



MERCYMOUNT COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

35 Wrentham Road – Cumberland, RI 02864

Telephone 401-333-5919

Fax 401-333-5150

WWW.MERCYMOUNT.ORG

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

Revised August, 2026

ACCREDITED BY THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT	5
FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES	6-7
FUNDAMENTAL UNDERSTANDING	8-9
ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT	10-12
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	10
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	10-11
REGISTRATION	11
TUITION AND FINANCIAL POLICIES	11-12
ATTENDANCE POLICIES	12
ARRIVAL	13
DISMISSAL	13
TARDINESS	13
FAMILY VACATIONS	14
ACADEMIC POLICIES	14-18
ACADEMICS	14
PROGRESS REPORTS	14
TRANSCRIPTS	14-15
FINAL GRADES	15
HOMEWORK	15
PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS	15-16
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	16
MID-YEAR AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS	16
TUTORING	16
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY	16-17
ACADEMIC PROBATION	17
HONOR ROLL	17
HONOR SOCIETY	17-18
BOOKS	18
STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE	18-22
GENERAL CONDUCT	18-20
DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES	20
BULLYING AND DIGITAL CONTENT POLICY	21
SUBSTANCE ABUSE	21
DETENTION	21
SUSPENSION	22
EXPULSION	22
WEAPONS POLICY	22
SEARCH	22

DRESS CODE	23-26
UNIFORM POLICY	23-25
<i>General Guidelines</i>	23-25
<i>Spiritwear</i>	25
<i>Mercy Ministries (Grades 7 & 8)</i>	25
<i>Spirit and Dress Down Days</i>	25
DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS	25-26
SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY	26-32
HEALTH SERVICES	26-30
<i>General Student Health Guidelines</i>	26
<i>Physical Exam and Immunization Requirements</i>	26-27
<i>Health Screenings</i>	27
<i>Medication</i>	27-28
<i>Inhaler Policy</i>	28
<i>Epi-Pen Policy</i>	29
<i>Food Allergy Policy</i>	29-30
ASBESTOS	30
CRISIS	30
EMERGENCY CLOSING	30
HUMAN SEXUALITY/FAMILY LIFE/CIRCLE OF GRACE	31
PARKING	31
SAFE ENVIRONMENT	31
WEATHER ALERT	32
TECHNOLOGY	32-33
COMPUTERS	32
ELECTRONIC DEVICES	32
<i>Personal Device and Media Policy</i>	32
<i>Device Misuse - Consequences</i>	32-33
TELEPHONE USE	33
OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES	33-36
VISITORS	33
VOLUNTEERS	33
AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION POLICY	33-34
BUS TRANSPORTATION	34
CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS	34
CUSTODY	34
EXTENDED CARE	34-35
FIELD TRIPS	35
FUNDRAISING	35

LOCKERS	35-36
LOST AND FOUND	36
PARTIES	36
PETS	36
PHOTOS/VIDEOS	36
SOLICITATIONS	36
 ADDENDUM I – COMPUTER & INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY	 37-39
ADDENDUM II – CUMBERLAND SCHOOL DEPT. POLICY (HEAD LICE)	40-41

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Mercymount Country Day's School Handbook can be accessed via our FACTS Family Portal and our school website.

Once you have read the handbook in its entirety, please indicate that you agree to the rules and regulations of Mercymount Country Day School in the FACTS Family Portal under "Web Forms". Full compliance is necessary for attendance at Mercymount.

Students have the right to:

1. An education
2. Physical safety and the protection of personal property
3. Be treated with dignity and compassion as children of God
4. Seek guidance and support from trusted adults in the school community
5. Learn in an environment that promotes mercy, justice and peace

Students are responsible for:

1. Attending school
2. Arriving on time
3. Completing the entirety of the school day
4. Acting with honesty and integrity in their words and actions
5. Completing all academic work when assigned
6. Bringing appropriate materials to class
7. Obeying school and classroom rules
8. Respecting the rights of others
9. Their own actions
10. Using appropriate language
11. Caring for God's creation through stewardship of the environment and school resources
12. Demonstrating kindness, compassion, and respect toward all members of the school community
13. Dressing appropriately according to dress code

Student Code of Conduct

Rooted in the charism of the Sisters of Mercy and inspired by the Gospel call to love and serve one another, students at Mercymount Country Day School are expected to uphold behavior marked by integrity, compassion, and respect—both on and off campus. Our mission is not only to educate minds but also to form hearts committed to mercy, justice, and peace.

We strive to foster a community where every person is treated with dignity and kindness, where differences are honored, and where relationships are built on trust and care. Students and teachers alike are called to be stewards of this spirit by showing respect for the rights, feelings, and safety of all.

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

MISSION STATEMENT

Faithful to Catholic educational tradition, Mercymount Country Day School, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, ensures the development of strong academic skills, nurtures creative abilities, creates a sense of community, and promotes social responsibility. In the spirit of Catherine McAuley, we affirm that each child is a unique gift of a loving God, open to God's presence in others and in all creation.

PHILOSOPHY

Mercymount Country Day School is a private Catholic elementary school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. We are committed to the full development of each student—spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. Recognizing that parents and guardians are the primary educators, our administration, faculty, and staff work in partnership with families to strive to nurture and guide students in becoming thoughtful, compassionate, confident, and faith-filled members of the community.

CORE VALUES

Our Core Values are the hallmarks of a Mercy Education. These are the ideals we stand up for and strive to live up to. We hold ourselves to these standards as an institution, as a community and as individuals. Each value is interconnected and necessary as we take Mercy into the world.



Compelled by Mercy

Mercy students, in the spirit of our founder Catherine McAuley, are steadfastly determined to take Mercy into an interconnected world. Our shared sense of social consciousness is fortified by universal empathy and a conviction that all are worthy of God's mercy. This deep awareness and compassion move us to take principled action and serve the needs of others.



Educational Courage

Mercy students welcome the challenge of pursuing their full potential in a culture of excellence, critical thinking and curiosity. Their multifaceted journey builds character while it builds essential skills. Our holistic program expects engagement, a thirst for knowledge and personal responsibility, while preparing students to thrive for a lifetime.



