



**Our Lady Star of the Sea School**

**PARENT/STUDENT  
HANDBOOK  
2025-2026**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Parent/Student Handbook is to ensure that parents and students understand the rules and regulations of the school and agree to abide by them. The policies are intended to promote the development of self-discipline, accountability, appreciation of learning, and respect for others. The information contained in this handbook enables us to cooperate and communicate effectively and provide for the safety and security of each child. All parents, guardians, volunteers, and students are expected to follow the procedures set forth in this book once the children are enrolled at Our Lady Star of the Sea School.

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 Our Lady Star of the Sea School 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 school 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.

When in doubt regarding a particular policy, procedure, regulation or activity, please contact the school office to clarify the issue.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Jesus Christ is the center of our Catholic 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.

## **ARCHDIOCESAN ADMISSIONS & NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:**

The Archdiocese's Admissions & Non-Discrimination Policy can be found on the website of the Catholic Schools Office of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington at <https://adwcatholicsschools.org/non-discriminationpolicy/>

## Archdiocesan Admissions & Non-Discrimination Policy

Archdiocesan schools follow local, state, and federal non-discrimination regulations, as applicable. As religiously-affiliated schools, Archdiocesan schools are not required to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with the religious or moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup>

Catholic students shall be given preference over non-Catholic students for initial admission into Archdiocesan schools. All applicants shall follow all applicable policies and procedures regarding school-based entrance requirements, health examinations and immunizations before finalizing any admissions.

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<sup>1</sup>Maryland law requires non-public schools that receive state funds to publish the following additional statement: "It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

(1) Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and

(2) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:

(i) discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;

(ii) refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or

(iii) discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint."

Maryland law further provides that Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code "does not require a nonpublic prekindergarten program or nonpublic school that is religiously affiliated to enroll, retain, or extend privileges to a student or prospective student who does not meet the usual and regular qualifications, requirements, and standards of the program or school or to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with the program or school's religious or moral teachings, provided that the denial, rule, regulation, or policy is not based on discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability."

## **ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT**

### **ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

Parents interested in applying for admission are required to visit the school, have their child(ren) visit their classroom for a day, and complete standardized testing in Math and Reading (for grades 1-8). An applicant for 1st Grade or above must provide a copy of his/her most recent report card and a copy of the results of their most recent standardized tests scores.

The principal 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.

Applications for Admission are accepted throughout the school year. To be considered for admission, prospective families must submit an electronic application through TADS at: <https://mytads.com/a/ourladystaroftheseasolomonsmd>. A \$150 application fee is due with the application; this reserves space for your child and is non-refundable, unless space is not available in the requested class.

### **ADMISSION PRIORITY**

In order of priority, Our Lady Star of the Sea School will accept children:

- 1) Whose parents are active, contributing parishioners of Our Lady Star of the Sea or St. John Vianney parish.
- 2) Whose siblings are presently students at Our Lady Star of the Sea School.
- 3) Whose parents are contributing members of another Catholic parish.
- 4) Whose parents are Catholic but do not contribute to any parish.
- 5) Whose parents belong to another religious denomination

### **ADMISSIONS POLICIES**

Children entering PK4 must be four years of age on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year, 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 1<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year.

Students will be conditionally accepted into Kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on displayed readiness on the Kindergarten entrance test administered by an authorized evaluator. The Early Prevention of School Failure assessment will be administered to all incoming kindergarten students.

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 from their previous school(s).

### **ACCEPTANCE**

Parents/Guardians will receive notification of acceptance to OLSS School shortly after submitting an Application for Admission in the TADS system.

New students at Our Lady Star of the Sea School are subject to a 90-day probation period to determine if both the student and the school benefit from the student's placement at the school. During this period, students will be evaluated for attendance, behavior, completion of assignments, adherence to school rules, and cooperation with teachers and staff. If any procedures or policies are not followed, the student will be removed from the school during, or at the conclusion of the 90-day period. At the end of the probation period, a conference will be scheduled between the parents, student, teacher, and principal and a final decision will be made.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Once a child has been accepted by the school in the TADS system, the parent/guardian must complete the online enrollment process in TADS in a timely manner. The following items are required:

- 1) Immunization Policy Acknowledgement/Health Assessment, completed & signed by physician
- 2) Copy of Birth Certificate

- 3) Copy of Baptismal Certificate (for Catholic students)
- 4) Copy of school records and report cards if your child is currently enrolled in another school.
- 5) Copy of custody order, or other court orders (if applicable)
- 6) Current report card, including comments, and the two previous years' report cards if transferring from another school
- 7) Current standardized test scores plus the two previous years' scores, if available.
- 8) Completion of the Tuition Agreement in TADS

### **CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS**

Parents/guardians who are or become divorced, separated, unmarried, or who have 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 Transportation Permission Form must also be updated as needed to reflect all current custody arrangements.

