

# Diocese of Altoona- Johnstown Catholic Schools

## Parent/Student Handbook



**Faith**

**Excellence**

**Community**

Legal Disclaimer: Nothing contained in this Handbook, or in any other document, custom or practice, is intended to, or shall be construed to, create any contractual obligations, express or implied, on the part of the diocese or the school.

# Table of Contents

<b>Mission Statement</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Administration</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Admission Policies</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Kindergarten Admission .....	7
Immunizations .....	8
Probation Period for All Students .....	8
<b>Academic Policies</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Student Progress .....	8
Grade Retention/Promotion .....	9
<b>Attendance</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Communications</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Confidentiality</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Support Services</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Emergency Operation Plan</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Custody</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Mandate d Re porting</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Discipline Behavior Management</b> .....	<b>12</b>
General Overview.....	13
Authority of Administration, Faculty, and Staff .....	13
Classroom-based Expectations and Management .....	13
Parent/Guardian Notification.....	15
Student Consequences of Misbehavior/Misconduct.....	16
<b>Field Trips</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Extra-Curriculars</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Medications</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian Cooperation</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Parental/Guardian Rights.....	19
Parental/Guardian Responsibilities .....	19

Family Responsibilities in Cooperation With School.....	20
Parent/Guardian Service Requirements .....	21
Retreats and Service Program .....	21
<b>Technology and Internet .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Personal Property .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Devices .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Use of School Grounds .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Amendments to Handbook.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Signature Page.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Student Use of the Internet in School .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Certificate of Individual Request for Loan of Textbooks .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>School Photo Release Form .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Student Demographic Sharing Form.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Diocesan School Handbook.....</b>	<b>After Appendix</b>

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**As a Catholic school community, our mission is to cultivate a Christ-centered learning environment where every child is given opportunities to excel and is recognized as a child of God.**

## **VISION STATEMENT**

**Our vision is for all children to be life-long learners who live out their faith with conviction, compassion, and commitment to use their God-given talents to make positive contributions to the whole world while building up the Kingdom of God.**



## **ADMINISTRATION**

**Diocesan and parochial schools of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown are those which meet all of the following conditions:**

- are recognized as Catholic by the Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown.
- are responsible to the Diocesan Director of Education for such matters as have been determined by the Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown and are subject to the Director's regulations.
- are governed by the Diocesan School Policies and Regulations.
- have written belief and mission statements which identify the school as Catholic.
- have a program of religious education which conforms to the standards determined by the Education Office of Altoona-Johnstown and the Office of Religious Education and Catechesis.
- are recognized by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## **ADMISSION POLICIES**

### **In accordance with the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Policy 5020 Admission:**

Since the formation of students in the Catholic faith heritage and its religious traditions is the primary purpose for which our Catholic schools have been founded, both parents/guardians and students must be willing to abide by the values inherent in our Catholic faith and by our philosophy of Catholic education.

All students, regardless of religious preference, enrolled in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown must take the prescribed religion courses in the curriculum and attend all religious service offered by the school. Religion classes are held on a daily basis. Services include, but are not limited to Liturgy of the Eucharist (Mass), Sacrament of Reconciliation, Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Penance Services, Prayer Services, Daily and Special Prayers, Adoration. Those who are not of the Catholic religion will not be expected to receive sacraments.

Students and parents/guardians who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education and who fulfill the requirements and conditions for enrollment specified below, are eligible for admission to the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown without discrimination with respect to sex, race, ethnic origin or disability, if with reasonable accommodation, they can meet the school's requirements, according to the subsequent provisions of this policy.

The request for the admission of students from a public or private school must be carefully reviewed and the reasons for the request examined.

In accordance with diocesan policy, the diocese encourages participation of all children in a kindergarten program prior to entering first grade.

### **Kindergarten Admission**

Those seeking admission to kindergarten must be 5 years of age on or before August 31 of the year of entry.

Registration is ongoing and continues until class is full.

In Pennsylvania, kindergarten is not a required grade.

When registering a kindergarten student, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall present proof of age and (for a Catholic child) a baptismal certificate. A Christian, non-Catholic student shall present a baptismal certificate and note the denomination when possible. Incoming students shall be given a school health examination form, which must be completed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student's physician. This form should be returned to the school prior to the beginning of the school year.

### **Immunizations**

The Pennsylvania Department of Health promulgates immunization regulations that require parents or guardians of students enrolled in grades K-12 to have their children immunized against various communicable diseases. Records will need to be given to the administrative offices of the diocesan school on or before the fifth day of class.

### **Probation Period for all Students**

All newly enrolled students are subject to a 9 week probation period. The school reserves the right to determine that the school is not a good fit for the student and to require withdrawal of the student. In such a case, any tuition paid will be refunded.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Student Progress**

The school uses the diocesan system (PowerSchool) for reporting pupil progress. This may include progress reports and interim reports which will be based on evidence from multiple assessments which demonstrate a student's understanding of the different academic content standards, teacher observations, or similar feedback, when appropriate.

Standardized Testing is also to be utilized to track student progress. Diocesan curriculum can be found on the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown website: [www.dioceseaj.org](http://www.dioceseaj.org) .



Honor Roll, Parent Conferencing, and Report Card information will be in the School Section if applicable.

**Grade scale:**

A = 93-100

B = 85-92

C = 76-84

D = 70-75

F = Below 70

Some Schools of the diocese will use a customized standard-based report card. This will be posted in the school section.

### **Grade Retention/Promotion**

Satisfactory completion of each grade is to be expected of every student. Absence itself, for a valid reason, is not a reason for retention of a student if the student has completed the required work.

Retention of students is appropriate where it is intended to enable a student to gain future developmental, emotional and/or educational maturity and success.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Full day attendance is expected of all students. Information pertaining to your school attendance policy will be posted in the School Section.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Open communication between home and school is important for student progress and maintaining a healthy school climate. The proper line of communication in discussing any facet of your child's progress is to first contact the teacher directly. This may be done through a

written message, e-mail or by telephone. Teachers are unavailable during class hours but will respond within two school days. If a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, the parent/guardian and/or teacher will inform the principal. If the problem remains unsolved, then the parents/guardians may have recourse to the pastor and or diocesan education office. Because of the interruptions in the teaching-learning process, spontaneous visits to the classrooms are not permitted.

Weather delays/cancellations will be announced via School Messenger, television, and radio by each individual elementary school.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Administrators, counselors, and teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. Student progress will only be discussed with parents or legal guardian. Progress cannot be discussed with grandparents, friends, etc. without **written permission** from legal guardian.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Counseling, speech, language, occupational therapy, and other services will be provided through the local Intermediate Units.

## **EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN**

Diocesan Schools have each developed an Emergency Operation Plan in cooperation with state and local authorities. The plan must be approved by the Education Office of the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese. Parents/Guardians should stay tuned to local media sites for important information.

## CUSTODY

Administrators, counselors and teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake.

The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and other school-related information regarding the child. A current physical address, e-mail, and phone number must be provided by the non-custodial parent in order to obtain information.

**If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order dealing with the education/visitation of the child. It is also the parent's responsibility to inform the school of the addresses where the student's records should be sent.**

**Divorced parents must provide the school with a court certified copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. If no such copy is on file, school officials will assume that both parents have custodial rights. Parents/guardians must provide the school with the most current court certified copy of the custody decree.**

School officials will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that children are released only to the appropriate parent at the time/days according to the court custody arrangements. However, parents must accept the primary responsibility for such arrangements and should instruct their children as to which parent should have physical custody of them on any given day.

**Please note:** The school, its teachers, and administrators cannot become involved in adjudicating marital disputes. Parents, in such cases, should strive to keep their personal issues out of school. The school's responsibility is with the child and his/her welfare.

## **MANDATED REPORTING**

Everyone working with your child is a mandated report. We are not permitted to contact parents if a child is interviewed by Children and Youth Services and/or police.

## **DISCIPLINE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

Schools will try to develop the art of discovering the good in every person and show respect for one another. In other words, we...

- include everyone;
- are kind in our words and actions;
- stick up for one another;
- and support and encourage each other.

Students recite a “Peacekeeper’s Pledge” that helps to remind them what the expectations are at Diocesan Schools. “I am a \_\_\_\_\_ Catholic School Peacekeeper. I promise to be kind in my thoughts, words, and actions. By doing this, I will keep our school a safe place to be as Jesus teaches us, I will do unto others as I would have them do unto me.”

In accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church, we strive for discipline to have an air of forgiveness and understanding as we are trying to develop thoughtful, caring, and loving individuals. This means we intend our discipline to be caring, fair, consistent, and understanding in the resolution of a situation.

When a child makes a poor choice, teachers will talk to the child and decide what action, if any, is to take place. Depending on the severity and/or frequency of the behavior, the teacher will inform the parents/guardians and/or principal to discuss an appropriate action. Ways to handle poor choices can include (but are not limited to) reflection, discussion, writing, temporary isolation (time-out), loss of privileges, etc.

For certain situations, the school pastor will also be included in the disciplinary action.

## General Overview

A variety of behavior management techniques, strategies, and procedures will be used to the extent necessary to ensure that the learning environment provided is not disrupted by inappropriate student behavior. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse are not permitted.

## Authority of the Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Every teacher, staff member, and administrator has the right to exercise authority as to the conduct and behavior of students in the school during the time they are in attendance.

## Classroom-based Expectations and Management

The following chart illustrates categories of student misbehavior/misconduct and the potential consequences of stated action.

### CONSEQUENCE LEVELS

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
<b>Examples</b>	<i>Not following classroom / cafeteria / playground rules; dress code violation; horseplay; off task behaviors; running in hallway; name calling; disruptive; talking when others are talking, no cell phones or unauthorized technology devices, no gum</i>	<i>Bus disturbance; lying/cheating; spitting; noncompliance; profanity/vulgarity, forged note/paper</i>	<i>Fighting/physical aggression; harassment/bullying; throwing dangerous objects; property damage/vandalism; reference in conversation, writing or pictures to weapons or acts of violence; internet/technology misuse / cyberbullying; stealing; skipping class</i>	<i>Possession of alcohol/drugs; weapon use / possession; intentional and severe physical harm to another; insubordination, leaving campus</i>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>	-Verbal Warning	-1:1 private discussion with teacher; -Written reflection (signed by parent)	-Student sent to Principal's office; Principal & Student call parents	-Parent called and asked to come to school for immediate suspension; -Discussion about appropriate placement, potential

				expulsion -Possible probation -Refer to SAP Training
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>	-1:1 private discussion with teacher; -Written reflection (signed by parent) -Written warning	-Parent Contact	-After School Detention; -Potential meeting with Pastor and Parent, referral to counselor	
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>	-Parent Contact	- Detention/Reflection Time	- Parent called and asked to come to school for immediate suspension - Discussion about appropriate placement, potential expulsion -Possible probation -Refer to SAP Training.	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Offense</b>	-Detention/Reflection Time	- After School Detention; - Potential meeting with Pastor and Parent, referral to counselor		

This chart is not considered a complete or exhaustive list of infractions, but serves to give illustrative examples and their categorization. Since every situation has context and nuance, the administration has the final say as to the category to which a student's specific behavior belongs, as well as the consequences thereof,

Detention/Reflection Time will take place at a designated time and space in the school at the discretion of the administration. The supervising administrator will give the student a task to reflect on his/her actions to be completed during his/her time. Students will not be allowed to do homework or other school-related activities. If detention takes place after school, the student's parent/guardian is responsible for transportation home.

In-school suspension will take place on a date at the discretion of the administration. The student will report to school as usual but will be excluded from classroom participation for the entirety of the school day. He/she will be and given appropriate assignments (School work and tasks to reflect on his/her actions). The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic competitions, band performances, etc.) on the day of the suspension.

