teacher via their OLSS email address only for questions regarding homework, assignments, etc. Do not email the teacher through their person email address or any social networks such as Facebook.

It is the policy of the Catholic Schools Office not to entertain any local concern until the proper channels on the local level have been followed.

Teachers will usually contact parents by telephone or by a note sent in a sealed envelope. Teachers in the Upper School (6th, 7th, & 8th) will communicate to parents/guardians specific middle school policies regarding late assignments and disciplinary procedures. This will normally be done on Back to School Night.

DISCIPLINE

While the school strives to provide an atmosphere that is pleasant for students, it must also be sufficiently structured to provide an environment in which learning can take place. Discipline in a Catholic school is an important part of moral guidance. Students are subject to the school's disciplinary code whether their inappropriate behavior occurs on or off school property, or over any communicative forums, including but not limited to, internet, intranet, cell phones of any kind, or other electronic devices or media.

The purpose of discipline is:
1. To promote moral, spiritual, and physical development.
2. To develop self-discipline.
3. To develop respect for one's self and others.

Students shall comply with the rules of the school and submit to the authority of teachers and others in authority over them. It is the student's responsibility to:
1) Conduct him/herself as becomes a Christian young person at all times.
2) Have respect for the person and property of teachers, all adults, and fellow students at all times.
3) Use proper and courteous language at all times.
4) Wear the school uniform properly at all times and for all classes (Refer to the Dress Code).
5) Be prepared for each class by having the necessary supplies and assignments.
6) Leave the building only at specified times, and enter rooms only with the permission of the teacher and in the presence of school personnel.

Students must abide by this code of conduct. They are expected to be respectful in their interactions with others. Some examples of unacceptable behavior are:
- Deliberately disrupting a teacher's class or the general quiet of the school
- Speaking disrespectfully to any teacher, adult, or student
- Behaving in a disrespectful manner in church
- Cheating on tests or school assignments, or any other dishonest behavior
- Using profanity or derogatory language, and/or making obscene gestures
- Fighting, harassing, or bullying another student, i.e. any actions that result in deliberate, hurtful acts or statements that physically or emotionally hurt, frighten or threaten another student
- Throwing rocks, sticks, snowballs or anything that might injure another student

Students must show proper respect for all school property, and will be held responsible for any damage to school property. School property includes books, the building, instructional equipment, educational and sports equipment, and the school grounds.

Students are required to have book bags in order to protect school property. Hardback textbooks will have covers on them at all times.

Students are not allowed to chew gum on school/church property.

Students must not have cigarettes, or other tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, drugs, fireworks, or weapons on school property. *

Students are never permitted to run inside the building.

Students are to maintain quiet during class changes and snack break, out of consideration for business being conducted in the office and for other classes that are in session.

In the event of a fire drill, students are not to talk or push.

Students may not enter the building at recess, noon, or after dismissal, nor may they leave the school property without permission.

Students may not be absent from school without the knowledge of parents.

Students may not bring electronic games, cell phones, or personal music players to school. These items will be

confiscated, held in the office, and returned to the parent on the last day of school.

Students are required to follow all uniform and non-uniform regulations.

ALL infractions of the Discipline Policy will be reported to the Principal, who will then discuss the matter with the child's parents. The Principal, in consultation with the pastor and/or teachers, reserves the right to determine whether an incident constitutes a serious infraction. Parents will be notified as soon as possible in cases of significant disciplinary situations that involve their child/ren.

***The school principal (by state law) reserves the right to inspect desks and bags of any type brought onto the school premises. All contraband items will be seized and appropriate measures will be taken.**

Harassment

Our Lady Star of the Sea School is committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure learning environment that is free from harassment or bullying in any form, including cyberbullying. Harassment or bullying, verbal or written, of any student by any other student, lay employee, volunteer, religious or clergy is prohibited. All reports of harassment or bullying will be treated seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest or online) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Threats

In the event of any actual or perceived threat of violence or other inappropriate illegal behavior, Our Lady Star of the Sea School reserves its right to take any and all actions it deems necessary for the health and safety of its school community, including the individual(s) making the threat. These actions may include contacting law enforcement offices, mental health professionals and/or any other outside experts as the school official(s) deems necessary.

Suspension

In cases of serious violation of school rules and regulations, when all other normal disciplinary procedures have been followed, it may be necessary to consider temporary in-school or out-of-school suspension. As soon as it becomes evident that the suspension of a particular student is appropriate, the student's parents/guardians will be notified and asked to confer with the proper school authorities about the matter. In all cases, written records of each suspension will be kept on file for the duration of the student's enrollment in the school. The following procedures will be followed:

1) The student and parents/guardian will be given oral and written notices of the charges against him/her.
2) The student and parents/guardian will be given an explanation of the evidence.
3) The student will be given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story.

