

The Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook

Our Lady of Lourdes School

52 First Street

Taunton, MA 02780

Telephone: 508-822-3746

Fax: 508-822-1450

“All schools in the Diocese of Fall River are subject to the policies of the Diocese of Fall River. The policy manuals of the Diocese of Fall River replace and supersede any contrary statement of policy, procedure, programs, or practices, including but not limited to, any such statements contained in any handbook or manual prepared by any school in the Diocese of Fall River”

These manuals are available to read at the

Catholic Schools Office
780 Highland Avenue
Fall River, MA 02720

Mission Statement

Our Lady of Lourdes School is committed to answering Jesus' call to love and serve others, and is committed to achieving academic excellence enriched in Catholic values.

School Motto

Mother Mary lead us to Jesus.

Philosophy

Our Lady of Lourdes School is a Catholic elementary school serving students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

We recognize and honor the dignity and individuality of each child.

We believe we offer a quality educational program of instruction, which forms the beliefs, values and traditions of Catholic Christianity.

We believe that our school is an extension of a Christ centered home, and that we share with the family the upbringing of each child. The home is where Christian education must first begin. The school is an effective vehicle toward the formation of adults who will benefit society.

At Our Lady of Lourdes School, we are guided by the Holy Spirit in providing for the education of the whole child – intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Christ is the reason for this school.

He is the unseen but ever-present teacher in its classrooms.

He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its students.

Admission Policy

Our Lady of Lourdes School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, ethnicity or national origin.

Requirements for Admission

Spiritual

A demonstrated commitment on the part of parents and children to fulfill the obligation of their faith in attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is expected of all Catholics. Catholics and families of other religious denominations are expected to live out the tenets of their faith.

Scholastic Aptitude

Any child entering Kindergarten must be five years of age by August 31st. A readiness screening will be administered to determine the correct placement for incoming Kindergarten students. For grades one through five, previous report cards will be reviewed. Our lady of Lourdes School provides differentiated instruction within the general education setting. Through our Resource Program, individual and small group instruction is also provided for students with I.E.P.'s or 504 plans. At OLOL, we strive to meet the needs of all learners. In cases where we are not able to provide the services a student needs, we will meet with parents/guardians to discuss other educational options.

File Requirements

The following documents are required for children's files and should be provided upon admission to Our Lady of Lourdes School.

- ~ Birth Certificate
- ~ Baptismal Certificate (when applicable)
- ~Immigration form (if born outside the U.S.)
- ~ Certificate of up-to-date immunizations
- ~ Proof of recent physical exam
- ~ Consent form for use of child's photo
- ~ Signed Computer Acceptable Use Policy

Tuition

Payment for tuition and book fees can be done in one of two ways. Parents/Guardians wishing to pay in full should do so by July 1st. Parents wishing to use the budget plan (July-May) must complete a FACTS automatic tuition agreement prior to June 1st.

It is imperative that tuition payments be kept current. Delinquent tuition payments are assessed a fee by FACTS. If there is a genuine hardship, such circumstances should be made known to the Principal, where appropriate means of settlement will be found.

Previous Financial Obligations: A student entering or transferring from another school in the Diocese of Fall River shall satisfy all financial obligations previously incurred at the sending school before the student may be enrolled at Our Lady of Lourdes School.

Transportation

Students using private transportation should arrive at school by 8:45 at the latest. Morning Prayer Assembly begins promptly at 8:50. Any student arriving after assembly must report to the office before going to class.

Students using school buses must comply with the rules and regulations of public safety. Please consult the Bus Rules Sheet sent home in the packet during the first week of school. For safety reasons, parents/guardians should encourage children to sit quietly at all times when riding the school bus.

Permission to change buses must be obtained from the Bus Company or Public-School Department, not from the school. A note should be sent to the Principal advising of any changes in regular transportation of students. No child will be dismissed to any person other than a parent or guardian without written parental consent. If a child is to be picked up at school by any other individual than the regular transporter of that child, the school must be notified in advance and in writing.

