

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School
Parent-Student Handbook
2008-2009

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
Mission Statement/Philosophy

We, the Parish Family of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, recognize that we are on a spiritual journey. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we grow as a People of God through Eucharistic celebration, sacramental prayer, apostolic service, continuing faith formation and renewal.

Our parish school is an extension of this parish. We believe that the aim of education is to help each person in her/his conscious endeavor to gain human wholeness in order to contribute effectively and responsibly to the society of which she/he is a part. To this end we strive to lead and encourage our students to learn that school is a community of searchers for truth, knowledge, skills, and faith. In an atmosphere of happiness, our children are taught to do their personal best as they grow towards Christian maturity, prepared to take their places in this American society.

Behavioral Standards

It is the goal of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart to provide a nurturing Catholic-Christian environment where all students have the opportunity to grow spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. In the spirit of justice, every student is entitled to a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Each teacher at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart sets goals, guidelines, and policies that are consistent with the mission of our school. It is important that parents, teachers, administrators, and staff support each teacher's efforts to run an orderly, respectful, and disciplined classroom.

At Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, students will be taught to be responsible for their actions. Every student in our school is expected to demonstrate the following:

- 1 Respect for God and the religious values and practices of the Catholic Church
- 2 Respect for him/herself, for others, and for personal and school property

- 3 Courtesy towards authority, adults, and each other
- 4 Obedience to rules and regulations
- 5 Responsibility for his/her actions
- 6 Kindness in speech, action, and attitude

Transfer Policy

In order to ensure that we can meet the spiritual, emotional, and educational needs of our students, we adhere to the following transfer policies.

- 1 Transfer is open to students in grades 1-6. Exceptions may be made for families who move into the geographic area of the parish or families who currently have a child attending OLSH.
- 2 September 1st is the deadline for all transfers. Exceptions may be made for students who move into the geographic area of the parish after September 1st.
- 3 Admission is granted based on satisfactory grades and standardized test scores from the previous academic year, average school attendance record, commendable conduct reports, a favorable letter of recommendation from the school previously attended, an interview with the Principal or Assistant Principal, and available room in the requested grade level.
- 4 Preference in acceptance is always given to current OLSH parishioners.
- 5 Transfer students are admitted on a probationary basis for one year.

Disciplinary Action

Good discipline is one of the most important factors in effective teaching and learning. Discipline, however, is not an end to itself: it is a means to enable the student to develop into a mature, responsible adult. In the Christian sense, discipline is training which develops self-control, good character, orderliness, and efficiency.

Good discipline begins in the individual teacher's classroom with an emphasis on preventing behavioral problems through a positive, firm, and equitable approach.

When a teacher has exhausted all appropriate preventive and corrective measures, a student will be referred to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Administrative disciplinary actions will include the following:

- 1 Detention
- 2 Loss of cafeteria privileges (student will eat lunch in a separate location or at a separate table away from other students in his/her class)
- 3 Suspension from extra-curricular activities (including field trips, sporting events, athletic practices, and after-school clubs)
- 4 Internal (in-school) suspension
- 5 External (out-of-school) suspension
- 6 Disciplinary Contract/Probation
- 7 Mandatory counseling
- 8 Request for withdrawal
- 9 Expulsion from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School

Academic Ineligibility

Students who are performing poorly in two or more subjects may become ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities until academic performance improves. This includes all athletic events, practices, after-school clubs, and school-sponsored social events. The Principal or Assistant Principal will determine when a student is eligible to resume extra-curricular activities.

Dress Code

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School is dedicated to the spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual development of our students. Basic to this concept is the idea that neat and appropriate dress helps to develop self-discipline, pride in one's school, and ultimately a school atmosphere more conducive to learning.

The code for appropriate dress and personal appearance is in effect throughout the school day, including lunch, after school activities, and most field trips.

On a designated Thursday of each month students can participate in "Denim for Dollars Day". The purpose of this "denim day" is to provide an opportunity to collect money (one dollar per child each denim day) for charity along with providing a special day for the children to wear jeans. On those days, students may wear sneakers, jeans and any casual shirt or sweater. Students are never allowed to wear any clothing depicting violence, drug or alcohol use, or any value contrary to our Catholic-Christian ideals. Clothing must be modest and appropriate for a Catholic school. Individual loss of privilege to participate in future denim days will result if a child dresses inappropriately.

The final determination as to whether or not a student's attire violates our dress code rests with the Principal or Assistant Principal.

School Uniform

Shorts for Girls and Boys – Black twill uniform shorts may be worn in September, October, May, and June. Students must always wear a belt with the uniform shorts.

