

Our Lady of the Prairie

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

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INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Lady of the Prairie School is dedicated to embracing the whole child by guiding them spiritually, socially, emotionally, and academically. Our school follows the principles of the Roman Catholic faith and instills its core values in a nurturing, multiage classroom environment where all students thrive in the Light of Christ.

PHILOSOPHY

"Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic School" (The Catholic School #34)

Following this belief, Our Lady of the Prairie is committed to the education of the whole person, intellectually, emotionally, morally, aesthetically, and physically, in response to the gospel of Jesus as it comes to us through scripture and the tradition of the Catholic Church.

By providing sound Christian leadership, competent teaching, a progressive curriculum, and creative learning programs, Our Lady of the Prairie seeks to address the individual needs of its students, encourage them to academic and moral excellence, prepare them to assume their proper roles in the Church and American society, and develop in them a respect for all peoples and cultures.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our Lady of the Prairie School will strive:

- 1. To develop our Catholic faith through common worship and prayer, and to study scripture, Catholic doctrine and social teachings.*
- 2. To work closely with parents/guardians in the education of their children.*
- 3. To help students develop a love of learning, and the power to think constructively and reason independently.*
- 4. To lead students to a mastery of skills in specific subject areas.*
- 5. To foster a love of God, all human life, family, country, and the natural world.*
- 6. To offer students leadership and guidance in developing a responsible moral life.*
- 7. To encourage students to recognize and enhance individual abilities.*
- 8. To provide opportunities for students to give witness to their Christian faith by acts of service to others.*
- 9. To lead students to respect themselves and others, as well as understand and appreciate other cultures and peoples.*

Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic School

Code of Conduct

We are dedicated to fulfilling our Mission and providing a safe and respectful environment for all who enter Our Lady of the Prairie school. To that end, we have established the following Code of Conduct.

Guiding Principles

All members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity, especially persons in positions of authority.

Members of the school community will use non-violent means to resolve conflict.

The school learning environments must be safe, orderly, positive and respectful. They must be free from abuse, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, hateful words and deeds, and physical violence in any form.

Responsibility

Responsibility creates a community of respectful individuals. It is important to remember that you control your own actions. You choose to do right.

Respect for the Rights and Property of Others

You are expected to be courteous to and considerate of everyone and compassionate to those in need. Verbal or physical harassment is not acceptable. Everyone has the right to be safe and feel safe in their school. We believe in the dignity of each person who is created in the image and likeness of God. This includes respecting property by caring for school equipment and the personal property of classmates, teachers, and all other staff.

Respect for Our School Community

We are all expected to comply with the rules and expectations of the school as they are outlined in our Parent/Student Handbook.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students:

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behavior.

Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when students:

- * come to school prepared, on time and ready to learn
- * show respect for themselves, and for others, especially persons in positions of authority
 - * do not bring anything to school that may compromise the safety of others
 - * follow established rules and take responsibility for their own action
 - * comply with the school's uniform

Parents:

Students benefit when parents show an active interest in the education of their children..Parents have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment.

- * communicate regularly with teachers
- * help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared
- * ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- * promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival
- * become familiar with this Code of Conduct and the school rules
- * encourage their child to follow school rules

Staff:

Teachers and school staff, under the leadership of the Principal and Pastor, maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behavior. As role models and followers of Christ, staff uphold these high standards when they:

- * help students work to their full potential and develop their self-worth
- * communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents, as appropriate
- * maintain consistent standards of behavior for all students

- * demonstrate respect for all students, staff and parents
- * prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship

Administration:

The Principal, as a school leader, has a duty to manage the operations of the school. They provide leadership by:

- * demonstrating care and commitment to academic excellence and a safe teaching, learning and working environment
- * holding everyone under their authority accountable for their behavior and actions
- * communicating regularly and meaningfully with members of and stakeholders in their school community
- * assisting staff in addressing the individual needs of each student

All students, parents, and staff will follow the policies outlined in the Parent/Student handbook to ensure that the school environment is safe, orderly and positive.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

Our Lady of the Prairie is accredited by the Minnesota Non-public School Accrediting Association and annual reports are submitted to this agency in order to meet Association standards. A renewal visit is made by MNSAA to the school every seven years. Curriculum evaluation is an on-going process at our school. Programs are selected after careful study and consultation on the part of staff.

PRE K LICENSURE

Our PreK program is licensed by the Department of Human Services for the State of Minnesota.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

PARENTAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/guardians are informed of the programs, regulations, and policies of the school through this document. In assisting your child, we require the following:

1. Familiarity with information contained in handbooks and other newsletters from the school.
2. Inform the school by phone of a student illness or absence.
3. Inform the school in writing of:
 - a. student illness or absence – upon return after three days of absenteeism
 - b. parental status and custodial constraints
 - c. change in transportation routine
 - d. change in address, phone, emergency contact, childcare, etc.
 - e. arrangement that might affect communication with the school
4. Meet financial obligation of tuition, fees, fundraising assessments or other accounts that apply.
5. Comply with:
 - a. policies, procedures and guidelines
 - b. goals and objectives of the Catholic schools as identified in this parent/student handbook
6. Support through words and action the mission of Catholic Education and Our Lady of the Prairie School.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

The school's office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. If no one answers the phone, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

Messages may also be left before or after school hours.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

It is Our Lady of the Prairie's policy that it will adhere to all State of Minnesota regulations concerning school attendance. All work missed by students who were absent must be made up two days after returning to school. Excessive absences often result in poor schoolwork. When an absence is necessary these steps are to be followed:

1. Parent/guardian will call the school each morning of a student's absence by 8:00 a.m.
2. All homework should be requested before morning classes begin and should be picked up no later than 3:00 p.m.
3. Student will make immediate plans to do all make-up work due to absence upon return to school. Two days to complete the work will be allowed for each school day missed.