When dropping children off for school in the morning, or picking them up in the afternoon, please do not park in front of the school or block private driveways. That area is reserved for school buses only.

Extended Care Program

Our Lady of Lourdes School offers an Extended Care Program for students. The hours are 7:00 am-8:30 am and 3:00 pm- 5:30 pm. A parent/guardian must fill out an Extended Care form before Extended Care will be provided. The cost for this care is minimal and will be stated clearly on the form. We ask that parents adhere to the scheduled hours for the program. A fee will be charged for late pick-up

Visitors

All persons coming into the building during school hours should first report to the office. Authorized visitors should obtain an identification badge at the office upon entering the school. Parents/guardians may not go to a child's classroom without permission of the Principal.

Dress Code

General Appearance: Inappropriate hairstyles or cuts will not be allowed. Hair should not obstruct vision. Both girls' and boys' hair should be trimmed neatly and away from the eyes. Boys' hair should be trimmed so as not to touch the collar. There will be no shaved up or cut-in styles for boys or girls. Excessive hair spray or gelled hair is not allowed, nor is bleached or dyed hair. Jewelry is not part of the uniform. Girls may wear one pair of small stud-type earring only. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings of any kind. Make-up and nail polish are not to be worn in school. Perfume bottles and sprays are not allowed in school.

School Uniforms

School uniform items may be ordered all year long through Donnelly's Uniform Company: www.donnelysuniforms.com. For a detailed list of acceptable uniform attire, please refer to the attached uniform page. Please be advised that students in grades K-5 must wear a belt with pants or shorts. Belts should be black or brown.

Gym Clothes: Students are allowed to wear gym clothes to school on the day they have gym class. Students will not be able to change for gym in school during the day. Sneakers must be worn to school on gym days.

Daily Schedule Grades K-5

No child should report to school earlier than 8:30 am unless arrangements have been made with the school for the Extended Care Program.

8:30	Teachers report to school
8:50	First Bell (all cars and walkers must be present)
8:50	Morning Prayer Assembly
11:30	Recess Grades K, 1, and 2
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Recess Grades 3, 4, and 5

1:00	Classes Resume
2:55	Closing Prayer
3:00	Grades K-5 Dismissal

Daily Schedule Flex and Pre-K 4

8:30	Teachers report to school
8:50	First Bell
8:50	Morning Prayer Assembly
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Recess
1:00	Classes Resume
2:45	Flex-Pre-K Dismissal

Homework

Homework is assigned to help the student:

- become more self-reliant
- learn to work independently
- improve and reinforce the skills that have been taught in class
- complete certain projects that require individual and creative effort

The following table provides **guidelines** as to the amount of time the typical student spends daily on homework.

Grade 1	20 minutes
Grades 2&3	30 minutes
Grade 4	60 minutes
Grade 5	60 – 90 minutes

Note that these times are guidelines and that individual students may take more or less time to complete assignments. These times do not include independent reading times.

Homework is a student's responsibility and not that of the parents or guardians. However, parents/guardians should see to it that students have a quiet place to study and that they spend time in study. All homework assignments are expected to be completed in a timely manner.

School to Home Correspondence

A calendar of events will be printed and sent home with your child during the first week of school. Each Thursday notices and other correspondence will go home in your child's communication envelope. ***Please read all materials and return the signed envelope. At times, on an as needed basis, notices will be sent home with your child. Please check your child's lunchbox and backpack daily to ensure you receive any and all communication.***

Medication

Students are not to be in possession of medication at any time. If a student needs to take medication for any reason, it should be brought to the school by an adult and given to school personnel. Directions for dispensing should accompany all medications. Either the school nurse or office staff will help with the distribution of medication as needed. If a child has a serious illness which requires medical treatment, please notify the school in writing of the protocol for the child's treatment. Please be advised that teachers will not keep or administer medications in the classroom. This includes cough drops. Children should not have any medication in their backpacks or lunchboxes at any time. Children may not take medication on school premises without the observation of school staff.

