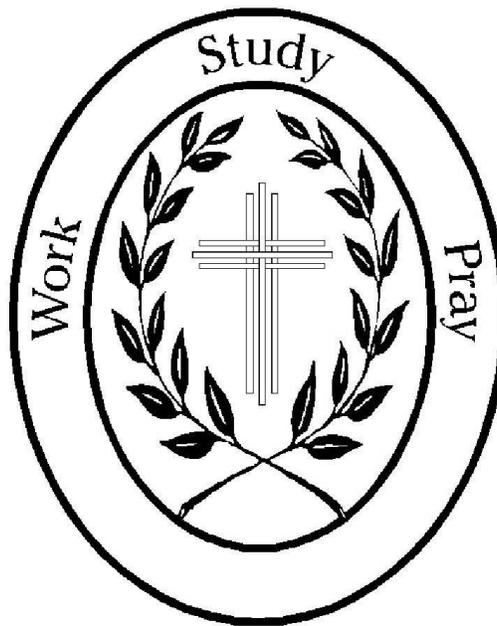


# Our Lady of Sorrows School

## Parent & Student Handbook



172 Academy Street  
South Orange, N.J. 07079  
(973) 762-5169  
(973) 378-9781 Fax

[www.ourladyofsorrowsschool.org](http://www.ourladyofsorrowsschool.org)

Let it be known to all who enter here  
that Christ is the reason for this school...  
the Teacher unseen, but ever present in it classes,  
the Model of its faculty,  
the Inspiration of its students.

# A Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

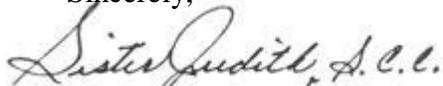
Our Lady of Sorrows School is dedicated to preserving the Catholic School heritage of academic excellence in a Catholic environment. Our school strives to provide a unique Catholic atmosphere in which each child can develop to his or her full potential – spiritually, morally, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically.

A well qualified staff, who strive to reveal the Christian message by word or gesture work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge, and the thoughtful formation of worthy goals in our students.

The school is a vital part of family and parish life. Within their partnership personal, moral and civic values become a priority.

It is our goal to help the students grow and develop a sense of self-worth and accountability as contributing citizens of the Church and society.

Sincerely,



Sister Judith Blair, S.C.C.

# Our Lady of Sorrows School Handbook

## Purpose and Use

The Handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of Our Lady of Sorrows School. To meet this objective, the school administration is given the flexibility and the ability to exercise discretion. In appropriate circumstances, the Principal has the discretion to take actions other than those specified in the Handbook. This Handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students or parents/guardians.

The School Handbook is printed for the express use of the families of students attending Our Lady of Sorrows School. The purpose of the handbook is to provide parents/guardians with a comprehensive, definitive resource for all the many aspects of life at Our Lady of Sorrows School. Parents/guardians and students should familiarize themselves with the School policies as set forth in this handbook.

Our Lady of Sorrows School intends to adhere to the policies set forth in this handbook. However, the School reserves the right to change the contents of this handbook at any time as it deems necessary and does not intend to be legally bound by the contents of this handbook.

## Amendments to Handbook

This Handbook is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the school administration. If changes are made to the Handbook, parents/guardians will be notified promptly. Changes in School policies will be considered in effect once the notification has been sent.

*Our Lady of Sorrows School is accredited by the Middle States Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

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Sister Judith Blair, S.C.C.  
Principal

**Our Lady of Sorrow School focuses its attention on two primary goals:**

- Catholic Education
- Quality Education

**SCHOOL HOURS**

Kindergarten to Grade 8      8:00am – 2:45pm

Pre-School (Monday-Friday)

Morning	8:00am-11:25am
Full Day	8:00am-2:25pm
Extended Day	8:00am-6:00pm

**AFTERCARE PROGRAM**

Kindergarten to Grade 8	2:45pm – 6:00pm
	12:15pm – 6:00pm (half days)

There is NO After-Care Program on School Holidays, or on days when school is closed due to inclement weather. This includes days when an unforeseen early dismissal is required.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

Our Lady of Sorrows School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School.

Our Lady of Sorrows School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Our Lady of Sorrows School  
Parent & Student Handbook

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The Principal reserves the right to amend this handbook for just cause.  
All parents/guardians will be notified of the changes.

## Section One

### **PHILOSOPHY OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS SCHOOL**

Our Lady of Sorrows School is a Catholic community of faith and love striving to fulfill the mandate to share with others the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our aim is to help the child grow towards maturity in faith with a total commitment of one's whole being to the person of Christ.

Parents are acknowledged as the primary educators. While the school functions as a community, it also functions in a community. Parental involvement and community support are necessary to ensure the accomplishment of the school's educational mission. We hope to engender in each child a love of learning, which starts with the parents, develops in pre-school and continues to grow in adulthood.

As educators we assist the parents in the development of each child's spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical, and social abilities and talents. We help them mature at their own rate of growth according to ability, recognizing individual needs and being aware of their personal uniqueness.

Through a well-integrated curriculum program and extra curricula activities, we at Our Lady of Sorrows strive to strengthen basic skills in obtaining information, solving problems, thinking clearly, and communicating effectively.

Our educational approach is child-centered in that we favor giving the child an education that will be personally relevant and will contribute to his full development as a person. It is our challenge as teachers to identify the learning strengths of the children and to utilize these strengths to overcome their weaknesses.

We embrace traditional programs in mathematics, science, reading, and language arts that proceed in a logical, instructional sequence from kindergarten through eighth grade. Learning occurs by building on an established foundation in subject areas. Review and re-teaching of basic skills is of importance for as long as is necessary and is employed by all teachers so that a thorough background in basic skills is achieved.

The intent of the administration, faculty, parents, and staff is to work together in the spirit of the gospel to "teach as Jesus did". We strive to be authentically Catholic and academically excellent.

## **Philosophy/Mission Statement**

Our Lady of Sorrows School, established in 1890, is committed to proclaiming and living the Good News of Jesus, striving for academic excellence, and forming exemplary leaders for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Rooted in the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, we achieve this goal with a partnership between families and teachers working together with the students to discover their own unique gifts and to develop them to their full potential.

## **Belief Statement**

*The development of each child's spiritual, intellectual, physical and social powers and talents are based on the beliefs outlined below:*

We believe we work to bring all of life and life's experience into relationship with God.

We believe a habit of prayer and worship are essential to our daily living.

We believe values based on Sacred Scripture are vital.

We believe each child needs the pride of accomplishment for a happy and successful life.

We believe each child can learn and mature at his or her own pace according to individual ability and rate of growth.

We believe we must highly value intellectual achievement, knowledge, and search for truth.

We believe there is a need to foster the habit of positive self-discipline in each student.

We believe in the importance of stressing various patterns of interaction to develop respect for others.

We believe there is a need to incorporate a sense of play, joy, and cooperation in school, home, and community.

## **Affiliation**

Our Lady of Sorrows holds membership in the National Catholic Education Association. Our school is part of the Archdiocese of Newark System and is subject and bound by the general policies of the Archdiocese. Our Lady of Sorrows complies with the regulations and requirements of the New Jersey Department of Education.

## Section Two

### Administration and Organization

#### **The Role of the Pastor**

The pastor is Ex-officio, the chief administrative officer of the total parish educational program. He is responsible for the effective maintenance and operation of the school and for its financial administration.