4. If absence is due to work, travel, or some other reason, parent/guardian should notify the school prior to the absence. Work may be issued ahead of time for students who anticipate being out of school.

Minnesota truancy law states that any elementary school child missing three full days without a valid excuse, such as that from a doctor, is considered truant. If a middle school or junior high school student misses three or more class periods on three days, he or she is considered truant.

A "habitual" truant means a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days. The names of truant children must be referred to the designated public school official.

Children arriving late must report to the school office. Excessive tardiness (more than three times per month) will result in parent/guardian being contacted.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES

Make-Up Work

It is the student's obligation to procure and complete work missed during an absence. If homework is to be picked up, please inform teachers in the morning who will come for the homework. Teachers will have assignments ready for pick-up after the regular school day unless otherwise requested. Make-up work may be either picked up or dropped off during our regular school hours (8:00 am – 3:00 p.m.).

ILLNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

If a student becomes ill during the school day parents/guardians will be contacted. The student should be picked up within ½ hour of notification. If parents/guardians are unable to come for the student, they must make arrangements for a relative or other authorized person to pick up the student in the school office within the ½ hour of reporting.

TARDINESS

Students who arrive after 8:20 a.m. are considered tardy and will be expected to present a suitable excuse to the office. Continued tardiness will be referred to the principal who will then follow up with the parents/guardians. **Ten tardies in one quarter equals one absence.**

SCHOOL CLOSING (emergency or inclement weather)

In case of emergency or severe weather, please watch your local television stations for school closings. If you have registered with infinite campus, you will receive an instant alert notification from them. No announcement means that school is in session. It is the rule that *Our Lady of the Prairie School is closed if the local public school district is closed because of severe weather conditions.* Please notify the school of changed bussing/pickup plans for your child if school closes early.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

1. Arrival time: 8:00 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. Dismissal: 3:05 p.m.
2. Entrances – south vestibule entrance for bus arrival and dismissal and North vestibule entrance for parent drop off and pick up.

VISITORS

All parents/guardians or visitors must check in at the office before going to a classroom. Parents/guardians and visitors are welcome for open houses, special programs, or observations, and are encouraged to attend. Visitors who wish to observe classrooms must check in at the school office before going to the classroom.

Persons not reporting to the school office will be considered trespassers and may be reported to the local authorities.

TELEPHONE USAGE

Students may use the office telephone to call home to make arrangements to have a parent/guardian bring forgotten band instruments, books, assignments, etc. Messages may be left in the school office if it is necessary to contact either a student or teacher.

VALUABLES

School insurance does not cover loss of personal possessions; therefore students are to refrain from bringing phones or other electronics to school.

Toys, trading cards, etc. are best kept at home. Teacher may take away such items if they are a distraction.

MONEY

When money is sent to school, it should be placed in an envelope and labeled with the student's name, grade, and the purpose for the money.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost items will be kept at the front desk. Unclaimed items will be donated to the thrift shop or put into the school swap closet.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

PTA will provide some of the school supplies. Parents/guardians will provide the school supplies designated each year for families. Additional lists to go home when supplies are running low.

SIXTH GRADE GRADUATION

Sixth grade graduation is a culmination of the strong academic program. Students are eligible for graduation if:

1. They have received passing grades (C- or better) for two or more quarters in each core subject area.
2. They have worked up to their ability and have shown a desire to learn.
3. All tuition and fundraising assessment fees are paid in full. Report cards and diplomas will not be issued until all accounts are paid in full.

Those failing to meet the academic requirements will receive a certificate of attendance rather than a certificate of graduation at the graduation ceremony.

At the discretion of the principal, students may be required to attend summer school/or work with a tutor to improve in a particular subject area or to complete unsatisfactory work before they are issued a diploma. Parents/guardians should be notified as soon as possible that their child may not graduate. The school will work with the student and parents/guardians in an effort to achieve graduation status.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Promotion/retention will be based on academic achievement and physical, emotional, psychological and developmental maturity. In the case of retention, parents/guardians will be notified of their child's situation as soon as possible. If a recommendation is made to retain a child and parents/guardians reject it, the parents/guardians sign a written acknowledgment of the schools recommendation. That acknowledgment shall serve to release the school from any responsibility for failure to follow the schools recommendation. Further discussion will focus on OLP's ability to meet the need of a child not retained.

GRADING (QUARTERLY SYSTEM)

The following system is followed in grades 4 - 6. Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade will use checklists, portfolios, oral reporting, and/or conferences to report on children's progress. As appropriate, letter grades may be used for some areas before grade four. Portfolios, check lists, oral reporting and/or conferences may likewise be used when appropriate in grades 4 - 6.

