

# *The Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook*

*Our Lady of Lourdes School  
52 First Street  
Taunton, MA 02780  
Telephone:  
508-822-3746  
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*“All Schools in the Diocese of Fall River are subject to the policies of the Diocese of Fall River. The policy manuals of the Diocese of Fall River replace and supersede any contrary statement of policy, procedures, programs, or practices, including but not limited to, any such statement contained in any handbook or manual prepared by any school in the Diocese of Fall River.”*

*These manuals are available to read at the:  
Catholic Education Center  
423 Highland Avenue  
Fall River, MA 02720*

## **Mission Statement**

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

## **Motto**

Mother Mary Lead us to Jesus

## **Philosophy**

Our Lady of Lourdes School is a Catholic Elementary School serving students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Five, which recognizes the dignity and individuality of each child.

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

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

In our school we are guided by the Holy Spirit in providing for the education of the whole child – spiritually, physically and intellectually and socially.

***Christ is the reason for this school.***

***He is the unseen but every present teacher in its classrooms.***

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

## Admission Policy

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

### **Requirements for Admission**

#### **1. Spiritual**

A definite commitment on the part of parents and children to fulfill the obligation of their faith in attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is required of all Catholics. Other faiths must also participate weekly in the lives of their parishes.

#### **2. Parish/School Support**

Priority is given to students who are members of the Parish of the Annunciation of the Lord. Secondly, students who have siblings attending our school are given preference. Thirdly, children of alumni are considered. After this, children are admitted on a first come basis at registration time.

Parents are required to actively support the school and its fund-raising activities.

#### **3. Scholastic Aptitude**

Any child entering Kindergarten must be 5 years of age by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Entrance exams, Readiness tests, previous report cards, etc. will be used to identify students who can profit from a normal classroom situation.

#### **4. File Requirements**

Birth Certificate

Baptismal Certificate

Immigration form if born outside the country

Certificate of Immunization and physical exam

Signed Permission for use of child's photo

Signed Computer Acceptable Use Policy

## **Tuition**

The payment for tuition and book fees is done in one of two ways. Parents/Guardians wishing to pay in full should do so by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Parents/Guardians wishing to use the budget plan (July-May) must complete a FACTS Automatic Tuition Agreement prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>.

It is imperative that tuition payments be kept up-to-date. Tardy tuition payments are assessed a fee by FACTS. If there is **genuine hardship**, such circumstances should be made know to the principal, where appropriate means of settlement will be found.

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

## **Transportation**

**Students using private transportation should arrive at school by 8:45 the latest.** Any student arriving late must report to the office before going to class. A written excuse is required for tardiness, except when tardiness is due to a late bus.

Students using public transportation, (school buses), should consider this a privilege and comply with the rules and regulations of public safety. Please consult the Bus Rules Sheet sent home in the packet during the first week of school. Parents/Guardians should encourage children to sit quietly at all times when riding the school bus.

**If it is necessary to change buses, permission must be obtained from the Bus Company or Public School Department, not from the school.** A note should be sent to the principal advising of any changes in regular transportation of students. If a child is to be picked up at school by any other than the regular transporter of that child, the school must know in writing, ahead of time that that person will be. No child will be dismissed to any person other than a parent or guardian without written parental consent. As noted earlier, a facsimile request signed by a parent will be accepted.

## **Extended Care Program**

A parent/guardian must fill out an Extended Care Form before Extended Care will be provided. The cost for this care is minimal and will be stated clearly on the form. The hours for this program are: **7:00 a.m. -8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. -5:30 p.m.**

## **Visitors**

All persons coming into the building during the school day should first report to the office. No parent/guardian should go to a child's classroom without permission of the principal. Authorized visitors must sign in at the office upon arrival into the building.

## **Dress Code**

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

## **School Uniforms**

School uniform items can be ordered throughout the year through the school.

## **Gym Uniforms**

**There will be a change with gym uniforms this year (2014).** Students are allowed to wear gym clothes to school the day they have gym class. Students will not be able to change in school during the day. Beginning this year, students must purchase a school gym uniform from Donnelly's. On warmer days, students are allowed to wear gym shorts that are cut to the knee.