The pastor has the responsibility of setting and maintaining the spiritual tone of the school and of directing the religious education of the children of the entire parish.

#### **The Role of the Principal**

The principal is the administrative head of the school and is responsible for the entire operation of the school as an educational institution. The principal must coordinate the efforts of all school personnel ~ administrative, instructional, and custodial ~ in achieving the harmonious and cooperative effort required for the attainment of a good teaching/learning situation.

Since Christian formation is based on the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, the principal must possess a commitment to the basic tenets of the Roman Catholic Faith and must furnish Christian and constructive leadership for the staff, students, and parents.

The principal must perform the duties involved in administration, supervision, organization, discipline, and educational evaluation.

#### **The Role of Priests**

The pastor and assistant priests play an active role in the school curriculum by assisting with religious instruction, Sacramental preparation, penance celebrations, and religious activities in conjunction with the liturgical calendar. They are vital members of the school's staff, which plans and offers experience in Christian living through the Liturgy, Sacramental life, prayer, guidance, and example, as well as service to others.

#### **The Role of the Teacher**

The school is staffed by a dedicated lay faculty and one Sister of Charity.

The faculty members are deeply committed to the goals of the school. Their professionalism is a source of pride to the school and community. Within the classroom and beyond, our teachers combine their talents and competencies with dedication in the service of their students. Educational programs are taught with expertise and with concern for the individual's religious and academic growth.

The prime factor for the success for the school's goals and programs is the spirit and personality of the teacher. Each one is a highly skilled professional who is expected to:

1. Instruct the students in the Roman Catholic Faith.
2. Provide a Christian atmosphere of a living and active faith.
3. Accomplish the school's educational goals.
4. Maintain a favorable climate of learning.
5. Courteously and consistently enforce the rules of the school.
6. Maintain discipline with fairness and respect for the child.
7. Inform parents, in accordance with school procedures, about academic progress and the general behavior of their children.

These functions are but a few of the many and varied obligations which teachers assume from the teaching authority delegated to them by parents.

## **The Role of the Parent**

To assist the school in maintaining good education there must be effective communication among parents/guardians, students, teachers and administration.

To help children parents should strive to:

1. Provide for genuine living of the Gospel message.
2. Recognize that the teacher takes the place of the parent while the child is in school and that parents, therefore, must uphold and support the authority of the teacher.
3. Teach and explain to children respect for law, for authority, for the rights of others, and for public and private property.
4. Insist on prompt and regular school attendance and compliance with attendance rules and procedures.
5. Arrange a time and place for students to complete written or study homework assignments.
6. Review all nightly homework assignments, sign homework assignment pad and check for any long-term assignment projects.
7. Talk with children about school programs and activities and share an interest in pupil progress.
8. Remind children frequently that good behavior is expected not only in the classroom, but also during recess, on the playground, in the cafeteria and on the way to and from school.
9. Work with the school in a cooperative effort to carry out recommendations made in the best interest of the child.
10. Pick up their children promptly at the conclusion of the school day, or make sure they are enrolled in the after-care program.
11. If public transportation is used or if the student is going to walk home, there must be written authorization from the parent or legal guardian on file in the office.
12. If a student is being picked up from school by someone other than the parent or guardian, a note must be sent to the office.

## **The Role of the Student**

The student body is united by its common efforts toward Christian human growth. This growth comes through a community experience: faculty, priests, students, and parent ~ each offering his/her own unique contribution to the school community. Roman Catholic children are obliged to practice the Faith as the Church teaches.

All children are obliged to:

1. Actively participate in religion classes, spiritual growth devotions and services.
2. Salute the United States flag, repeat the Pledge of Allegiance and sing a patriotic song.
3. Adhere strictly to all school regulations.
4. Respect staff members, volunteers and peers.
5. Extend efforts to achieve academic success according to ability and potential.

### **Policy of Admission of Students**

Our Lady of Sorrows School gives preference to:

1. Registered parishioners of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish who have siblings in the school
2. Registered parishioners who have no siblings in the school
3. Catholic students registered in parishes other than Our Lady of Sorrows who currently have siblings in the school and also no siblings in the school
4. Alumni status
5. Non-Catholic students

## Technical Requirements

- Age: A birth certificate MUST be submitted for proof of age
- PreK-3: Child must be 3 years old on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>
- PreK-4: Child must be 4 years old on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Kindergarten: Child must be 5 years old on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>
- First Grade: Child must be 6 years old on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>

## Health Requirements

New and returning students entering K, 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades are required to present their health records and have evidence of a recent physical examination prior to or on the first day of the new school year. Our Lady of Sorrows School also requires a student to provide a health history including: allergies, past serious illnesses and current health problems. The school nurse needs to be aware of these conditions in order to monitor and treat children appropriately. Be assured, all health information will be kept strictly confidential.

***Failure to meet requirements will prohibit the child from returning to school until the necessary data are presented.***

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

**NJ State law requires the following minimum doses:**

- 5 DPT Doses (if 4<sup>th</sup> dose is on/after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, 5<sup>th</sup> dose is not required)
- 4 Polio Vaccine Doses (if 3<sup>rd</sup> dose is on/after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, 4<sup>th</sup> dose is not required)
- 1 – 4 HIB Doses (not required after age 5)
- 2 MMR Doses (1<sup>st</sup> dose on/after 1<sup>st</sup> birthday, 2<sup>nd</sup> dose before enrollment in K-1 school)
- 3 Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV) at prescribed intervals

**The State of New Jersey requires all new students and kindergarten students to be up-to-date on their immunizations.**

**AN APPLICANT WHOSE IMMUNIZATION RECORD IS INCOMPLETE WILL NOT BE ADMITTED.**

## Transfer Students Requirements

In addition to all the above items, the following is also required from a student's previous school:

- Transfer notification
- Most recent report card
- Health records
- Most recent standardized test scores
- Birth Certificate
- TWO Recommendation letters are required for Grades 1-8
  - One from the principal
  - One from present teacher
- A parent must be interviewed by the principal

Transfer Admissions: Further information regarding application, registration and admission may be obtained from the school office.

*NOTE: All new students will be accepted on a probationary basis. Their performance and ability to adjust will be evaluated for a minimum of one year. The purpose of this policy is to ascertain the school's ability to meet the needs of the child, as well as the family's willingness to comply with the mission and philosophy of Our Lady of Sorrows School.*

### **Families Withdrawing Students from OLS**

Parents should notify the principal as soon as possible. Records will be forwarded to the new school upon receipt of a request from the new school. Parents must sign a permission slip to release these records. Parents wishing to return to Our Lady of Sorrows will be admitted at the discretion of the principal.

### **Eighth Grade Graduation Fees**

A graduation fee is required each year payable directly to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom teacher by January 16<sup>th</sup> of the graduating year. Additional costs may be incurred due to non-support fundraisers. If tuition or any other fees are delinquent, students may not be permitted to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip, dinner dance and field day until fees are paid.