Sweater for Boys and Girls – The red Cardigan sweater with "OLSH" embroidery is available for boys and girls. This is the only sweater that may be worn as part of the uniform. This sweater should be worn with the white knit uniform shirt with either a collar or turtleneck. Students should wear this sweater for Mass, special assemblies, and field trips. *School sweatshirts in red or black are available for both boys and girls to wear as part of the school uniform.* These sweatshirts are available to be ordered in the Fall through the school. The uniform shirt must be worn with the sweatshirt. Sweatshirts may not be worn to mass.

Shirts for Boys – Red or white knit uniform shirts (long or short sleeve) with a collar or turtleneck. *Shirt must be neatly tucked into pants.*

Shirts for Girls – Red or white knit uniform shirts (long or short sleeve) with a collar or turtleneck or Peter Pan blouses. *Blouses and shirts must be neatly tucked into skirt.*

Pants for Boys – Black twill pleated uniform pants. A belt must always be worn with the uniform pants.

Pants for Girls – Girls may wear black twill pleated uniform pants from November 1 through March 30. Uniform shirts must be worn with the pants. A belt must always be worn with the uniform pants and shirt must be neatly tucked into pants. If a girl chooses to wear pants underneath her uniform during this time, they must be solid black in color and must be removed when she enters the classroom. Sport team sweats are not acceptable.

Jumpers and Skirts for Girls – Red/black plaid jumpers for girls in grades 1-4. Red/black plaid skirts for girls in grades 5-8. Skorts may be worn by girls in grades 1 - 8.

Skirts/kilties, skorts, and jumpers should be no more than two inches above the knee.

Boots for Girls and Boys – Boots in winter are required for both girls and boys.

Shoes for Girls and Boys – **Appropriate indoor shoes** and socks/stockings must be worn. Hiking and work boots are not appropriate indoor shoes. Sneakers are not permitted for students in grades 1-8. Footwear for girls must be red, black, or white knee socks or tights. From May 1st through the end of the school year girls may wear red, white or black crew socks that cover the ankle bone . Boys should wear black or white socks with their uniform pants. "Sneaker socks" that fall below the ankle bone are not considered appropriate footwear.

T-Shirts/Undershirts – T-shirts with designs or writing should not be worn under the uniform knit shirt.

Belts –All students must always wear a belt with both the uniform shorts and uniform pants.

Phys. Ed. Attire – A school gym uniform must be worn by all students in grades 1 - 8. This uniform consists of the school logo t-shirt and shorts available through Campus Outfitters. Children in grades 1 -3 may wear red or black sweatpants with their gym shirts from November 1st through March 30th on their assigned gym day.

Dress for Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten Students – Students should dress casually but neatly. Students in these grade levels should wear sneakers every day.

Personal Appearance

Hair – Should be kept neat and clean at all times. There should be no spike, puffs, Mohawks, designs, etc. Hair should not hang in any manner which may obstruct the student's eyes. **Hair length on boys should be no longer than the top of the shirt collar and should be cut above the top of the ears.** Hair must be one color. *Effective October 1, 2000, hair must not be streaked, dyed or frosted.*

Jewelry – It is recommended that students do not wear any jewelry to school. Girls are permitted to wear only one small, post style earring (no hoops or dangles) in each ear. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings. No body piercing is permitted.

Make-up – Girls may wear clear nail polish. Noticeable eye and facial make-up is not permitted. Students violating this rule will be told to remove the make - up.

Facial Hair - Boys must be clean-shaven at all times.

Harassment Policy

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School fosters a Christian environment in a time when children are bombarded with contrary values. Harassment, in any form, cannot be tolerated in any Christian community. Harassment can result from a pattern of behavior wherein the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment. Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical or verbal behavior which can include, but is not limited to the following: physical or mental abuse, racial insults, derogatory ethnic slurs, unwelcome sexual advances or touching, and sexual comments or jokes. Students who are found to be harassing another student may be suspended from school from two to five days and may be required to participate in counseling. Repeated offenses will result in a student being asked to withdraw from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Parents should report suspected cases of harassment directly to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Any student found selling or in possession of illegal drugs will be referred to the police and parents/guardians will be immediately notified. Any student found selling or in possession of drugs or alcohol at school or any school-sponsored event is subject to expulsion.

Any student found to be under the influence of alcohol at any school-sponsored event would be subject to the following:

- 1 Parents/guardians will be notified and asked to assume responsibility for removing the student from the school premises or event
- 2 A conference involving the student, parent, and Principal must be conducted
- 3 The student may be suspended from school for three to five days
- 4 The student must enroll in a counseling or alcohol abuse prevention program

Fighting Policy

If any student is involved in a fight his or her parents/guardians will be contacted to arrange for the student to be taken home. On the following school day, a conference will take place between the student, parent/guardian, and the Principal or Assistant Principal. If it can be determined which student was the instigator, he/she will serve two days of suspension. If such a determination cannot be made, all students involved will serve two days of suspension from school.