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.

### **RE-REGISTRATION**

In order to get a firm commitment from parents of students already attending OLSS, each family must pay a \$150 nonrefundable re-registration fee each Spring for the following school year. Re-Registration is processed through TADS. 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 Roman Catholic 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.

### **FINANCIAL POLICY**

#### **TUITION PAYMENTS**

OLSS School is firmly committed to providing an opportunity for a Catholic education with tuition costs that are reasonable for most families.

In order to receive the Catholic Active Parishioner Grant, the student must be part of a practicing Catholic family and complete the Catholic Active Parishioner Grant Application. Families who are not active parishioners of a Catholic parish or are non-Catholic will not be eligible for the Catholic Active Parishioner Grant but may apply for Tuition Assistance.

All families shall be expected to make tuition payments according to one of the school's available payment plans. Each family's preferred manner of payment must be submitted each year at the time of student enrollment. Tuition payment options are:

- 1) One payment, made in August
- 2) Two payments, made in August and February
- 3) Four payments, made in August, October, January, and April
- 4) Ten payments, made once a month from July through April

All payments can be made by automatic debit or credit card charge directly to FACTS. Payments are due on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. A fee may be charged if the tuition payment is late. A \$50 fee will be charged for each returned payment.

Tuition for students registering on or after the first day of school will be prorated over the number of school days they will be in attendance according to a formula established by the pastor, principal, and tuition bookkeeper.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF LATE PAYMENTS & OVERDUE ACCOUNTS**

It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to keep the pastor and principal informed of their need to make any changes in their tuition payment preference option or adjustment in the amount of tuition expected to be paid. The school will work with families to set up alternate payment plans if necessary.

It is crucial that tuition payments be made promptly every month. Accounts are considered delinquent after 60 days. Students will not be permitted back to school if tuition is in arrears, and parents have not contacted the pastor/principal. This policy will be strictly enforced, and late fees will be applied directly through FACTS.

Our Lady Star of the Sea School reserves the right to cancel the registration of any student(s) whose family fails to satisfactorily meet its tuition or any other financial obligation. Student report cards, access to FACTS, results of standardized testing and/or transfer information will not be sent or completed until all past due balances are paid.

Our Lady Star of the Sea School reserves the right to request that all financial obligations including outstanding tuition payments, lunch account debts, and any unfilled volunteer service hours to be paid by **June 5**. All overdue financial obligations will then be billed to your FACTS billing account and payments will be made through FACTS.

Unpaid financial obligations will be turned over to a collections agency. If it becomes necessary for OLSS to institute legal proceedings to collect tuition, the parents/guardians will be responsible for all legal/attorney fees.

### **WITHDRAWAL**

The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding tuition balance.

Withdrawal from School before August 15: Due to financial obligations and agreements with our teachers, the school must be notified in writing before August 15 if your child is not returning for the 2024–2025 school year. July & August tuition payments are non-refundable. Withdrawals by this date are obligated to pay the July & August tuition.

Withdrawal from School after August 15 but before 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter begins: Withdrawals during this timeframe require the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter's tuition to be paid in full.

Withdrawals from start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter through the end of the school year: The full school year's tuition is expected to be paid.

Military transfers, as the law requires, receive a full, pro-rated refund.

Any refund requests require at least 5 business days to process.

TADS charges a \$5 fee for refunds that are the parent/guardian's responsibility to pay.

### **VOLUNTEER SERVICE PAYMENT**

Each family must meet a volunteer service payment of 40 volunteer service hours (20 hours for part-time PK students) per school year. Volunteer opportunities will be posted on the Track It Forward site and include helping in school, fundraising activities, etc.. No less than 10 hours must be served at a Community Building Fundraiser.

Alternatively, parents/guardians may choose to make a cash payment for (30) volunteer service hours to the school. 10 hours of volunteer service must still be served at a Community Building Fundraiser.

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 their unfulfilled hours at a rate of \$30/hour with the last direct payment of the school year.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The following are valid reasons for excused absences from school (if properly documented upon the student's return to school):

- 1) Illness of the student (after three days of illness, student must provide medical documentation indicating that he/she 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 chief administrator;
- 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; and
- 7) Other absence(s) approved in advance by the chief administrator upon the written request of a parent or guardian. Sufficient notice should be given to the school in order to provide anticipated student work that the student is expected to complete during their absence. Failure to provide sufficient notice may result in an unexcused absence.