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation fee includes:

- Cap and Gown
- Diploma and case
- Group class picture
- Awards and medals
- Yearbook
- Graduation mementos
- All printing, engraving and shipping charges

## Section Three

### Academic Policies

Our Lady of Sorrows School curriculum incorporates the following subjects:

Religion	Social Studies
Language Arts	Foreign Language
Reading	Penmanship
Spelling	Art
Vocabulary	Music
Math	Physical Education
Science	Computer Education

#### **Curriculum**

Our Lady of Sorrows School is in accord with the Christian philosophy, goals and objectives of the Diocesan Education Office. Curriculum is developed on a local level to meet the needs of our student population. Classes are self contained in Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> to give the child a feeling of security. They are introduced to partial departmentalization in grade 4 and 5. This is a good preparation for complete departmentalization in grades 6, 7, and 8.

#### **Religion Program**

The Religious Education Program is at the very heart of the school's educational mission. Our objective is to create a community of Faith in which the Christian message of hope and love, the experience of community, worship and social concern are integrated in the total educational experience of the students, parents and faculty.

We at Our Lady of Sorrows strive for that high standard through various activities:

- Daily Religious Instruction
- Daily Prayers as a student body
- Monthly School Liturgies
- Student Penance Services
- Sacramental Preparation
- Mission Awareness
- Parish and Community Service
- Social Concern
- Virtus Child Safety Program
- Religious Instruction integrated throughout the curriculum

#### **Religious Education and Religious Services**

The non-Catholic student is welcome at Our Lady of Sorrows School. The non-Catholic student is expected to understand and agree that the School exists in the framework of Catholic values. Non-Catholic students must participate in the Religion classes and Liturgical services performed during the school year.

#### **Report Cards**

The Archdiocese of Newark has issued new regulations for report card distribution. Report cards shall be issued on a trimester schedule. The period of reporting has been extended to allow for more effective and authentic assessment and accountability of student performance.

## **Grading and Honors**

The grading explanation is listed below and also printed on the report card.

### **Academic Marking Code – Grades 4-8**

A+	97-100
A	92-96
B+	88-91
B	83-87
C+	78-82
C	73-77
D	70-72
U	Below 70

### **Academic Marking Code – Grades 1-3**

E	Exceeds (High Understanding)
S	Secure (Understanding Demonstrated)
D	Developing (Growth Demonstrated)
B	Beginning (Beginning Stages)
N	Not Yet Performing (Assistance Required)

## **Honor Roll**

The Honor Roll is established to recognize those students who have diligently worked to a very high standard of learning.

### **First Honors – Grades 4-8**

Awarded to a student who has achieved all A's or A+'s in all academic areas, sub-headings and cultural development as well as achieved:

- Have No U/I's in any area of the report card
- No more than 3 consecutive or 5 total absences in a marking period without a doctor's note
- Have no more than 2 unexcused late arrivals in a marking period

### **Second Honors – Grades 4-8**

Awarded to a student who has achieved all B's or better in all academic areas, sub-headings and cultural development as well as achieved:

- Have No U/I's in any area of the report card
- No more than 3 consecutive or 5 total absences in a marking period without a doctor's note
- Have no more than 2 unexcused late arrivals in a marking period

### **Merit – Grades 4-8**

Awarded to students who have satisfactory grades, who exhibit outstanding effort in all major subjects, and have no I or U on their report card. No Merit Awards will be given in the first marking period.

## Promotion and Retention

Promotion or retention of a student is based on an evaluation of the individual's academic, physical, social and emotional growth. The primary reasons a teacher may consider retention include: course failure, indifference or lack of effort on the part of a capable student, physical or social immaturity, frequent or long absences.

Parents can assume their child will be promoted unless the alternative of retention has been discussed during the school year. Parents will be involved in any retention decision. The final decision, however, rests on the administration.

## Course Failure

### Grades 1 – 7

A student's cumulative grade of U or 69 and below in ONE MAJOR SUBJECT area warrants a *satisfactory completion* of summer school. Upon proof of satisfactory completion, the student will enter the next grade. Should the student not successfully complete the summer school program, the promotion process will then be reviewed for each student individually. A conference will be held with the principal, the student's parents and the teacher to determine the student's grade level. An academic action plan will be developed at the time to meet the student's needs.

A cumulative grade of U or 69 and below in TWO or more MAJOR SUBJECT areas precludes promotion to the next grade level and warrants a review of the student's enrollment by the administration.

### Grade 8

No student in the eighth grade will receive a diploma at graduation unless they pass ALL MAJOR SUBJECT areas. A student's cumulative grades of U or 69 and below in ONE MAJOR SUBJECT area warrants a *satisfactory completion* of summer school in that subject area. Upon proof of satisfactory completion, the student will receive a diploma. Should the student NOT SATISFACTORILY complete summer school, it will be noted on his/her report card and the student will not receive a diploma.

A cumulative grade of U or 69 and below in TWO or more MAJOR SUBJECT areas precludes promotion to the next grade level. The student will need to repeat the 8<sup>th</sup> grade at a new school.

*Excessive absences resulting in poor academic performance will result in retention.*

## Homework

Students will receive homework on a daily basis. Homework is assigned to supplement and reinforce class work as well as develop certain skills. Homework is an important aspect of the student's learning process. Parents can assist their child immensely by establishing a definite homework study period. The time allotments should be as follows:

Grades K, 1, 2	20 to 45 minutes daily
Grades 3, 4, 5	30 minutes to 1 hour daily
Grades 6, 7, 8	1 to 2 hours daily

Written work is not the only type of homework; study time is also very important. Whatever type is assigned, the child must realize early on that homework is the STUDENT'S responsibility and it must be done consistently with emphasis on completeness, accuracy and neatness.

Your child will be given a homework assignment pad at the beginning of the school year and it MUST BE CHECKED AND SIGNED DAILY. If the homework assignment is not handed in on or completed on the date due, the student will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment and will still be required to complete the assignment.

## Tests

All tests will be sent home and are to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school the next day. Teachers grade Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, and Penmanship on tests, where applicable.

## Make-Up Work Policy

All make-up work for days absent is the responsibility of the student. It is up to the student to meet with teachers to find out what material was missed, when tutoring time on the missed material can be obtained, and an acceptable date to hand in missed assignments.

If the make-up work is not made up on the due date given by the teacher, the student will receive a grade of 0 on an assignment, yet will still be required to hand it in.

## Records and Transcripts

A parent/guardian has the right to view his/her child's academic record, academic standardized test results, health records, and emergency sheet. These records can be made available upon written request.

Records attached to publicly funded services provided through the local Board of Education, such as Child Study Team Reviews, Compensatory Education, Speech, ESL, etc. are the property of the Essex County Special Services. If a parent/guardian wishes to examine these records or to procure additional copies for his/her own use, he/she must apply to the Essex County Special Services for this information. Our Lady of Sorrows School is NOT permitted to distribute this information to anyone, not even to parents or guardians.

Transcripts of academic and health records may not be given directly to the parent/guardian in the event of a transfer. A request for transfer must be submitted in writing to the school by the parent/guardian. Transcripts will be sent directly from school to school when the sending school receives an official written request from the receiving school. If the parent/guardian does not submit a request for transfer that includes an authorization to send the transcript, the receiving school must secure permission from the parent/guardian to request the transcripts from the sending school.

## Technology

### Acceptable Use Policy for Technology

The use of computer services at Our Lady of Sorrows School is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to make responsible, ethical and appropriate use of computers and information services at all times. Network and computer services include: use of personal and school computers and peripherals, the *Internet*, and all associated software. Students should realize that such things as time, money and hardware are limited and costly and if these services are abused their use will be restricted.