A	- 100 - 95
A-	- 90 - 94
B+	- 87 - 89
B	- 84 - 86
B-	- 80 - 83
C+	- 77 - 79
C	- 74 - 76
C-	- 70 - 73
D+	- 67 - 69
D	- 64 - 66

D- - 60 - 63
F - < 59

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

Students are tested for achievement through the NWEA MAP Assessment Program adopted by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The main purpose for testing is to help with curriculum planning. Students in grades K thru 6 will be tested annually, three times each year. Parents/guardians will be notified of the test results by a computerized report.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The school has established ways of communicating with the parents/ guardians of its students in order to increase the understanding of the school's mission, programs, and goals in general. The following means of communication are used to share information with parents/guardians concerning the functions of the school and progress of their child(ren).

Parent/Student Handbook

The Parent/Student Handbook is issued each fall via the school website. Acknowledgement of the handbook must be by each family. Document for signature is distributed each fall at the back-to-school picnic.

Communication Folders

Communication folders are sent back and forth daily with students. Parents and teachers may use this as a way of communicating in addition to emails.

Report Cards

Report Cards/Progress Reports are issued at the end of each quarter. Reports are sent at mid-quarter to parents/guardians whose child(ren) is/are performing on a less than satisfactory level.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in the Fall and Spring. A parent/guardian and/or teacher may request a special conference at any time as the need arises.

Communication Procedure

To help with the lines of communication between teachers and parents/guardians, the following actions should be taken:

- A. If the parent/guardian has a concern about what is happening in the classroom, please make an appointment with the teacher.
- B. If you have met with the teacher and are not satisfied, then make an appointment with the principal. At that time, a meeting with the teacher, student, principal and parents/guardians may be called.

If you are still not satisfied with the results please refer to the Grievance Policy in the School Policies Section of this handbook.

SCHOOL RECORDS

AVAILABILITY

Parents/guardians may ask to review the contents of records or data on their child. Any or all of the following defines “Records or data”:

1. identifying data
2. academic work completed
3. level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores)
4. attendance data
5. scores on standardized testing
6. health data (separate records kept in health file)
7. family background information
8. teacher or counselor ratings and observation
9. verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns

In accordance with state and federal laws, parents/guardians are entitled to see their child(ren)'s records. An appointment with the principal should be made in advance. The principal is to respond to the request in a reasonable amount of time.

TRANSFER OF RECORDS

Records to be transferred upon written request.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The formal study of the Catholic religion, as well as curriculum that reflects Catholic values and tradition, are integral parts of our total education. It is Our Lady of the Prairie's school policy that all students, including non-Catholics, attend religious instruction and liturgies. Students participate in religion classes.

Students at Our Lady of the Prairie take turns assisting with the school Mass (with the exception of the first one of the school year, planned by the teachers). Parents/guardians are invited to attend this school Mass whenever their schedules permit. On holy days of obligation, the students attend Mass.

SERVICES

Hot Lunch Program

Hot lunch is provided by the Taher lunch program at the cost of the parents, as long as enough volunteers are available to carry out the program.

Title I (formerly Chapter I)

The purpose of Title I is to provide assistance to state and local education agencies to meet the needs of children in the areas of math and reading. Working with the classroom teacher, the building Title I contact teacher or non-public school proctor identifies students and schedules them for appropriate, consistent Title I services.

Special Education

The special needs of students in the non-public school are addressed through the public school district in three ways:

1. Classroom teachers see the needs of their students and consult with the Special Education teacher assigned to their building. Interventions may be suggested to meet the needs of the students. The needs may be in the areas of academic, behavior, health, or motor skills.
2. If the interventions are not successful, the student may be referred for assessment by either the school or the parent/guardian. If the school initiates the assessment, written parental/guardian permission will be required. Once the assessment is complete a meeting is set up to report on the results and possibly develop an Individual Educational Plan (IEP).
3. The IEP may be written with the goals to help improve the areas of need. The services may be direct or indirect. Services will be done onsite. If services are done offsite, transportation is provided by the public school.

School Pictures

Individual pictures are taken each year. Notification of this will be given well in advance of the photography session.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are part of the educational program. These trips are designed to support the curriculum and introduce the students to community resources and have an educational purpose and outcome. Students are expected to participate in field trips and parent/guardian will be notified of the scheduled field trips.

Insurance regulations of the Archdiocese require the use of the parent/guardian authorization form EACH TIME the students participate in a field trip. Failure to return the form means that the student may not go on the field trip and must stay at school.

Whenever possible, field trip participants travel by bus. Should it be necessary to use transportation provided by parents in private vehicles, parent/guardian will be notified. All private vehicles used to transport students must have an approved background check on file.

GUEST SPEAKERS/ASSEMBLIES

Throughout the year, assemblies are held with invited resource guests to enhance the students' learning opportunities. Guest speakers invited and topics discussed will be consistent with the mission, philosophy, and objectives of the school.