Possession of Weapons Policy

Any student in possession of a weapon at school or any school-sponsored event will be asked to withdraw from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Smoking Policy

Students are not permitted to smoke anywhere within the school boundaries, at any school-sponsored event, or on any school-sponsored fieldtrip. When a student violates this policy, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. The student may be subject to the following:

First violation - The student will serve one day of in-school suspension and placed on disciplinary probation.

Second violation – The student will serve three to five days of out-of-school suspension.

Third violation – The student may be asked to withdraw from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Inappropriate Language Policy

The use of vulgar language and taking the Lord's name in vain is unacceptable in a Catholic-Christian environment. Students using inappropriate language or using the Lord's name in vain may receive a stern warning from a teacher or administrator. Subsequent offenses may result in detention, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

Stealing Policy

Any student who is involved in any situation of stealing or found to be in possession of stolen property in school or at a school-sponsored event will be subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Parents/ guardians will be notified. The student will be required to return, replace, or pay for the stolen property. At the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal, the police may be notified.

Truancy

Truancy is the absence from school (full or partial) without parental consent. Students found to be truant will be subject to the following: Parents/guardians will be notified; no credit will be given for missed class work, tests, or quizzes; up to five days of detention will be assigned. Repetitive truancy may result in mandatory counseling and disciplinary probation.

Cutting Class

If a student absences him/herself from a class during the school day, the student will receive no credit for any class work, tests, or quizzes missed. The student will receive one hour of after-school detention. Parents will be notified. Repeated violations will require a meeting with the student, parents/guardians, and the Principal or Assistant Principal. Continued class cutting may result in suspension from school

Vandalism

Any student who mars or destroys school property will be involved in a school-work program as an act for restitution. Parents may be held responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic De Vices

Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school. Once the child is on school property the phones should be in the "off" position. At NO time is any student to have a cell phone on them during the school day. Any child using or possessing a cell phone, or other electronic device, during the school day will have the item confiscated until a parent/guardian can come to the school and reclaim the item.

"Cyber" violations are inappropriate use of all technology, including but not limited to, cell phones, computers and/or the internet to engage in behaviors including, but not limited to bullying, intimidating, threatening, maligning and/or defaming others. Any such action will be dealt with by the principal.

Bus Conduct

All students of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart are expected to conduct themselves properly while riding the school bus. Students should be seated at all times. Any disciplinary problems may result in riding privileges being suspended by a student's home district.

Conduct at Extra-Curricular Events and Fieldtrips

Students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all school related events. Students are to show respect to adult chaperones, coaches, and moderators at all times. Students who poorly represent Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School at any extra-curricular event will lose the privilege of participating in future events or activities. This includes conduct on the buses traveling to and from school-sponsored events.

New York State Mandated Attendance Policy

Excused (**legal**) absences include:

- 1 Student illness
- 2 Sickness or death in the family
- 3 Required court appearance
- 4 Approved high school visits
- 5 Quarantine
- 6 Religious observance
- 7 Appointments at health clinics

Unexcused (**illegal**) absences include:

- 1 Unlawful detention
- 2 Truancy
- 3 Vacations
- 4 Suspension

Students who miss 25 days of school are in jeopardy of retention.

Students in middle school (grades 6-8) who miss 25 periods of a particular class are in jeopardy of retention.

Students who are tardy 25 times or more per year are in jeopardy of retention.

Students who have early departures 25 times or more per year are in jeopardy of retention.

1. Parents must notify the school for absence or tardiness

*2. **Students who are tardy must be signed-in at the main office by a parent or guardian***

3. A written excuse must be completed by a parent or guardian giving specific reasons for absence

4. If an excuse is not received within three school days, the absence is recorded as unexcused (illegal)

*5. **The school administration will monitor attendance patterns. If the problem or pattern persists, the school administration is required to notify proper authorities***

6. Pupil attendance records must be reviewed by the principal for the purpose of initiating appropriate action to address unexcused pupil absences, tardiness, and early departure

7. Students who are absent are not permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities after school hours

8. Work is not given to students who are out for unexcused (illegal absences)

9. An approved field trip must begin and end at school. A teacher must be present with the students.

10. If a student is absent five or more consecutive days, a physician's note is requested.

Any incident or activity not specifically covered in the OLSH Parent/Student Handbook will be viewed as a unique situation and will be handled using the Principal's discretion.