Our Lady of Sorrows School holds specific expectations for students at each grade level regarding their use of computers before, during and after school in the computer lab, classroom or library.

The following **Rules of Conduct** apply to information services.

### Students:

- May use only their password (where applicable).
- May not reconfigure or tamper with the network system in any way, or attempt to access or alter files without proper authority.
- May not unlawfully copy software or information.
- May not use illegal software.
- Must cite properly all information that is required from electronic sources and used in their assignments.

- Are held responsible for all activity conducted on his/her account or under his/her password (where applicable).
- May not run non-instructional computer games on any school-owned computer, server or network system.
- Students and parents are required to sign a written agreement in support of the policy
- No forms of media (e.g. floppy disks, CD ROM disks, zip disks etc.) are to enter any machine without prior consent of the principal and computer teacher.
- Access to chat lines, bulletin boards or news/discussion groups, unless supervised by a teacher in an educational sense is prohibited.

***Failure to comply with these standards or acceptable use of Our Lady of Sorrows School technology will result, in the very least, in suspension or withdrawal of network privileges.***

### **Fire Drills**

In accordance with New Jersey State Law, fire drills are to be held once a month. Proper conduct, ways to exit, and other regulations involved in a safe exit from the building are taught to the students. Violations of the safety code during a fire drill are cause for disciplinary action.

### **Crisis Drills**

In accordance with New Jersey State Law, crisis drills are to be held once a month. This crisis drill includes a classroom lockdown, as well as an evacuation of the school. Proper conduct, ways of exit, and other regulations involved in the safety of students are taught.

### **Emergency Cards**

Two Emergency Cards are given out during the first week of school. One is kept in the nurse's file and one in the school office. Two forms must be completed for EACH CHILD registered in the school. All information should be completely and accurately filled in by the parents/guardians. All forms must be completed and returned by the end of the first full week of school. If the forms are not returned by the Friday of the first full week of school, the student will not be allowed to return to school until all forms are completed and returned to the office. If a child becomes ill or is hurt during the school day, parents will be notified first. In cases of illness or serious injury, the school cannot assume responsibility for the child without the permission of the parents, guardian or contacts noted on the card.

***Should there be any change of address, telephone numbers, or name on the Emergency Card at any time during the academic year, parents/guardians MUST NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY.***

**Note:** Telephone numbers need to be accurate and parents/guardians need to be accessible because your child's safety could be at risk if the school cannot get in touch with you.

## Section Four

### Communication

#### **Appointments with School**

Parents who wish to meet with the principal, a teacher, or any other member of the school staff must contact the office to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time. To maintain good order in the school, parents may not approach staff members during the school day without arranging an appointment beforehand.

Staff members who wish to communicate with the parents of a student may do so by phone, letter or mutually convenient appointment. Teachers will not schedule an appointment at times that could conflict with teaching or supervisory duties.

When appointments are made, both parent and the staff member should be aware of the purpose of the conferences so that all concerned may be appropriately prepared.

#### **Regular Communication with All Parents/Guardians**

Our Lady of Sorrows School will communicate with all the parents/guardians. The weekly Wednesday envelope is sent home each week electronically via email and is also available on the school website.

#### **Money Brought to School**

Money that is sent to school should be placed in a sealed envelope clearly identified with the child's name, homeroom, the amount enclosed and the purpose.

#### **General Meetings**

Parents are obliged to attend all general meetings listed on the monthly calendar. Parent/Teacher Conferences, Home/School Associations (Caritas), Committees and Parent Volunteer Programs are making progress because thoughtful parents participate faithfully in these cooperative efforts to enrich their children's education. The benefits of home and school partnership are so evident that all parents should be made aware of their duty to be full partners with the school. The school administrator recognizes the importance of this cooperation and encourages the reciprocal accountability, of parent-to-school and school-to-parent. Today's Catholic school is more than a means of safeguarding faith and virtue; it is a center in which parents and teachers, guided by the Holy Spirit, collaborate in giving children a complete Catholic Education.

#### **Faculty Meetings**

Faculty meetings are an opportunity for professional growth for every faculty member. At Our Lady of Sorrows School, they are held on the first Friday of every month, unless otherwise stated. Dismissal will be at 12:15pm.

#### **Use of Telephones**

Personal calls between parents and children will be limited to emergency messages. Forgetting an item is not considered an emergency. **Students are not to use cell phones in school or on school property during the school day.** If a parent warrants a child to have a cell phone in case of emergencies, the cell phone MUST be given to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the day and will be returned at the end of the day to the student. *Any student using a cell phone during school hours will warrant a detention and the phone will be kept by the principal. A parent/guardian will have to come to the school to get the phone back.*

## Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents

### **Parental Rights to School Records**

Our Lady of Sorrows School abides by the provision of applicable law (Buckley Amendment) with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary upon request, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the student's essential academic records.

### **Court Orders**

If there is a court order specifying the rights and responsibilities of individual parents, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with the official copy of the court order. The custodial parent may wish to supply the Principal with the custody section of the divorce decree if it contains information, which may be useful to the school in fulfilling obligations.

### **Pick-Up from School**

The school will permit only the custodial parent, or his/her designee, to pick up the child during or at the end of the school day. The non-custodial parent will not be permitted to remove the child from school during or at the end of the school day, unless there is written authorization from the custodial parent. In an emergency, a clearly defined, one-time telephone authorization may be acceptable.

## Section Five

### Financial Obligations

#### **Fees**

There is a non-refundable Registration Fee, which is collected at the time of registration.

#### **Tuition Obligation**

Tuition is to be sent to the school either by mail, hand delivery to the office by the parent, or by delivery to the school by the student. All tuition envelopes must be clearly marked with the child's name, grade and noted as Tuition Payment.

A tuition contract is signed at the time of registration which describes what is due, when it is due, and late fee requirements. All payments must be kept current.

Questions concerning payment of tuition should be directed to the Bursar. The matter will then be discussed with the Principal and the Pastor. If payments are not made at the specified times, a notice will be sent home.

#### **Tuition Reimbursement**

If a student withdraws or is expelled after payment has been made, the obligation will be prorated for the actual time the student spent in school.

#### **Support Obligations / Parent Participation**

Parent/guardians are asked to support the school in the fundraising activities.

## Section Six

### Health

#### **Policy for Administration of Medication**

Our Lady of Sorrows School strongly discourages the administration of either prescription or non-prescription medication in school or on field trips. However, if it is absolutely essential that a student receive medication while under School supervision, the following procedures apply:

- 1) A parent/guardian should come to the school and personally administer the medication.
- 2) If this arrangement is not possible, the school nurse, the principal, or her designee will administer the medication under the following conditions:
  - a) The medication must be given to the school nurse or principal by the parent/guardian;
  - b) The medication must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container with the child's name, name of medication, time, route to which the medication is to be given and dose clearly printed on the label.
  - c) No medication will be given to another child or sibling that is taking the same medication without his/her name printed on the original bottle.
  - d) The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an *Authorization to Administer Medication in School* form. This form is available from the school office or by making copies of the form included in this handbook.
  - e) Students will be permitted to self-administer medication only for life threatening illnesses and conditions
  - f) The parent/guardian must schedule a conference with the school nurse to discuss in detail the need for medication.
- 3) Medications on school trips:
  - a) If a student is on medication, whether prescription or over the counter, and the physician says that the child needs to take this medication, and that child is scheduled to go on a school activity or trip away from school it is mandatory that the parent or school nurse accompany the child to this event. If the school nurse cannot attend then it is the parents' responsibility to go with the child or the child will be excluded from the event.
- 4) Medications Exceptions for school trips:
  - a) If a child is on an inhaler and the child can use this on their own, then the parent or the nurse does not have to accompany the child. The teachers will carry these inhalers and if the child needs this medication the student will be capable of self-administering this medication. A note stating that they are capable of self-administering the inhaler is required from both the physician and parent.