Inspired by Faith

Mercy students become living models of faith and forceful advocates for Gospel values. Grounded in our Catholic identity in the Mercy tradition, we welcome all faiths and are strengthened and shaped by these relationships. As we pursue a personal relationship with God, we strenuously follow Jesus Christ's example of social justice, love and service.



Principled Leadership

Mercy students are poised to lead with their unique gifts. Prepared with an ethical and moral compass, we put Mercy values into action and work assertively for what is right. We're equipped to make difficult choices, learn from our mistakes and develop high emotional intelligence. As an international community, we're confident in our ability to make a positive difference and push for systemic change.



A Voice for Dignity and Respect

Mercy students honor the intrinsic value of the individual and recognize God's presence in each person. We embrace a global vision and value differences of opinion, and are unafraid to confront hostile or hurtful attitudes. By standing up for those who can't, we go beyond acceptance to help make sure everyone feels recognized and heard.

FUNDAMENTAL UNDERSTANDING

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION - “PIE”

Mercymount’s newsletter, the *PIE*—an acronym for Partners in Education—has, since its founding in 1948, served as a constant reminder of the vital partnership between parents and the school. This collaborative relationship is essential to fostering the positive, supportive environment we value at Mercymount. In the rare instance that the administration determines this partnership has been seriously compromised, the school reserves the right to require the withdrawal of the student(s).

Enrollment of a child in the school implies a partnership between the school and the family. Growing and strengthening this partnership requires, among other facets:

- Commitment to a common goal – namely, the growth and flourishing of the whole child
- Frequent, open communication
- Mutual respect for each member of the partnership
- Trust that each member will fulfill the necessary obligations to meet common goal(s)

RESPECT FOR MEMBERS OF THE MERCYMOUNT COMMUNITY

All members of the Mercymount community are expected to show respect for themselves and others, including faculty, staff, students, families, visitors, and the broader community.

Parents/guardians are vital partners in their child’s education and must maintain respectful relationships with school staff and the community. If this partnership breaks down, the school may require the family to withdraw their child.

REPUTATION OF THE SCHOOL/UNAUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL NAME/EMPLOYEES

Mercymount does not sanction the use of its name or the name of any group associated with Mercymount on any website without the expressed written consent of the Head of School. Any student or parent inappropriately using or referring to the name of Mercymount or names of its employees on any website including any social networking sites may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.

MERCY MINISTRIES

All seventh and eighth grade students at Mercymount actively participate in Mercy Ministries, a cornerstone of our mission rooted in the vision of Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. Each Tuesday of the month, students step beyond the classroom to serve in the broader

community, offering support to those who are poor, the sick, and the uneducated—those whom the Sisters of Mercy have long championed. This hands-on ministry not only honors our Mercy heritage, but also plays a vital role in forming compassionate, socially conscious individuals. At Mercymount, we believe these experiences are essential in nurturing the core values of empathy, service, and justice that define a Mercy education.

COMMUNICATION

Clear communication between home and school is key to student success. Important updates are shared through the PIE Memo, newsletters, teacher notices, phone calls, parent notes, FACTS, emails, conferences, and the school website. Teachers are not expected to respond to emails after 4:00 p.m., on weekends, during vacation weeks, or over the summer. Please allow 24 hours for a response during the school week. The school does not share contact information beyond what parents provide for the parent directory in FACTS.

FACTS

In accordance with our communication policy, parents of students in Grades 4 - 8 should monitor their child's academic performance on a regular basis via *FACTS*.

Parent Conferences

Formal parent conferences are scheduled in late fall, with additional conferences arranged as needed throughout the year. Teachers are available for meetings by appointment only, either before or after school hours. To minimize disruption to instructional time, parent conferences may not take place during the school day unless specifically arranged by the teacher.

ADDRESSING CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES

At Mercymount, we believe that open, respectful communication is essential to maintaining the spirit of unity and charity among parents, students, and faculty. When a concern or grievance arises, the following steps are recommended to help resolve the issue thoughtfully and constructively:

1. The student is encouraged to speak directly with the teacher involved (or the teacher may initiate the conversation).
2. If further clarification is needed, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) should meet with the teacher.
3. If the concern remains unresolved, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) may meet with the Dean of Students or Assistant Head of School along with the teacher.
4. If the concern remains unresolved, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) may meet with the Dean of Students, Assistant Head of School and/or the Head of School along with the teacher.

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admissions Requirements: Pre-School and Pre-Kindergarten

An in-house screening is required for all incoming Pre-School and Pre-Kindergarten students.

Potty Training Policy

Students entering Pre-Kindergarten must be fully potty trained prior to the start of school and must be three years old by September 1 of the enrollment year.

Fully potty-trained means that a child can consistently and independently:

- Recognize and communicate the need to use the toilet
- Manage clothing and personal hygiene (including wiping)
- Use the toilet without reminders or adult assistance
- Remain accident-free

If a student has three accidents, parents will be notified. At that time, the student may be temporarily excluded from school to allow for continued potty training and reinforcement at home.

Admissions Requirements: Kindergarten through Grade 8

Students entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1 of the enrollment year. An in-house screening is required for all incoming Kindergarten students.

Students applying to grades 1–8 must complete a shadow day at Mercymount and will be screened prior to acceptance. Proof of academic ability and evidence of successful promotion from the previous grade are required.

At the time of registration, families are asked to provide:

- A copy of the student's birth certificate
- Documentation of received sacraments (if applicable)
- A non-refundable registration fee

Mercymount Country Day School admits students of any race, creed, gender, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial aid is available to families based on need after one full year enrollment at Mercymount. A financial aid application in FACTS along with a written request to the Head of

School are required for consideration of financial aid. Local parishes may provide financial assistance; however, parents would need to personally request such from their pastor.

REGISTRATION

Families attending Mercymount Country Day School must re-register before January 31st. The registration fee guarantees a place, provides the Parent Association with monies for its treasury and is used for enrichment purposes. This fee is non-refundable.