In rare cases, out-of-school suspension will be considered. Out-of-school suspension will take place on a date at the discretion of the administration. On the day of the suspension, the student is not to report to school and is excluded from all school activities. The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic competitions, band performances, etc.) on the day of the suspension. The student is required to make-up missed work.

In extreme cases, expulsion is considered. This will only be done with administrative and pastoral counsel. Expulsion is a permanent status and goes into effect at the time of parental notification. Parents/guardians are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for their child to attend another school, per Pennsylvania law.

\*Extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic competitions, band performances, etc.) are not considered an excuse to postpone or cancel any consequence.

### **Parent/Guardian Notification**

Depending on the severity of the infraction, if a student commits an infraction, the teacher/administrator may contact the parents/guardians about the situation and meet with the student (and parents/guardians, if applicable) to discuss the consequences. A pattern of continuous infractions will result in a Parent/Guardian Conference.

If a student commits an infraction while riding district-provided transportation (school bus/van), the driver will fill out a referral form and give it to the school office. The administration is responsible for contacting the parents/guardians about the incident and taking any disciplinary action with the student.

## **Student Consequences of Misbehavior/Misconduct**

Each school will maintain a Conduct Record on each student. Each Diocesan Catholic School teacher and/or designated learning support expert maintains his/her own classroom behavior expectations and management procedures. These expectations and procedures are discussed with the students during the first week of classes. Written outlines of classroom expectations and procedures are available upon request. If at any time a student is unwilling or unable to meet the expectations of classroom behavior, he/she may be referred to the administration. Student Conduct Records will be maintained in the school administration office.

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## **FIELD TRIPS**

A standard permission form must be signed and returned to the school prior to the scheduled field trip for the student to participate in the trip.

A student who fails to submit a standard permission form prior to the trip will not be permitted to participate. Only the STANDARD PERMISSION FORMS obtained from the school office/published online are acceptable. Notes from parents or legal guardians giving permission are not acceptable.

Field trips must be educational and must be approved by the principal in consultation with Diocesan Education Office

Field trips are a privilege. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. A student may be denied participation if he/she demonstrates inappropriate behavior, or does not meet academic standards including grades, class assignments, and homework. Parents/Guardians have the right to refuse their child's participation in a field trip. However, the child must report to school the day of the field trip or be marked absent.

Participation in field trips is restricted to those students in the class for which the trip is scheduled. Siblings or other children are not permitted to attend field trips. All designated Chaperones are required to have completed the diocesan youth protection requirements.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULARS**

Every Student who does participate in a field trip/school sponsored extra-curricular activity is expected to obey all discipline codes as outlined in this handbook.

Students who participate in an extra-curricular activity should behave as if they are representing their Catholic School and should behave accordingly.

Attendance at school is required to participate in school sponsored extra-curricular activities scheduled that day or evening. The Student must be in school for at least half a day to

participate. Exceptions may be considered but building principal must be consulted in advance.

## **MEDICATIONS**

A policy implemented by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, regulates the administration of prescription and over the counter medication (OTC) to students throughout the school day. The directives are as follows:

1. **No one except a licensed professional** can dispense prescription or over the counter (OTC) medication in a school. **The office personnel will not dispense Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, Tums, cough drops, or prescription medications.**
2. In the absence of a licensed professional, neither the secretary nor the principal can administer OTC meds or those prescribed by a doctor **UNLESS** it is an emergency Medication (**epinephrine or asthma inhaler**).

A **doctor's order** must accompany **prescription or OTC** medications to be dispensed only by a licensed professional (school nurse). Again, even with a doctor's order, **office personnel are NOT PERMITTED** to dispense any prescription or OTC medications.

For example, if cough medicine is brought to school it cannot be given unless the doctor has signed an order to be administered during school hours and **ONLY IF THE NURSE IS PRESENT** to dispense the ordered dosage.

3. In the event your child is on a maintenance medication, for example Insulin, arrangements can be made with our district school nurse to administer the medication on the contingency that a doctor's order has been issued and is on file with our office.
4. All medications must be delivered to the office by an adult. Students may not transport medications.

**Parents/Guardians are permitted** to administer their child's prescription and OTC meds during school hours. When your child is ill and unable to finish out the school day, you will be notified so that you can make a decision on what you think would be the best plan of action for you.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN COOPERATION**

The education of a student is a partnership between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school. Just as the parent/guardian has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

### **Parental/Guardian Rights**

- to have your children's safety be a priority;
- to have your children receive an authentic, Catholic education in a Catholic environment;
- to have your child's learning needs met if the program can reasonably accommodate them;
- to have your children taught by competent teachers who respect and care for them;
- to talk with personnel and to have requests for meetings answered in a timely manner;
- to have your children "try out" for all program activities and teams;
- to review records and respond;
- to participate in the life of the school and parish.

### **Parental/Guardian Responsibilities**

- to be a partner with the school in the education and formation of your children;
- to understand and support the Catholic identity of the school; to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary;
- to know your children's teachers and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings;

- to discuss concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved before contacting other authorities;
- to be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible;
- to promote our parish(es) and school and to speak well of them to others;
- to know and support school rules; and
- to appreciate that Catholic education/formation is a privilege that many persons do not have.

--adapted from Volunteers in Catholic Education: An Administrator's Guide to Legal Considerations (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) by Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN (NCEA, 2007.)

### **Family Responsibilities in Cooperation with School**

Parents/Guardians must be the first to foster a loving and discipline d atmosphere at home. The school provides a setting for learning, but can only operate effectively with the cooperation of the family. To achieve a harmonious relationship parents/guardians are expected to:

- Provide for the spiritual, physical and mental development and well-being of the child.
- Be supportive toward the school and education in word and deeds and in social media outlets.
- Help the child develop into a positive, productive member of society and the church, taking seriously their baptismal promises to fulfill the spiritual upbringing of their children including regular mass attendance.
- Cooperate with and respect school policies and school personnel both in word and deed and in social media outlets.
- Be responsible for any financial obligations incurred by the child in school.
- Know and adhere to school philosophy and policy.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gives parents/guardians the right to inspect their child's educational records, and to have a school official explain the records if requested. Any parent/guardian who wishes to see his/her child's records should contact the school principal for an appointment

### **Parent/Guardian Service Requirements**

**If the Diocesan School requires service and/or fundraising, details are provided in the individual school section.**

### **Retreats and Service Program**

**If the Diocesan School offers retreat and service programs, details are provided in the individual school section.**

## **TECHNOLOGY & INTERNET**

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown issues an Internet Usage Policy and a Remote Instruction Policy that requires a parent/guardian and student signature of agreement. Schools also issue a Hardware Use Policy that details the use of devices, acceptable behaviors and financial responsibilities should devices be lost or damaged. The full policy can be found in the Appendix

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The school is not responsible for any personal property brought into the school by the student including electronic devices.

## **CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones, smartwatches, and other personal electronic devices **are not** to be used during school hours. If used, the device will be taken by the student to the administrative office and can be picked up at the end of the day. The location of the device pick up will be determined by each school.

## **USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Schools are responsible for students only during posted school hours. Hours should be posted in the Individual School Section. Children are not to be on school grounds unattended at any other times.

## **AMENDMENTS TO HANDBOOK**

**The school reserves the right to amend this handbook. Parents/Guardians will be given prompt notice of any amendments.**

**Prior to the first day of school, parents/guardians must sign and return this agreement either in person or submit electronically:**

In consideration of \_\_\_\_\_ School's provision of a Catholic education for my/our children, I/we, \_\_\_\_\_ the parent(s)/guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree to be governed by this handbook and to pay all required tuition and fees.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

# Appendix



## Student Use of the Internet in School

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown (DAJ) is fortunate to have a connection to the Internet to supplement the other educational resources already available to staff and students. Through the Internet, your child will have the entire world at his or her fingertips and be able to explore it.

This wonderful resource brings with it additional responsibility. As Internet users, we must be aware of the many issues that surround the Internet. There are many valuable resources available on the Internet that may not be found elsewhere. There are also many sites that can be considered inappropriate for students and serve no educational value. It is the responsibility of all users, staff and students alike, to ensure that, at all times while in a Diocesan School, the Internet is being used only for educational purposes. When using the Internet, students will be supervised by Diocesan School Staff. However, due to the nature of the Internet and evolving technology, even with supervision, students may get to an inappropriate site. It is the student's responsibility to report any inappropriate site to the teacher and return to the educational topic assigned.

***As part of our internet safety policy, schools will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. This is required by the Protecting Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act.***

The following Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) should be read carefully and understood by all Internet users. As parents/guardians, you should review it in detail with your children before they begin using the Internet in their school. The Acceptable Use Policy was developed to ensure the safety of all users.

The DAJ uses a filtering system designed to prevent access to educationally inappropriate sites. However, it is important to understand that no solution is perfect, and we cannot guarantee that students will not have access to inappropriate sites.

Parents should be aware that DAJ educators can request that a specific site be blocked or un-blocked. Such decisions will be made by those responsible for monitoring the filtering service within the DAJ.

It is important that you and your children understand that any violation of the AUP may result in the loss of Internet and e-mail privileges or other disciplinary action. We ask that you work with your children in reinforcing the behaviors associated with the AUP and the attached student contract. Please also note that our filtering system allows us to track and monitor all computer use on the network.

## Acceptable Use Policy for Networks, Including the Internet

It is the policy of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown that all technology used to access the network will be used in a responsible, legal, and ethical manner. Failure to do so will result in the termination of network and e-mail privileges for the user.

Individual users of the network—students and adults—are responsible for their use of the network. The use of the network must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with academic actions of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown School System and will be under the supervision of Diocesan Staff. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Use of the network for any illegal or commercial activities is prohibited.

- ❖ A responsible network user will:
- ❖ Use language that is considered appropriate.
- ❖ Be polite.
- ❖ Send information that other users will not find offensive.
- ❖ Conform with copyright laws and always give credit to the author of the material used.
- ❖ Never reveal personal information about any user such as address, telephone number, credit card numbers, social security number, etc.
- ❖ Neither tamper with the system nor alter, delete or destroy any files or data that are not yours.

A responsible network user must be aware that:

- ❖ Use of the network and e-mail is a PRIVILEGE, not a RIGHT.
- ❖ The DAJ network is to be used only for educational purposes.
- ❖ E-mail is not guaranteed to be private.
- ❖ Identifying photos of students with their first and last names may not be used on a web site.
- ❖ It is important to log off the computer at the end of every session, so another user cannot use your password.
- ❖ Violation of this policy will result in the possible loss of Internet privileges and/or disciplinary action pursuant to the Code of Ethics for Catholic Schools and/or prosecution under state and federal law.
- ❖ Persons issued an account are responsible for its use at all times.

**Acceptable Use Policy for Networks, Including the Internet**  
**Student and Parent/Guardian Signature Page**

It is the policy of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown School System that students and staff will use all technology to access electronic (“computer”) networks, including the Internet and email, in a responsible, legal, and ethical manner. Failure to do so may result in the loss of network privileges for the user, disciplinary action under the Code of Ethics for Catholic Schools, or prosecution under federal or state law.

I have read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy for Diocesan Schools Internet use (Attachment 1). I understand that use of the Internet and e-mail in school is a privilege, not a right. Use of the Internet in school is designed strictly for educational purposes. I also understand that the DAJ is taking measures so that my child does not have access to any material deemed inappropriate, but because no filtering system is perfect, my child might gain access to an inappropriate site. I agree that I will not hold the DAJ responsible for any access by my child of any inappropriate materials acquired on the Internet.

By signing below, I give my child permission to work on the Internet and use e-mail for educational purposes.