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.

Start time in school is essential to the learning process. In the best interest of the child, parents are encouraged to schedule family vacations during times when school is not in session. Class assignments and/or homework for absence due to a vacation will NOT be given prior to the vacation.

Any time a child misses school, it is the responsibility of the student and parents to obtain and complete missed assignments within the time allotted by the teacher(s). Assignments given prior to the child's absence, long range projects included, are due upon the child's return or on the assigned date unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher ahead of time. If work is not made up, a zero may be recorded for missing assignments at the teacher's discretion. Arrangements for making up missed tests are at the convenience of the teacher/parent. In the event of an extended illness, individual learning plans will be developed for students.

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. Absences/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.

If a student is going to be absent from school, parents should inform the school by phone or email between 7:30 - 8:30am. Upon return to school, the student will have up to two school days to make up daily work assigned on each day absent. Long-range work, previously assigned work, or projects will be given an extension date at the teacher's discretion.

Habitual tardiness is 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 7:55am 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 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. Students who miss an extended period of school days may be subject to retention.

**TRUANCY LAW:**

Under Maryland State law, a student is considered truant if they miss more than 8 school days in a quarter, 15 days in a semester, and/or 20 days in a school year. By law, truancy must be reported and retention may be necessary.

**HEALTH**

**HEALTH & IMMUNIZATION POLICIES**

All students in the Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall be immunized in accordance with the immunization requirements and the guidelines of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington. Exemptions are provided on a temporary basis to those applicants with a physician-documented medical reason. Full immunization reflects Catholic moral teaching which urges parents/guardians to immunize their children against serious infectious diseases given the grave risk of non-vaccination to other children, pregnant women, and the population as a whole. (ADW Policy 3514, updated July 2024)

Maryland State Law requires children in ALL grades to provide proof of Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, Hepatitis, and Meningococcal vaccinations. Every student must have an Immunization Record on file in the school office **BEFORE the first day of school**. Families who do not submit written proof of proper immunizations will not be admitted to school.

Complete health examinations are required prior to entrance into school by ALL Pre-K students, and all NEW students in K – 8th Grade.

**ILLNESS**

If a child is running a fever of 100°F, is nauseated or ill at home before school starts, **DO NOT SEND THE CHILD TO SCHOOL**. Sending the child to school exposes others to possible illness. When a student will be absent from school due to an illness, a parent is required to call the school office with the nature of the illness by 8:00am.

Children will be sent home if any of the following conditions exist, so please keep your child home in the morning if he/she exhibits:

- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Severe cough
- Yellowish, watery or red eyes
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Abnormal body temperature or fever (below 97°F or above 100°F)

- Severe headache
- Head lice

In the event that a child becomes ill at school, the teacher will send the child to the office where the school Nurse or Med Tech will examine them and notify the parents. If the child is running a fever, the parent must come to the school **as soon as possible and within 30 minutes** and transport the child home. In the case of accident or emergency the parent also must pick the child **within 30 minutes**, or the school will call 911 to have the child transported to the Emergency Room at Calvert Health Medical Center (formerly Calvert Memorial Hospital) in Prince Frederick.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (Not COVID Policy)**

Whenever a child has a communicable disease, the parents must notify the school office by phone call, email, or written notice, 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.

For cases of strep infection, ringworm, impetigo, conjunctivitis (pinkeye) and other infectious conditions, a child must be on medication for 24-48 hours, and be symptom-free prior to returning to school. A child's temperature must be within normal range for at least 24 hours without fever-reduction medications before returning to school. Children must be free from nausea, diarrhea and vomiting without the use of medications for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child is diagnosed with head lice, he/she must be completely lice-free before returning to school. The child will have their hair inspected by the school nurse before they are allowed to return to their classroom.

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 such as Physical Education.

Any allergies to foods, insects, and medications must be included on children's Emergency Information form. If a child is allergic to bee stings, the parent must provide a bee sting kit to be kept in the school office. If a child has food allergies, parents must provide an EpiPen with completed medical form from their physician to the School Nurse.

### **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, parents must obtain a Student Medication Authorization form from the school office or school website. The form must be completed and signed by a physician and signed by the parents. This form must be dated, the medication identified, the dosage and the time of distribution stipulated, as well as the anticipated duration of the treatment and any side-effects which may occur.