### **Policy for Administration of Epinephrine**

As permitted by New Jersey Law, the School shall follow the orders of a physician or advanced practice nurse for emergency administration of epinephrine via epi-pen for anaphylaxis.

#### **Parents/Guardians Authorization and Agreements Regarding Liability**

Written authorization for administration of the epi-pen must be received from the parent or guardian of the student. The parent/guardian of the student shall be notified that upon administration of the epi-pen in accordance with procedure below as provided by law, the school and its employee or agents, shall have no liability for any injury arising from administration of the epi-pen to the student. The parent/guardian of the student shall indemnify and hold harmless the School and its employees or agents for any such injury, as provided by law.

#### **Administration of the Epi-Pen by the School**

The School nurse shall have primary responsibility for administration of the epi-pen. In the absence of the School nurse, another School employee, designated and trained in administration of the epi-pen by the School nurse pursuant to New Jersey law, may administer the epi-pen.

Some students have allergies where an Epi-Pen may be needed. Although, some students have permission from their physician and their parents to give themselves the injection the majority do not have permission. Most of the OLS teachers have been shown how to administer the Epi-Pen just in case the child cannot inject themselves or the nurse is not present.

#### **Medical and Dental Appointments**

Dental and medical appointments should be made for after school hours, Saturdays, or on free days. If it is absolutely necessary to make the appointment during school hours, a note must be presented to the homeroom teacher the day before the appointment.

#### **Student Accident Insurance**

Each student is covered by an Archdiocesan Insurance Plan which protects each student during the hours and days when school is in session, and while attending or participating in school-sponsored activities. This coverage has been purchased on a full excess basis, which means that in the event of any injury to your child, you must first claim benefits under any other coverage you may have.

#### **Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

New Jersey State Law requires that any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect must make a report to the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services.

#### **Asbestos Management Plan**

Our Lady of Sorrows School's Asbestos Management Plan is on file in the school office as required by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). This document is available for examination upon request.

#### **Smoking/Tobacco Paraphernalia**

As in compliance with the State of New Jersey, Our Lady of Sorrows School is a smoke-free environment. As an expression of the school's concern for the health of the students and as an inflexible rule of discipline, students are not permitted to smoke at any time on the school premises, or on the way to or from school. Matches, lighters, or smoking materials of any sort may not be kept in the possession of any student.

A student caught smoking or holding a cigarette, pipe and/or cigar at any time during the school day subjects him/herself to suspension with parental notification.

### **Communicable Diseases**

State health regulations require the exclusion of a child from school if he/she has certain diseases or communicable diseases. Please call the school if your child has any of the following diseases but not limited to:

Measles	Whooping Cough	Scarlet Fever
Chicken Pox	Mumps	Impetigo
Pediculosis (lice)	Scabies	Ringworm
Bacterial Pink Eye	Tonsillitis	
Respiratory Streptococcal Infections		

A doctor's excuse must be sent to the school before the child returns to school. Also, your child will be required to leave school if any of these diseases are suspected. You will be called and asked to have your child seen by a doctor to confirm or refute the suspicion.

### **Health Services**

Our Lady of Sorrows School has a registered nurse on duty 5 days a week, provided by Our Lady of Sorrows parish. All students are weighed and measured annually. Routine visual and audiometer (hearing) screenings are done on all children. Scoliosis screening is done at age 10 and above.

***If a child comes to school with a bad cold or cough or anything else that hinders him/her from doing school work or participating in physical activity the parents will be called to pick up the child and bring them home.***

### **Diabetes**

Any child that is a diabetic, MUST be accompanied by the school nurse or a parent to any event outside school grounds regardless of the child's age or grade level. Teachers are not allowed to administer medication to diabetics. In the event that a child would need a certain injection for their diabetes then it is the responsibility of the nurse or parent to administer the medication. The school nurse does take accu-checks (blood sugar) and gives insulin to children that need this medication. For most school trips, the nurse will NOT be going, so please make the arrangements to accompany your child.

### **Temperature**

Any child with a temperature that registers 100.5 or higher will be sent home. The child will not be allowed to return to school for at least 24 hours. This means that if a child is sent home on Monday with a temperature the earliest he/she can return to school is Wednesday. A child has to be fever free for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducing medication such as Motrin or Tylenol. If a child needs Tylenol or Motrin to reduce a fever then the child cannot attend school the following day. If a child goes all day and night without these medications and remains fever free than they may return to school.

### **Vomiting**

If a child has vomited and feels nauseous the child will be sent home. The child will not be allowed to return to school for 24 hours or a whole day without vomiting.

**Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)**

Pink eye is very contagious. If a child is suspected of having pink eye (watery, crusted, itchy, very pink), you will be asked to pick up the child and take him/her to the physician. If the child has a confirmed diagnosis of pink eye then he/she has to be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

**MRSA: Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus**

Starts with a cut/scrape that develops into a skin infection; appears as pustules or boils that are red, swollen and painful or have pus or other drainage. If diagnosed by a physician, the child may attend school but the whole area must be covered by a dressing (bandage). All surfaces must be cleaned with bleach to keep the MRSA from spreading to another child. Usually MRSA is transmitted by skin to skin contact.

**Ringworm**

Ringworm is very contagious. A child will be sent home if ringworm is suspected. Ringworm starts out as a CIRCLE and the center is covered by small scales and can become red and itchy. If a child scratches the area he/she can spread it to other children by touching them with the hand that touched the lesion. The child will be allowed back in school with the area totally covered and a note from their physician.

*Any child that is absent from school 3 or more days must bring in a doctor's note or your child will not be allowed to return to school.*

## Section Seven

### Policies

#### **Attendance**

Prompt regular attendance is absolutely essential to academic success. The parent/guardian is expected to foster these good habits in the student, both for the benefit of the student's current academic achievement and to encourage mature adult behavior in the future.

#### **Supervision**

The school's responsibility for supervision begins at 7:45am and ends at 2:45pm. For students enrolled in the After Care Program, supervision begins at 2:45pm and ends at 6:00pm.

#### **Policy Regarding Student Absence**

A parent/guardian **MUST** call the school no later than 8:30am, to report a student's absence. If no call has been received by 8:30am, the school will make a reasonable effort to reach a parent/guardian by phone to verify the legitimacy of the absence. These procedures represent a mutual effort to account for the presence of the student during school hours.