**By not signing, I understand that my child will not be permitted to work on the Internet and use e-mail in school.**

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENTS MUST SIGN THE STATEMENT BELOW REGARDING INTERNET USE:**

I understand and agree to adhere to the behaviors outlined in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that any violation of this policy may result in the loss of Internet and e-mail privileges, disciplinary action, or prosecution under federal or state law.

**I understand that if I do not sign this agreement, I will not be permitted to use the Internet and e-mail in school.**

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Secretary of Education, pursuant to Section 9-923-A of the Public School Code, is authorized to purchase textbooks, instructional materials, and equipment, which may be loaned to all children residing in the Commonwealth who are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in nonpublic and private schools. Our school is now in the process of requesting specific textbooks, materials and equipment to be loaned to your child(ren).

In order to participate in the program, a parent/guardian of each child attending the nonpublic or private school must individually request a loan of textbooks, instructional materials and equipment. The enclosed individual request form fulfills that requirement. Please sign the form, date it, and return it to the school immediately.

Thank you for your continued assistance and cooperation. Sincerely  
yours,

Principal

### **Certificate of Individual Request**

#### **For Loan of Textbooks, Instructional Materials and Equipment**

I hereby request the loan of textbooks, instructional materials and equipment in accordance with the Pennsylvania Public School Code of 1949 for my child(ren) attending

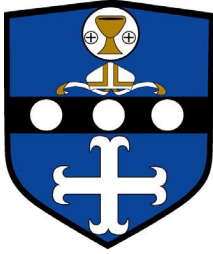
\_\_\_\_\_ School.

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

This program is available only to Pennsylvania residents.

---



## Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown

### Guidelines for Use of Photographic

### Images of Children and Youth

**The following guidelines will be adhered to and authorization form obtained when required, for use of photographic images of children and youth by diocesan Departments, Parishes, Schools, and Agencies.**

#### **For children/youth under 13 years of age:**

Parent permission (release form) **Must** be obtained for any photographic images of children **under 13 years of age** that are used for publicity, brochures, newsletter, web sites, etc.

#### **For children/youth between 13 and 18 years of age**

If photographic imagers being used are covering “news” or a specific event, the use of identifiable photographic images is allowed. Examples of this would include sports games/championships, Boy or Girl Scout Jamborees, award services, Youth Ministry Rallies/events, etc.

If identifiable photographic images are being used as a marketing or development item, permission (release form) must be obtained from the parents to use an identifiable picture. Examples of this would be flyers, brochures, web sites, etc., that would be advertising services, schools, programs, etc. In other words, if the project is “planned,” the youth are being used as “models” and the Photographic images are identifiable, then permission (release form) is needed.

If photographic images on a web site are merely to enhance it and are not being used to report news or specific events, then permission (release form) is needed to use identifiable photographic images.

Parental permission (release form) is needed to include any type of video (VHS or streaming) which shows children in a classroom doing “work” or answering questions – this video is considered an “educational record” and cannot be included without permission of parents.

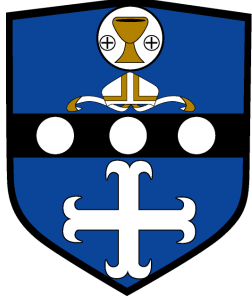
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The safest photographic images to use of youth over 13 for enhancement/marketing are “unidentifiable” photographic images – photographic images taken at a distance, from the side, from the “top”, large group activities, etc.









# Diocese of Altoona- Johnstown *Education Office*

2713 W Chestnut Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16601  
Phone: 814-695-5579  
[www.dioceseaj.org](http://www.dioceseaj.org)

I give my consent for my child's Diocesan Elementary School to share the following information with a Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Catholic High Schools:

- student name,
- parent/guardian name(s),
- address, telephone number(s),
- email address(es), and
- grade level

This information will be shared for the purposes of enhancing programming. I understand that this information will be treated as confidential and not be released to any other parties except those stated. I understand that participation in sharing this information is voluntary.

I am the parent or legal guardian of the student named and hereby fully release and discharge all Diocesan Schools, and their administrators, employees, and agents, from all liabilities arising out of or in connection with the above described demographic data sharing relative to the above stated organizations. I reserve the right to withdraw my consent at any time by submitting written notification to school administration.

---

Child's Name Printed

---

Parent's Name Printed

---

Parent's Signature

---

Date







# **Elementary and Middle School Student and Parent Handbook**

800 Westerly Parkway  
State College, PA 16801  
814-238-1592  
[www.olvcatholicschool.org](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org)

Version 4.0  
August 2022

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>5</b>
School Mission	5
School Philosophy	5
School Alma Mater	5
Relationship with the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown	6
Relationship with the Pennsylvania Department of Education	6
Middle States Accreditation	6
<b>ADMISSIONS</b>	<b>7</b>
New Students	7
Transfer Students	7
Students With Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	7
Re-Enrollment	7
Tuition	8
Payments	8
Tuition Payment Due Dates	9
Tuition Assistance/Scholarships	9
<b>ACADEMICS</b>	<b>10</b>
Curriculum	10
Evaluation	11
Classroom-based Evaluation	11
Online Gradebook/Powerschool	11
Report Cards	11
Honor Roll	11
Standardized Testing	11
Aimsweb Testing	12
Learning Support Resources and Programs	12
Field Trips	12
Homework	12
School Supplies	13
School Year	13
Volunteerism (Middle School)	13
<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>14</b>
General Overview	14
Arrival	14
By Bus	14
By Car (“Parent Drop-off”) or Walking	14

Dismissal	14
Tardiness	15
Appointments During School	15
Absences	16
Excused Absences	16
Unexcused Absences	16
Planned Absences/Educational Field Trips	16
School Cancellations and Delays	17
Early School Dismissals	17
<b>DRESS CODE</b>	<b>18</b>
General Appearance	18
Uniform	18
General Requirements	18
Elementary Uniform Requirements	19
Middle School Uniform Requirements	20
Physical Education Uniform Requirements	21
Mass Uniform Requirements	21
Dress Down (Out of Uniform) Days	22
Middle School Events	22
<b>STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>23</b>
Expectations Overview	23
Overall	23
In the Cafeteria	23
At Recess/On the Playground	23
At Assemblies	24
At Mass/Religious Services	24
On the Bus	24
Recess	25
Outside Recess	25
Indoor Recess	25
Religious Activities	25
Memorandum of Understanding for Parents/Guardians of Catholic Students	25
Computer and Internet Use	26
iPad Use	26
Cell Phone and “Smartwatch” Use	26
Use of School Equipment and Property	27
Lockers	27
General Rules and Requirements	27
Middle School Lockers	27

<b>BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE</b>	<b>28</b>
General Overview	28
Authority of the Administration, Faculty, and Staff	28
Classroom-based Expectations and Management	28
Student Misconduct/Misbehavior	28
Categories of Misbehavior/Misconduct	28
Parent/Guardian Notification	29
Student Consequences of Misbehavior/Misconduct	29
Important Caveats	30
Individual Behavior Plan	31
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>32</b>
Access to Student Records	32
Communication with Non-Custodial Parent	32
Confidentiality	32
Parent-Teacher Conferences	32
Principal’s Weekly Update (E-announcements)	32
School Calendar	32
School Website	33
<b>SERVICES</b>	<b>34</b>
Bussing	34
Food Service	34
Free-Reduced Priced Lunch	34
Summer Lunch Program	34
<b>EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>35</b>
General Overview	35
After School Activity Program	35
Athletics	35
Fine Arts	35
Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)	35
Extracurricular Activity Fee	36
Extracurricular Activity Behavior Expectations	36
<b>PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>37</b>
Committee Work	37
Parent Teacher Guild (PTG)	37
Athletic Council	37
School Council	37
Technology Committee	38
Fundraising	38

Box Tops for Education	38
Educational Improvement Tax Credits	38
Giant A+ Rewards	38
OLV Day Walk-A-Thon	38
Volunteering	38
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	<b>40</b>
Doorbell and Door Codes	40
Emergency Drills	40
Harassment	40
Health Services	41
Illness in School	41
Infectious Diseases	42
Lice	42
Lost and Found	42
Medication at School	42
Safe2Say Something Program	42
School Nurse	43
Student Reluctance	43
Parental Supervision Required at School-Sponsored Family Events	43
Parking	43
Peanut and Other Food Allergies	43
Personal Property	44
Phone Calls	44
Playground Boundaries	44
Security Camera and Video Surveillance System	44
School Resource Officer	44
Use of School Grounds	44
Visitors to School	45
Wellness Policy	45
Youth Protection Program	45



# PRINCIPLES

## School Alma Mater

Our Lady of Victory, the school that we love,  
You showed us the ways of our Father above.  
You took us and formed us with kindness and care;  
May God always smile on you, this is our prayer.

Through all of our lives in whatever we do  
The lessons we learned here we'll always hold true.  
You taught us to reason, to feel and to see;  
Your sons and your daughters forever we'll be

## **Relationship with the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School is a part of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The OLVCS administration works in conjunction with members of the Education Office of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown and the leadership at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church to determine and implement general school policy. Information about Diocesan education policies can be found at [h](https://education.dioceseaj.org/policy/) <https://education.dioceseaj.org/policy/> or by contacting the Diocesan Education Office.

## **Relationship with the Pennsylvania Department of Education**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School is recognized as a Registered School by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. OLVCS follows the educational rules and guidelines set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in so much as they align with the mission and philosophy of OLVCS, Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, and the Education Office of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. OLVCS participates in the Acts 195/90/35 Programs, which provide for the loan of textbooks, instructional materials and equipment to Pennsylvania students enrolled in private/nonpublic schools. As a result, OLVCS uses textbooks, instructional materials, and other educational equipment that meet or exceed the standards of Pennsylvania Department of Education.

## **Middle States Accreditation**

In addition to being approved by the Education Office of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown and being a Registered School by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA-CESS <https://msa-cess.org/>).

MSA-CESS accreditation is an external, objective validation of school quality and student achievement. Only schools that meet a high standard of institutional mission, goals, performance, and resources may receive MSA-CESS accreditation. The MSA-CESS accreditation process includes a self-study, evaluation of this self-study and a site visit by external evaluators.

MSA-CESS is recognized by the United States Secretary of Education to conduct accreditation activities for elementary and secondary schools in Pennsylvania and other Northeastern states. MSA-CESS accredits preK-12 public, private, parochial, charter, non-degree granting career and technical post-secondary institutions, special purpose schools, supplementary education centers, learning services providers, and distance education institutions.

# ADMISSIONS

## New Students

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School welcomes all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or national origin.

Current enrollment requirements for students entering all grades at Our Lady of Victory Catholic school may be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/admissions](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/admissions). All application and enrollment information must be submitted via SchoolAdmin, an online school admissions and enrollment platform ([https://ourladyofvictory.schooladminonline.com/users/sign\\_in](https://ourladyofvictory.schooladminonline.com/users/sign_in)). Questions regarding registering a new student should be directed to the school office.

## Transfer Students

Students transferring from another school will be enrolled subject to a three-month probationary period. Further, OLVCS will obtain a certified copy of the transfer student's academic records from his/her previous school. Parent/guardian permission is not required for the transfer of these records.

## Students With Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

It is the policy of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School that students for whom English is not their first language will be assessed for English proficiency and those with Limited English Proficiency will be enrolled on a provisional basis.

If it is determined that the student lacks sufficient English skills to maintain enrollment, the student and their parents/guardians must agree for the student to attend LEP tutoring sessions. OLVCS will provide the tutor, but paying the cost for the tutor is the responsibility of the student's parents/guardians. Further, LEP students may be required to obtain an electronic translator and bring it to all classes.

After one marking period, the OLVCS faculty and administration will assess the student with LEP in the area of language acquisition, classroom performance and behavior. A decision will be made at that time to remove provisional status.

If at any time the student with LEP or his/her parents/guardians do not comply with these requirements, the student's enrollment at OLVCS can be terminated.