TUITION AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

In order for your registration or re-enrollment to be accepted by Mercymount, the following tuition and deposit terms and conditions must be followed:

Registration Deposit - When a student registers at Mercymount Country Day School, in addition to holding a place for the student, we commit resources to optimize the educational experience and design staffing, supplies, and programs based on the number of registered students. Students who are withdrawn or dismissed from Mercymount Country Day School for any reason will not be refunded their registration deposit.

Tuition Policy - As a private school, Mercymount Country Day School's operating budget depends solely upon tuition and fundraising. It is imperative that parents/guardians take this responsibility seriously. Tuition payments are completed by May 30th. Payments may be made in full by July 1st or in 10 or 12 monthly installments through the FACTS Tuition Management Program. Full Payment before the start of school (by July 1st) may reduce the tuition.

Students who are withdrawn or dismissed from Mercymount Country Day School for any reason will be responsible for the tuition per the following schedule:

July 1 through August 31	10% of Tuition
September 1 through September 30	30% of Tuition
October 1 through October 31	40% of Tuition
November 1 through November 30	50% of Tuition
December 1 through December 31	60% of Tuition
January 1 through January 31	70% of Tuition
February 1 through February 28	80% of Tuition
March 1 through March 31	90% of Tuition
April 1 and After	100% of Tuition

Tuition in Arrears Policy - If a family's tuition account is more than 30 days in arrears, the following will take place:

1. A student may not be admitted to class on the first day of school, unless at least one-quarter of the tuition has been paid. Tuition must be current for a student to continue in the second-half of the school year.
2. Progress reports and/or report cards will not be distributed to parents.
3. Transcripts and recommendations will not be released as part of the 8th grade high school application or student transfer process.
4. Students will not be permitted to participate in activities including, but not limited to: athletics, field trips, school dances, and grade specific activities.
5. Tuition and any other outstanding accounts which are delinquent after June 1st will result in students not taking final exams, graduating, or receiving final grades.
6. Although seldom necessary, Mercymount reserves the right to pursue legal action for the collection of unpaid tuition. The parent/guardian will be responsible for all costs of collection, including court expenses and legal fees.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Regular attendance is essential. Missing even 5% of Kindergarten (just 9 days) can signal future academic struggles. Any absence removes a student from critical learning time and can impact achievement. Students should be present and on time every day school is in session.

All absences, dismissals, or tardies require a signed note from a parent by the next school day, stating the date and reason. After 10 unexcused instances, the school will send a letter and/or schedule a meeting with the student, parents, and administration.

Absences

Excused absences include participation in approved school activities, suspension, religious holidays, family emergencies (with administrator approval), medical appointments, illness or injury (with a doctor's note for absences of 3 or more days), and funerals. For chronic illnesses, a doctor's note must be on file; future related absences will then be excused.

Students absent due to illness or suspension may not attend school activities (e.g., sports, performances, dances) on the same day.

All absences are unexcused unless a parent or guardian calls with a specific reason that is approved by the school's administration. Absences due to family travel or vacation are strongly discouraged and will be marked unexcused. Parental permission alone does not make an absence excused.

ARRIVAL

Morning Arrival Procedures

Upon arrival between 8:15 and 8:30 a.m., students in grades 4–8 should report to the Gym, while students in grades K–3 should report to the Cafeteria. Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students should enter through their classroom’s designated outside entrance and report directly to their classroom.

All doors will be closed promptly at 8:30 a.m. Students arriving after this time must report to the main office to be checked in by the adult accompanying them.

DISMISSAL

Early Dismissal and End-of-Day Procedures

Pre-School, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten students are dismissed at 2:50 p.m., along with students enrolled in the Early-Bird dismissal option. Regular dismissal for grades 1–8 begins at 3:00 p.m.

Students may not leave school early without prior permission. A written note stating the reason for early dismissal must be submitted to the homeroom teacher. If notifying the school by phone or email, the message must be received by 9:15 a.m.

The adult picking up the student must sign them out at the main office.

For safety reasons:

- Students may not use the playground during dismissal.
- Students dismissed due to illness or injury may not participate in after-school activities that day unless approved by the administration.

Students may not return to classrooms or lockers after 3:15 p.m.

TARDINESS

Students must arrive by 8:30 a.m. We recommend arriving between 8:15 and 8:25 a.m. to ensure a smooth start to the day. Late arrivals disrupt the learning environment and may require teachers to repeat instructions.

All doors close promptly at 8:30 a.m. Students arriving after this time must be accompanied by a parent and checked in at the main office.

Students in grades 4–8 will receive a detention after 10 unexcused tardies.

FAMILY VACATIONS

School breaks are scheduled in December, February, and April. Families are encouraged to plan vacations during these times to minimize disruptions to student learning.

If time off is unavoidable, parents must notify the Assistant Head of School at least one week in advance. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance or offer additional instruction for absences due to vacations. All missed work must be completed promptly upon the student's return, at the discretion and convenience of the teacher.

Any assessments missed due to a vacation absence must be made up promptly upon the student's return and will be scheduled outside of regular instructional time, before or after school. When necessary, students may be required to come in on a Monday morning before the start of the regular school day to complete missed assessments. Make-up times will be determined at the discretion and convenience of the teacher.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

ACADEMICS

Our curriculum provides a one-of-a-kind learning experience for students in preschool through 8th grade, surpassing national standards while being guided by the Sisters of Mercy and their values. We're shaped by our Catholic heritage as we look to prepare students for the future through STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Math) and a hands-on (or student-centered) approach to education.

PROGRESS REPORTS (Gr. 1-8)

The school year is divided into trimesters, with formal grades recorded on the report card at the end of each grading period. Progress Reports are issued midway through each trimester to all students in grades 4–8 to communicate current academic performance. In Pre-K through grade 3, progress reports may vary in format and frequency. However, a report will be provided if a student is demonstrating poor performance, a sudden change in effort, or noticeable shifts in academic progress.