Expulsion

If it is determined that a student's interests would be better served in another environment, or that the individual's behavior poses a significant threat to him/herself or a threat to others, a student may be expelled.

Procedures and Regulations Governing Expulsions

The administrator of the school must contact the Catholic Schools Office before any action regarding expulsion takes place. Under ordinary circumstances, the student will have been suspended at least once during that school year.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations.

TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET USAGE AT OLSS

Acceptable Use of Technology and Internet by Students in Catholic Schools:

Students shall use all Technology Equipment, including, but not limited to computers, networking systems, Internet, mobile devices, communication devices, cell phone, email, social networking sites, calculators, DVD players, and cameras (Technology Equipment) with care and respect, whether at school, at home, or elsewhere. Students shall not type, send or otherwise use any inappropriate or offensive words, or display, send, or otherwise use inappropriate or offensive images, sounds or messages from or on Technology Equipment. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in a manner that violates any local, state, or federal laws. Students shall immediately report to a teacher or supervising staff member any inappropriate material or misuse of Technology Equipment of which the student becomes aware. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in any way to engage in cyber bullying behavior. Any student use of cell phones and mobile devices during school hours is prohibited, with the exception of medical emergencies.

When using the school's Technology Equipment, all students:

- shall not reconfigure any school hardware, software, or network settings;
- shall print, download, or otherwise transfer only that information approved by the teacher or supervisor;
- shall obtain the permission of a teacher or supervisor before loading a file or disk onto a school computer;
- shall not use any school Technology Equipment to create, store transfer or use software or electronic content in a manner which violates the rights of the holder of copyright in the software or the content;
- shall not plagiarize works on the internet;
- shall not load any software onto school computers without first obtaining the teacher's permission;
- shall only use the Internet for school-related projects and shall visit only the sites assigned by the teacher;
- shall not surf the Internet or visit Facebook or any other social networking websites while at school;
- shall not log-on to the Internet without permission from a teacher or supervising staff member;
- shall not give out, post, or otherwise distribute personal information such as photographs, home address, telephone numbers, parents' work addresses or telephone numbers or the name and location of the school
- Each student's parent must review the "Technology & Internet Usage Agreement" with the students and either sign a hard copy, or acknowledge agreement to the policy in the TADS system during Admissions or Re-registration.

Blogs:

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, MySpace, Facebook, Instagram, etc. will result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

Cell Phones:

If a student needs a cell phone after school due to walking home from school, entering a house where no one is home, or attending sport practices or games, he/she must bring the cell phone to the school office upon arrival in the morning and turn the cell phone off for the day. The cell phone may be picked up by the student at dismissal. At no time during the day should a cell phone be in a student's desk or in his/her possession. Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year.

Sexting:

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion.

Texting:

Students should at no time be involved in texting during the course of the school day. Students involved in texting at school face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Virtual Reality Sites:

Virtual Reality Sites such as, but not limited to, There.com secondlife.com, pose a developmental and moral risk to the life of a student. Parents are cautioned to be aware of the online sites visited by their children, knowing that often predators are not living in a neighborhood, but within the home via a computer.

Archdiocesan Catholic School Counseling Services

In the event of an emergency or crisis, the Archdiocese of Washington may send a team of school counseling professional to Our Lady Star of the Sea School. One-time, initial counseling services may be rendered to students by school or archdiocesan counseling staff in the event of a crisis or emergency.

Prevention Programming

As a Catholic School, Our Lady Star of the Sea believes and teaches that each of us is called to love our neighbor and to treat them with respect. Our Lady Star of the Sea School is committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation in any form, including, cyber bullying. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation of any member of the school community are prohibited. All reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

The reprisal or retaliation against anyone who reports acts of bullying, harassment, and intimidation is strictly prohibited. All reports of reprisal or retaliation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Bullying, harassment, and intimidation mean any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including electronic communication (telephone, cell phone, computer, iPod, etc.), that:

1) Physically harms an individual; damages an individual's property; substantially interferes with an individual's

education or learning environment; or

2) places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property; and occurs on school property; at a school activity or event; on a school transportation vehicle or bus; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

Extracurricular Activities

A student will be barred from participation in extracurricular activities for serious violations of school rules. This action will be taken at the discretion of the principal. Aftercare, bus transportation, and field trips are all extensions of the school day and all rules apply.