## Re-Enrollment

In the Spring of each year, the Our Lady of Victory Catholic School administration offers re-enrollment to current students in good standing. Parents/guardians of eligible students are required to complete the re-enrollment process through SchoolAdmin, in order to verify their student's enrollment for the upcoming school year.

Re-enrollment is a privilege, not a right. The OLVCS administration may refuse re-enrollment to any student who has not made sufficient academic progress and/or demonstrates repeated, disruptive behavior. Further, the administration may deny re-enrollment to any student whose parents/guardians have been unable to meet their financial obligations to OLVCS or who have demonstrated inappropriate, harmful or disparaging behavior toward OLVCS personnel, students, or the school in general, as deemed by the OLVCS administration.

If a student is not eligible for re-enrollment, the administration will notify the student's parent/guardian of this in writing. It is the student's parent/guardian's responsibility to identify and secure a new educational placement for his/her student. Questions regarding re-enrollment should be directed to the school principal.

## Tuition

The parish of Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church and the administration of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School make every effort to make tuition for the school affordable. The per-pupil cost is calculated each year and used to determine the tuition rates and fees. Tuition rates are published each year in the Spring. Current rates may be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/tuition](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/tuition).

In general, there are two tuition rates:

1. Catholic parishioner rate
2. Non-Catholic parishioner rate

To be eligible for the Catholic parishioner rate, parents/guardians must provide documentation of Catholic parish registration.

## Payments

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School has a history of working in good faith with families regarding tuition payments, but families are responsible for communicating with the school, committing to a payment plan that is acceptable to all parties, and fulfilling the terms of the approved payment plan.

All families must enroll in FACTS, an online tuition management service ([www.facts.mgt.com](http://www.facts.mgt.com)) and are responsible for paying the annual FACTS enrollment fee. Through this service tuition payments may be made by credit card, debit card, or check. At enrollment, parents/guardians will be given an OLVCS-specific link for FACTS enrollment.

Tuition and other charges (eg. ASAP payments) must be paid in full by the last day of the marking period for a student to receive his/her report card or graduation certificate (if applicable).

## Tuition Payment Due Dates

Below is a chart of tuition payment due dates:

<b>To Receive a Report Card for:</b>	<b>Tuition/Fees must be paid through:</b>
First Marking Period	September
Second Marking Period	November
Third Marking Period	February
Last Day of School/Fourth Marking Period	Last Day of School

The tuition of students who withdraw from OLVCS before the end of the school year may be prorated. However, permanent records of students leaving OLVCS will not be forwarded to the new school until all tuition and other charges are paid in full.

With respect to making tuition payments, the administration will make a concerted effort to work with families, including those with financial need. However, if a family does not pay an outstanding balance after multiple reminders by Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, the administration reserves the right to send the unpaid balance for tuition and other charges to a collection agency. Failure to review an online account does not constitute a valid reason for not paying tuition on time. Further, current students with unpaid balances may not be eligible for re-enrollment in the following school year, at the discretion of the school administration.

## **Tuition Assistance/Scholarships**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School is aware that Catholic education can mean substantial financial sacrifice for many families and is committed to structuring a comprehensive tuition assistance program to benefit all who need assistance. While OLVCS believes the primary responsibility for financing a Catholic education rests with the family, specific circumstances can often mean tuition assistance is needed.

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School is able to offer overall, income-based tuition assistance through the Second Century Scholarship Fund. Parents/guardians must complete an application requesting this support in the spring of the year prior to the school year for which the assistance will be used. Information about the program, including income eligibility guidelines and applications due dates, can be found at [www.olvcatholicsschool.org/tuitionassistance](http://www.olvcatholicsschool.org/tuitionassistance).

If, during the school year, a family's financial situation makes it very difficult to pay tuition on time, parents/guardians are asked to notify the school principal. In some cases, the administration is able to give limited, short-term financial support.

# ACADEMICS

## Curriculum

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School follows the standards and requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, as well as the curriculum and requirements established by the Education Office of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The Education Office endeavors, through the revision of the curriculum guides, to provide continuity and stability to the teaching-learning process while assisting in the growth of students. Curriculum policy is developed by our school faculty under the leadership of the school administration.

Basic subjects and time allotments are established by the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. Curriculum content is determined through faculty selection of appropriate grade-level materials. The basic skills are presented in a context specific to the level of study. The sequential presentation of subject material within the curriculum begins at the introductory level. The OLVCS curriculum provides an education for the development of the total person. The religious dimension gives meaning to one's relationship with God, self, others and the physical world. Gospel values are the heart of our curriculum, and are integrated in all areas.

In accordance with our Diocesan directives, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School seeks to achieve the following three goals:

1. To integrate religious values within the total school program.
2. To provide a Catholic environment in which academic excellence can be achieved to each student's potential
3. To meet the needs of each student by correlating the continuous-progress philosophy through the use of the curriculum.

The following subjects are taught at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School.

Language Arts  
Mathematics  
Social Studies  
Science

Religion  
Art  
Spanish  
Music

Health  
Physical Education  
Library Skills  
Technology Skills

The educational materials and evaluative measures all align with Pennsylvania Department of Education standards and requirements. More information may be found at [www.olvcatholicsschool.org/academics](http://www.olvcatholicsschool.org/academics) or through contacting your student's teacher.

# Evaluation

## Classroom-based Evaluation

Formal student evaluation is obtained primarily through fixed standards of achievement, as well as formative and summative evaluation and standardized tests. These tests are used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. Informally, OLVCS students are evaluated on the basis of teacher observation.

## Online Gradebook/Powerschool

All teachers use a secure, online gradebook system, Powerschool, to enter grades and monitor students' academic performance. Middle school students and their parents/guardians may monitor grades in all subjects by logging into this online gradebook system. A parent/guardian must use a student-specific code to access his/her student's information. More information about this system can be obtained from any middle school teacher.

## Report Cards

Report cards are distributed to all students in good standing four times during the school year, following the end of each marking period. Parents/guardians are asked to sign and return the report card envelope to the classroom teacher for the first three marking periods. After the fourth marking period, parents/guardians may keep the report card and envelope.

On each report card, students in Grades 1 through 8 receive a letter grade in each subject. Kindergarten students are assessed on a Kindergarten-specific scale. Quantitative and qualitative information about student behavior may also be included on the report card. For more detailed grade information, parents/guardians should contact their student's teacher.

## Honor Roll

Each marking period, Middle School students have the opportunity to be recognized for their academic achievement by being placed on the Honor Roll or High Honor Roll. To qualify for the Honor Roll, a student must achieve a GPA of  $> 3.33$  in the five core subjects. A student who achieves a GPA of  $> 3.67$  in the five core subjects qualifies for the High Honor Roll. The five core subjects are language arts, mathematics, religion, science, and social studies. Students with a C+ or lower in any subject, including specials, are ineligible for any type of honor roll designation.

## Standardized Testing

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) is administered to Our Lady of Victory Catholic School students in grades 2 through 8 in the mid-spring of each school year. The ITBS is used to evaluate student progress and to assess the effectiveness of the school program. The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is also administered to Grades 4 and 7 in the spring of each year. Additional standardized tests may be also administered at the discretion of the administration and/or request of the Diocesan Education Office.

The student-specific standardized testing scores are distributed to the parents/guardians when they become available, usually in the late spring.

## Aimsweb Testing

The Aimsweb Test is a leading assessment and RTI solution in schools today. This test is a complete web-based monitoring data system that is given at designated times during the school year to track individual student progress in grades K-5. This testing has been shown to efficiently allocate notifications for interventions.

## Learning Support Resources and Programs

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers a Learning Support Program to provide accommodations for students with disabilities who are integrated ("mainstreamed") into the regular classroom. Students who have an IEP or 504 plan from a public school **are maybe** eligible for this service. In addition, teachers working in conjunction with a student's parents may request Learning Support services for a student. If it is determined that an evaluation is needed, the student's public school of residence **or the Central Intermediate Unit 10** completes this evaluation. OLVCS faculty will help and guide parents and students through this process.

At OLVCS, the Learning Support Program staff work in conjunction with Central Intermediate Unit #10 and Title 1 personnel to provide learning support services to meet both educational and social needs of OLVCS students. Central Intermediate Unit Act 89 services provide support for students who need extra assistance beyond the classroom. Further, some students may qualify for Title 1 reading support through the student's home district. Both Act 89 and Title 1 eligibility are determined by teacher and parent recommendations, and **further additional** testing will **be necessary to qualify. used to determine if a student qualifies for those services.**

Depending on a student's needs, OLVCS Learning Support Program staff can assist a student with **mastery of** grade-level subject matter through one-on-one support, homework help, and in-classroom support. The goal of the Learning Support Program is to help enrolled students gain the skills and confidence they need to participate and succeed in the regular classroom.

For more information about Learning Support, parents/guardians should contact their student's teacher or the school principal.

## Field Trips

Field trips are designed as a part of the educational process and are scheduled to enhance classroom lessons. No student may go on a field trip without a written permission slip signed by a parent/guardian. Parents/guardians wishing to help chaperone a class field trip must have completed the Diocesan Youth Protection Program online training and have submitted valid clearances. Questions regarding class field trips should be directed to a student's teacher.

## Homework

Homework is an integral part of the learning process and must be completed regularly. Homework



reinforces what has been taught in the classroom and develops independent study habits.

OLVCS teachers commonly post homework assignments on the whiteboard in their classrooms and on their classroom webpages. Middle school teachers also post homework assignments on a shared calendar that students and parents can access to view all assignments for a given day in one location. All students are expected to maintain an assignment book, in which daily assignments are to be recorded. The amount of homework corresponds with the grade level.

Parents/guardians will be notified when students have shown inadequate effort to complete assignments. However, it is recommended that parents/guardians regularly check to see if their student's homework has been completed.

## **School Supplies**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School provides general school supplies for its students. This includes folders, pencils, pens, crayons, glue sticks, scissors, notebook paper, etc. Each student is responsible for having a backpack and lunchbox (if he/she brings his/her lunch from home).

## **School Year**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School will provide a Diocesan-approved calendar prior to the onset of the school year. This calendar is posted at [www.olvcatholicsschool.org/calendar](http://www.olvcatholicsschool.org/calendar).

## **Volunteerism (Middle School)**

All students in grades 6-8 are required to do twenty hours of volunteer work each school year. This volunteerism should be documented using the form supplied by the middle school religion teacher. Completion of this requirement is reflected in a middle school student's religion grade.

# ATTENDANCE

## General Overview

Students are expected to attend school every day it is in session. A student may only attend an extracurricular activity if he/she has been in school on that given day.

## Arrival

Students may arrive for the school day at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School as early as 7:30AM. It is strongly suggested that students arrive by 7:50 AM in order that they may have time to unpack their backpacks, get their school supplies ready, put items in their lockers, and be ready for a successful start of the school day. Students who do not arrive by 8:00 AM must report to the school office.

## By Bus

All buses are required to have the students exit the vehicle to the walkway in front of the front gym doors. The students must enter the school through the gym doors and wait in the auditorium/gym under faculty supervision. At 7:40 AM the students will be dismissed to go to their classrooms.

## By Car (“Parent Drop-off”) or Walking

Walkers or students arriving by car must arrive between 7:30 AM and 7:50 AM. To drop off their students, parents/guardians should enter into the back parking lot from Saxton Dr. and follow the designated traffic pattern. Parents/guardians should proceed into the designated drop off area and put their vehicle into park. Students may exit the vehicle when it is safe and immediately enter the school through the back door. Vehicles should exit out of the parking lot onto Westerly Parkway. Additional information may be found at <https://www.olvcatholicschool.org/Page/3083>

## Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 2:30 PM. Students will be dismissed as designated by the parent/guardian on the student’s Transportation Form. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to inform the school office of any dismissal changes. If there is a change in a student’s dismissal plans, the parent/guardian must call the school office by 1:00 PM to inform school personnel of the change. If there is any question regarding a student’s dismissal plans, the student will be kept at school.