When a child returns to school, he/she must present a **WRITTEN EXCUSE** from a parent/guardian stating the student's name, date and the reason for the absence.  
***Any child that is absent from school 3 or more days must bring in a doctor's note or your child will not be allowed to return to school.***

#### **Prolonged Absence**

In the event of a prolonged absence (two weeks or more), a student is required to take part in a home tutoring or supervised study program to make-up and continue the work of the class. If, at the end of the term, achievement is below class level, retention may be necessary. The above regulation also applies to regular absences (8 times during the marking period). In either case, the parents, through the school office, must arrange the tutoring or supervised study program.

#### **Family Vacations and Personal Days**

The teacher and principal are to be notified in writing prior to any vacation and/or personal days. It is the responsibility of the student to make up missed work and tests when he/she returns from a family vacation. Family vacations are discouraged during the school year.

#### **Partial Absence/Lateness/Tardiness**

No student may leave the school before regular dismissal time unless excused by the principal; this may be accomplished by sending a note in a sealed envelope stating the reason for the early dismissal. All students must be signed out by an adult. Any student leaving the school grounds other than at regular times, without permission, automatically suspends himself/herself

from school. Dental and doctor appointments should be made, if at all possible, at a time that will not take the student from his/her schoolwork.

**Students need to be assembled in school by 8:00am, which is the official starting time of school.**

### **Absence from Physical Education**

A written excuse by the parent, doctor or school nurse is the only reason a student will be exempt from taking part in the Physical Education program at school. The note will be regarded as a one-time excuse unless the length of the absence is otherwise indicated.

### **Absence from School & Participation in School Activities**

If a student is absent from school because of illness or disciplinary action, he/she will not be permitted to take part in extracurricular or athletic activities that afternoon or evening.

If a student is absent from school for a reason other than illness or disciplinary action, the school reserves the right to make an individual judgment regarding same day extracurricular and athletic participation.

### **Truancy**

A student who deliberately avoids coming to school, contrary to the wishes of his/her parent/guardian, is considered truant. Habitual truancy will be reported to the Attendance Officer of the child's district of residence. A student who is chronically truant will be subject to disciplinary measures.

### **Early Dismissal**

Planned early dismissals are placed on the school calendar. The first Friday of each month is always an early dismissal. Half-day dismissals are at 12:15pm. Aftercare is provided unless otherwise stated. Unplanned emergency closings due to weather conditions, high absenteeism related to sickness, boiler or water failure etc. are handled through the Honeywell Instant Alert System. No child can be dismissed until an authorized person is contacted.

Delayed openings and/or closings due to inclement weather are called by the South Orange/Maplewood Board of Education. Our parents are notified through the Honeywell Instant Alert System.

### **Visitors**

Parents, volunteers, and other visitors are requested to report to the school office. Visitors are not permitted to go to the classrooms during school hours. This is a protective measure for the students.

### **Environment**

A hallmark of Catholic Education has always been a disciplined environment. Our Lady of Sorrows School proudly carries on that tradition. A commitment to quality education demands that a receptive and caring environment be present. The careful integration of disciplinary provisions, with Christian respect for the dignity of each person, allows us to provide the best educational environments.

### **Extra Curricular Activities**

Aftercare	Field Trips	Little Chef's Club
School Choir	Academic Bowls	Spring Musical
Forensics	Dance Club	
Student Council	Christmas Show	
Essay Contests	Holiday Observances & Activities	

## **Extra Curricular Activities Cont.**

Sports: Cross Country, Track & Field, Volleyball, Soccer, Softball, Basketball, Cheerleading

## **Faculty / Staff**

A Sister of Christian Charity is the principal of Our Lady of Sorrows and a Sister of Charity teaches in the lower grades. All lay and religious teachers are degreed and certified. As Christian educators, faculty members strive to reveal the Christian message by word and by gesture. They work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge, and thoughtful formation of worthy goals. In relating with students, the staff attempts to treat each with love and justice, showing concern for their problems and helping them to grow in a sense of self-worth and accountability. The support staff includes secretaries, aides and maintenance personnel.

## **Policy on Field Trips**

On occasion, the students of Our Lady of Sorrows School will participate in a field trip for the educational enrichment of their curriculum. Participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right. Any inappropriate behavior or lack of serious approach toward academic responsibilities (i.e. homework, class participation, etc.) on a regular basis may prohibit the student from attending the field trip. The student will still be required to report to school. No student may participate in a field trip unless a signed parent/guardian permission slip for the specific event is submitted to the school prior to the day of the trip. The permission slip is provided by the school. Dress code for each trip will also be listed on the permission slip.

## **Sacramental**

It is our aim to deepen the student's appreciation and love of the Mass. Liturgy and Eucharist are celebrated monthly at 9:30am and holy days with the entire school. Liturgies are prepared by the faculty, priests and students working together.

Penitential Services are celebrated periodically for Grades 3-8.

First Communion is celebrated as a Parish Family. Dates and times are determined by the Director of Religious Education and the Parish Priests.

## **Standardized Testing**

Students in Grades 1-7 are administered the CTB McGraw-Hill Terra Nova each year in the spring. The schools of the Archdiocese of Newark also administer a writing assessment for grades 4 and 7 within the first half of the school year.

Results of the standardized testing are distributed to parents and scheduled conferences are available with individual teachers.

## **Textbooks**

Some textbooks are on loan from the State of New Jersey. These are important for the student's use and should be cared for. Textbooks should be properly covered at all times; please do not use contact paper to cover textbooks, or tape of any kind on the textbook itself. There is no drawing or doodling in any schoolbook. *Any lost or damaged books must be replaced and the cost of the book must be made promptly.*

All students are required to have a book bag or backpack to carry all school materials on a daily basis.

## Library

Library books that are lost or destroyed must be replaced. The minimum amount of \$26.00 will be collected for each lost or destroyed book.

## Personal Grooming

Make-up, nail polish, and excessive jewelry are not permitted. Small earrings, for pierced ears, are allowed. Loops or large dangling earrings are not permitted for safety reasons. Boys may not wear earrings.

Hair is to be kept neat and clean and the administration reserves the right for final approval of haircut styles.

## Uniforms

The idea of a uniform is that all students wear the same articles of clothing. Our Lady of Sorrows School uniform policy is very liberal, however students who do not comply with the guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action.

Summer Uniforms Grades 6 – 8  
First Day of School to October 1<sup>st</sup>  
May 1<sup>st</sup> to Last Day of School

Girls

OLS knit polo shirt  
plaid kilt  
white or navy knee socks  
Black, navy or dark brown FLAT shoes  
(no backless shoes)

Boys

OLS knit polo shirt  
Navy pants with belt  
white or navy crew socks  
Black, navy or dark brown shoes

Summer Uniforms Grades K – 5  
First Day of School to October 1<sup>st</sup>  
May 1<sup>st</sup> to Last Day of School

Girls

OLS knit polo shirt  
navy cuffed shorts with belt or  
jumper with short sleeve peter pan collar shirt  
white or navy knee socks  
Black, navy or dark brown FLAT shoes  
(no backless shoes)

Boys

OLS knit polo shirt  
navy cuffed shorts with belt  
white or navy crew socks  
Black, navy or dark brown shoes

Gym Uniform for All Grades

OLS T-shirt  
OLS Gym shorts or OLS sweat pants  
OLS sweatshirt  
Sneakers

Regular Uniforms Grades 6-8

October 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>

Girls

White long or short sleeve Oxford shirt  
Plaid kilt  
OLS navy vest or  
OLS navy long sleeved v-neck sweater  
White or navy knee socks/opaque tights  
Black, navy or dark brown FLAT shoes  
(no boots or backless shoes)