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is very important to your child's academic development. Students must be in class on time, attend all classes and participate in all assigned activities prepared and equipped to learn. If a child is going to be absent, parents/guardians are asked to call the school prior to 8:30 am. This will alert teachers and staff that your child is absent and will help ensure the safety of our students. If no notification is received at the school, parents/guardians will be called after 9 am to check on the child's whereabouts. Upon the return to school, a note explaining the absence should be presented to your child's teacher.

Massachusetts state law requires a doctor's note if a contagious disease was the cause of the absence. Work that is missed during a child's absence must be made up within a reasonable length of time. This should be arranged with the teachers involved as soon as the child returns to school. A student who is absent from school may not participate in any after-school

activities, including the Extended Care Program. Unless an exception is granted at the discretion of the Principal, any reason for absence other than illness will not be excused. Excessive absences will be cause for a meeting with the child's teacher and/or Principal. After a total of twenty-one days of absence, it will be necessary to evaluate if a student will be able to move to the next grade.

Tardiness

In order for your child to succeed, it is important that he/she be on time for school. The occasional tardiness is understandable. Chronic tardiness is disruptive to the learning process for your child and others. If tardiness becomes excessive, a meeting with the Principal will result to determine how missed time should be made up.

Dismissals

Pupils must bring a written note from home, signed by a parent/guardian, requesting early dismissal. Should an emergency warrant an early dismissal, and someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up the child, a parent/guardian must send a written note stating the reason and authorizing the person picking up the child to do so. The person will be asked to present photo identification prior to release of the child.

Appointments

Medical and dental appointments, except genuine emergencies, should be scheduled outside of school time.

Vacations

Vacations should not be taken outside of regularly scheduled school vacations. If children are taken out of school for this reason, they will not be allowed to make up the work missed, as this is considered an unexcused absence. It is important to note that school attendance is a mandatory obligation. There are ample times throughout the year when time off is scheduled. Teachers will not be providing work in advance for prescheduled absences, unless the child cannot be in school for medical reasons.

Make-Up Work

If a student is absent for a test, he/she must be prepared to make up the test on the day he/she returns to school. All tests must be made up within three days. If he/she fails to make up any tests within three days, he/she will receive a **zero** on that test.

Academic Progress

Progress Reports are sent home periodically during the trimester for parental review of the student's work. These reports must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school.

Promotions and Retention

To move to the next grade level, students must satisfactorily complete the curriculum requirements for their current grade level and be absent fewer than 21 days. Teachers will notify parents/guardians by May 1 if a child will be retained. Parents/guardians objecting to the teacher's decision should meet with the Teacher and Principal. The final decision, however, will rest with the Principal after consultation with the teacher and the parents/guardian.

Graduation

Graduation from Our Lady of Lourdes School is a promotion to the next academic grade level and as such is governed by the academic requirements of The Diocese of Fall River. Successful completion of Grade Five shall be marked by an appropriate ceremony, which gives recognition to the completion of a specific phase of Catholic education.

No-School Announcements

Please listen to local TV and radio stations early in the morning to hear announcements about cancellations during inclement weather. We follow the schedule of Taunton Public Schools during severe weather. Please tune into:

Channel 7 WHDH Boston

Channel 10 WJAR Providence

Furthermore, a School Messenger telephone announcement will be sent to announce school cancellation.

Emergencies

Emergency Information Forms are sent home the first week of school. This form must be filled out completely and returned to the school. It is important to include numbers where you can be reached during the day and the name and number of another person we can contact should you be unavailable. Please notify us immediately if your address, phone number, or place of employment should change at any time during the year. Up-to-date parent/guardian information is a requirement of the Diocese.

If at any time during the school year a change in status of the family, (separation, serious illness, divorce, death), should occur, please notify the school at once.

Rainbows

Our Lady of Lourdes School is a registered site for Rainbows. Rainbows is a group for those children who are experiencing or have experienced grief in their lives. This could be the result of separation or divorce of their parents, death of a loved one or an abusive situation. Groups will form on an as needed basis and notices will be sent home regarding enrollment.