DRESS CODE

PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN

Pre-Kand Kindergarten Students wear the OLSS gym uniform daily:

Tops:
- OLSS T-shirt
- OLSS sweatshirt



Bottoms:
- OLSS shorts
- OLSS sweatpants



Footwear:
- White or navy socks
- Sneakers, any color

GIRLS IN GRADES 1-8:

TWO COLOR COMBINATION OPTIONS (As pictured; combinations may not be mixed & matched):

1) LIGHT BLUE/NAVY COMBINATIONS:



Short- or long-sleeve light blue blouse or polo shirt

WITH



Navy shorts (Grades 1-8)



Navy pants (Grades 1-8)



Blue plaid jumper (Grades 1-5)



Blue plaid skirt (Grades 5-8)



Navy, brown, or black belt with shorts & pants

2) NAVY/KHAKI COMBINATIONS



Short- or long-sleeve navy polo

WITH



Khaki shorts (Grades 1-8)



Khaki pants (Grades 1-8)



Khaki skirt (Grades 6-8)



Navy, brown, or black belt with shorts & pants

TIGHTS & SOCKS – options with any uniform:



White or navy tights



White or navy socks: knee-high or turn cuff

FOOTWEAR:



Grades 1-5: All-white or all-black sneakers OR brown boat shoes



Grades 6-8: Brown boat shoes

Dress code regulations for additional top items:
- Sweaters: a navy blue crewneck or cardigan may be worn over uniform
- Sweatshirts: only an OLSS gym sweatshirt may be worn over the uniform
- OLSS Seahawk basketball sweatshirts may be worn by members of the team during the regular basketball season
- Sweatshirt sleeve length must be at the wrist
- Shirts must be long enough to be tucked in
- White t-shirts or tanks may be worn under shirts and blouses

Dress code regulations for bottoms:
- Shorts must be knee-length
- Shorts may be worn only in the Aug, Sep, May, & June, unless otherwise stated by the Principal
- Girls are advised to wear bike shorts under their skirts
- Jeans, pants with rivets, and stretch pants are not permitted

Sock Options:
- Navy blue or white knee-high socks or tights must be worn with a jumper
- Navy blue or white fold over socks (sock folder over should be 2" above the ankle) must be worn with pants/shorts
- Logos on socks or tights are not permitted

Footwear Options:
- All brown boat shoes
- All white or all black sneakers with PE uniform

Additional Regulations For Girls In All Grades:

Jewelry:
- A simple chain necklace with a cross or religious medal may be worn
- Watches may be worn
- Girls may wear only ONE STUD earring per ear
- Dangling earrings MAY NOT be worn

Other:
- Make-up, nail polish, artificial nails, and hair dye (including highlighting and streaking) are not permitted.

BOYS IN GRADES 1-8:

TWO OPTIONS (As pictured; combinations may not be mixed & matched):

1) LIGHT BLUE/NAVY COMBINATIONS:



Short- or long-sleeve light blue dress shirt or polo
WITH

2) NAVY BLUE/KHAKI COMBINATIONS



Short- or long-sleeve navy blue polo
WITH



Navy blue shorts



Navy blue pants



Navy blue, brown, or black belt



Khaki shorts



Khaki pants



Navy blue, brown, or black belt

FOOTWEAR:



White or navy blue socks



Grades 1-5:
All-white or all-black sneakers OR brown boat shoes



Grades 6-8:
Brown boat shoes

Dress code regulations for additional top items:
- Sweaters: a navy blue crewneck or cardigan may be worn over uniform
- Sweatshirts: only an OLSS gym sweatshirt may be worn over uniform
- Sweatshirt sleeve length must be at the wrist
- Shirts must be long enough to be tucked in
- White t-shirts or tanks may be worn under shirts

Dress code regulations for bottoms:
- Shorts must be knee-length
- Shorts may be worn only in the Aug, Sep, May, & June, unless otherwise stated by the Principal
- Jeans and pants with rivets are not permitted

Jewelry:
- A simple (not thick) chain necklace with a cross or religious medal may be worn. No other jewelry is permitted.
- Watches may be worn

Other:
- Boys' hair must be trimmed above the eyebrows and kept above collar length. No "Mohawk" haircuts are permitted.
- Earrings and bleached hair or unnatural hair dye (including highlights & streaking) are not permitted

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GYM CLASS) ATTIRE FOR ALL STUDENTS, GRADES 1-8

Tops:
- OLSS T-shirt
- OLSS sweatshirt



Bottoms:
- OLSS shorts
- OLSS sweatpants



Footwear:
- White or navy socks
- All-white or all-black sneakers



Birthday/ Tag Day Dress Code
On students' birthdays (or half-birthdays), appropriate clothing, such as jeans and a colored shirt with no words or pictures may be worn. On tag days, students may wear appropriate fitting pants and shirts with "tastefully" themed pictures. If shorts are worn, they must be at least knee length.

Dress Code Infractions:
When a child arrives at school in shoes or clothing other than that outlined in this handbook, a parent will be notified of the infraction. Children will not be returned to class until they are properly attired. Disciplinary action may result. The Principal has final recourse as to whether or not clothing is appropriate.

TRANSPORTATION

By Car:

Parents who transport their children by car are asked to follow the traffic pattern established by the school.