HOMEWORK

Homework refers to tasks that the student is assigned to do on his/her own time after school hours. Homework assignments serve as a means of providing a bond of common effort between parent/guardian, child, and teacher. In order for homework to be effective, each participant—teacher, student, and parent/guardian—must understand and be committed to carrying out his/her responsibility. If any of the three (parent/guardian, teacher, student) do not fulfill their responsibilities, then the positive effects of homework will be reduced and may cause a negative impact on the student's learning.

Homework Responsibilities of Teachers

1. Communicate to students and parents/guardians homework goals and expectations.
 - a. Set clear and concise expectations concerning assigning, returning, and evaluating homework.
 - b. Coordinate homework assignments with other teachers with whom students work, and who may assign homework.
2. Assign appropriate homework according to students' needs.

Homework Responsibilities of Students

1. Know and understand the purpose of the homework assignment.
 - a. Responsible for copying assignments into assignment notebook, understanding directions, and knowing what is required for completion of the assignment.
 - b. Responsible for completing and returning assignments.
2. Understand when some assignments are to be completed independently, others as a team effort.
3. Complete assignments neatly and do quality work.

Homework Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

4. Maintain a positive attitude towards learning and the value of homework.
 - a. Be aware of the homework policy and individual teacher requirements.
 - b. Help your child find a study area that is quiet and relatively free of distractions.
5. Be patient with your child and praise him/her for any effort made.

6. If the child has trouble understanding directions, help her/him with explanations.
7. Look over the assignment to affirm completion and quality. Praise your child.
8. Support the teacher and the child. Get both sides of a story before making a judgment.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Our Lady of the Prairie School Discipline Policy

Appropriate behavior is expected of every student at Our Lady of the Prairie School. Students who are courteous and considerate of others seldom have conflicts with teachers or other students. Along with the right to learn in a safe environment, each student has certain responsibilities. Those responsibilities include knowing and following those rules and the consequences for not following those rules are outlined below.

School Rules: Level I

- Electronic devices are to be turned off and kept in backpacks when school is in session.
- Verbal harassment / taunting of other students or adults will not be tolerated.
- Continual disruption of classes or activities will not be tolerated. Respect for adults and other students is expected at all times.
- Physical harassment such as pushing, shoving, bullying, etc. of other students or adults will not be tolerated. Students shall keep their hands, feet, and foreign objects to themselves.
- A student cannot leave parish grounds without permission from the principal, coordinator, or pastor.
- Rude, abusive, disrespectful, and inappropriate language will not be tolerated whether it is intended towards someone or not.
- Students should be in class, not in areas where they do not belong.
- Candy and snacks are permitted at snack time only.
- Cheating, plagiarism, and forgery will not be tolerated.

Consequences for a Level I offense will be as follows:

1. 1st offense will result in a verbal warning.
2. 2nd offense may result in a meeting with the principal. An email will be sent home and must be acknowledged by the parent or guardian following day for re-admittance into class.
3. Two referrals may result in a mandatory meeting between the pastor, principal, student and parents before the child is readmitted to class.
4. Further infractions may result in the student being expelled from the program and further class placement to be determined.

School Rules: Level 2

- Stealing, damaging or defacing parish property or another student's property will not be tolerated.
- Fighting that result in personal injury will not be allowed. There will be no throwing of stone, ice chunks, etc.
- Firecrackers, other minor explosive devices, lighters, matches, spraying devices, etc. will not be allowed on parish grounds.
- Look – alike weapons will not be allowed on parish grounds.

Consequences for a Level 2 offense will be as follows:

1. 1st offense may result in a meeting with the principal. An email will be sent home and must be acknowledged by the parent or guardian following day for re-admittance into class.
2. 2nd offense may result in a mandatory meeting between the pastor, principal, student and parents before the child is readmitted to class.

3. Further infractions may result in the student being expelled from the program and further class placement to be determined.

School Rules: Level 3

State laws and school policy prohibit students from the use, evidence of use, possession, or transfer of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs or substances on parish grounds or at parish sponsored activities.

Consequences for a Level 3 offense will be as follows:

The local law enforcement agency will be contacted immediately for any Level 3 offense. An offense at this level is a criminal offense, and the local law enforcement officials will deal with the student involved. The student's parents will also be notified.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT CHILD ABUSE

POLICY:

- * Each school shall maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and child abuse.
- * It shall be a violation of this policy to harass another through conduct or communication.
- * It shall be violation of this policy to abuse a child physically, sexually, or verbally.

This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the school board, parents, vendors, volunteers, coaches, guests, and others who act on our behalf. It applies whenever and wherever school takes place. Anyone who violates this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include separation from the school and /or catechetical program.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT: *Harassment* is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance, or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment. The basis for harassment may be any protected class, including age, creed, color, disability, national origin, race, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

One particular category of harassment, *sexual harassment*, consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with an individual's employment or education, or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive working or learning environment. It also includes situations where submission to such behavior affects decisions made about the individual's employment or education. Sexual harassment may be directed to members of the same or opposite sex.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- * Teasing or joking of a sexual nature, sexual name calling, making references to past or present sexual activity, spreading sexual rumors, or making derogatory or dehumanizing sexual remarks
- * Subtle pressure for sexual activity
- * Intentional brushing against a person's body
- * Display of offensive pictures, posters, or other graphics
- * Leering, inappropriate patting or pinching, and other forms of unwelcome touching

- * Otherwise creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment

PROCEDURES IN CASES OF SEXUAL OR PROTECTED CLASS HARASSMENT:

Any member of the school and/or catechetical program community who experiences or witnesses sexual or protected class harassment is encouraged to deal with the situation immediately by politely but firmly advising those involved that the behavior is inappropriate and should stop. However, if the individual does not wish to deal with the problem directly or if a request to stop is not respected, he or she should report the incident to an appropriate official (principal or in the case of a complaint against the principal to the pastor).

The principal will assume responsibility for investigation of all complaints, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual or protected class harassment. Based on the investigation, appropriate action, including but not limited to counseling, disciplinary warnings, or other disciplinary actions, will be taken. An investigative report documenting interviews, conclusions and recommendations will be completed.

The complainant, the alleged harasser and their parents (if either is a minor) will be advised of the outcome of the investigation, preferably in writing. The alleged harasser will be warned, preferably in writing, that retaliation or intimidation directed towards anyone who makes a complaint or assists in the investigatory process will not be tolerated. The complainant should be invited to report recurrences or retaliation, and the situation monitored as the principal or director deems appropriate.

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE: *Child abuse* consists of acts and threatened acts, which are physical, sexual, or verbal in nature.

- * *Physical child abuse* means physical injury inflicted or threatened by a person responsible for a child's care in a school or catechetical program. Examples include hitting, pushing, and shaking a student.
- * *Sexual child abuse* means intentional physical contact or threatened contact with a student, which is sexual in nature. It also includes comments and actions, which the student perceives as having a sexual meaning or purpose.
- * *Verbal child abuse* means a mental injury to a child's psychological capacity or emotional stability as seen by observable or substantial impairment of the child.

PROCEDURE IN CASES OF CHILD ABUSE: Any member of the school who experiences or witnesses any type of child abuse is encouraged to deal with the situation immediately by politely but firmly advising those involved that the behavior is inappropriate and should stop. However, if the individual does not wish to deal with the problem directly or if a request to stop is not respected, he or she should report the incident to an appropriate official (principal/director of catechesis, or in the case of a complaint against the principal or the director, to the Pastor).

If a teacher or other professional (including a professional's delegate) has reason to believe that a student may have been the victim of abuse in a school, he or she is required to make a direct and immediate report to local police or welfare authorities. Anyone making such a report is requested to advise the principal immediately.

The principal will assume responsibility for investigation of all complaints of child abuse, whether formal or informal, verbal or written. Based on the investigation, appropriate action,

including but not limited to counseling, disciplinary warnings, or other disciplinary actions, will be taken. An investigative report documenting interviews, conclusions, and recommendations will be completed.

The student and his or her parents, and the alleged abuser will be advised of the outcome of the investigation, preferably in writing. The alleged abuser will be warned, preferably in writing, that retaliation or intimidation directed towards anyone that makes a complaint or assists in the investigatory process will not be tolerated. The student should be invited to report recurrences or retaliation, and the situation monitored as the principal deems appropriate.

Bullying Policy

Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic School strives to maintain a safe and welcoming environment for every student in our community. Bullying behavior negatively affects our community and each member in it and is therefore unacceptable. Any student found bullying another student, as defined by school staff and administration, will be subject to appropriate action. Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Repeated physical abuse including hitting, kicking, pushing
- Repeated teasing, name calling, harassing, taunting and threatening
- Repeated cyber bullying including the use of e-mails, text messages, instant messages, and websites

Based on the information gathered by school staff or administration, appropriate action will be taken. The appropriate action may include, but is not limited to:

- Parents will be contacted by the student, teacher, and/or administrator
- A group conference with student, teacher and/or administrator
- Detention
- Suspension

HEALTH/SAFETY

Emergency Information

An emergency information form on each student is sent home at the beginning of each year to be filled in and signed by the parent/guardian. If changes occur during the year, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school in writing or by phone.

Health Records

Health records are required for each student. It is recommended that the student have a physical before entering kindergarten or first grade. The State of Minnesota requires immunizations to be up to date.

Immunizations

Our Lady of the Prairie's School follows the requirements of the Minnesota School Immunization Law, (Minnesota Statutes Section 123.70).

All immunization dates are to be submitted to the school during the first two weeks of the school's present school year. Parent/guardian is responsible for providing this information in writing to the school office, and to include additional immunizations each year as they are administered to the student by the family's physician.

Medication During a School Day (Minnesota Statute 126.202)

A written statement is required of the parent/guardian and physician who requests and authorizes the giving of medication in the dosage prescribed by the physician, thereby releasing school personnel from liability should reactions result from the medication.

Drugs or medicines must be in a container with a label prepared by a pharmacist or original packaging. Administration of the medication during school hours shall be by qualified personnel and in a manner consistent with instructions on the label.

Aspirin and similar over-the-counter medications should be considered the same as prescription medication.

Health Screening

Annual vision and hearing, examinations are conducted by public school personnel for students each school year.

Accident/Injury/Medical/Insurance

The school does not have insurance to cover medical or dental expenses related to injuries or accidents that occur at the school. Parent(s) personal medical/dental insurance coverage will be the primary insurance used for any injury.

Reporting of Child Abuse/Neglect

The staff members of the school are legally required to follow the requirements of Minnesota law pertaining to reporting child neglect and/or abuse which may be summarized as follows:

Staff members are required to report a suspected case of child abuse/neglect to the local law enforcement agency or social service agency. This must be done if they know of or have reason to believe there is abuse or neglect presently or has been within the past three years. A written report must be filed within 72 hours of the verbal report.

Neglect is defined as failure to provide food, clothing, and shelter or medical care and prenatal exposure to controlled substance abuse can be physical or sexual abuse, or emotional maltreatment

SCHOOL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Our Lady of the Prairie has established the following procedures regarding school emergencies:

Lockdown Drills – There will be five lockdown drills each school year.

Fire Drills - There will be five fire drills each school year.

Hazardous Spills / Bomb Threat – The same procedures for evacuating the building will be followed as used in fire drills. Students will not be permitted to return to the building until an official has certified the building as safe.

Tornado Drills – A Tornado drill is held in the Spring.

INSIDE PROCEDURES – The students and teachers are to proceed to the shelter area without talking. Once they are in place, they should kneel down facing the wall and place their hands over the base of their heads to protect their neck and heads.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES – When using the Holy Childhood building for library, students should proceed to the room at the bottom of the basement stairs. Once in place, they should kneel down facing the wall as stated above.

OUTSIDE PROCEDURES – If students are outside, a designated person will blow a whistle blast three times to alert students and staff to seek emergency shelter if possible. Stay away from the building, trees, and power lines.

Note: If there is a tornado warning issued by the National Weather Service, the Civil Defense alarm for the area will sound. Then follow the tornado drill procedures listed above.

SCHOOL POLICIES

GENERAL ADMISSION

Non-Discrimination Policy:

It is the policy of Our Lady of the Prairie School to comply with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, to the end that no person(s) shall be denied or excluded from enrollment or participation in any educational program or activity operated by the school on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability.

Every local effort should be made to provide each qualifying Catholic child the opportunity to attend a Catholic school regardless of the financial situation of the family. Families should seek the advice of the principal if a financial problem arises.

Admission Priority:

Students are accepted in the following priority:

1. *All students presently attending the school.*
2. *New students who are brothers and sisters of students in the school.*
3. *New students who once had brothers and sisters in the school.*
4. *Students on a first year registration in school who are members of the parish.*
5. *New students who have transferred from another Catholic school and are members of the parish.*
6. *Students who are not members of the school but are members of another Catholic parish.*
7. *Students applying for transfer to the school who are non-Catholics.*
8. *Open registration.*

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists will be established when grades are filled. The decision to open another classroom will be made at a later date by the Board of Education.

Entrance to 3K, 4K and Kindergarten

Our Lady of the Prairie School requires children who enter 3K to be three years old, children who enter 4K to be four years old and children who enter kindergarten to be five years old by September 1 of the year in which they will enroll.

Early Kindergarten Admittance at Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic School:

Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic School has adopted an Early Kindergarten Admittance policy that allows children who are not yet 5 as of September 1 of that fall to enroll in OLP Kindergarten. All families considering this option currently enrolled in OLP preschool must notify the preschool and kindergarten teachers. The preschool teacher will make a recommendation for early admittance at the final spring conference to the family. The preschool teacher will meet with the kindergarten teacher and share the conference results of the child with the teacher. The kindergarten teacher will meet with the child to review readiness skills. Upon agreement, a child may be recommended for early admittance. If the child does not attend the OLP preschool, they must follow the procedures for the Belle Plaine Public School early admittance and the Minnesota Department of Education policies at: <http://www.education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/Kindergarten/index.html>.

TRANSPORTATION

Role of the Public School District

The local public school district handles bus arrangements. Bus transportation is a privilege as well. The students must conduct themselves properly and respect the rights of others. The school bus driver is the authority on the bus and has been directed to maintain order to insure the safety of passengers. Therefore, parents/guardians and students need to support the rules and guidelines regarding the safe transportation of students from the home to the school, etc. Parents/guardians whose children do not follow the bus rules will be notified as to the

appropriate behavior of the child. Teachers are not responsible for student behavior on the bus.

Instruction and Training For Bus Safety

Instruction/review in bus and pedestrian safety is required each year. Instruction/review materials appropriate to grade levels are provided to the teachers by the local public school districts.

Misconduct on the Bus

Denial to ride the bus may be given for misconduct on the bus. Parents/guardians are notified when such action is necessary.

Restriction: Bus Students Only

Only bus students are to ride the bus. Students are to go home on their assigned bus and get off at their assigned stops.

STUDENT RECORDS

The school shall collect and maintain the records of students while they attend the school. To transfer records, parents/guardians are asked to inform the school office as soon as possible when transferring a child to another school. If the tuition and other financial obligations of the student have been paid in full, school records will be sent directly to the new school upon request of that school. Parent/guardian must sign a release authorizing the transfer of records to the student's new school. Parent/guardian and student understand, acknowledge, and agree that in the event the tuition or other financial obligations have not been paid in full Our Lady of the Prairie School shall have the right to withhold all records, including grades and academic transcript.

No one except appropriate school personnel, parents/guardians of minors, and students who have reached legal age, shall have access to individual pupil records without either a subpoena or appropriate written authorization either from the parent/guardian (in the case of a minor student), or from the adult student or former student.