Students who have not been picked up by 2:45 PM will be signed in ASAP and their parent/guardian will be responsible for any fees incurred.

## Bus Riders

Students who are transported by bus will exit to the line of busses through the auditorium. For more information about your student's bussing plan contact the school office or your student's school district transportation office (<https://www.olvcatholicschool.org/Page/540>).

## “Parent Pick-Up” and Walkers

Students who are "parent pick-up" or walkers will exit through the door by the library or middle school doors, once they have reported to the faculty member on duty. Students will be escorted to their parent/guardian's vehicle, once the parent/guardian reaches the pick up area. Detailed instructions regarding “Parent Pick-Up” can be found at <https://www.olvcatholicschool.org/Page/3083>.

## ASAP Pick-Up

To pick up a student from ASAP, parents/guardians should enter through the doors by the library, report to a ASAP staff member, and sign the student out on the ASAP form. To learn more about ASAP, go to [www.olvcatholicschool.org/asap](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/asap).

## Tardiness

A student arriving after 8:00 AM must report to the school office with their parent/guardian to be signed in before going to their classroom. A written reason for being tardy must be provided by the parent. Oversleeping and/or missing the bus are not typically considered legitimate reasons for tardiness. Lunch orders submitted after 8:30 AM cannot be guaranteed. The number of tardies is recorded on students' report cards.

Parents/guardians of students who are habitually tardy will be contacted by administration and may need to meet with administration to implement an attendance improvement plan. Students who are tardy five or more times may be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the administration.

## Appointments During School

On the day of the appointment, the parent should send in a note to the school with their student, alerting his/her teacher and the administration that the student has an appointment that will take him/her out of class (e.g. dentist appt.).

When arriving at school to pick up the student for the appointment, the parent/guardian must report to the school office and sign the student out. Students are not permitted to leave the school building during the school day unless accompanied by a parent/guardian. It is strongly suggested that anytime a student visits a physician that an excuse document, issued by the health care office, is given to the school office.

When the student returns to school, the parent/guardian must accompany the student to the school office and sign him/her in.

## Absences

If a student will be absent from school for any reason, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School requires that a parent/guardian contact the school by phone by 8:30 AM to inform school personnel of the student's absence. If leaving a message on the school's voicemail, parents/guardians should include:

- Student's name
- Homeroom
- Reason for absence
- Instructions regarding obtaining and completing missed work

Students who are absent from school are not allowed to attend any extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic events, dance, etc.) on that given day. The number of student absences is recorded on the student's report card.

## Excused Absences

In accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Compulsory Attendance Law, all student absences are considered unexcused until the school receives a signed, written excuse from the parent/guardian. All written excuses must be received within three days of the absence. The note must be submitted as a hard copy, faxed, or scanned document. Email notification is not acceptable.

Following each absence, a student must submit a written, signed note from his/her parent/guardian detailing the following to the school office within 3 days of the absence:

- Student's name
- Homeroom
- Reason for absence
- Parent/guardian signature

Parents/guardians may provide up to 10 written, parental excuses each year per student. After ten absences, a written excuse from a doctor must be provided to the school office.

## Unexcused Absences

Any absences that are not defined above are considered unexcused absences. Students who have unexcused absences and their parent/guardian will be required to meet with the administration. At the discretion of the administration, the student may not be permitted to make-up missed work and may not be eligible for re-enrollment.

## Planned Absences/Educational Field Trips

A student's parent/guardian must submit written notification of planned absences that extend beyond four (4) school days to the student's teacher and administration at least two weeks in advance of the anticipated absence. A form for this purpose may be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/forms](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/forms).

It is the student's responsibility to contact each of his/her teachers in order to make arrangements regarding anticipated assignments and other make-up work for the period of absence. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that the student completes and turns in the work on the day he/she returns to school.

## **School Cancellations and Delays**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School follows the State College Area School District regarding cancellations and delays. Cancellations are usually determined by 5:30 AM and announcements are made to parents/guardians through the automated contact system. On days that school is canceled, ASAP and other after school activities (e.g. athletic team practices/competitions, band, etc.) will not take place. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the school office of any changes to the family's emergency contact information.

## **Early School Dismissals**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School follows the State College Area School District regarding early dismissals due to inclement weather or other emergencies. In the event of an early dismissal, the OLVCS administration will notify parents/guardians of the early dismissal through the automated contact system. ASAP and other after school activities (e.g. athletic team practices/competitions, band, etc.) will not take place.

Each OLVCS student will be dismissed as per the instructions of his/her Early Dismissal Plan. In general, a student transported by the State College Area School District transportation service will ride on the bus # of his/her "afternoon bus". It is not uncommon for transportation to take longer than usual during an early dismissal.

Parents/guardians are asked to refrain from calling the school office, unless absolutely necessary, during the period of an early dismissal.

# DRESS CODE

All students are required to follow the established dress code. The school uniform must be worn on all school days, except those designated by the administration as “dress down days.” Students who do not follow the dress code/wear the appropriate uniform may be subject to disciplinary action. The administration reserves the right to be the final judge of what is acceptable in matters of student dress and grooming.

## General Appearance

- All clothing worn in school must be clean, pressed and presentable (no holes in knees, tears, etc.).
- All clothing worn in school must be sized correctly and worn appropriately.
- Girls may wear post-type earrings only. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.
- No body piercings or tattoos are permitted.

## Uniform

The administration has chosen a modest uniform, which our students find comfortable and up-to-date, and parents generally find fashionable and easy to care for. Information about current uniform options may be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/uniforms](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/uniforms).

New, official uniform items may be purchased from Lands’ End, using preferred school code # 900074790. Gym uniforms for middle school students may be purchased through Lands’ End or Collegiate Pride. A parent-organized, used uniform sale generally occurs in the fall and spring of each school year. Parents/guardians are encouraged to label each of their student’s clothing articles (especially outerwear) with the student’s name.

## General Requirements

- Shirts
  - Shirts must be tucked into trousers/skirts/skorts.
  - White T-shirts may be worn under uniform shirts but may not be visible.
  - Collars and sleeves of shirts/blouses may not be rolled in or up.
- Bottoms
  - Shorts and skorts must be at a modest length.
  - Skirts must reach within an inch above the top of the knee and may not be rolled up.
  - Boys may wear shorts, and girls may wear shorts or skorts without tights from
    - First day of school to October 31st, and
    - April 15th to the last day of school.
  - Girls may wear skorts with tights between November 1st and April 14th, but shorts (with or without tights) are not permitted during this time.
  - Girls are encouraged to wear shorts (spandex “biker” shorts, preferred) under their skirts, but the shorts may not be visible.
  - Baggy, oversized, flared-bottom, cargo, or drawstring trousers or shorts are not permitted.

- Boys are encouraged to wear solid color belts, but this is not required.
- Outerwear
  - Only uniform-specific outerwear may be worn in the classroom.
  - Non-uniform outerwear may be worn at recess, when outdoors.
  - Uniform shirts must be worn under uniform-specific outerwear.
- Socks/Tights/Leggings
  - “No show” socks are not permitted.
  - Only leggings that reach the ankle may be worn under skirts/jumpers.
  - Socks must be worn when wearing leggings.
- Shoes
  - Sandals, flip-flops, and light-up sneakers are not permitted.
  - Boots are not permitted to be worn during the school day.
  - Students must wear sneakers/athletic shoes for physical education class.

## Elementary Uniform Requirements

The following chart summarizes the uniform requirements for students in Kindergarten through Grade 5. See the school website ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/uniform](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/uniform)) to view images of these options and additional details.

Item	Boy (K-5)	Girl (K-3)	Girl (4-5)
Shirt	Light blue polo with logo White polo (logo optional) White turtleneck shirt	Light blue polo with logo White polo (logo optional) White blouse White turtleneck shirt	Light blue polo with logo White polo (logo optional) White blouse White turtleneck shirt
Bottom	Navy chino trousers Navy walking shorts	Plaid jumper Navy chino trousers Navy walking shorts Navy skort	Plaid jumper Navy chino trousers Navy walking shorts Navy skort Plaid skirt
Outerwear	Navy fleece with logo Navy sweatshirt with logo Navy sweater (logo optional)	Navy fleece with logo Navy sweatshirt with logo Navy sweater (logo optional)	Navy fleece with logo Navy sweatshirt with logo Navy sweater (logo optional)
Socks	Solid white, navy, tan, black, or gray	Solid navy or white, that are at knee, crew or ankle length	Solid navy or white, that are at knee, crew or ankle length
Tights	NA	Solid navy or white	Solid navy or white
Leggings	NA	Solid navy to the ankle	Solid navy to the ankle



Shoes	Sneakers/athletic shoes Brown/black/neutral dress shoes	Sneakers/athletic shoes Brown/black/neutral color flats or "Mary Janes"	Sneakers/athletic shoes Brown/black/neutral color flats or "Mary Janes"
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## Middle School Uniform Requirements

The following chart summarizes the uniform requirements for students in Grades 6-8. See the school website ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/uniform](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/uniform)) to view images of these options and additional details.

Item	Boy	Girl
Shirt	Light blue Oxford shirt (logo optional)	Light blue blouse (logo optional)
Tie	Maroon Crimson and Blue	NA
Bottom	Navy chino trousers Navy walking shorts	Navy chino trousers Navy walking shorts Navy skirt
Outerwear	Maroon fleece with logo Maroon sweatshirt with logo	Maroon fleece with logo Maroon sweatshirt with logo
Socks	Dress Socks: Solid white, navy, tan, black, or brown Athletic Socks: Solid black, white or navy calf-height	Dress Socks: Solid navy or white, that are at knee, crew or ankle length Athletic Socks: Solid black, white or navy calf-height
Tights	NA	Solid navy or white
Leggings	NA	Solid navy to the ankle
Stockings/ Nylons	NA	Solid blue or skin tones
Shoes	Sneakers/athletic shoes Brown/black/neutral dress shoes	Sneakers/athletic shoes Brown/black/neutral flats

## Physical Education Uniform Requirements

The following chart summarizes the uniform requirements for physical education class for boys and girls:

Item	Middle School Students	Elementary Students
Top	Short sleeve gray T-shirt with logo	NA
Bottom	Navy athletic shorts with logo	NA
Shoes	Sneakers/athletic shoes	Sneakers/athletic shoes

## Mass Uniform Requirements

Students are required to wear a particular uniform to the school Mass each week. The following chart summarizes the Mass uniform requirements:

Grade	Gender	Mass Uniform Requirements
Kindergarten	Boy	Any standard approved uniform combination
Kindergarten	Girl	Any standard approved uniform combination
1-3	Boy	White uniform shirt with navy trousers
1-3	Girl	White uniform shirt with plaid jumper
4-5	Boy	White uniform shirt with navy trousers
4-5	Girl	White shirt with plaid jumper or plaid skirt
6-8	Boy	Uniform shirt, navy trousers, and school tie
6-8	Girl	Uniform shirt with navy skirt

## **Dress Down (Out of Uniform) Days**

Dress down days are special days when students are not required to wear the school uniform. The following policy has been created regarding the dress for out of uniform days and events, in accordance with the Catholic virtues of modesty and temperance. Administration reserves the final right in determining the appropriateness of clothing.

On Dress Down Days, students may wear street clothes that meet the following requirements:

- No oversized or tight fitting clothing may be worn.
- Pants may not drag on the ground or have holes/tears.
- Pants/shorts must be worn at the waist, not on or below the hips.
- Shorts must have an inseam of 7 inches or more and may only be worn between April 15 and October 31.
- The lower portion of the skirts may be no more than 2 inches above the knee. No cut-off shorts/skirts are permitted.
- Skorts must be of a modest length.
- No tank tops/thin straps or short length shirts (eg. crop-tops) may be worn.
- No shirts showing violence or inappropriate sayings/pictures can be worn.
- No tight-fitting stretch pants or form-fitting bottoms are permitted.
- Leggings are permitted to be worn under a dress, a skirt, with shorts, or while wearing a long (falls well below the hips) shirt or sweatshirt.
- Flip-flops are not permitted.

## **Middle School Events**

When attending school-sponsored events (e.g. dances), middle school students are required to wear clothes that meet the requirements for Dress Down Days. Students may be denied access to the event if they are wearing clothing that does not meet the requirements listed above. As during the school day, the administration reserves the right to determine if a student's dress is within the dress code requirements.

# STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

## Expectations Overview

At Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, all students are expected to exhibit respectful and positive behavior. As is developmentally appropriate for each student's grade/age level, each student assumes responsibility for his/her own personal behavior at all times. A positive learning climate at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School depends upon an environment free from undue disruption due to misbehavior/bad conduct.

The OLVCS environment includes all rooms, spaces, and buildings on the school grounds, as well as those of the CIU instructional areas and Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church. When attending field trips, sporting events, or other extracurricular activities as representatives of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, students are expected to display proper decorum and conduct themselves in a respectful fashion.

The following describes general behavior expectations for OLVCS students:

### Overall

- Arrive to school/homeroom on time
- Wear proper uniform/dress down day clothing
- Maintain respectful attitude and behavior toward others
- Use courteous language
- Raise your hand for permission to speak
- Follow safety rules
- Respect school property and personal property of others
- Walk quietly on the right-hand side of the hall
- Refrain from cutting and saving places in line
- Keep hands to yourself
- Chewing gum in school, on buses, or on school premises at any time is prohibited. (This includes all school functions and field trips.)
- Running, shouting or pushing is prohibited.

### In the Cafeteria

- Follow directions of cafeteria aides and teachers
- Maintain conversational tones when speaking
- Maintain a clean eating area and clean up spills, etc. that occur
- Raise hand to be excused by a lunch aide before disposing of your trash or leaving table
- When a student's class is called, line up in single-file lines to go outside for recess

### At Recess/On the Playground

- Stay within playground boundaries
- Return to classrooms only with supervision
- Ask for permission to enter building or seek medical attention, if necessary

- Play fair
- Refrain from intentionally interfering with games
- Return all playground equipment to proper storage area
- Line up promptly and quietly when the bell rings
- Enter school quietly when recess is done
- Check that uniform is in order (eg. shirt tucked in)

### At Assemblies

- Enter and exit the auditorium quietly
- Use appropriate applause
- Refrain from talking during performance

### At Mass/Religious Services

- Before leaving the classroom, check that uniform is in order (eg. shirt tucked in)
- Enter church or service area quietly
- Genuflect or bow while looking at the tabernacle before taking seat in a pew
- Remove any non-uniform clothing (eg. outerwear)
- Follow along in missalette or other worship aid (eg. Stations of the Cross booklet)
- Sing along with choir or cantor as directed
- Join in all verbal responses as prompted
- Refrain from talking, fidgeting, or touching other students
- Fold hands and walk quietly or continue singing when going up for Communion
- Return song sheets, rosary, etc. to teacher or appropriate collection area when the service is over
- Refrain from talking and genuflect devoutly looking toward the tabernacle when leaving pew
- Walk out of church quietly and reverently

### On the Bus

- Keep hands, heads, and all objects inside the bus
- Remain in seat
- Refrain from yelling or making other loud noises
- Refrain from eating, drinking, or gum chewing on the bus
- Follow all behavior rules that apply at school (see above)
- Follow district-specific behavior rules and expectations\*

\*District-specific rider behavior rules and expectations are listed on each student's home school district website.

## **Recess**

In addition to the expectations listed above, the following gives more detail about expected student behavior during recess:

### **Outside Recess**

All students will participate in outdoor recess, weather permitting. Students may not stay indoors because they do not have proper attire. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that students arrive at school with appropriate recess attire.

At the discretion of the lunchroom supervisor, students may be directed to participate in indoor recess due to inclement weather or other circumstances.

### **Indoor Recess**

Students must play quietly in the homerooms. Middle school students may have activities in the gymnasium. Shouting, running, eating, and leaving the classroom without permission is not be permitted. Lunchroom aides and/or classroom teachers will supervise students.

## **Religious Activities**

Christian formation in the gospel values, community service, and self-discipline prepares Catholic school students for the challenges they face today and will in the future. A firm understanding of the Catholic faith is vital to the spiritual well-being of Catholics. Every student is considered a part of the total school community and will be included and is expected to participate in all activities, including those of a religious nature.

All OLVCS students will study and learn the precepts of the Catholic Church. Students will attend Mass once a week at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church, usually on Wednesdays at 9AM. At this Mass, OLVCS students serve as readers, altar servers, and greeters, as well as fulfill other duties for the Mass. Throughout the school year all students will also go to church on Holy Days of Obligation, receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, participate in the Stations of the Cross, Rosary, and May Crowning, as well as other devotions and prayer services. Further, students and their families will be asked to support the efforts of Catholic Services and other social justice organizations that seek to support the mission and tenets of the Roman Catholic faith.

### **Memorandum of Understanding for Parents/Guardians of Catholic Students**

Catholic education is a shared venture of the family, parish community, and the school itself. Parents/guardians of Catholic students are expected to support their parish and to provide the example their family needs to grow in the Catholic faith. Parents/guardians are expected to worship regularly on Sundays and holy days, to participate in the sacramental preparation programs, to contribute financially to the offertory collection, and to offer time and talent to their parish.

## **Computer and Internet Use**

Use of the Internet provides numerous educational benefits for students. When in school, use of the Internet must be in support of education and research, and must be consistent with the educational objectives and policies of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. All school policies regarding student conduct extend to student use of the Internet.

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in loss of this privilege. Students and parents/guardians are required to read, accept and sign an Internet Acceptable Use Policy, outlining online behavior, developed by the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese. A copy of this policy may be obtained from the school office.

## **iPad Use**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School issues iPads to Middle School students for the enhancement of the learning environment. With a parent/guardian's permission, a student may take his/her assigned iPad home to be used outside of school hours. The iPad remains OLVCS property.

The use of the iPad provided by OLVCS is a privilege, not a right. A student will lose the privilege of having an iPad if he/she is found to be using it for any purpose not authorized by his/her teachers, mishandling the device, and/or behaving in any way with the iPad that is in violation of the behavioral expectations of OLVCS students.

Students are to keep their iPad in a keyboard case at all times. Parents/guardians of students issued an iPad from OLVCS are financially responsible for the cost of replacement and/or repair of the iPad, as well as the power charger and keyboard case, if damaged or broken. Cost estimates of replacement and repair can be obtained from the school office.

Students are responsible for their iPads at all times. iPads must be kept away from all food and drink and off the floor. Students are to keep iPads with them or plug them into the designated charging station. If a student gives his/her iPad to another student for any reason, the student who has been assigned the iPad will still be accountable for any misuse or accidents.

Students are to maintain enough memory and have a sufficiently charged battery on their iPads to be able to utilize them for the intended educational purpose. Students are to keep apps and iOS updated. Students with insufficient memory on their iPads may lose the privilege of having them. Students are to plug in their iPad in the designated charging station at the end of each school day.

## **Cell Phone and “Smartwatch” Use**

Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school but not use them during school hours. Cell phones and other communication devices must remain in student lockers during school hours. If participating in an afterschool activity, students may only use a cell phone to contact a parent or guardian (but only with the coach or activity supervisor's approval).

“Smartwatches” are permitted to be worn during school, but they may only be used for the basic function of a watch.

Unapproved use of personal electronic devices (ie. cell phone, Smartwatch, etc.) during the school day, on field trips, or during other school events are subject to confiscation. The device will only be returned to the parent/guardian, and the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Use of School Equipment and Property**

All Our Lady of Victory Catholic School students are expected to treat school property such as laptops, iPads, books, athletic team uniforms, and other supplies with care. If school property is lost or damaged, and it is determined that this had been caused by negligence or intentional acts on the part of the student, then the parents/guardians will be responsible for the entire cost of replacement or repair of the item. If payment is not made in a timely fashion, a student may be dismissed or ineligible for re-enrollment in the following school year. The time frame for payment is at the discretion of the administration.

## **Lockers**

Lockers are the property of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School and are provided for students to store school-related books, materials, and students’ clothing.

### **General Rules and Requirements**

The following are rules and regulations regarding locker use:

1. Lockers are to be used to store items related to the activities at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School
2. OLVCS is not responsible for articles that are stolen or missing from a student’s locker.
3. Stickers or other items that would damage or disfigure the locker are prohibited both inside and outside the locker.
4. The school has the right to inspect or search a student’s locker or desk at any time for the purpose of determining whether it is being improperly used for the storage of illegal items or substances or any materials that pose a threat to the health, safety, order, and welfare of school occupants.
5. Students shall have no expectations of privacy with respect to their use of their lockers. The school administration has the right to conduct locker searches at anytime.
6. Materials deemed inappropriate can be removed by the school administration, teachers, or staff.
7. The OLVCS administration reserves the right to be the final judge of what is acceptable in matters concerning students’ lockers.

### **Middle School Lockers**

In addition to the general rules and regulations listed below, the following pertain to middle school lockers:

1. Middle school students may provide their own combination lock and must submit combination to the homeroom teacher and school office.
2. Sharing combinations to locks with other students is prohibited.



# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

## General Overview

A variety of behavior management techniques, strategies, and procedures will be used to the extent necessary to ensure that the learning environment provided at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School is not disrupted by inappropriate student behavior. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse are not permitted at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School.

## Authority of the Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Every teacher, staff, coach, and member of the Our Lady of Victory Catholic School administration has the right to exercise authority as to the conduct and behavior of students in the school during the time they are in attendance.

## Classroom-based Expectations and Management

Each Our Lady of Victory Catholic School teacher and/or designated learning support expert maintains his/her own classroom behavior expectations and management procedures. These expectations and procedures are discussed with the students during the first week of classes. Written outlines of classroom expectations and procedures are available upon request. If at anytime a student is unwilling or unable to meet the expectations of classroom behavior, he/she may be referred to the administration.

## Student Misconduct/Misbehavior

### Categories of Misbehavior/Misconduct

The following chart illustrates categories of student misbehavior/misconduct:

	Infraction Category			
	Bus-specific	Minor	Serious	Major
Includes, but not limited to:	Out of seat, shouting, throwing objects, fighting, etc.	Dress code violation, Classroom misconduct, Profanity, Horseplay, Loitering, Cafeteria misconduct, Repetitive playground offense, unsportsmanlike conduct (including P.E.)	Fighting Insubordination, Defiant behavior, Verbal harassment, Sexual harassment, Misuse of Technology, Cyberbullying	Theft, Vandalism Possession/misuse of lighters, matches, Possession of weapons and/or "look-a-likes", Assault on staff, Under the influence of or in possession of alcohol, non-prescription drugs, tobacco products, or abuse of prescription drugs.

The chart above is not considered a complete or exhaustive list of infractions, but serves to give illustrative examples and their categorization. The OLVCS administration has the final say as to the category to which a student's specific behavior belongs, as well as the consequences thereof.

## Parent/Guardian Notification

If a student commits an infraction listed above, the Our Lady of Victory Catholic School administration will contact the parents/guardians about the situation and meet with the student (and parents, if applicable) to discuss the consequences.