Morning:

- Cars enter the parking lot from the entrance on Alexander Lane.
- After the children are dropped off, cars leave by the second exit by the Parish Church and down Alexander Lane.
- DO NOT PASS CARS THAT ARE UNLOADING CHILDREN AT ANY TIME.

Afternoon:

- At 3:00PM, students will begin assembling by class in the parking lot with their teachers
- Cars will enter by the Parish Church entrance, and depart through the school entrance/exit in two lines; one going to Alexander Lane, the other going to Calvert St.

By Bus:

- Students walk to the bus quietly, led by the assigned teacher
- The safety of the children is of primary importance; therefore, good conduct on the bus is imperative. The driver is in charge of the bus and assumes responsibility for the behavior and safety of the students. Driver rules are to be followed!
- CLASSROOM CONDUCT IS EXPECTED ON THE BUS AT ALL TIMES
- The use of tobacco is prohibited
- Students and/or parents must pay for replacing damaged areas or items on the bus that a student/s has vandalized
- No object may be discarded from the windows of the bus at any time. MD State Law imposes a fine for this offense.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council of Our Lady Star of the Sea consists of four elected officers, (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer), five elected homeroom representatives (Grades 4-8), four appointed homeroom representatives (Grades K-3), and five appointed committee chairpersons. Students are elected as an officer or appointed as a representative or chairperson for a term of one year to serve their fellow students, the school, and the community in various ways. Student Council officers and appointed members are required to maintain a C average and display respectful behavior.

The purpose of Student Council is:

- To promote good citizenship
- To encourage students to respect justice and peace
- To prepare students to serve their community with Christian values
- To advance the welfare of the school and its members
- To arouse school spirit
- To demonstrate the application of democracy
- To help students become respected citizens and active members of the faith community

PARENT SERVICES

Parent/Guardian Cooperation

Parents/Guardians and students understand and acknowledge the Roman Catholic religious nature of Our Lady Star of the Sea School. Parents/ guardians and students agree not to publicly repudiate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and will respect and support the unique identity that OLSS derives from its Catholic faith. As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians will not act in ways that contradict the Catholic nature of Our Lady Star of the Sea School. Parents/ Guardians shall cooperate fully with the school and the students; shall participate in all required programming, including instruction in the Catholic faith and attendance at Mass. As the primary educators of the students, parents/guardians agree to act in ways that promote the best interests of the Church and school and will comply with the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington and Our Lady Star of the Sea School.

Home & School Association (HSA)

This is an organization of the parents and teachers of the children enrolled in Our Lady Star of the Sea School. Meetings are held at least four times a year. Every family with children enrolled in the school MUST be represented at these meetings.

The objectives of the Home School Association include the following:
· To encourage parents and teachers to cooperate in fulfilling their responsibilities.
· To promote a clear understanding of the educational responsibilities of parents and teachers.
· To provide a base from which all of the needs of the school and students are accomplished.

Fundraising

Archdiocese of Washington policy states that all door-to-door sales of goods by elementary school students for fundraising purposes is prohibited for safety reasons.

School Advisory Board

The School Advisory Board provides advice and assistance to the OLSS administrative team (Principal and Pastor). The board is composed of 11 members including the ex-officio members. The functions of the board include the following:
· Planning, including goal setting in conjunction with AdvancEd Team.
· Formulation of school policy
· Finances
· Public Relations/Marketing

Selection of board members is as follows;
· Candidates shall be nominated by the board to the administrative team
· From the list of candidates, the administrative team selects members to fill the vacancies left by members rotating off the board

VOLUNTEERING

The faculty and staff are very grateful to all who so generously contribute their time and talents to assist as volunteers. At Our Lady Star of the Sea, regular volunteers assist teachers, the librarian, serve as classroom aides, work in our hot lunch program, and serve as volunteer School Nurses. Without their assistance, many services would not be available to our children. According to Archdiocese of Washington policy, all volunteers must complete all required steps of the VIRTUS Child Protection Program before beginning serving the school as a volunteer.

It is expected that all parents/guardians volunteer in some way to assist our school. Besides helping during the school day, parents/guardians may help with various fundraisers, help in school custodial work, or work at home for various needs. If a parent is contacted for any of the above, the school would certainly appreciate a sincere effort to assist because these projects benefit the students and maintain the health and vitality of the school.

Volunteer Dress Code

As adults representing Our Lady Star of the Sea School, all volunteers working in the school can always dress casually but appropriately. That means that men will wear slacks or jeans and a collared shirt or crew neck T-shirt with appropriate footwear. Women will wear a modest skirt or pants/jeans with a collared shirt/blouse or crew neck T-shirt and appropriate footwear. Shorts at the knee can also be worn.

RIGHT TO AMEND

Our Lady Star of the Sea School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via Weekly Newsletter or through e-mail communication.