For the safety of the children and to comply with state health regulations, **NO STUDENT IS TO HAVE IN HIS/HER POSSESSION ANY MEDICATION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, INCLUDING LIP BALM, THROAT LOZENGES, AND COUGH DROPS. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE KEPT IN AND DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE NURSE'S OFFICE. PARENTS MUST INFORM THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES OF ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS OR ALLERGIES THEIR CHILD MIGHT HAVE. THE SCHOOL SHOULD BE NOTIFIED IF A CHILD IS ON MEDICATION OR WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE IN A CHILD'S MEDICATION.**

### **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

The health and safety of the students demands that unless a child has a documented disability that prevents him/her from being toilet trained by the age he or she is eligible to attend pre-kindergarten or kindergarten,

all children who attend OLSS School are expected to be able to handle their own personal hygiene needs independently, including managing their clothing, toileting and clean up, and hand washing. When a child has an occasional toilet accident, staff members will contact the child's parent(s). If a student's accidents become a documented pattern, the principal will provide the parent verbal and written notice. From that point forward, the parent will be contacted and will be expected to come and change the child or pick the child up from school in the event of a toilet accident. The principal reserves the right to determine if a child may not return to school until they are completely toilet trained and accident-free.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT & MEDICAL INFORMATION FORMS**

Forms are sent home the first week of school for parents to fill out with emergency phone numbers and medical information. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THESE FORMS BE RETURNED PROMPTLY AND THE INFORMATION IS KEPT UP TO DATE. Parents will also be asked to provide contact information and dismissal directions in the event of an emergency school closing. Parents should have another local contact besides themselves on the emergency form.

If there are any changes to regular contact or emergency contact information during the school year, the school office **MUST** be notified.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum at Our Lady Star of the Sea, guided by the teaching of the Catholic 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, human sexuality, and environmental 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, weekly Adoration, 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 skills 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 up to two days to make up new class work and homework assigned on each day absent. Missed tests will be administered upon consultation with the teacher. While it is discouraged, 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. Student assignments that are turned in after the deadline may be marked down as late assignments.

## **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 to progress. 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 in core subjects for the year MUST successfully complete an approved summer school program in order to be considered for promotion to the following grade. If he/she does not maintain a 70% average in two or more classes, they face possible retention.

Additionally, students accruing excessive absences over the course of the school year that affect their academic growth may possibly be considered for retention. Under Maryland State law, a student is considered truant if they miss more than 8 school days in a quarter, 15 days in a semester, and/or 20 days in a school year.

## **REPORT OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Report cards are distributed four times a year for students in grades 1-8. Parent-Teacher conferences are held for all parents at the end of the 1st quarter. 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 requests it.

Pre-K and 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. Parents of students in grades 4-8 can access up-to-date information about their student's grades in Plus Portals. The final report card will be mailed after the end of the school year after all financial obligations have been met.

## **GRADING SYSTEMS**

### **Grades PK-3**

EE = Exceeding Expectations  
ME = Meeting Expectations  
AE = Approaching Expectations  
NE = Not Meeting Expectations  
X = Not Assessed

### **Grades 4-8**

A = 93% - 100%  
B = 85% - 92%  
C = 77% - 84%  
D = 70% - 76%  
F = Below 70%

### **Specials Classes**

E = Excellent  
G = Good  
S = Satisfactory  
I = Improvement Needed  
U = Unsatisfactory

## **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.

## **LEVELED CLASSES**

Students in leveled Math classes must maintain a 90% average or above to remain in those classes. At the beginning of the school year, students will be evaluated to determine their readiness in reading/math for an accelerated program.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY**

Students in grades 4-8 who are otherwise eligible to participate in extracurricular activities (e.g. Student Council, NJHS, Basketball, and Robotics) 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

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 Catholic Schools Office’s regulation on testing, standardized assessment is administered online to students Kindergarten through 8th grade. This testing program will be used to determine a baseline of skill levels at the beginning of the year and progress made by students at mid-year and end of the school year. Students in grades 3–8 also take the Archdiocesan Faith Assessment in the spring of each year (or possibly at mid-year).

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.

A high school placement test is given to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students pursuing Catholic High School entrance in November or early December.

## PROCEDURES

### ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Regular school hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00am–3:00pm. Students are dropped off in the car line, following all Car Line Safety Procedures . Parents may walk their child to the main entrance after parking away from the car line, but may not enter the school building.

All students are expected to be in their homerooms by 7:55am. After this time , they are marked tardy. Students arriving after 7:55 must be walked to the main entrance of the school by a parent/ guardian to be admitted.