## **Daily Schedule Grades PK-5**

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

8:30	Teachers report to their classrooms
8:30-8:50	Students report to class upon arrival
8:50	First Bell ( <b>all cars and walkers must be present</b> )
8:50	Morning Prayer Begins
11:55	Prayers/End of Morning Session
12:40	End of Recess Period
2:50	Closing Prayers

## **Homework**

Homework is assigned to help the student:

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

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

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

These times do not include independent reading times.

Homework is a student's responsibility and not the parents'. However, parents should see to it that the students have a quiet place to study and that they spend time in study.

Whether through negligence or forgetfulness, if a student does not complete homework assignments, he/she will be required to stay after school, on the same day, to complete the assignment. Parents/guardians can pick their child up at 3:30 p.m. at the office.

## **Extra Help**

Each teacher will offer extra help from 3:00-3:30 p.m. one day a week.

## **School Calendar**

A calendar of events will be printed and sent home with your child during the first week of school. Each Tuesday notices and correspondence will go home in your student's communication envelope. At other times, as needed, notices will be sent home with your child, to keep you posted as to upcoming events.

## **Medication**

If a child is required by a physician to take any medication, for any reason whatsoever, a physician's note, along with the medication in its original container, must be brought to the principal's office. Accompanying these items must be a signed consent form from the parent/guardian, giving permission for the medication to be administered. When the school nurse is present, she will administer the medication. At other times, authorized school personnel will do so.

**All medication must be kept in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office unless refrigeration is required. In that case, the medication will be kept in the Faculty Room.**

## **Child Abuse Reporting**

If, in their professional capacity, a teacher, guidance counselor, administrator or any other person receiving compensations from a school to work with or care for students, has a reasonable cause to believe that a student is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse or neglect, he/she shall report the matter immediately to the head of the school. The head of the school shall report the matter to the Superintendent, or his/her designee. The Director of Catholic Social Services, or his/her designee, shall inform the head of school of the reporting responsibilities to the Massachusetts Department of Social Services.

## **Confidentiality**

Student records are confidential. The contents of a student's personal file are available to authorized personnel only. Requests, by parents or legal guardians, to view a student's file must be made to the principal in writing. Twenty-four hour notice is required.

Teachers and staff will keep confidential information entrusted to them, so long as no one's life, health or safety is at stake. Parents will be promptly notified of teacher concerns regarding their child's well being.

In the event of withdrawals or transfers, student records shall be released upon the receipt of a Release of Records Form signed by the parent or guardian.

## **Custody of Children**

If parents of a student are separated or divorced, a copy of the current custody agreement must be submitted to the school. This agreement will be placed in the child's file, and shared with those school personnel who must be made aware of its contents. It is important, for the safety of all children, that the school be kept informed of any changes to custody or visitation agreements, and who may pick up a child.

## **Counseling Opportunities**

We are fortunate to have a licensed counselor available, courtesy of Catholic Social Services. This counselor is on call to assist those students who need temporary help in dealing with emotional difficulties. Parents should realize that this service is not meant to replace therapy for any child who needs it.

## **Rainbows**

The school is a registered Rainbows site, and provides group meetings during the year for those children who are experiencing or have experienced grief in their lives. This could be the result of a separation or divorce of their parents, death of a loved one or an abusive situation. Notices will be sent home regarding enrollment and times of Rainbows meetings.

## **Academic Progress**

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

## **Promotion and Retention**

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

## **Graduation**

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

## **Emergencies**

Emergency Information Forms are mailed home in August. This form must be filled out completely and returned with your child on the first day of school. It is important to include numbers where you can be reached during the day and the name and number of another person we can contact should you be unavailable. Please be sure to notify us immediately if your



address, phone number, or place of employment should change at any time during the year. Up-to-date parent/guardian information is a requirement of the Diocese.

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

### **Attendance**

Parents/guardians and students have the responsibility to be on time for school. Students must be in class on time, and attend all classes, and assigned activities prepared and equipped to learn. If a child is to be absent, parents/guardians are asked to call the school (508-822-3746) prior to 8:30 a.m. but no later than 9:00 a.m. Parents/guardians will be called to check on their child(ren) if no notification has been received. A note explaining the absence or previously arranged dismissal of a child should be presented to the child's homeroom teacher upon his/her return to the classroom. State law required a doctor's certificate if a contagious disease was the cause of the absence. It is suggested that the work missed during a child's absence be made up within a reasonable length of time. This should be discussed with the teachers involved as soon as the child returns to school. A student who is absent from school may not participate in any after-school activities, including sports and the Extended Care Program. There are no bereavement days for students, i.e. excused absences for a loss; a child absent on any type of Take-Your-Child-to-Work-Day is considered absent. After a total of twenty-one (21) days of absence, it will be necessary to evaluate if a student will be able to move to the next grade. Letters of concern will be sent to parents/guardians if a student's absence becomes a concern to the teacher.