TRANSCRIPTS

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents and legal guardians have the right to access their child's educational records. Student transcripts are considered part of those records.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Section 99.4) states that both parents, whether custodial or non-custodial, or an eligible student have the right to inspect and review the student's education records. The following procedure applies:

- Call Mercymount Country Day School to request an appointment with the Assistant Head of School and/or the Head of School;
- State the purpose of the meeting (i.e. to review educational records);
- A response to the request will be made within twenty-four (24) hours.

Transcripts and academic records will be forwarded directly to the receiving school upon written request and/or completion of a records release form. Records will not be released to parents for hand delivery.

In the event that transcripts cannot be released to a private institution due to outstanding obligations (such as unpaid tuition or missing school materials), Mercymount reserves the right to withhold records. However, in compliance with state law, transcripts will be forwarded to the public-school district in which the child resides, if necessary.

FINAL GRADES

Academic failures in the core subjects will require that students attend an accredited summer school program or be tutored by a certified teacher for thirty hours.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a valuable extension of the school day. It reinforces concepts taught in class, provides opportunities for practice and review, and encourages enrichment through independent study. Homework is never assigned as a form of punishment.

Developing strong study habits, self-discipline, and time management skills is essential to student growth. Completing homework regularly helps students build independence and personal responsibility for their learning. All students are expected to use an agenda or assignment book to record homework and manage daily responsibilities.

In addition, students are expected to read or be read to for at least 20 minutes each evening, regardless of grade level. Families are encouraged to create consistent routines and quiet study spaces at home that support concentration and learning.

As many students participate in extracurricular activities, it is important that they plan ahead and schedule time wisely to balance academic and outside commitments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE) REQUIREMENTS

Participation in Physical Education is a required part of the school curriculum and supports students' physical health, coordination, and overall well-being.

Students are not excused from PE class without a written note from a licensed physician, as required by state health and safety guidelines. Notes from parents or guardians alone are not sufficient for medical exemptions. In the case of extended absence from PE, updated documentation may be required.

For safety and ease of movement, all students must wear the official school gym uniform and sneakers on PE days. Failure to wear proper attire may impact a student's ability to participate fully in class.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Participation in religion class and liturgical services is a required part of the curriculum at Mercymount, as an essential expression of our identity as a Catholic school rooted in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.

All students take part in religious education and are expected to attend Mass and para-liturgical services held during the school day. The Catholic faith is taught, and Christian values are woven throughout the school experience. At the same time, teachers are mindful and respectful of the diverse faith traditions represented in our community. No teacher will seek to influence or undermine the personal religious beliefs of students from other backgrounds. Respect for each child's spiritual identity is a core value at Mercymount.

MID-YEAR AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS

It is an important part of the Middle School experience to prepare students for success at the various high schools they will be attending after Mercymount. Accordingly, students in grades 6, 7 and 8 are required to take mid-year and final exams in all academic subjects.

If a child is going to be absent during an exam, the Assistant Head of School must be notified. An unexcused absence will result in a 10-point deduction on the make-up exam.

TUTORING

Extra help is always available for students from their current teachers. For a fee, teachers may tutor those students whom they do not teach on a daily basis.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

At Mercymount Country Day School, we believe that honesty, integrity, and responsibility are essential to the learning process and the development of good character. Academic dishonesty goes against our mission to educate the whole child, and it undermines the desired trust and fairness between a student and his/her teacher.

Students are expected to complete their own work and to act with integrity in all academic matters. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and inappropriate use of technology or AI tools.

Consequences

Academic dishonesty will result in the following:

- A zero on the assignment or assessment in question
- A conversation with the teacher and Dean of Students
- Notification to parents or guardians
- A possible loss of additional academic privileges or opportunities

Repeated or serious offenses may result in further disciplinary action at the discretion of the Dean of Students and/or the Assistant Head of School.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Academic probation is designed to encourage students to focus on learning as their primary responsibility.

A student whose academic performance shows significant concern or falls below expected standards may be placed on academic probation. In addition, students who receive a failing grade in one or more of their core subjects at the end of a grading period will be automatically placed on academic probation.

Students placed on academic probation will meet with teacher(s) and or the Dean of Students to develop a plan to return to good academic standing.

HONOR ROLL

Each trimester, the Honor Roll recognizes students' academic achievements. Students in grades 6–8 may earn High Honors or Honors based on the average of all subjects. To qualify, students must be passing all classes with a minimum grade of 80 or higher.

- High Honors: 93–100 average
- Honors: 85–92 average

HONOR SOCIETY

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)

The National Junior Honor Society recognizes outstanding students in grades 7 and 8 who demonstrate excellence in Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Character, and Citizenship. Mercymount's NJHS chapter upholds these pillars as the foundation for student selection and membership.

To be eligible for consideration, students must meet the following academic criteria:

- A cumulative average of 92% or higher in the five major subject areas: Religion, English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies
- A passing grade in all additional subjects, including Spanish, Computer, Music, Art, and Physical Education

Students who meet these academic standards are then evaluated on their leadership qualities, character, commitment to service, and contributions to the school and broader community.

To remain in good standing, NJHS members must:

- Maintain a 92% cumulative average
- Follow all school and NJHS policies
- Demonstrate respect, responsibility, and leadership in daily conduct
- Participate in out-of-school service projects as part of their commitment to citizenship

New members are considered for induction at the end of the first trimester of seventh grade.

BOOKS

All hardcover textbooks, borrowed or owned, must be cared for at all times. Students who return a borrowed textbook that is marked or torn will be charged a percentage of the full value of the book. If a textbook or library book is marked, torn, ruined or lost, the student will be charged for the damage or loss.

Students are responsible for obtaining required textbooks not provided by Mercymount.

- Massachusetts residents must purchase their own textbooks.
- Rhode Island residents must request textbooks through their local public school department.

If you have any questions regarding textbooks, please contact the Assistant Head of School.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

GENERAL CONDUCT

At Mercymount Country Day School, we believe that “each child is a unique gift of a loving God,” deserving of dignity, respect, and an opportunity to grow in faith, character, and knowledge. Rooted in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, we are committed to nurturing a community where the full development of each student can be realized; and all relationships and interactions are guided by mercy, justice, service and compassion.