If a student commits an infraction while riding district-provided transportation (school bus), the driver will fill out a referral form and give it to the school office. The OLVCS administration is responsible for contacting the parents/guardians about the incident and taking any disciplinary with the student.

## Student Consequences of Misbehavior/Misconduct

The following chart shows the general student consequences of misconduct/misbehavior:

Occurrence	Consequence	Type of Infraction			
		Bus-specific	Minor	Serious	Major
1st	Minimum	Warning	Warning	Detention	1 day in-school suspension
	Maximum	1 week no ride	Detention <sup>1</sup>	1 day in-school suspension	Expulsion
2nd	Minimum	1 week no ride	Detention	1 day in-school suspension	1 day out-of-school suspension
	Maximum	2 weeks no ride	1 day in-school suspension <sup>2</sup>	3 day in-school suspension	Expulsion
3rd	Minimum	2 weeks no ride	1 day in-school suspension	2 day in-school suspension	TBA
	Maximum	1 month no ride	3 day in-school suspension	Expulsion	Expulsion
4th	Minimum	1 month no ride	2 day in-school suspension	Indefinite out-of-school suspension	TBA
	Maximum	2 months no ride	Expulsion <sup>4</sup>	Expulsion	Expulsion
5th or more	Minimum	1 Marking period no ride	Indefinite out-of-school suspension <sup>3</sup>	TBA	TBA
	Maximum	1 year no ride	Expulsion	Expulsion	Expulsion

<sup>1</sup>Detention will take place at a designated time and space in the school at the discretion of the administration. The supervising administrator will give the student a task to complete during the detention period. Students will not be allowed to do homework or other school-related activities. If detention takes place after school, the student's parent/guardian is responsible for transportation home. Extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic competitions, band performances, etc.) are not considered an excuse to postpone or cancel the date of the detention.

<sup>2</sup>In-school suspension will take place on a date at the discretion of the administration. The student will report to school as usual but will be excluded from classroom participation for the entirety of the school day. He/she will be and given appropriate assignments. The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic competitions, band performances, etc.) on the day of the suspension.

<sup>3</sup>Out-of-school suspension will take place on a date at the discretion of the administration. On the day of the suspension, the student is not to report to school and is excluded from all school activities. The student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic competitions, band performances, etc.) on the day of the suspension. The student is required to make-up missed work. It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her teachers to obtain information about missed assignments and complete these assignments within 3 days of returning to school.

<sup>4</sup>Expulsion is a permanent status and goes into effective at the time of parental notification. Parents/guardians are responsible for making all necessary arrangements for their child to attend another school, per Pennsylvania law.

## Important Caveats

The accumulation of detentions and/or suspensions may prevent a student from participating in school sponsored and related events. This may be enforced at the discretion of the administration.

In all instances of vandalism, the parent/guardians are responsible for covering the full cost of replacement or repair of damaged/destroyed property and/or other charges incurred by the school as result of the student's behavior. If payment is not made in a timely fashion, a student may be dismissed or ineligible for re-enrollment in the following school year. The time frame for payment is at the discretion of the administration.

In some cases, students who commit major infractions will be referred to law enforcement. Parents/guardians are responsible for any cost incurred by this.

The principal and the pastor are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary guideline, rule or policy for just cause, at their discretion.

## **Individual Behavior Plan**

In situations where a student is struggling with behavior, the administration may place him/her on an Individual Behavior Program (IBP). An IBP is a plan individualized for a student that is designed to teach and reward appropriate classroom and school-related behaviors, as well as offer concrete, predictable consequences for misconduct. The goal of the IBP is to help a student develop skills to avoid problem behaviors and develop positive behaviors in school.

The IBP will be put in place in coordination with the administration, teacher(s), and parents. The administration will monitor the student's behavior and judge if he/she is able to successfully fulfill the requirements of the plan within the designated time period. The principal and pastor reserve the right to make the final decision as to whether or not a student has met the IBP requirements.

Students who are unable to meet the terms of the IBP will be subject to dismissal and/or not eligible for re-enrollment. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians, not OLVCS, to find an alternative school placement for students who are dismissed from OLVCS or deemed ineligible for re-enrollment.

# COMMUNICATION

## Access to Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act grants parents/guardians the right of access to their child's records. If a parent/guardian wishes to view their child's records, a request should be made in writing with 24 hours notice to the principal.

## Communication with Non-Custodial Parent

The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with the respect of the rights of a non-custodial parent. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide, upon request, the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is generally held to mean that an individual will keep in confidence information that has been given to them, and will not reveal it. Students expect that teachers and other staff members will keep confidences. Parents/guardians expect that school officials will give them necessary information concerning the health, life and safety of their students. It is the policy at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School that teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health or safety is in danger. Parents/guardians will be promptly notified of teacher concerns.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences are held once a year, generally in early November. Refer to school calendar ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/calendar](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/calendar)) for scheduled dates. A parent/guardian who would like to schedule a conference with the teacher over and above the scheduled time should contact his/her child's teacher.

## Principal's Weekly Update (E-announcements)

The Our Lady of Victory Catholic School principal sends out an update by email each week. This update includes important information about upcoming events and the results of school-related activities. Further community-based events and activities of interest to OLVCSS families are also reported. Parents/guardians are expected to read these postings and act on the information presented, if applicable. Parents/guardians who find that they are not receiving these updates should contact the school office.

## School Calendar

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School maintains an online calendar of academic, extracurricular, and parish events, as well as teacher in-service and school holidays. This calendar may be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/calendar](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/calendar).

## **School Website**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School maintains a school website, [www.olvcatholicschool.org](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org) , on which important school-related information regarding academic instruction, school events, and extracurricular activities is posted. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to view the website when seeking information about school events or activities. Parents/guardians and students can help maintain the validity and usefulness of the website by alerting the school office of any incorrect/inappropriate information found on the site or “dead links,” as well as making suggestions for additional postings.

# SERVICES

## Bussing

The State College Area School District, the Bellefonte Area School District, the Bald Eagle Area School District, Penns Valley Area School District, and Tyrone School District provide bus transportation for OLVCS students on the days that OLVCS is in session. This may include days that other area schools are not in session. A child may ride only on a bus provided by the school district in which the child resides. Questions regarding bussing for OLVCS students should be directed to the OLVCS Registrar.

## Food Service

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers affordable, nutritious, peanut-free hot lunches at the OLVCS Cafeteria. The cafeteria kitchen is adjacent to the gymnasium. OLVCS students eat at tables in the cafeteria.

The lunch menu is created by the OLVCS Food Service Director, and her assistants, and is published monthly ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/lunchprogram](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/lunchprogram)). Meals include an entree, fruit, vegetable, and milk. Dessert is regularly offered.

Lunch payments may be made by check or through a secure online system, MySchoolBucks ([www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com)). This system may be used for one time payments and recurring payments (autopay). There is a small fee for using this system.

Students arriving at school after 8:30 AM must call in their lunch order prior to 8:30 AM or bring a bag lunch. Students packing their lunch should have their name clearly marked on their lunch box or bag.

Students who forgot their lunch will first be encouraged to select one of the hot lunches for the day. If they decline those choices, they are permitted to call home for a lunch. If a bagged lunch cannot be provided for that day, the student will be required to purchase one of the hot lunches.

## Free-Reduced Priced Lunch

Eligible families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced lunch for their students. Application materials may be found on the school website at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/lunchprogram](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/lunchprogram). Applications should be sent to the school office, not the State College Area School District Food Service Department. Families with students enrolled in more than one school must submit separate applications to each school.

## Summer Lunch Program

Nutritious, free meals are available for students and teens throughout the summer while school is out of session. To learn more visit [www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks](http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks) or call 1.866.3Hungry or 1.877.8Hambre for help connecting to nutritious, affordable food in our community.

# EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

## General Overview

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers a variety of extracurricular activities to enhance our students' growth in mind, body and spirit beyond the classroom. Participation helps our students develop a sense of school pride and spirit, as well as develop new skills and confidence.

Below are short descriptions of the most commonly enrolled activities. The OLVCS website ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/activities](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/activities)) provides a list of currently offered extracurricular activities.

## After School Activity Program

The After School Activity Program (ASAP) is a child-care program, available for OLVCS students beginning in Kindergarten. Care is provided immediately following the school day until 5:30 PM on days when school is in session. Activities will include supervised play, snack, homework time, and educational games. Students may bring their own snacks or purchase snacks. The After School Activities Program is canceled on early dismissal days and on days the school is dismissed early due to inclement weather. For more information, including registration information and fee structure, go to [www.olvcatholicschool.org/asap](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/asap).

## Athletics

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers both PIAA and club team sports. PIAA sports teams include soccer (coed), girls basketball, boys basketball, and track and field. OLVCS offers club teams for fencing, ski/snowboarding, and other sports. For more information about PIAA and club sport teams at OLVCS go to [www.olvcatholicschool.org/athletics](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/athletics).

## Fine Arts

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers band, strings, choir, forensics, and theater. Students perform both at school events and in the community. Specific instrument lessons take place during the school day. Group band and string ensemble practices take place once a week, after school. Practices or the forensics team and theatre productions take place after school. For more information about these programs go to [www.olvcatholicschool.org/finearts](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/finearts).

## Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

Throughout the school year, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers a variety of extracurricular programs that center on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Examples of these programs include the solar car competition club, computer coding classes, the math team, and more. Information about current offerings is posted on the school website ([www.olvcatholicschool.org](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org)).



## **Extracurricular Activity Fee**

Participation in extracurricular activities is optional and commonly requires the payment of a participation fee. Parents/guardians are responsible for the payment of this fee; however, in some cases the fee may be reduced or waived. Parents/guardians seeking a reduced or waived fee must contact the school principal before registering their child for the program.

## **Extracurricular Activity Behavior Expectations**

Student participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. The behavioral expectations of students participating in extracurricular activities are consistent with school/classroom rules, procedures and guidelines. The minimal expectations are outlined in the Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct. Students may be required to meet additional behavioral expectations while participating in a specific activity.

The OLVCS administration and coordinator of a given activity retain the right to exclude any student from any or all extracurricular activities due to non-compliance of established behavioral expectations. Further, failure to comply with behavioral guidelines during extracurricular activities will result in the same consequences as for the school day.

# PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Parent/guardian involvement is vital to Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. Research shows that parent engagement in schools improves student achievement and reduces absenteeism. Further, studies show that students whose parents/guardians volunteer at their school earn higher grades and test scores, have better social skills, and exhibit better behavior.

There are a variety of opportunities for parents/guardians to become involved at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School.

## Committee Work

### Parent Teacher Guild (PTG)

The OLVCS Parent Teacher Guild is a link connecting our school families to our teachers and administration. The purpose of the PTG is to organize fun activities that benefit our school families, allowing parents/guardians and students alike to build relationships and pride in our school. PTG-organized events include the Back-to-School picnic, Family Fun Night, Father-Daughter events, Mother-Son events, and many more. All parents/guardians of students at OLVCS are welcome to volunteer with the PTG. The OLVCS PTG is led by a group of four officers. These are volunteer positions. The officers work with the teachers and administration to organize and implement activities that meet the mission of the PTG.

### Athletic Council

The purpose of the Athletic Council is to advise the OLVCS administration in fulfilling the mission of the Church through the athletic programs of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. The Council is a consultative body which, in fulfilling this mission, cooperates with and is guided by any legal, Diocesan, or parish directives or policies which regulate the conduct of athletics at the school. The Pastor identifies and appoints members to this committee.

### School Council

The purpose of the Council is to advise the Pastor in fulfilling the mission of the Church through the education program of the school. The Council is a consultative body which, in fulfilling this mission, cooperates with and is guided by any legal or Diocesan directives or policies which regulate the conduct of Catholic education on the elementary and middle school levels.