Field trips

Any school sponsored trip is a privilege given to students, and any student can be denied participation if he/she fails to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements. Only those students who have submitted proper, Diocesan-generated permission slips, signed by a parent or guardian will be allowed to participate. Phone calls will not be accepted. Notes other than the authorized school form will not be accepted. Permission slips for field trips must be returned to the school in advance of the day of the field trip.

Parents' Guild

Any parent/guardian having a child enrolled in our school is automatically a member of the Parents' Guild. Families will be notified of upcoming meetings.

Parish Advisory School Board

This is an appointed group, which is primarily advisory in capacity. The Principal, Pastor and Development Director, along with a council, meet five times yearly to discuss all aspects of the school. Candidates for appointment must be recommended to the Pastor for consideration.

Harassment/Bullying

All individuals in the school community have the right to be free from actions or communications that cause physical, emotional or psychological distress. Any such intentional or careless action or communication that is unwelcome, uninvited or unwanted will not be tolerated. The person inflicting such distress shall be subject to discipline, including but not limited to, suspension or expulsion. An ad hoc discipline board comprised of school personnel shall be assembled in the case of ongoing and persistent behavioral problems to decide upon the proper action to be taken.

“Bullying” is the use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that causes physical or

emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or damage to his or her property; creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

“Cyber-bullying” is the bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, image sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include: the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying.

Bullying shall be prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school and: at a location activity, function, or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district, or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

Student Conduct

The school shall provide for student discipline procedures. These procedures will be communicated to both students and parents. All students are required to conform to the standards of conduct outlined by the Principal and each classroom Teacher. The Discipline Code first and foremost recognizes respect for the dignity of all. The school has established school-wide expectations which each student must adhere to at all times, whether in their respective classroom, a “specials” class, the cafeteria or playground.

Any behavior that disrupts the educational process, endangers a person or property, or violates a policy of the school, Department of Education, or the Dioceses of Fall River may subject a student to disciplinary action. Behaviors which will not be tolerated, and which require immediate correction are as follows:

- Possession or use of a weapon, or an object which could be used as a weapon
- Disrespect of others or inappropriate behavior of any kind
- Damage to or theft of school property or the property of others
- Foul language or inappropriate remarks made to fellow students, teachers, staff or administration
- Physical altercations occurring with intent and/or malice
- Verbal threats of violence or actual physical violence
- Harassment in any form, including but not limited to sexual harassment, verbal harassment, or physical harassment.

An ongoing pattern of acting-out behavior which does not respond to typical intervention will be brought to the attention of the discipline board mentioned above and an appropriate course of action will be determined. The school shall make disciplinary decisions on a case by case basis, once all the facts of a situation have been determined and deliberated.

Toys or other items other than ordinary school supplies are **not** to be brought to school. An exception to this rule is when a teacher, as part of an assignment, asks students to bring specific items to school. Inappropriate items taken from a child by a Teacher or the Principal must be picked up by a parent in the Principal's office. Weapons of any kind are never to be brought to school. Nail clippers, pocket knives, scissors, etc. are among those items that are not to be brought to school.

Cell phones or other electronic devices are **not** to be brought to school by students. Any student needing to call home may use the school phone.

Suspension

Suspension is the temporary exclusion of a student from class or school for five school days or fewer. The school provides procedures for both "in-school" and "out-of-school" suspension. Parents shall be immediately notified of a decision to suspend a student.

Expulsion

The Principal may expel a student involved in any incident or circumstance that is deemed harmful or detrimental to any individual or to the school, especially when the incident or circumstance occurs on school property or at any school sponsored or school-related event. The following examples shall be cause for immediate expulsion:

- Use, possession, giving or selling of illegal drugs or alcohol on school grounds or at a school sponsored event
- Possession or use of a firearm on school premises or at a school sponsored event
- An intentional and forceful physical assault on a faculty, staff member or other student which causes serious bodily injury
- Bomb threats or possession of materials which could be used as a bomb
- Chronic disregard for school rules/policies and/or the safety of others

An Ad Hoc Discipline Board will be established as needed for severe disciplinary concerns.

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. The school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines the partnership is irretrievably broken.

The school administration retains the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Revised: August 2017