Our conduct policy is grounded in our Mercy core values: Compelled by Mercy, Educational Courage, Inspired by Faith, Principled Leadership, and a Voice for Dignity and Respect. Further, our policy is designed to promote a safe, respectful, and supportive learning

Students at Mercymount are expected to embody a Christian attitude rooted in respect for themselves and others. Through self-discipline, students avoid behaviors that could disrupt or hinder the school learning environment. In our Mercy environment, discipline is intended to help students reflect on and change unacceptable behaviors to acceptable ones. Parental partnership, cooperation, and support for the faculty and administration in administering discipline are essential.

The Dean of Students oversees the general conduct of Mercymount's students, providing direction and oversight. For serious disciplinary offenses, the Dean may consult with other members of the administration and grade-level teams. Parents will be notified of any significant actions taken. Mercymount employs a progressive discipline approach to consistently address disciplinary infractions.

<i>Examples of Minor Infractions</i>
<i>*Please note that these are examples and not an exhaustive list of infractions</i>
Dress Code Violation
Gum Chewing
Late to Class
Disrupting Class (talking, laughing, making noises)
Horseplay (non-malicious)
Unkind Behaviors
Littering

<i>Examples of Intermediate Infractions</i>
<i>*Please note that these are examples and not an exhaustive list of infractions.</i>
Leaving Class without Permission
Vandalism (minor)
Peer Harassment (verbal, physical, cyber)
Stealing
Cheating
Forgery
Repeated Minor Infractions
Inappropriate Language
Misrepresenting Facts (Lying)
Misuse of Technology (minor)

<i>Examples of Severe Infractions</i>
<i>*Please note that these are examples and not an exhaustive list of infractions.</i>
Vulgarity, Obscene Language/Gestures (major)
Leaving School Property without Permission
Willful Destruction of School Property/Vandalism (major)
Misuse of Technology (major)
Fighting and/or Assault
Threatening behavior/words (encouraging self-harm, harm to others, promoting violence)
Violation of Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policies
Sexual Harassment
Bringing a weapon to school
Excessive Minor Infractions
Repeated Intermediate Infractions

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

When student behavior is in question, the school's administration will work collaboratively with the student(s), teachers, and parents to reach a resolution that considers the well-being of all involved. If necessary, the administration may consult with professional resources (such as a psychologist, school resource officer, etc.) to review the situation and determine whether a professional assessment or further support services are warranted.

The administration is also responsible for determining if disciplinary action is appropriate. In the case of a serious behavioral incident, the following steps may be taken:

1. Investigation of the incident by faculty and referral to the administration
2. Verification of the incident through witness statements and student accounts
3. Communication with parents/guardians (via phone or in-person meeting)
4. Implementation of disciplinary measures, which may include:
 - Loss of Privileges
 - Detention
 - In-school suspension
 - Out-of-school suspension
 - Expulsion

These steps are designed to uphold the values of respect, accountability, and growth, while supporting the student in making positive behavioral choices.

BULLYING AND DIGITAL CONTENT POLICY

Mercymount is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. Bullying of any kind—whether physical, verbal, emotional, or digital—will not be tolerated. This includes repeated acts of intimidation, harassment, or any behavior that causes harm to others or their property.

Parents can access the Rhode Island Statewide Bullying Policy and a Bullying Report Form directly from the homepage of the school's website. Any confirmed incidents of bullying will result in appropriate disciplinary action, in alignment with our school's mission and values. In keeping with our commitment to Mercy and mutual respect, students are expected to use technology responsibly. The school administration reserves the right to review a student's digital content, during the school day. Any material found to be inconsistent with the mission of Mercymount—including disrespectful, harmful, or inappropriate content—will be addressed, and disciplinary action may follow.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Drugs consist of anything considered illegal by the State of Rhode Island (alcohol and tobacco are included) and therefore are not permitted at Mercymount. Any student in possession of or under the influence of any drug will have the drug confiscated and his/her parents and the proper authorities will be notified immediately. Suspension from school will occur followed by counseling and/or possible expulsion.

DETENTION

When a student fails to meet the expectations outlined in the school's academic or behavioral code, detention may be assigned. A detention slip is issued in triplicate and must be signed by the teacher, an administrator, and the student's parent or guardian.

Detention is held after school and ends at 4:00 p.m. Students who are not picked up by 4:00 will be sent to After-Care, and families will be billed accordingly.

Detention takes priority over all non-academic activities, with the exception of medical appointments.

Any student who receives more than three detentions in a single trimester will be subject to an out-of-school suspension.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is invoked for serious infractions of school policy and shall be within the jurisdiction of the Assistant Head of School. Parents are notified and must sign a suspension form. Students serving an at-home suspension must make up missed school work within a day of their return. Four or more detentions within a trimester warrant an at-home suspension.

EXPULSION

Expulsion from school is invoked for the most serious infraction of school policy and shall be within the jurisdiction of the Assistant Head of School and/or Head of School, in consultation with the diocesan superintendent. A student leaving under the terms of expulsion will not have his/her tuition payment refunded.

WEAPONS POLICY

The safety of our school community is our highest priority. Possession of any weapon—real or imitation—is strictly prohibited on school grounds, during school hours, or at any school-sponsored event. A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives, or any object used or intended to cause harm.

Any student found in possession of a weapon will have the item immediately confiscated. The student's parent/guardian and appropriate law enforcement authorities will be notified without delay. Disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion, will be determined by the administration.

SEARCH

In order to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment, the school reserves the right to search a student's desk, locker, or personal belongings at any time. Such searches may be conducted when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation of school rules, policies, or laws, or when the safety and well-being of students and staff may be at risk.

Desks and lockers are school property and are provided to students for their use during the school year. As such, they are subject to inspection without prior notice. Personal belongings, including backpacks and electronic devices, may also be searched when deemed necessary by the administration.