The Pastor identifies and appoints members to this committee. The Council advises in the creation of policies by which the school's program is designed, implemented, and evaluated. The Council is responsive to, and collaborates with, all the parishes sending students to the school, as well as other councils and committees within the parish or school.

## Technology Committee

The purpose of this committee is to offer support and recommendations to the Technology Coordinator and administration in the area of computers and technology. Membership is open to all parents and parishioners with an interest and expertise in this area.

## Fundraising

### Box Tops for Education

These labels may be found on many of a family's favorite food products. Students may bring in the labels to the school office at anytime. Each label will be redeemed by the school for 10 cents.

### Educational Improvement Tax Credits

The Pennsylvania legislature enacted and launched the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program in 2001. The program offers businesses tax credits for donating to organizations that provide low- and middle-income families private school and prekindergarten scholarships. Our Lady of Victory Catholic participates in this program ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/EITC](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/EITC)) and is grateful to business owners who participate in this program and thereby support the Second Century Scholarship program.

Parents/guardians interested in learning how their business might support this program should contact the school office.

### Giant A+ Rewards

This is an easy way to raise funds for Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. Once a shopper registers his/her Giant Bonuscard at <http://giantfoodstores.com/school-rewards/>, each time he/she shops at Giant, a portion of the purchase price will be donated to OLVCS. The school code for OLVCS is 01049. NOTE: Shoppers must reactivate their A+ Rewards each school year.

### OLV Day Walk-A-Thon

The Walk-A-Thon, which takes place on OLV Day (October 7th), is Our Lady of Victory Catholic School's only mandatory fundraiser. Each family is responsible for raising \$200 for the Walk-A-Thon. The funds raised go directly to support OLVCS educational materials and activities, such as classroom enhancements, technology upgrades, student activities, field trips, exercise equipment, and merit scholarships. More information about the Walk-A-Thon and how to make a tax-deductible donation can be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/olvdav](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/olvdav).

## Volunteering

Parent volunteers are an integral part of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. Each year parents/guardians are needed to help in a variety of ways, including doing math cards with students, assisting at the used uniform sale, being a room parent, and organizing Family Fun Night.

Announcements regarding volunteer opportunities are posted on the school website and in the principal's weekly email update. Classroom teachers also make requests for volunteers directly to their students' parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians wishing to volunteer in the classroom must complete the online Youth Protection Program and submit appropriate clearances. Information about these requirements can be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/youthprotection](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/youthprotection).

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Doorbell and Door Codes

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School has a coded front entry door (door nearest the front office). In order to gain entry into the school during school office hours (7:45 AM to 3:00 PM) parents/guardians and other visitors should ring the doorbell. The doorbell may be found on the keypad on the right side of the door. A member of the office staff will open the door using the electronic door opening system. Visitors must go to the school office and show a photo ID before proceeding to rooms within the main school building.

To gain entry to the school after school hours (3:00 to 5:30 PM), parents/guardians must enter in a family-specific code into the door security system keypad. Parents/guardians are prohibited from sharing this door code with anyone who is not authorized to pick up their student(s).

## Emergency Drills

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School faculty, staff and students regularly participate in emergency drill training and practice exercises. These activities are scheduled and supervised by the Security Resource Officer (SRO).

## Harassment

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School will not condone any threat or harassment of any nature. A threat is defined as any comment or action that has the potential to place any member of the school personnel or a student at risk of physical or emotional harm.

No OLVCS teacher, administrator, staff member, or student shall be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. Harassment regulation is grounded in the belief that all persons have a right to be treated with dignity. Demeaning behavior is unacceptable.

The OLVCS administration takes all allegations of harassment or threat of any type, either direct or indirect seriously, and will fully investigate and act upon the allegation.

All OLVCS faculty, staff, volunteers, and students are encouraged to report any threat/harassment or suspicion or threat/harassment to the administration. This includes but is not limited to verbal comments, written communication, drawings, or other suspicious behavior.

Once the report is made, the administration will conduct an investigation by gathering information by contacting individuals who may have pertinent information. This will include, but is not limited to, students, faculty, staff, parents, and other involved parties. In addition, it may be necessary to gather information contained in a student's locker.

Following the gathering of information, the OLVCS administration will convene with the involved parties and an action plan will be formulated. This meeting may include (as applicable), but is not limited to, appropriate students, parents/guardians, teachers, counseling experts, school administrators, and the pastor. In some cases law enforcement may be contacted for additional guidance or to institute a formal charge.

## **Health Services**

In order to comply with Pennsylvania law and the requirements of the State College Area School District, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School requires that students have regular physical examinations and dental screenings, and be up-to-date on their immunizations. Further health screenings of students are done yearly in school by the school nurse, as directed by Pennsylvania law and the requirements of the State College Area School District. A list of requirements is available at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/healthscreenings](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/healthscreenings) or the school nurse. The administration will notify parents/guardians of students in advance when health screenings in school will take place.

Exemptions to health screening or immunization requirements may be granted for medical, religious, moral, or ethical reasons. In this case, a parent/guardian must submit a written request for exemptions to the school nurse for consideration.

It is important to note that school health services supplement, but are not a substitute for, the health care which parents provide for their students. School services devote attention to student health problems and encourage parents to use the services of their physicians, dentist and community agencies when attention is needed.

A doctor assigned to our school by the State College Area School District is available on a date determined by the district to conduct routine physical examinations.

## **Illness in School**

If a student becomes ill in school, he/she should report to the school nurse, with his/her teacher's permission. If the nurse is not available, the student should report to the school office.

The school nurse or a member of the school office staff will contact the parent/guardian and inform him/her of the student's illness. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to arrange transportation and care for the child at home. The parent/guardian must sign the child out at the school office before the child will be allowed to leave the school grounds.

## Infectious Diseases

Some recommendations for when to keep your child home include the following, since these symptoms can indicate a contagious infection and a need for evaluation by your child's clinician:

1. Fever 100 degrees F or more
2. Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
3. Rash on face, arms, chest or legs
4. Blisters or open lesions around mouth or nose
5. Red, watery eye accompanied by itching, burning or crusting discharge
6. Yellow or green nasal discharge, with or without coughing

## Lice

If a child contracts pediculosis (head lice), the parent/guardian must contact the school immediately. Once treated, the parent/guardian is required to accompany the child to school to be examined by the nurse before returning to school. Regardless of whether the lice were initially discovered by the parent or the school nurse, the child must be nit-free (no lice eggs) for re-admission.

## Lost and Found

The Lost and Found rack is located in the auditorium. It is the student's responsibility to claim these items. Unclaimed items are periodically donated to charitable organizations.

## Medication at School

If a student requires prescription or "over-the-counter" medication during the school day, a parent/guardian must submit a medication form. Medication cannot be administered to the student without submission of the medication form. This form may be downloaded at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/forms](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/forms).

All medication must be submitted to the school office in its original container. No student is permitted to carry medication on their person in school. The administration will dispense the medication to the student, per the directions listed on the medication form.

## Safe2Say Something Program

In accordance with Act 44 passed by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in 2018, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School along with all schools in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown participate in the Safe2Say Something program ([www.olvcatholicschool.org/safe2saysomething](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/safe2saysomething)). Safe2Say Something is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General.

The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others, and to "say something" before it is too

late. More information, including information specific for parents/guardians and a link to the Safe2Say Something app, can be found on the Safe2Say Something website ([www.safe2saypa.org](http://www.safe2saypa.org)).

## **School Nurse**

The school nurse is available in case of illness and emergencies that occur during school hours. The school must be informed if a child has any special health problems. It is very important that all emergency information be accurate and up-to-date. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the nurse of any emergency information changes, of any medications your child takes on a regular basis at home (e.g. allergy or headache medication), as well as any food or drug allergies.

## **Student Reluctance**

Parents of students who are reluctant to come to school (i.e. recurrent physical complaints each school morning, increased anxiety about leaving home or fear of riding the bus) are encouraged to discuss the situation with the child's teacher and/or administration. Repeated unexcused absences from school or tardiness can result in disciplinary action or referral of parents to court.

## **Parental Supervision Required at School-Sponsored Family Events**

At all school sponsored events, such as Family Fun Night, Back to School Night, and the Fine Arts Night, students and their siblings are expected to remain inside the designated event area, under parental supervision. No students are allowed to be outside the building during these events, as there will be no supervision outside. During events held in the gymnasium, no students are to be in the academic wing of the school.

## **Parking**

Visitors to the school who will be leaving school grounds before 1PM should park in the visitor parking area in front of the school. In order to prevent problems with the bus lanes, those who expect to stay beyond 2PM should park in the back parking lot between the church and the sidewalk leading to the main entrance to the school.

Parents/guardians picking up students at dismissal may park in the back parking lot, near the outer doors closest to the library.

## **Peanut and Other Food Allergies**

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers peanut-free, hot lunches through the OLVCS Cafeteria. All students are welcome to bring a packed lunch.

During each lunch period a table is designated for OLVCS students with peanut allergies. Only students with peanut allergies and classmates who have purchased a peanut-free meal from the OLVCS Cafeteria may sit and eat at this table. Once the students have eaten, the tables are cleaned to reduce the risk of contamination.



Students may only bring peanut free snacks to their OLVCS classrooms to share (for birthdays, class parties, etc.). Parents/guardians of OLVCS students with peanut and food allergies are encouraged to contact the principal to discuss options available to provide a safe environment for their student.

## **Personal Property**

All personal property that is not needed for educational use (e.g. toys, electronic devices/games, cell phones ,or other communication devices) must be kept in the student's backpack or locker while school is in session, unless given other directions by a teacher. OLVCS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property.

## **Phone Calls**

Parents/guardians should reserve phone use for emergency situations only. If a student needs to call home, he/she must receive permission from their teacher, report to the office and then use a school phone. No other phone use ( such as cell phone or nurse's phone) is permitted. Parents/guardians are asked to refrain from making non-urgent phone calls to the school office from 1:15-2:45 PM (dismissal time).

## **Playground Boundaries**

The outdoor recess area includes the marked off area of the parking lot and the grassy area to the gravel boundaries upon the hill. Students may not play in the tree lines and must be in full view of the playground monitors. No traffic is permitted in the recess area.

## **Security Camera and Video Surveillance System**

Security cameras are placed throughout Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, both inside and outside the building. These cameras are for investigative purposes and are not routinely or regularly monitored live. The images are stored on a hard drive. The cameras are restricted from public viewing.

## **School Resource Officer**

An Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, a School Resource Officer (SRO) provides safety, security and services to the school, school grounds and areas adjacent to the school. For more information contact the school office.

## **Use of School Grounds**

Unsupervised students may not be on the school grounds. The administration, faculty and staff of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School are not responsible for unsupervised students before 7:30 AM and after 2:45 PM on the days that school is in session.

## **Visitors to School**

All visitors must enter the school by the main entrance and immediately report to the school office. No teacher or student may be disturbed during the school day except in the case of an emergency or scheduled appointment, and with the permission of the school office. Student visits for enrollment purposes are scheduled through the school office.

## **Wellness Policy**

Under the guidance of the Education Office of the Diocese of Altoona Johnstown, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School has implemented a Wellness Policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for a school environment that promotes student wellness, nutrition education, and physical activity to students, and education for parents to enable them to assist their students to make better choices. A copy of the policy is posted at [www.olvcatholicschool.org](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org)

## **Youth Protection Program**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has established a statute that requires all individuals working with students either as employees or volunteer to obtain certain clearances. Additionally, the Diocese requires individuals working with students either as an employee or volunteer to complete a one hour self-guided training course, the Youth Protection Program, and complete and submit appropriate forms. These requirements have been set with the safety of our students in mind. More information about this process may be found at [www.olvcatholicschool.org/youthprotection](http://www.olvcatholicschool.org/youthprotection).