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, email, 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 pick up their children in the afternoon carline do so only in the parking lot behind the school. **The parking area between the convent and rectory, Sedwick Street, and the teachers’ parking lot are off-limits to parents. 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 are car riders 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).

**LATE FEES:** Please do not inconvenience our staff and extend their work day by picking up your children after the scheduled time. A late pick-up fee of \$10 plus \$1 for every minute past the scheduled pickup time (12:45pm for early dismissal days, 3:15pm for regular school days) will be charged to your TADS account every time your child is picked up late.

Students leaving before the end of the school day, must present a handwritten note (not an e-mail) to that effect to the homeroom teacher. Students will not be dismissed between 2:30-2:45pm when school staff are preparing for the afternoon dismissal procedures.

Visitors and 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, announcements will be made through the Rediker mass notification system, an emergency communication program (phone, text, and e-mail) set up by the Archdiocese of Washington. Parents are expected to respond within 30 minutes.

### **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, and a make-up assignment may be given as an alternative.

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.** Only pre-approved chaperones who have completed the ADW Virtus Child Protection Program are allowed to chaperone field trips. Siblings are not allowed to attend school-sponsored field trips.

### **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 longer recess before or after the lunch period. Outdoor recess is a time of exercise and play for the children.

All children should bring a healthy morning snack, lunch (unless purchasing hot lunch), and a refillable plastic water bottle (no glass water bottles). Glass-bottled drinks, sodas, energy drinks, and other high sugar content beverages are not permitted.

Hot lunch is served each day at a cost of \$4-\$5 per meal, or students may bring their lunch from home.

During lunch time students are required to:

- Sit at their designated 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.

### **ACADEMIC 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 school supplies for every day. A list of required supplies is provided to parents before the start of the school year, and is expected that they be replenished as needed.

### **EVENT INVITATIONS & GIFTS**

If your child is planning a party or celebration 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.

If a student wishes to share holiday or birthday gifts with other students, gifts should be exchanged outside of school, unless all students in the class are included.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The primary method of communication from the school is by FACTS School Notification System emails. An email message will be sent to all families with the weekly newsletter from the principal, and additional school-related information. Any hard copy items, including 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 personal email address or any social networks such as Facebook.

While OLSS is a Christian community, disagreements may occur. Parents are asked to pursue the appropriate channels of communication with teachers or the principal, and not to post any inappropriate, defamatory messages about the school or staff on social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram.

The chain of communication is first with the student's teacher, then with the principal, and then, if necessary, with the pastor. It is the policy of the ADW 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 (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup>) 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.

## **PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Enrolling your child in Our Lady Star of the Sea School, you agree to certain important responsibilities, including:

- 1) To be a partner with the school in the education of your child via active communication and participation.
- 2) To understand and support the Catholic mission and identity of the school.
- 3) To read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary.
- 4) To know who your child's teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings.

- 5) To discuss concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved prior to taking additional action.
- 6) To be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible.
- 7) To promote OLSS and to speak well of it to others, including, but not limited to, social media platforms.
- 8) To meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible.
- 9) To appreciate Catholic education and the benefits of attending a school in a Christ-centered environment.
- 10) To behave appropriately at all school-related functions, both inside and outside of the school hours, and whether on school property, or third-party sites, and including sports events.
- 11) To follow the guidelines of this handbook, including non-academic standards and expectations related to parking, drop-off, pick-up, and communication with teachers and staff.
- 12) To demonstrate appropriate behavior and respect for all teachers, staff, and administrators, this includes verbal, written, or electronic exchanges.

### **SUPPORT, PARTNERSHIP, AND COMPLIANCE BY FAMILIES**

In cases of disregard of staff members' directions, threats or threatening behavior, serious or repeated noncompliance with school policies or procedures, or other demonstrated lack of support or cooperation, whether by parent, child, or other family member, the administration reserves the right to withdraw the child/children from the school. Depending on the severity of the breach of partnership with the school, parents or other family members may be prohibited from entering the campus.

### **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 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 during recess or after dismissal without permission from a teacher/staff member. Students may not leave school property without permission.

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

Students who bring their cell phone or other electronic devices to school must turn it into the school office in the morning and may pick it up at the end of the day. Students who would like to bring electronic devices to school for reasons such as a long bus ride, must first receive permission from the principal and must keep the item in their backpack during the school day.

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**

As a Catholic school, Our Lady Star of the Sea School 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 cyberbullying. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation of any member of the school community is prohibited. All reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be treated seriously. Students should report such acts to the teacher, principal, assistant principal, or counselor. The parent or guardian of the alleged victim will be notified within 3 business days after the date the act is reported. The parent or guardian of the alleged perpetrator will be notified within 5 business days after the date the act is reported. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

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, cellular phone, computer, pager, iPod, etc.), that:

1. Physically harms an individual; damages an individual's property; substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment; or places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property; and
2. 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.

Support for victims or bystanders of bullying, harassment, or intimidation may include counseling, resource support, and other support services as appropriate.

Students involved in repeated harassing/bullying behavior will face disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Students who commit acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation will be required to participate in anti-bullying programming or counseling. Students making false accusations of harassment/bullying will face disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

### **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. A student who makes a threat of violence may be required to remain off school property until a mental health professional certifies that the student is not a danger to him/herself or others, or may be subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion.

### **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/or 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.

**ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET BY STUDENTS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS:**

Archdiocesan parents, educators, and administrators work together every day to ensure the safety and security of all God's children. With our schools' ever-growing and abundant technology resources, it is more important than ever that we communicate clear expectations of our students. The following guidelines were developed from Archdiocesan curriculum and have been adapted, with permission, from the [International Society for Technology in Education](#). For more information regarding each school's individual rules, please refer to your school policy. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

Our schools provide students with an opportunity to access computers and computer networks, including the Internet. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in our schools. Access to this technology is a privilege, not a right. All students are expected to abide by the following technology rules and to sign the user agreement.

**STUDENTS:**

1. Students will cultivate and manage their digital identity and reputation and demonstrate awareness of the permanence of their actions in the digital world. T.PK8.DC.1. All Students:
  - a. Shall always represent themselves in a manner that respects the values of the Catholic Church when using electronic devices, network and the Internet and demonstrate an understanding that digital content is everlasting, even when deleted or within privacy settings;
  - b. Shall only use accounts assigned to them or authorized by the school, supporting others' positive digital identity by not accessing the accounts of others or falsely representing themselves as others;
  - c. Shall keep all accounts and password information private and secure.
2. Students will engage in positive, safe, legal and ethical behavior when using technology equipment, including social interactions online or when using networked devices. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property. T.PK8.DC.2, T.PK8.DC.3. All Students:
  - a. Shall always demonstrate kind and respectful behavior towards others when using electronic devices, network and Internet; following school policy agreements and [anti-cyberbullying laws](#) at the local, state and federal levels;
  - b. Shall immediately report any known cyberbullying behavior to a teacher or supervising staff member;
  - c. Shall protect the rights and privacy of others, by never photographing or filming an individual without consent, and never posting and/or distributing videos or photographs without consent of the school and the persons depicted;
  - d. Shall behave in a safe manner when using technology by protecting and not sharing personal information and personal images in the public domain. While on school property, students will only use technology to communicate with individuals within the school community or organizations/experts approved by teachers. While on school grounds students shall only use communication platforms approved by the school and all communication shall be only for educational purposes;
  - e. Shall abide by all copyright and intellectual property laws, avoiding plagiarism by using proper citations or permissions. Students shall only use work product that is their own, not taking credit of the work of others;
  - f. Shall immediately report to a teacher or supervising staff member any inappropriate material or misuse of technology equipment of which the student becomes aware.
3. Students will manage their personal data to maintain digital privacy and security and are aware of data-collection technology used to track their navigation online. T.PK8.DC.4. All Students:
  - a. Shall protect and manage personal data in a safe manner by never posting, or otherwise distributing personal information such as photographs, home addresses, telephone numbers, parents' work addresses or telephone numbers or the name and location of the school;
  - b. Shall respect networking protections and security within the school infrastructures by working within the designated login and security parameters and never reconfiguring or hacking any school hardware,

- software, or network settings;
  - c. Shall use school issued email accounts for authorized educational purposes only;
  - d. Shall respect the right of the school to monitor student use of technology.
4. Students will treat all technology equipment including issued devices, software and networking systems with care and respect, whether at school, at home, or elsewhere. All Students:
    - a. Shall demonstrate proper physical care for technology equipment;
    - b. Shall protect the proper functioning of technology equipment by downloading only teacher approved files and not intentionally writing, producing, generating, copying or introducing dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to viruses, bugs, 'worms', etc.;
    - c. Shall respect the digital property of others by not accessing or searching files, directories, or folders for which the student does not have authorization, and by not intentionally erasing, renaming, moving, or disabling anyone else's files or programs;
    - d. Shall maintain the settings of any issued device by not manipulating any device settings or functionality.
  5. Students understand and acknowledge that:
    - a. Any violation of this policy may result in permanent revocation of their technology privileges and other disciplinary action may be taken in the sole discretion of the principal.
    - b. Schools may require that technology used in a bring your own device program must meet certain compatibility requirements, use certain security measures, and include certain hardware, software, or applications, which may include applications that grant the school control over the content on the technology.
    - c. Use of all technology may be monitored, and there is no expectation of privacy for , or for any information stored on any technology used on school grounds, including any information or files stored in students' personal accounts (such as social media or file sharing accounts) that are accessible via such technology.
    - d. The school reserves the right to maintain, access, or retrieve an issued device at any time, at its sole discretion; the school reserves the right to access a student's computer files or any other technology equipment when required for the maintenance of the school's technology equipment, in emergencies, in the course of investigation of possible wrongdoing, or at the discretion of the principal.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall support both school and ADW-wide policies and procedures as they relate to the use of technology and our Catholic Identity