### **Tardiness**

Chronic tardiness will result in time missed being made up after school.

### **Dismissals**

Students must bring a written note from home, signed by a parent/guardian, requesting early dismissal, the day before they are to be dismissed. Should an emergency warrant early dismissal, and someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking the child(ren) up from school, a parent/guardian must bring a written note, or fax a signed note to the school stating the reason for dismissal and name the person who will be picking up the child(ren). This person will be asked for photo identification.

### **Appointments**

Medical and Dental appointments, except for genuine emergencies, must be scheduled outside of school time.

## **Vacations**

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

## **No School Announcements**

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

Channel 7	WHDH	Boston
Channel 10	WJAR	Providence
School Reach telephone announcement		

## **Field Trips**

Any school sponsored trip is a privilege given to students, and any student can be denied participation if he/she fails to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements.

Only those students who have submitted proper, Diocesan-generated permission slips, signed by a parent or guardian will be allowed to participate. Phone calls will not be accepted. Notes other than the authorized school form will not be accepted.

## **Parents' Guild**

Any parent/guardian having a child enrolled in our school is automatically a member of the Parents' Guild. At least one parent should make an effort to attend monthly meetings. Notices will be sent.

## **Parish Advisory School Board**

This is an appointed group, which is primarily advisory in capacity. The principal, pastor and development director, along with a council of nine, meet five times yearly to discuss all aspects of the school. Candidates for appointment must be recommended.

## Harassment/Bullying

All individuals in the school community have the right to be free from actions or communications that cause physical, emotional or psychological distress. Any such intentional or careless action or communication that is unwelcome, uninvited or unwanted will not be tolerated. The person inflicting such distress shall be subject to discipline, including but not limited to, suspension, or expulsion.

**“Bullying”** is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

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

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

## Student Conduct

The school shall provide for student discipline procedures. These procedures will be communicated to both students and parents. All students are required to conform to the standards of conduct outlined by the principal and each classroom teacher. **The Discipline Code first and foremost recognizes respect for the dignity of all.** Each teacher has established an Assertive Discipline Plan, which has been approved by the principal.

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

1. Gum chewing
2. Disrespect for school property
3. Disrespect for the property of others
4. Foul language
5. Fighting
6. Disrespect to school personnel
7. Inappropriate behavior on the school bus
8. Inappropriate behavior in the cafeteria
9. Threats of violence
10. Harassment in any form including any sexual harassment/remarks made to fellow students, teachers or administration.

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

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

It is to be noted that a student is an Our Lady of Lourdes student at all times. A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, and that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, may be disciplined by school officials.

### **Suspension**

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

## **Expulsion**

The principal may expel a student involved in any incident or circumstance that is deemed harmful or detrimental to any individual or to the school, especially when the incident or circumstance occurs on school property or at any school-sponsored or school-related event. Examples of incidences that may subject a student to expulsion include, but are not limited to:

1. Use, possession, giving or selling of illegal drugs or alcohol
2. Possession of a dangerous weapon on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related event
3. A physical assault on a faculty or staff member or other student
4. Student involvement with a threat to school safety
5. Chronic disregard for school rules and policies

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

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

Revised: September, 2014

September, 2014

Dear Parents/Guardians,

After you have read this year's handbook, please fill out the form below and return it to your child's teacher.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Sandra Drummey

Principal



Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mrs. Drummey,

I/We have read the Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook for the school year 2014-2015 and have accepted and agreed to all policies and procedures as stated therein.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Please list your child/children's name(s) and grade(s):

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

During the year, we will be sending pictures of school events to the newspapers, and posting pictures on our website. Please indicate whether you want your child(ren's) pictures to be used for this purpose.

YES, my/our child(ren's) pictures may be sent to the newspapers or used in any school communication.

NO, my/our child(ren's) pictures may not be sent to the newspapers or used in any school communication.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature