

Our Lady of Victories School

36 Main Street
Sayreville, NJ 08872



Parent-Student Handbook
Revised 2011-2012

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF OUR LADY OF VICTORIES SCHOOL

The mission of Our Lady of Victories School is to promote the faith values and beliefs of the Catholic Church while providing a strong academic program to the students enrolled in our school. The school strives to create an educational environment, which fosters the spiritual, social, intellectual, physical and emotional development of each child in the pursuit of excellence.

Therefore, we commit ourselves to:

- Recognize that Jesus is the model for our students.
- Create a school atmosphere which is rooted in sound Catholic teaching and practice.
- Recognize the uniqueness of each student and encourage each student to develop his/her fullest potential.
- Provide opportunities for professional growth and development of teachers.
- Work collaboratively with parents and the community to achieve our goals.

FOREWARD

Our Lady of Victories School, Sayreville, New Jersey, is a Catholic elementary school, which provides a Christian environment for the academic education of youth under the Pastor, Principal, and Faculty within the Diocese of Metuchen. It is Middle States Accredited.

PHILOSOPHY

Catholic Education makes our faith come alive through instruction in the unique setting of a school whose model teacher is Jesus Christ. The educational program of Our Lady of Victories provides for the development of the spiritual, intellectual, psychosocial, physical, social, and emotional growth of the students. It is through the dedication and commitment of the faculty, staff, clergy, and with the cooperation of parents and students that this is accomplished.

Teaching respect for authority in the home, school, and society creates the atmosphere of self-discipline and emphasizes our personal obligations of freedom with responsibility established under the guidance of the Sisters of Mercy.

Parents as Partners

We thank you for choosing Our Lady of Victories School for your child/children's education. By doing so, you have formed a partnership with the faculty and staff. Each of us has a specific role. We depend on you to support us regarding all aspects of education, for example in all Academic matters, rules and regulations, etc.

Home School Association (HSA)

A Home School Association will be established in every elementary school in the Diocese and operate in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Diocesan Coordinating Committee for Home Schools Association as promulgated by the Diocese of Metuchen.

In complying with this Policy, the following Procedures shall be observed:

- The local Home School Association will adhere to the Diocesan Constitution and By Laws for Home School Associations.
- The Home School Association is responsible for sustaining harmony between the home and school.
- All parents/guardians are members of the Home School Association.
- All activities through which HSA funds are raised must be approved by the principal and pastor.
- The Officers of the Home School Association promote activities to: (a) raise funds, (b) encourage school spirit, and (c) promote a family environment within the school community.
- The funds raised by the Home School Association are to be maintained in the school's general account. The signatures of the HSA Treasurer and the pastor or the principal are necessary endorsements on all checks issued by the Home School Association.
- The fundraising goals are established collaboratively by the pastor or principal, and HSA. The revenue raised from fundraising will be used for the general operating expenses of the school.

Volunteers

All volunteers must be finger-printed along with a Criminal History Check before they are allowed to work on or in the school campus.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The double middle doors to the school building open at 7:30 AM. Students being driven to school should be dropped off **across the street.** Students must be in class by 7:50 AM or they will be marked late. Buses will arrive in front of the school. At dismissal, buses line up in the parking lot behind the school. All students who are transported by car will be dismissed on Walk Line 3 and are to be picked up **across the street from the school.** Students will be dismissed in the following order:

1. Walkers – Lines 3, 1, & 2
2. Bus students
3. Special Activities/Clubs
4. Extended Care Students
5. Parents and children are not allowed to return to school after hours for any reason.

ATTENDANCE

Students who are registered in a Catholic School in the Diocese of Metuchen shall comply with the New Jersey State compulsory attendance to the age of 16 years. Regular attendance is essential to the student's success in school. Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation. Persistent absenteeism/lateness creates a genuine hardship to the student and is regarded as a very serious problem. The following reasons are sanctioned as excused absences:

- Medical reasons
- Bereavement (immediate family, godparents)
- Court appearance
- 8th Graders allowed 1 visit to a high school as Freshman for a Day.

Parents are to call the school nurse to report an absence. A written note, explaining the reason for the absence along with the dates must accompany the child upon his/her return to school. It is the responsibility of the parents to insure that the student attends school daily. Vacations are not sanctioned during the school year if it causes the student to be absent from school. However, if this does occur, it will be considered an unexcused absence. The student will make-up any work upon returning to school. The student may be required to stay after school for instruction. It will be the parent's responsibility to provide transportation home. Excessive/unexcused absence can prevent a student from moving on to the next grade.

BUS CONDUCT

Students are expected to conduct themselves properly while riding to and from school. The Principal/Local Public School Transportation Coordinator will deal with infractions of the bus behavior code. This may lead to a student being suspended from riding the bus. Bus regulations are sent home the first week of school. Kindly read this form over **with your child.** The parent/guardian and student must sign and **return the bottom section to school.**

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus authorizations are handled by the local public school district in which the student resides and must be filled out each year. No student may ride a bus unless a transportation form is filled out and returned to the school office and accepted by the Board of Education.

CELEBRATIONS

Students may celebrate their birthday by bringing in a non-food item for each classmate. Food is not permitted due to the various food allergies that some of our students possess. This is to ensure the safety of all our students. Party invitations are also not permitted to be handed out in classrooms unless there is one for each child. Teachers are not permitted to give out students' phone numbers to other students. If there is a class celebration (for a Holiday) each student brings in their own snack.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/NAME/PERSONAL TELEPHONE INFORMATION NUMBER/EMAIL ADDRESSES

It is imperative that the school have up-to-date information on each student in the event of student illness or emergencies. If there are any changes in the information, please send the change in writing to the school office. It is the responsibility of the parents to make telephone numbers/email address changes on the Honeywell Alert System. The school cannot do this.

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences take place after the first and second marking periods. Teachers will notify parents of conference dates and times. The dates will be found on the monthly calendar and class websites. Parents

can request a conference at any time by writing a note to the student's teacher, leaving a voice message for the teacher at school or e-mailing the teacher via the school e-mail. Teachers may also request a parent conference at any time.

CRISIS DRILLS

The following are practiced during the school year:

- Fire Drill – once a month
- Lock Down – once a month
- Other types such as evacuation drills twice a year

DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR

Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in their classroom. School discipline policies will be established in each class and consistency enforced.

The major objective is to obtain the respect, the confidence, and the willing cooperation of the student. The kind of discipline desired is self-discipline, which the student imposes upon herself/himself. Therefore, the most effective discipline is that which occurs **before** the time of infraction.

The following lists some unacceptable behaviors and disciplinary action that will be enforced.

1. Fighting and aggressive behavior
 - Parental notification
 - In-school suspension
 - Recommendation for counseling
 - Possible expulsion if no change in behavior
 - Reported to Diocese and local police officials
 - As per agreement with Sayreville Police Department
2. Bullying
 - Parental notification
 - Christian Awareness Project as deemed necessary by the school.
 - Possible expulsion if no change in behavior
 - Reported to Diocese and local police officials
 - As per agreement with Sayreville Police Department
3. Use of Profanity
 - Parental notification
 - Will be handled on an individual basis
 - Detention after school

4. Possession of weapons or other dangerous objects
 - Parental notification
 - Out of school suspension
 - Reported to Diocese and local police officials
 - As per agreement with Sayreville Police Department
 - Possible expulsion if no change in behavior
 - Recommendation for counseling

5. Possession of or use of drugs, alcohol or other controlled dangerous substances
 - Parental notification
 - Out of school suspension
 - Reported to Diocese and local police officials
 - As per agreement with Sayreville Police Department
 - Possible expulsion if no change in behavior
 - Recommendation for counseling

6. Vandalism in any form
 - Parent notification
 - In-school suspension
 - Christian Awareness Project
 - Financial reimbursement
 - Possible expulsion if no change in behavior

7. Electronic devices
 - Prohibited – if used during the school day, item will be confiscated
 - Responsibility of a parent to pick up at school
 - Cell phones – collected by homeroom teacher each AM and returned to students at end of day
 - Must be turned off during school hours
 - Confiscated if used
 - Responsibility of parent to pick up at school.

8. Gum chewing
 - Prohibited
 - Parental notification
 - Detention

9. Cheating
 - Prohibited/Grade of F will be given
 - Parental notification
 - Detention

- If determined that the student was cheating, a grade of F will be assigned for that particular exam or assignment

10. Teachers have the authority to enforce all school and classroom rules.

In the event a child receives three (3) detentions, more than one (1) in-school or out-of-school suspension, and continues to exhibit discipline problems, the parents/guardians will be notified that Our Lady of Victories School is not the correct placement and, therefore, will be asked to find the appropriate setting for the child.

DRESS CODE

Our Lady of Victories School requires a distinctive uniform worn by all students. School regulations regarding the uniform policy will be enforced. All parents are asked to comply with the school uniform policy. If valid reasons exist for periodic exemptions, such as medical reasons, etc. parents should consult the Principal before sending children to school “out of uniform”.

On warm days, the summer uniform is optional and may be worn from the opening of school up until October 17th, and from April 16th to the last day of school. Summer and winter school uniforms are available from Flynn and O’Hara uniforms in Hazlet, N.J. (Not from any place else).

Dress Code for NUT Days (No Uniform Today)

Students must dress in clean and appropriate attire for a Catholic School:

- Dress slacks (boy/girl)
- Jeans (clean, not ripped or torn) boy/girl
- Blouse/shirt – suitable for Catholic school
- Skirt (girl) appropriate length – to the knee or longer
- Parents will be called if a child is dressed inappropriately and a change of clothes must be brought to school

The **Administration** reserves the right to make decisions on questionable clothes.

UNIFORMS-BOYS GRADES K-8

Boys Winter Uniform:

Khaki pants, white or navy short or long sleeve shirt, black shoes, dark colored socks (above the ankle bone), no boots or sneakers

Boys Summer Uniform:

Khaki shorts, white or navy short-sleeve shirt, white socks (above the ankle bone), white sneakers (no logos, no wheels)

UNIFORMS- GIRLS GRADES K TO 5

Girls Winter Uniform:

Plaid khaki and navy kilt, pleated jumper, white Peter Pan collar blouse, cardigan navy sweater, navy knee socks or tights. No nylon stockings or knee-highs. Black shoes (flat or low-heels).

Girls Summer Uniform:

Same as boys. Girls may also wear skorts.

Gym Uniforms are worn on Gym day. Gray tee shirts, blue gym shorts, white socks (above the ankle bone), white sneakers. Navy school sweat gym uniforms are to be worn in cold weather.

IF THE DRESS CODE IS VIOLATED, STUDENT WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN OTHER NUT DAYS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR.

After 3 infractions, a detention will be issued along with a check on the report card

FINGERNAILS

Fingernails should be natural and trimmed or filed down. For safety reasons, no tips or acrylic polish are permitted.

HAIR

BOYS – Hair should be worn in a short, off the face style, neat and above the shirt collar. No bizarre hair color or styles.

GIRLS – Hair should be worn in a neat style. No bizarre hair color or styles. No headbands except school uniform headbands and scrunchies are to be worn.

JEWELRY – Religious medals are not considered jewelry and may be worn under the shirt/blouse. However, other items that are not part of the school uniform may not be worn; with the exception of a wristwatch.

Earrings must be small studs for boys/girls and only one set may be worn at any time. (No hanging, large earrings, or hoops of any size are permitted for safety reasons).

EARLY DISMISSAL

If it becomes necessary for a pupil to be dismissed early, a written request from the parent/guardian should be submitted to the teacher stating the reason for this request. Parent/guardian must sign student out in the office. **If an emergency arises**, a signed, written request **must** be faxed to the school office. The fax number is 732-254-5066.

EXTENDED CARE

The Aftercare Program is located under the church. When students are not picked up or miss the bus they will be sent to Aftercare and parents will be notified. A note will be left on the school door directing them to Aftercare.

FIELD TRIPS

Meaningful and appropriate field trips are a vital part of the educational process. Field trips may occur throughout the year and are a privilege. Permission slips **must** be signed by the parent before students are allowed to go. Out of state trips require a **notarized permission slip**. Chaperones are chosen via a lottery.

FINANCES

Specific information regarding tuition and fees can be found on the School Website. Remember that registration fees are non-refundable.

FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

Parents/guardians are to report any food or other allergies to the school nurse. There is also a place to list allergies on the health forms. A peanut-free table is available in the cafeteria. The early childhood classrooms (Pre-K 3 & 4) are peanut-free. All faculty members have been trained on Allergic Reactions. The school nurse is notified immediately. They also have been trained for use of the Epi Pen and life threatening allergy issues.

No food is allowed to be shared in school unless parental permission has been given. When snacks are allowed, each child brings their own snack and no sharing.

HEALTH SERVICES

Periodic health screening including height, weight, vision and hearing are scheduled by the school nurse. The following services and policies are in effect during a student's stay at Our Lady of Victories:

VISION – Tested in Gr. K-8, anytime a teacher or parent requests a vision check

HEARING – Gr. K-4, 6, 8 – or as requested by parent

SCOLIOSIS SCREENING – Students in Gr. 4-8 are screened bi-annually.

HEALTH SERVICES CONT'D

Pupils requiring medication at school **MUST** have a written note from a physician identifying the type, dosage and purpose of the medication. A **written note** from the **parents**, giving permission to administer the prescribed medication is also required. A physician's note is also required for **non-prescription drugs**, such as Tylenol or cough medicine. All medications, in original containers, will be kept in the nurse's room. **All food allergies** should be reported to the Nurse.

HOMEWORK

The school's policy is to assign homework, either written or study, as a carryover of the work that has been covered in class. Homework is not to be done in school. Homework provides reinforcement and enrichment of the material taught in school. Research projects and other long term projects are assigned periodically. Consult class website for all assignments. In the event of an extended absence, homework can be accessed on the Class Website. If books are needed, call the school office for pick-up. 24 hour notice must be given. If a child is sick, work, tests, assignments can be made-up upon the child's return.