All searches will be conducted in a respectful and discreet manner, with consideration for the dignity and privacy of the student involved. When appropriate, a second adult will be present during the search. Parents will be notified of any significant findings or concerns that arise.

DRESS CODE

UNIFORM POLICY

Students must wear the regulation uniform at all times unless a parent provides a written explanation to the homeroom teacher. With the exception of approved spirit wear, all uniform items must be purchased through Flynn O'Hara. A full list is available on the Mercymount website.

General Guidelines:

- Simple navy or white accessories (e.g., headbands, small earrings, rings, watches) may be worn if they complement the uniform.
- The following are not allowed: makeup, body piercings, unnatural hair color or styles, distracting jewelry, wristbands, buttons, scarves, dangle/hoop earrings, and hats (except on Spirit Days).
- For safety and hygiene reasons, long, artificial, or acrylic nails are not permitted. Natural nails must be kept clean and at a length that does not interfere with school activities
- Uniform shorts may be worn before November 1 and after April 1.
- Shirts must be tucked in, and belts are required with pants or dress shorts.
- Girls' skirts, jumpers, and shorts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.

Grade	Uniforms	Footwear
PS/PK Boys	*Navy Mercymount t-shirt or fleece crewneck sweatshirt *Navy micromesh shorts or fleece sweatpants *Optional Spiritwear to be worn in place of gym uniform sweatshirt: • Gray or navy faceoff 2-lace hoodies • Navy full zip sweatshirt	*Ankle or crew socks in navy, black or white (no athletic socks or logos) *All black sneakers
PS/PK Girls	*Navy Mercymount t-shirt or crewneck fleece sweatshirt *Navy micromesh shorts or fleece sweatpants (Size XXXS is not available through Flynn O'Hara. Therefore, any brand will be allowed for that size) *Mercymount knit jumper - optional *Optional Spiritwear to be worn in place of gym uniform sweatshirt: • Gray or navy faceoff 2-lace hoodies • Navy full zip sweatshirt	*Ankle or crew socks in navy, black or white (no athletic socks or logos) *All white sneakers
Grades K-5 Boys	<u>Formal uniform</u> *Light Blue Mercymount polo shirt, tucked in *Navy Mercymount fleece crewneck sweatshirt or navy full zip sweatshirt *Navy slacks or dress shorts with a belt (black or brown)	<u>Formal uniform:</u> *Ankle or crew socks in navy, black or white (no athletic socks or logos) *All black dress shoes *Sperry Topsiders – tan or brown <u>Please note:</u> Hey Dude shoes are not acceptable.

	<u>PE uniform</u> *Navy Mercymount t-shirt *Navy sweatpants hem bottom or micromesh shorts * Navy Mercymount fleece crewneck sweatshirt (optional) *Optional Spiritwear to be worn in place of gym uniform sweatshirt: • Gray or navy faceoff 2-lace hoodies • Navy full zip sweatshirt	<u>PE uniform</u> * Black ankle or crew socks (no athletic socks or logos) *All black sneakers
Grades K-5 Girls	<u>Formal Uniform</u> *Mercymount jumper with white Peter Pan blouse *Light Blue Mercymount polo shirt, tucked in *Navy slacks or shorts with belt (brown or black) *Navy Mercymount cardigan sweater <u>PE uniform</u> *Navy Mercymount t-shirt *Navy sweatpants hem bottom or micromesh shorts *Navy Mercymount fleece crewneck sweatshirt (optional) *Optional Spiritwear to be worn in place of gym uniform sweatshirt: • Gray or navy faceoff 2-lace hoodies • Navy full zip sweatshirt	<u>Formal uniform:</u> *Ankle socks, knee socks or tights in navy or white (no athletic socks or logos) *Black or navy dress shoes *Sperry Topsiders in tan or brown <u>Please note:</u> Hey Dude shoes are not acceptable. <u>PE uniform</u> * White ankle or crew socks (no athletic socks or logos) *All white sneakers
Grades 6-8 Boys	<u>Formal Uniform</u> * Navy Blue Mercymount polo, tucked in *Khaki Mercymount dress slacks or dress shorts with belt (brown or black) *Navy blue heathered fleece - ¼ Zip <u>PE uniform</u> *Gray Mercymount t-shirt *Navy Mercymount warm up pants or micromesh shorts *Gray Mercymount sweatshirt (optional) *Optional Spiritwear to be worn in place of gym uniform sweatshirt: • Gray or navy faceoff 2-lace hoodies • Mercymount championship sweatshirts • Navy full zip sweatshirt	<u>Formal uniform:</u> *Ankle or crew socks in Khaki, black or white (no athletic socks or logos) *Black or brown dress shoes *Sperry Topsiders – tan or brown <u>Please note:</u> Hey Dude shoes are not acceptable. <u>PE uniform</u> * Black ankle or crew socks (no athletic socks or logos) *All black sneakers
Grades 6-8 Girls	<u>Formal Uniform</u> *Navy blue Mercymount polo, tucked in *Plaid Mercymount skirt *Khaki Mercymount dress slacks or shorts with belt (brown or black) *Navy blue heathered fleece - ¼ Zip <u>PE uniform</u> *Gray Mercymount t-shirt *Navy Mercymount warm up pants or micromesh shorts *Gray Mercymount sweatshirt (optional)	<u>Formal Uniform</u> *Knee socks or tights in navy or white (no athletic socks or logos) *Black or navy dress shoes *Sperry Topsiders – tan or brown <u>Please note:</u> Hey Dude shoes are not acceptable. <u>PE uniform</u> *White ankle or crew socks (no athletic socks or logos) *All white sneakers

	*Optional Spiritwear to be worn in place of gym uniform sweatshirt: • Gray or navy faceoff 2-lace hoodies • Mercymount championship sweatshirts • Navy full zip sweatshirt	
Please note that shorts can only be worn before November 1 st and after March 31 st (from April 1 st on).		