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will monitor online behavior and social media within the home and notify the school in the event of any incident contrary to the school policy, providing evidence when applicable.
2. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will monitor their child's use of the Internet when the school networks and accounts are accessed from home or a non-school location
3. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) agree that students' schoolwork should be limited to school authorized accounts only (if provided by the school)
4. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall respect the right of the school to monitor student use of technology
5. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for all fees as determined by school policy related to loss, damage, or misuse of school technology.

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 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, 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.

OLSS School may have a School Counselor on staff who would be available to assist students, once parental permission has been granted and any necessary forms have been completed and turned into the School Nurse.

## 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 :

**Summer Uniform:** OLSS PE t-shirt and \*OLSS PE shorts

**Winter Uniform:** OLSS PE t-shirt and sweatshirt with \*OLSS sweatpants

\* If the smallest size OLSS shorts and sweatpants are too big for PK students, they may wear **solid** navy shorts or sweatpants without pockets.

**Footwear:** Any color socks with any color sneakers

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### GIRLS IN GRADES K-8:

**Tops:** Short-sleeve or long-sleeve light blue polo or blouse

**Bottoms:** Navy shorts, navy pants, or plaid jumper for grades 1-5 and plaid skirt for grades 6-8. Plaid jumpers and skirts should be purchased from French Toast School Uniforms for the correct pattern.

**Belt:** Navy or black belt must be worn with shorts & pants

**Socks:** Navy or white knee-high socks or tights with skirts & jumpers, white or navy fold-over socks with short or pants. **Leggings are not allowed under skirts and jumpers.**

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

Grades 6-8: All-brown boat shoes daily, and all white or all black sneakers with PE uniform

### DRESS CODE REGULATIONS FOR ALL GIRLS, PK-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE:

#### Additional Uniform tops:

- Sweaters: a navy crewneck or cardigan may be worn over uniform
- Sweatshirts: only an OLSS sweatshirt may be worn over the uniform
- OLSS basketball sweatshirts may only be worn by members of the team during 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

#### Uniform Bottoms:

- Shorts and skirts must be no more than two inches above the knee
- Shorts may be worn only in the Aug, Sep, Oct, May, & June, unless otherwise stated by the principal
- Girls must wear navy bike shorts under jumpers and skirts
- Logos on socks or tights are not permitted

#### Additional Regulations for Girls in All Grades:

##### Jewelry:

- Only a simple chain necklace with a cross or religious medal may be worn
- Watches may be worn (no smart watches)
- Girls may wear only ONE STUD earring per ear
- Dangling earrings MAY NOT be worn

##### Other:

- Makeup, nail polish, artificial nails, and hair dye (including highlighting, streaking, & hair extensions) are **NOT** permitted.

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### **BOYS IN GRADES K-8:**

**Tops:** Short-sleeve or long-sleeve light blue polo or button-down shirt

**Bottoms:** Navy shorts or navy pants

**Belt:** Navy or black belt must be worn with shorts & pants

**Socks:** White or navy crew socks or fold over socks covering the ankle

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

Grades 6-8: All-brown boat shoes daily, and all white or all black sneakers with PE uniform

### **DRESS CODE REGULATIONS FOR ALL BOYS, PK-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE:**

#### **Additional Uniform Tops:**

- Sweaters: a navy blue crewneck or cardigan may be worn over uniform
- Sweatshirts: only an OLSS sweatshirt may be worn over uniform
- OLSS basketball sweatshirts may only be worn by members of the team during 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
- Logos on socks are not permitted

#### **Uniform Bottoms:**

- Shorts must be knee-length
- Shorts may be worn only in the Aug, Sep, May, & June, unless otherwise stated by the Principal