Boys

White long or short sleeve Oxford shirt  
Navy pants with belt  
OLS navy pattern tie  
OLS gray vest or  
OLS gray long sleeved v-neck sweater  
Black, navy or dark brown shoes  
(no boots)

Regular Uniforms Grades K-5

October 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>

Girls

White long or short sleeve peter pan collared shirt  
Plaid belted tunic  
OLS Navy cardigan (optional)  
White or navy knee socks/opaque tights  
Black, navy or dark brown FLAT shoes  
(no boots or backless shoes)

Boys

White long or short sleeve Oxford shirt  
Navy pants with belt  
OLS navy pattern tie  
OLS gray vest or  
OLS gray long sleeved v-neck sweater  
Black, navy or dark brown shoes  
(no boots)

Optional Winter Uniform for Girls – Grades K-8

Navy pants and belt (from the uniform company)  
Pants may be worn beginning December 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>

In order to maintain uniformity in appearance and quality, all uniform items (except socks and shoes) must be purchased from Flynn & O'Hara.

This can be done in one of two ways:

- Visiting the store located at 317 Rt. 46 East, Parsippany, N.J.  
Call for store hours 973-882-0833
- Through their website [www.flynnohara.com](http://www.flynnohara.com)

## **Tag Days**

Certain days are designated as Out of Uniform days. It is expected that students always maintain the type of appearance and personal hygiene not distracting to teachers and other students. Parents in all cases must assure that their children wear attire befitting the values and morals of a Catholic School. Children who do not adhere to the principal's Tag day guidelines will not be able to participate in future Tag days.

## **Parental Organizations**

Our Lady of Sorrows School relies on the cooperation of parents and guardians, through organizations such as Caritas, School Advisory Board, Parent Volunteer, and Class Parents to accommodate the daily operation of the school.

## **Student Visitations of High Schools**

Families should contact individual high schools for personal visits to the school. Should such a visit require the student be absent from Our Lady of Sorrows School, an absence note is required and the student must make up all class work, as well as any home assignments, that were missed on the day.

Parents should exercise good judgment, and have their child visit only those high schools they most likely will attend. Students may only attend three freshman potential days (total for Grades 7 & 8), and parents should try to schedule these visits on days that Our Lady of Sorrows School is not in session.

## **Chewing Gum**

Gum chewing is not permitted during school hours.

## **Sports Policy**

Students in grades 5-8 who participate in sports, must abide by the following criteria:

If a student receives two or more D's and/or one or more U's on the report card, he/she will be suspended from participating in any sports competition for a three week period. He/she will, however, be allowed to go to practice. During that three week period, the student and parent need to confer with the teacher and discuss ways to improve the unacceptable grades. Academic assistance will be available after school hours. Teachers will inform the students of their after school hours. It is up to the student to arrange a meeting with the teacher for extra help after school.

At the end of the three week period, the Principal will confer with the teachers to discuss the student's progress. If the student has improved academically during that period, he/she may resume competition. If there is no improvement, the student will be suspended from practice as well as competition until the next report card.

At the time of the three week suspension, a letter will come home with the student explaining the academic situation and it must be returned the next day signed by the parent or the student will not be able to participate in practice.

It is at the discretion of the Principal to suspend any student from school or sports for behavioral issues.

## Section Eight

### Code of Discipline

#### **General Discipline Policy**

A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment at Our Lady of Sorrows School. Students and parents are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. They **MUST** take seriously their obligation to develop lifetime habits of self-control and concern for the well-being of others.

A student who chooses to disrupt the good order of the school or to violate a policy or regulation will have to accept the consequences of those irresponsible choices. Appropriate discipline is within the discretion of the Principal. Accountability for uncooperative, disruptive or unsafe behavior may take any of the following forms: misconduct referrals or warnings, punishment assignments, denial of privileges, detentions, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

Actions which violate the law, threaten or cause harm to other students or staff members, disrupt or impede the welfare and progress of the school community, or bring discredit to the School will not be tolerated. Such actions or other severe violations of School rules may result in immediate expulsion. If a student persists in violating basic obligations of courtesy, consideration, respect, cooperation, or safety, a Pastor/Principal/Parent/Student conference will be scheduled. All subsequent discipline, counseling, consultation and corrective action plans will be viewed as positive Home-School efforts to help the student improve behavior. If these cooperative efforts of parents and school staff prove ineffective, the student will be subject to expulsion or may be denied re-admittance to the School.

All who attend Our Lady of Sorrows School agree to:

- Use appropriate, courteous language: oral, written or gestured
- Respect the belongings, works, and property of others
- Observe classroom rules
- Respect adults and students in school and any related function
- Dress appropriately, according to Catholic morals
- Act with appropriate decorum at all assemblies and outside activities

#### **Disciplinary Guidelines**

The teacher will note infractions of any rules stated in this handbook. Notification to the parents of minor infractions will be up to the discretion of the teacher. In an effort to improve behavior, relevant consequences will be assigned at the time of the misbehavior in order to teach life long self discipline based on respect and dignity.

Breaches of the Code of Discipline are serious and could result in suspension.

The following are unacceptable behaviors at Our Lady of Sorrows School:

- Disrupting the learning process
- Use of foul or inappropriate language – oral or written
- Verbal or physical abuse
- Threatening others, harassment of any kind
- Failure to observe school, classroom, playground, lunchroom and uniform rules

- Theft of, or intentional destruction of school property (monetary compensation must be made)
- Chronic, unexcused absence and/or tardiness from school
- Plagiarism
- Possession of prohibited items:  
Knives, weapons, matches, lighters, fireworks, drugs, tobacco, rubber bands, gum and items deemed dangerous by the supervising teacher.

### **Vandalism**

Vandalism has become an increasing problem in our society today. We define vandalism as the deliberate damaging of property in the school, with a resulting loss of time, money and potential difficulties such as safety violations, lack of respect, etc. After proving accuracy of the charge of vandalism, the following steps will be put into effect:

1. All restitution is to be made by the student and the parent for the damage caused by the vandalism.
2. Where property damage is over \$200.00 the school is expected to notify the local police authorities of the crime which has taken place.
3. In cases when parents/guardians are not cooperative, the case shall be referred to the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese and local police authorities. In such cases, the parents shall be required to withdraw the student from the school. Transcripts cannot be released until appropriate restitution is made.

### **Weapons Policy**

In furtherance of the overall philosophy, goals and objectives of the Catholic educational experience, the Archdiocese of Newark has proposed a policy that expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale or discharge of any weapons or explosive devices in the school, on the school grounds, or at any school sponsored activities. This policy shall apply to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators and other personnel in the school or parish.

The definition of “Weapon” for purposes of this section shall include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchuck stick, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

“Offense” defined – A person commits a misdemeanor of the first degree if he/she possesses a weapon in the building of or on the grounds of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Aggravated assault – A person is guilty of aggravated assault if he attempts to cause intentionally or knowingly causes bodily injury to a teaching staff member, school board member, other employee or student of any elementary parochial school while acting in scope of his or her employment relationship to the school.