HONOR ROLL

Students in grades 4 to 8 can attain special recognition for academic achievement.

Principal's List – Students maintain A's in major subjects, as well as S or O in Special Subjects. No checks on the left side of the report card.

Honor Roll – Students maintain A's and B's in all subjects and Satisfactory or Outstanding in Special Subjects. No checks on the left side of the report card.

HOURS

OFFICE HOURS: 7:30 AM – 2:30 PM

SCHOOL HOURS: 7:50 AM -1:50 PM

LUNCH/PLAYGROUND HOURS – 11:00 AM-12:20 PM

LATENESS

Prompt arrival at school is expected of **all** students. Late arrival disrupts the **whole** class and causes loss of instruction time. Students who arrive at school after **7:50 AM** are considered late with the following exceptions

- Late buses
- Inclement weather
- Accidents/traffic delays
- Detention after 3 lates
- 3 lates or more parent conference to remediate situation

LIBRARY

Our Lady of Victories library is located in Monsignor Dalton Hall. The library contains a variety of books, reference materials, encyclopedias, dictionaries, tapes (VCR/DVD) and computers to meet the needs of the students at different levels. The library schedule provides for all classes, Pre-K 4 to 8, to visit the library one period a week. There are also provisions for upper grades to use the library for research. Respect books – lost or late returns will be fined or replaced.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost items can usually be retrieved in the school office.

LUNCH MENUS

A hot lunch program is available. The cafeteria is located in Monsignor Dalton Hall. Lunch menus are sent home monthly. The menu lists the types of lunches, snacks and prices. The menu can also be found on the school website.

MONEY COLLECTIONS

All money sent to school should be put in an envelope by the parent and marked with the child's name, grade, amount, and purpose. No money may be collected in school for any purpose without the express permission of the Principal.

PHONE CALLS

Please do not call the office to ask for personal messages to be delivered to your child. Please be sure your children know where they are to go in case of emergency dismissal. Instructions from home help this situation. If there is a change in your instructions, a written note must be faxed to the school office. The fax number is 732-254-5066. Students will not be allowed to use the telephone unless there is a **true** emergency. **(NO calls for forgotten homework, lunches, gym clothes, books, snacks, supplies, reminders of half-days, etc.)**

PHOTO RELEASE FORMS

Photo release forms are given to each child for parental/guardian signatures. This gives or doesn't give permission for the school to use photos in any media (printed or electronic).

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

School staff will supervise the playground with the help of volunteers. We ask parents to contact the office if they wish to help supervise students as volunteers. All volunteers must be fingerprinted along with a criminal history background check.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

The school will maintain records on all students. Information included in these records may not be released without written parental consent.

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

The day begins and ends with prayer. Students are encouraged to cultivate a spirit of offering prayers for special intentions, for the sick and dying and each other. All grades attend a weekly Liturgy. Monthly liturgies are special Masses that school children attend. First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Penance are received in the second grade. Dates are placed on the school calendar when they become finalized.

Confirmation studies begin in the seventh grade and the sacrament is received in the eighth grade usually in the spring of the year. The date is confirmed by the Bishop of Metuchen.

Students may experience many spiritual activities during the year. Some of these events are: Lenten devotions, Advent wreath blessing, Penance services, Stations of the Cross, Family masses and May crowning.

The students are expected to participate at the 9:00 AM Children's Mass on designated Sundays when assigned. A printed schedule will be sent home to parents. It is usually the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. Not every student participates at every Mass.

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

NO CARS ARE TO PARK IN FRONT OF SCHOOL. STUDENTS ARE NEVER DROPPED OFF OR PICKED UP IN FRONT OF SCHOOL, OR IN THE BACK OR SIDE OF SCHOOL. THIS IS CONSIDERED A SAFETY HAZARD.

Please obey all traffic safety rules when using the parking lot across from the school. Violators will be in danger of receiving summons.

VISITORS

All visitors are required to report to the office personnel upon entering the building. Parents are welcome and are encouraged to visit the school building during open house, assemblies, and classroom invitations.

Visitors must be escorted by a faculty or staff member in the building.

PLEASE RING THE BELL AND THE OFFICE WILL ACKNOWLEDGE YOU. CHECK IN AT THE OFFICE AFTER ADMITTANCE TO THE BUILDING.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Notification will be done through the Honeywell Alert System and announced on WCTC 1450 AM Radio Station.

YOUR CONTINUED COOPERATION IS APPRECIATED. PARENTS AND SCHOOL WORKING TOGETHER WILL HELP YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN DEVELOP INTO A SPIRITUAL, RESPONSIBLE PERSON.