#### **Additional Regulations for Boys in All Grades:**

- A simple (not thick) chain necklace with a cross or religious medal may be worn.
- Watches may be worn (no smart watches)
- Boys' hair length should be no longer than the top of the collar, above the eyebrows and the ears. No mohawk haircuts, manbuns, or shaved designs are permitted. Hair styles must not be extreme.
- Earrings and bleached hair or unnatural hair dye (including highlights & streaking) are not permitted

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### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GYM CLASS) ATTIRE FOR ALL STUDENTS:**

**Tops:** OLSS T-shirt in summer, OLSS T-shirt with OLSS sweatshirt in winter

**Bottoms:** OLSS shorts in summer, OLSS sweatpants in winter

**Footwear:** White or navy crew socks or fold over socks covering the ankle ,with all-white or all-black sneakers for students in grades 1-8

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### **BIRTHDAY/ TAG DAY DRESS CODE**

On students' birthdays (or half-birthdays) and designated Tag Days, students may wear appropriate non-uniform clothing reflecting the Tag Day theme or colors. Clothing must be modest and appropriate. T-shirts must be in good taste and must not display inappropriate symbols or sayings. Tank tops, halter tops, "spaghetti strap" tops, and crop tops are not permitted. Tops must be long enough to tuck in easily and cover the shoulders. Cleavage must not be visible at any time. Policies for jewelry and make-up remain the same on non-uniform days.

Jeans or pants must be neat, fit properly, and may not be tight or have rips or holes in them. Leggings, skinny jeans, and pajama bottoms are **not** allowed. **Leggings may only be worn under dresses or knee-length skirts on Tag Days or the student's birthday.**

Dresses and skirts must be approximately knee length and may not be tight-fitting. If shorts are worn on Tag Days in Aug, Sep, May, or Jun, they must be no less than two inches above the knee. All pants, shorts, or skirts cannot ride low on the hips, they must fit properly on the student's waist. Underwear must be covered by clothing at all times and shirts should not be see-through. Open-toed shoes and flip flops are not allowed.

**DRESS CODE INFRACTIONS:**

When a child arrives at school in shoes or clothing other than that outlined in this handbook, a parent/guardian will be notified of the infraction by a phone call from the School Office. A student in violation of the uniform or non-uniform regulations may be required to remain in the office until he/she has the necessary clothing to dress appropriately. 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.
- Students should exit through the right side doors of their vehicles to avoid walking around cars.
- After the children are dropped off, cars leave by the exit by the Parish Church and down Alexander Lane.
- DO NOT PASS CARS THAT ARE UNLOADING CHILDREN AT ANY TIME.

**Afternoon:**

- 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.
- Students are dismissed in groups to the cars parked at the head of the car line. Once the first set of cars has left the parking lot, the next group will be called.

**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), five appointed homeroom representatives (Grades PK-3), and 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

## **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

Students in Middle School are eligible to apply for the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) after the first and second quarters of each year. An induction will be held in the spring.

There are five criteria for selection for the NJHS that form the foundation on which the organization and its activities are built:

- 1) Scholarship: Students must have a cumulative middle school grade point average of 3.0.
- 2) Service: Service is a volunteer contribution of time, energy, and talent made by a student to their school, church, or community without receiving payment or expecting recognition.
- 3) Leadership: Student leaders are resourceful, organized, dependable, and enthusiastic role models, who are willing to give their time and energy to guide, work with others, and teach others.
- 4) Character: A student of good character demonstrates morality, honesty, and respect in all situations. He or she always follows courtesy, concern, and thoughtfulness towards others.
- 5) Citizenship: A student demonstrates good citizenship by willingness to be involved in community organizations and school clubs and looking for ways to contribute to the good of all.

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES**

### **VIRTUS CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM**

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
- 4) Having electronic fingerprinting done through an Archdiocese of Washington approved service.

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.

## **ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

In the event of an emergency or crisis, the Archdiocese of Washington may send a 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.

## **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 usually 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 the needs of the school and students are accomplished.
- To assist in organizing fundraising events.

### **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, and will meet once a quarter or as necessary. The functions of the board include the following:

- Planning, including goal setting in conjunction with the accreditation 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. 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, and as models to our students, all volunteers working in the school are expected to dress in accordance with our students' dress code. Men may wear pants/jeans and a collared shirt or crew neck T-shirt with appropriate footwear. Women may wear a modest skirt or pants/jeans (no leggings) with a collared shirt/blouse or crew neck T-shirt and appropriate footwear. Skirts, skorts, and shorts must be no more than two inches above the knee. Cleavage must not be visible at any time.

### **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.*