Violations of these policies may warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. A disciplinary process will include immediate in-or-out-of-school suspension, pending investigation and resolution. If the student’s infraction does not warrant immediate dismissal, then the parents may be required to sign a probation contract that includes all conditions of the student’s retention at the school. Possible terms of this probation agreement may include professional counseling, participation in a community program addressing youth violence, suspension from extracurricular activities, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the administration of the school or parish program after recommended consultation with the Diocesan office.

## **Drugs**

The term drug includes any alcoholic or malt beverage, any drug listed as a controlled substance, chemical, abused substance or medication for which a prescription is required under law, and/or any substance intended to alter mood or is a health-endangering compound. Examples of the above include, but are not limited to beer, wine, liquor, wine cooler, cocaine, marijuana, chemical solvents, look-alike substances and any capsules or pills not registered with the nurse, annotated within the student's health record and given in accordance with the Diocesan policy for the administration of medication to the student in school.

A student, who at any time, whether in or out of school, is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or mood altering substances or possesses, transfers, sells, or aids in the procurement of alcohol, narcotics, restricted drugs, mood altering substances, health-endangering substances, or any substance shall be subjected to discipline pursuant to the provisions and procedures outlined in the Diocesan policies.

## **Possession**

Students may not have in their possession at school or any school-sponsored activity drugs as defined above. Students may not have on their person or in their possession, nor in their desk any drug or article of drug paraphernalia that is commonly associated with drug uses.

Any violation concerning possession is considered a major infraction of school policy. Any student guilty of this infraction will face severe disciplinary action and is liable for dismissal. In the event of such an occurrence, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. Parents shall be informed and assisted in providing an appropriate response to the situation.
2. A family which refuses to cooperate with the school's program of assistance and disciplinary action shall be required to withdraw the child from school.

**The school reserves the right to search if there is probable or reasonable cause. The school reserves the right to seize any of the above substances. The student's illegal activity shall be reported to the police.**

## **Usage**

Students who are found to be under the influence of a drug at school or any school-sponsored event are in violation of school policy. The same procedure for possession will likewise occur for usage.

The following policy would affect any student whose appearance or behavior indicates the possibility of drug misuse on school property or at a school function:

- The student shall be removed to a protective environment for observation and care until the parents can be contacted to take the pupil home.
- The parents shall be immediately notified of the incident.
- A conference shall be conducted with the parents after the investigation of the incident.
- A medical examination of the pupil may be deemed necessary. If so, a written report of the medical examination shall be furnished to the parent and the Principal by the examining physician within twenty-four hours. If there is a positive diagnosis from the medical examination indicating that the student is under the influence of intoxicating drugs, the student shall be returned to the care of the parents as soon as possible. Attendance at school shall not resume until a written report has been submitted by the physician who has examined the pupil to diagnose drug use. The report shall certify that the pupil is physically and mentally able to return to school.

*Each case involving vandalism/drugs, etc. will be handled on an individual basis.*

## **Sexual Harassment**

Purpose - Our Lady of Sorrows School is firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, Our Lady of Sorrows School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence in the school environment. This policy re-emphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others.

Sexual Harassment – For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment includes the following specific instances: verbal sexual abuse, disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics, pornographic pictures or other literature, or having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities; obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school/parish grounds, continuing and unwanted written and oral communication of a sexual nature directed to another; spreading sexual rumors/innuendos; obscene T-shirts, hats or buttons; touching oneself in front of others; obscene and/or sexually explicit gestures and any other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient. The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute sexual harassment.

Isolated, trivial incidents are not sufficient to constitute harassment and will be handled according to the student behavior code.

Allegations of sexual harassment (as defined above) are to be reported to the Teacher and Principal. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of all allegations. The matter will be kept confidential by all parties involved and every effort will be made to protect the alleged victim from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation.

If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary action will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency and severity of the action, the ages of the offender and the victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred. Possible disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to any or all of the following:

- Verbal warning/reprimand and apology to the victim
- A parent/student/principal conference
- Written warning/reprimand and parent notification entered in the student's file
- Detention or removal from selected school activities and/or extracurricular activities
- Behavior, probation contracts, possibly requiring professional intervention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

## **Defamation**

“The school administrators can punish students who defame others in the school community, whether in school or on the web (i.e. chat rooms, blogs, etc.). Deliberate defamation of others is not consistent with Christian values, and students will be held accountable for intentional harm they cause others.” *(Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, J.D., Ph.D. Director, Education Law Institute, Spalding University, Louisville, Kentucky)*

## Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is a guide for student behavior. Compliance should foster a positive and safe climate for learning and instill self-discipline, motivated by Christian values. Parental cooperation and support is of the utmost importance.

Method for handling behavior that violates the code of conduct:

**Elastic Clause:** Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which may arise, this clause empowers faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior which violates the spirit and philosophy of Our Lady of Sorrows School, even though not specified in this Code of Conduct.

### Disciplinary Infractions

In order to reinforce students' duties, and closely monitor student behavior, we have implemented a Three-Strike disciplinary system. Strikes (demerits) may be issued by any teacher in the school, not just student's classroom teachers.

- Upon receipt of a first demerit, a form will be sent home with your child. This form is to be signed and returned the next day.
- Upon receipt of a second demerit, another note will be sent home with the student, to be signed and returned the next day. This note will remind parents that a third strike will result in automatic suspension.
- Upon receipt of a third demerit the student will receive an automatic 3-day out-of-school suspension. The student is responsible for all work covered during the suspension period.
- The Strikes reset at the start of each Trimester. However, three suspensions in one school year will result in expulsion.

### Suspension/Expulsion

Most serious cases may warrant the following:

- In-school suspension: Student reports to school but is not permitted to participate in class-related activities; assignments are given
- Suspension: Temporary separation from school. The student is responsible for all work covered during the suspension period.
- Expulsion: Permanent separation from school.

Expulsion may be enforced for the following reasons:

- Overt contempt for the Catholic Faith and religious practices
- Possession or sale of items deemed dangerous to the welfare of students
- Deliberate defiance of school policy after imposition of discipline code.

These measures are always used in the best interest of the child and the school, and not just as punishment for unsatisfactory behavior. These actions will be taken only after conference and consultation with concerned parties.

Students who are candidates for expulsion will be granted a conference with their parents, teachers, principal and the pastor. After the conference, if removal from the school seems in order, parents will be given the option of transferring the student to another school, so as to avoid the official expulsion on a student's record. If the parents refuse, the entire matter will be sent to the Diocese and a formal expulsion will appear on the record.

*The rules and regulations in this Handbook are subject to change. These rules and regulations are not all-inclusive. It is the right of the principal, after consultation with the pastor, to make final decisions about an issue/incident that may not be specifically stated in these pages.*

## Section Nine

### Acknowledgement and Receipt

I/we acknowledge receipt of the Handbook containing the policies, rules and regulations for Our Lady of Sorrows School. I/we have read the Handbook or will read it as soon as possible. I/we understand and agree that the Handbook is binding on the students and parents during the current academic year. I/we understand and agree that the administration of the school will have the authority set forth in the Handbook.

I/we understand that the policies, rules and regulations contained in the Handbook are established for the welfare and benefit of all students. I/we understand my responsibility to support the school in the policies it has established, and to see that my child/ren adhere(s) to the rules and regulations set forth in the Handbook.

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Name of Student(s)

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Signature of Student(s)

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

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Date