Spiritwear:

- Only approved Mercymount Spirit Wear may be worn during school hours.
- Spiritwear must be properly sized and purchased through approved school vendors or MercyMart.
- Approved items include:
 - Gray or Navy Faceoff 2-lace Hoodies (PE only)
 - Navy Full Zip Sweatshirt (Grades K–5, Formal Uniform)
 - Navy Heathered ¼-Zip Fleece (Middle School, Formal Uniform)
 - Mercymount Championship Sweatshirts (Middle School, PE only)

Note: All other Mercymount sweatshirts may only be worn to and from school, not during class.

Mercy Ministries (Grades 7 & 8):

Students must wear their gym uniform on assigned Mercy Ministry days. The gym pants are required for Mercy Ministries, therefore no shorts.

Spirit and Dress Down Days

On non-uniform days, students are expected to dress modestly and, in a manner, appropriate for a Catholic elementary school following the guidelines below:

- Clothing must cover the torso, hips, back, and mid-thigh. No short shorts, spaghetti straps, tank tops, or tight tops.
- Jeans are allowed if clean, hemmed, and free of holes or tears.
- No flip-flops, Crocs, slides, or slippers.
- Clothing with violent, offensive, political, or controversial messages is not allowed.

The school administration will determine what is appropriate. If a student is not dressed suitably, parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes. Students must provide a no-uniform slip that is not expired when choosing to dress down.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

PS-4

- *First offense:* Teacher communicates with the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- *Second Offense:* Teacher calls or emails the parent(s)/guardian(s) and informs the Dean of Students

- *Third Offense:* The teacher informs the Dean of Students and the Dean of Students will call the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- *Fourth Offense:* The student loses all dress down privileges for the remainder of the trimester.

5-8

- *First Offense:* Teacher warns the student.
- *Second Offense:* Teacher calls or emails the parent(s)/guardian(s) and informs the Dean of Students
- *Third Offense:* The teacher informs the Dean of Students and the Dean of Students will call the parent(s)/guardian(s). The student loses all dress down privileges for the remainder of the trimester.

SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEALTH SERVICES

1. General Student Health Guidelines

- a) If a child is sick, he or she should be kept home from school to protect the health of other students and staff.
- b) If a child vomits at school or spikes a fever, he or she will be sent home from school.
- c) A student who is being dismissed due to illness is expected to be picked up within an hour by a parent or another adult on the child's emergency contact list.
- d) An ill child must remain home from school until he or she is fever free without fever reducers for 24 hours. If a child has been vomiting, he or she should be kept home for 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting.
- e) If a child has been diagnosed with strep throat or any other contagious illness requiring antibiotics, he or she should be kept home for at least 24 hours following the first dose of antibiotics. Please notify the nurse if your child has been diagnosed with any contagious illnesses including but not limited to influenza, strep throat, pink eye, etc. Students absent for 5 days or more due to illness or injury require a doctor's note to return to school.
- f) If a child has an injury that will keep them from PE and or recess for more than 1 class or day, a doctor's note is required either excluding them, or listing limitations during class or recess. A doctor's note must be received to clear them to return to PE or recess. The nurse creates and updates the gym list, and this is shared with the PE teacher so they are aware.

- g) Head lice can be a common problem among school age children. Please note that Mercymount Country Day School follows the Cumberland School Department policy (see Addendum II). Please note that if there is an outbreak, two or more cases, then the whole classroom will be notified with follow up instructions.
- h) Only sports drinks such as Gatorade, Propel, or Vitamin Water are permitted in the lunchroom, and they must be in their original, labeled containers. Soda and caffeinated beverages are not allowed.

2. Physical Exam and Immunization Requirements

- a) All students entering Pre-School, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Grade 7 must have a valid physical examination form on file by the start of the school year. This physical must be dated within one year from the first day of school. Students who previously attended school out of state must have a new physical examination completed prior to entering Mercymount.
- b) Acceptable evidence of immunization is required for all students prior to school entry. As your child receives subsequent vaccinations throughout their childhood, updated immunization records should be provided to the school nurse. State immunization requirements can be found on the school website. Medical, temporary, or religious exemption forms are available from the nurse upon request.

3. Health Screenings

In accordance with Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) requirements, the following annual health screenings will be conducted at school:

- Vision: Grades K through 5 and all new students in Grades 6-8
- Hearing: Pre-K through Grade 3
- Dental: Grades K through 5 and Grade 8 (unless documentation is provided from the student's personal dentist)
- Scoliosis: Grades 6 through 8 (unless noted on a physical exam dated within one year of the school screening)

If any concerns or irregularities are identified during these screenings, parents will be notified and provided with appropriate follow-up instructions.

4. Medication

- a) All medication is administered by the school nurse and kept in a secured cabinet.
- b) Any medication being given at school must be in the original pharmacy packaging. This includes over the counter medication.

- c) A doctor's note is needed for both prescription and over the counter medication changes (either the medication itself or dosage). These updates can be faxed directly from the prescriber's office to the school.
- d) Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the school nurse of all medications that their child is taking in or out of school. This disclosure is for the safety of the student and will be kept confidential.
- e) Medications will not be administered if they are out of date or expired. Medications are not to be carried by students during the school day. This includes cough drops for all grade levels. Students in grades 1-8 may request a cough drop as needed. Cough drops from home may be stored with the nurse in a labeled bag.
- f) Standing physician orders are in place for commonly used over the counter medications stocked in the health office (Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl and antacid tablets). A parent permission form must be completed for any of these medications to be given to a child. These medications cannot be administered without parental consent. Forms can be found on the school website and requested from the nurse.
- g) A long-term medication form must be filled out for any medication being given for longer than a two (2) week period. This includes both daily and as needed medications. Medication cannot be administered without this form which includes both parental permission and a physician's signature. A separate form should be completed for each individual medication. Forms can be found on the school website or requested from the nurse.
- h) Parents of students in grades K through 5 will receive a call from the nurse if there is a question about giving any over the counter medication at school for fever, injury or mild allergic reactions (hives, new rash).