Parents/guardians may ask to review the contents of any records or data collected regarding their child. Records or data may mean any or all the following:

1. Identifying data
2. Academic work completed
3. Level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores)
4. Attendance data
5. Scores on standardized intelligence
6. Health data
7. Family background information
8. Teacher or counselor ratings and observations
9. Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns (may be maintained separately)

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

Should you perceive that your child has a disability and is not making satisfactory academic, social, behavioral and/or communicative progress and has a substantial limitation in the areas of learning and communicating, you may seek a screening and evaluation through the Belle Plaine Public Schools. The evaluation will be designed to determine whether or not your child has a disability as defined by special education eligibility criteria in Minnesota Rules (MR) 3525. For children with disabilities who are found eligible to receive special education services, parents will be invited to participate on a planning team that will review the information and propose services. The process is as follows:

1. You will be invited to attend the planning team meeting at the public school. Representatives from the non-public school will be invited to attend also. The team will review the information presented by your child's teacher, evaluator, and/or other staff. You will also have an opportunity to share information as you deem appropriate.
2. If the team decides to proceed with an evaluation, you will receive a written notice of the proposed evaluation for your approval. This notice requires written permission by the parent prior to the public school conducting the evaluation.
3. Once written parental permission is received, then the public school special education staff will conduct your child's evaluation. You will have an opportunity to provide further information about your child's needs as a part of the evaluation.
4. The planning team will complete an Evaluation Report (ER) and they will make a decision regarding your child's eligibility for special education.

Children eligible for special education services under MR 3525 will have an Individual Service Plan (ISP) developed by a planning team of public school special education staff, non-public school staff and you. Please let your building principal or me know if you have questions about the identification process and/or special education services.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

If a grievance between parent/guardian or a student and a teacher or school administrator should arise the following grievance procedure shall apply:

1. The parent/guardian or student (grievant) will meet with the teacher or administrator (respondent) to discuss resolution of the grievance.
2. If the grievance is not resolved, the grievant will meet with the school administrator (if the grievance involves a teacher) or with a person designated by the pastor or parish administrator (if the grievance involves the school administrator).
3. If the grievance is still not resolved, a grievance committee will hear the grievance.
4. The grievance committee will be made up of three persons: one designated by the pastor, one designated by the respondent, and one designated by the grievant.
5. The committee will meet to receive evidence. It shall have the discretion to determine whether such evidence shall be written, oral, or both.
6. At the conclusion of the meeting, and upon due consideration, the committee will make its recommendation to the pastor. The committee shall not have the power to alter or amend school policies.
7. The pastor or his designate will then decide the grievance.
8. The grievance procedure should be completed within 30 days.
9. If the grievance determination is not resolved to the satisfaction of either party, a referral to Archdiocesan Due Process may be made. Nothing contained herein shall obligate either party to consent to conciliation or arbitration under the Archdiocesan Due Process procedures.

DRESS CODE

It is the policy of OLP to have a uniform. The uniform policy and guidelines are posted on our website. Students out of uniform will be dealt with by the school principal. Students who are consistently out of uniform will be sent to the office where their parents will be notified to bring them proper dress code clothing. Further disregard of this policy will result in a discipline referral and will then follow further consequences for level one offense as delineated in the Discipline Policy.

EARLY WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Our Lady of the Prairie School carefully budgets for how many students will be in attendance during each school year. Once the school year has begun, most of our costs have already been incurred. When a student is withdrawn from school prior to the end of a contract year, a hardship is presented to our school community. With that in mind, the following payment schedule shall be adhered to:

Prior to September 30 th –	25% of the total tuition and fundraising commitment is payable to school.
Prior to November 15 th –	50% of the total tuition and fundraising commitment is payable to school.
Prior to January 15 th -	75% of the total tuition and fundraising commitment is payable to school.
After January 15 th -	100% of the total tuition and fundraising commitment is payable to school.

Refunds for overpayment will be considered on a case-by-case basis as will special circumstances of family hardship.



COMPUTERS

Our Lady of the Prairie Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Our Lady of the Prairie School is committed to the effective use of technology to both enhance the quality of student learning and the efficiency of school operations. It also recognizes that safeguards have been established to ensure that the school's investment in both hardware and software is achieving the benefit of technology and inhibiting negative side effects.

The administration is directed to establish guidelines to ensure that students and staff are making appropriate and ethical use of computers, other equipment and networks. The administration shall establish guidelines in compliance with federal and state laws and are in accordance with any guidelines promulgated by the Archdiocesan Department of Education.

The administration shall also ensure that staff and students are adequately informed about disciplinary actions that will be taken if school technology and/or networks are abused in any way or used in an illegal or unethical manner.



Our Lady of the Prairie Network and Internet Acceptable Use Guidelines

Our Lady of the Prairie School may provide network and Internet (hereafter referred to as Network) access to enhance information gathering and communication skills, to assist in resource sharing, and to facilitate the use of technology to achieve educational ministry objectives.

The Network is an electronic highway connecting hundreds of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. The Network extends the resources of the parish and school and provides benefits such as:

- Worldwide electronic mail
- Information and news from research institutions and religious organizations
- Public domain software and shareware of all types
- Discussion groups
- Access to the Library of Congress, ERIC, university libraries, and open forums

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational moral value in the context of the school or parish setting. Our Lady of the Prairie will take precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information. Our Lady of the Prairie firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not constant with the educational and religious goals of the parish and school. Network access is a privilege, not a right. System administrators (members of the school's and parish's professional staff charged with responsibility of the Network) will provide access to individuals. Individuals will be asked to read the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Guidelines and to sign the Network User Agreement.

All information services and features of the Network are intended for the private use of its registered users and any use of these resources from commercial-for-profit or other unauthorized purposes is expressly forbidden. Any problems which arise from a user's access are the responsibility of the user. Use of an access by someone other than the registered user is forbidden and may be grounds for loss of access privileges.

Users may not use the Network or its resources to:

- Access, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials
- Transmit obscene, abusive, or sexually explicit language
- Violate any local, state, or federal statute
- Vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another person or organization
- Access another person's materials, information, or files
- Vandalize, damage, or disrupt the operation of the Network
- Intentionally seek passwords belonging to other users
- Violate copyright or otherwise use another person's intellectual property without his or her prior approval or proper citation

Disciplinary actions may include:

- Temporary loss of computer privileges
- Permanent loss of computer privileges
- Suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment

- Payment of loss, damage, or injury
- Civil liability
- Criminal prosecution

FINANCE/FUNDRAISING

TUITION

Our Lady of the Prairie's School Advisory Council sets a yearly tuition rate during its budget process. The tuition charged represents only a portion of the actual cost of educating each student. Parish, fundraising and state funds provide the remainder of the costs.

The following tuition investment guidelines have been set by Our Lady of the Prairie's School:

1. Currently parishioners and non-parishioners are charged the same tuition rate.
2. All monthly payments are due each month August through May; quarterly payments by the fifth of September, December, March, and June semi-annual payments are due by the fifth of September and January; and annual payments are due by the fifth of September. Alternate payment plans are arranged through the parish administrator's office.
3. Families who are delinquent in their tuition payments will not be allowed to register for the following school year unless arrangements have been made with the principal. Our Lady of the Prairie School reserves the right to suspend the student indefinitely and not to allow re-admission until such time as all past due accounts has been paid in full.
4. Report cards and diplomas will not be issued until delinquent accounts are current or acceptable arrangements have been made with the parish administrator.
5. Accounts, which are delinquent from the previous year (for which no arrangements have been made), may be turned over to a collection agency.

FEES

In addition to tuition, and the pre-registration fee, some programs/activities require an additional participation fee. Parents will be notified well in advance of the activity, for example field trips.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/TUITION ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Tuition assistance may be available to families. Distribution of funds is based on need and availability of funds.

STEWARDSHIP

Parish stewardship is an important part of the relationship between the school and the parish. Parish subsidy levels are based on estimated income taken from stewardship contributions. We ask each parish member to tithe 10% of their income to God, 5% to the Church and 5% to a worthy charity.

PARISH INVESTMENT

Since the entire parish benefits from Catholic educational programs, the entire parish shares in financial responsibility for the education of children. Parish investment is that amount contributed by the parish annually to the school. The percentage of parish investment level is determined at the local level.

Our Lady of the Prairie's School receives investment from Our Lady of the Prairie parish. The investment represents just under 20% of the school's operating budget.

FUNDRAISING ASSESSMENT

Our Lady of the Prairie families are expected to participate in fund-raising activities during the year. Our two major fundraising projects include the Marathon for Non-public Education in the fall, and the Gala.

A fundraising chairperson, education secretary and the principal will coordinate all fundraising efforts. All fundraising will be approved through the princi Archdiocesan and legal regulations must be considered when planning fundraising programs/events.

STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS

There are several state and federal programs that non-public students may participate in on an equal basis with public school children. These programs are administrated through the local public school district.

Our Lady of the Prairie receives state and federal entitlement allocated on a per pupil basis.

State programs include:

Education Aids for Non-public School Children - provides textbooks and related individualized instructional materials, and health services.

Transportation - Minnesota public school districts must provide "equal transportation" within the district boundaries. The public school shall have sole discretion, control, and management of scheduling, routes, bus stop locations, and discipline.

School Milk Program - State funds are matched with federal funds to assist families who qualify for free or reduced lunch, as well as providing kindergarten students with at least one serving of milk each school day.

State Income Tax Deductions - Taxpayers who itemize deductions may be able to take a deduction per dependent in grades K-6 for books, tuition, and transportation costs. This amount may vary from year to year. Please refer to your State Income Tax Manual's directions.

Federal Programs include:

Special Education - Districts shall identify students and make available special education to all who are disabled, regardless of whether they attend a non-public school. The district must provide assessment, periodic observation, and review of progress and establish an IEP (Individual Education Plan), which generally involves tutoring by a special education teacher.

Title I - This program provides supplementary instruction in math, reading, and language arts to students who have been identified as "at risk." Computer-aided instruction may be an acceptable alternative to direct services.

Title IV - Safe and Drug-Free Schools - Non-public schools receive monies, on a per-pupil entitlement basis, for programs which address drug and safety issues.