5. Inhaler Policy

- a) Students may be prescribed a metered dose inhaler to be used on an as needed basis for the treatment of asthma, allergies or other respiratory issues. The following guidelines are in place to provide a consistent plan for assisting students who may require use of an inhaler while at school.
- b) It is preferred that prescription metered dose inhalers be kept in the health office and administered under the supervision of the school nurse.
- c) An "Asthma Action Plan" must be completed for all students requiring an inhaler at

school which includes parental permission and a physician order. This form can be found on the school website.

- d) Inhalers may be carried by a student and self-administered with parental and physician permission. The student is responsible for telling the nurse if they administered a dose during the school day so it can be documented.
- e) It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to replace any medication that expires during the school year. Parents will be notified when inhalers are low or due to expire. Inhalers kept in the health office should have the original prescription label affixed to the outside of inhaler or box.

6. Epi-Pen Policy

- a) Certain students who have allergies or other health conditions may be prescribed an Epi-Pen to be administered in the case of a severe reaction. The following guidelines help create a consistent and school-wide health care plan for assisting students who may require the use of an Epi-Pen at school.
- b) Parents of students who have been prescribed an Epi-Pen must notify the school nurse and must return an “Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan”, and provide all necessary pens. It’s preferable to have two, unexpired pens per student.
- c) All staff are trained at orientation to identify anyone with signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, and how to correctly administer a pen. Extra Epi-Pens are located in the lunchroom and nurse’s emergency bag.
- d) Storage of Epi-Pens in the School Health Office - Epi-Pens will be stored individually in student specific bins that clearly identify the intended user. The bins will be kept in a visible location where access can be granted in a timely manner.
- e) An Epi-Pen may be self-carried by students in grades 6-8 with written permission from both the MD and parent. An Epi-Pen must also be stored in the nurse’s office for this student, too.
- f) Preschool Epi-Pen Storage-due to these students eating lunch in their classrooms, a teacher will keep any students with allergies Epi-Pen in their desk to have easy access. One pen will also be kept in the nurse’s office.

7. Food Allergy Policy

The following are policies to help protect the safety and health of our students who have food allergies.

a) Peanuts/Tree Nuts

- i. Peanuts, tree nuts or any products containing peanuts or tree nuts may not be consumed in any area of the school other than the lunch room. Tables are wiped down between lunches. Peanut/tree nut snacks may not be consumed in the classroom during snack time.
- ii. There are peanut/tree nut free tables in the lunchroom where students can appropriately and safely eat food. Parents/guardians must notify the teacher and nurse if they would like their child to eat at this table.
- iii. No products sold in the cafeteria contain peanuts and or tree nuts.

b) Other Food Allergies

- i. If a class/homeroom has a student with a different severe food allergy which produces an anaphylactic reaction, the other students in the homeroom may be asked to refrain from eating products containing this food in the classroom. This will be determined on a case by case basis by the school administration and nurse.
- ii. Gluten Free options are available most lunch days and will be listed on the monthly menu.

c) Parties and Celebrations: On occasion classrooms may have food as part of a lesson or holiday event. The teacher is responsible for notifying the Assistant Head of School, nurse and families of what will be served. These foods are checked for any allergens.

d) Outside food for birthdays is not allowed. Exceptions are very rare, and must be approved by the Assistant Head of School.

e) A spreadsheet is maintained and updated yearly and as needed with any student who has food allergies. This is shared with the lunchroom staff and teachers.

ASBESTOS

Mercymount Country Day School has removed all exposed and friable asbestos in accordance with Diocesan and State recommendations. A management plan is on file in the school's main office. Documentation of inspections is available for review.

CRISIS

In the event of an emergency or crisis, standard procedures are in place for lockdowns or evacuations. Plans are on file in the school office and with the Cumberland Police Department. Students are evacuated off site and transported by bus to a central location for parent pick-up.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

In the event of a delayed opening or school closure, Mercymount will communicate updates through FACTS, email, and/or local media, including the Rhode Island Broadcasters Association at www.ribroadcasters.com.

All before- and after-school activities will be canceled when school is closed.

During the school day, if a student needs to contact a parent due to an emergency or schedule change, the school will make every reasonable effort to assist with communication.

HUMAN SEXUALITY/ FAMILY LIFE/CIRCLE OF GRACE

In alignment with the Diocese of Providence, Mercymount incorporates Human Sexuality and Family Life education into the religion curriculum at all grade levels. These lessons use age-appropriate, diocesan-approved materials and audiovisual resources that uphold Catholic teachings and values.

Students also participate in the *Circle of Grace* program, which provides instruction on personal safety and healthy boundaries. This diocesan curriculum helps students recognize God's presence within themselves and others while equipping them with tools to protect themselves from harm.

Together, these programs foster the spiritual, emotional, and moral growth of each student within a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment.

PARKING

Please observe the Handicapped parking areas at all times and any other restricted parking area at Mercymount Country Day School. For the safety of our students, drivers are asked to back into parking spaces in the lot. In addition, drivers are asked to adhere to our one-way signs and drive at low speeds. Due to the limited amount of parking spaces, we ask that you refrain from socializing in the parking lot after dismissal.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

In compliance with State of Rhode Island law and the Diocese of Providence's Safe Environment Program, all individuals who work with or volunteer around children must complete a criminal background check and participate in Safe Environment Training prior to beginning their service. This includes faculty, staff, coaches, and all school volunteers.

Additionally, all personnel are required to renew their Safe Environment Training every three years. This training includes instruction on recognizing and responding to signs of child abuse and neglect, as well as understanding one's legal and moral responsibility to report such concerns.

Rhode Island law mandates that any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected must report the information to the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) within 24 hours. Reports can be made by calling **1-800-RI-CHILD**. DCYF is required to initiate an investigation immediately upon receiving a report.

Mercymount is firmly committed to maintaining a safe, nurturing environment for every student, and we expect the same commitment from all who serve in our school community.

WEATHER ALERT

Students will go outside for recess and After-Care when the temperature, including the “feels like” temperature (factoring in wind chill or heat index), is between 32°F and 90°F.

We rely on parents to ensure that children are dressed appropriately for outdoor conditions throughout the year.

TECHNOLOGY

COMPUTERS

Upon entrance to Mercymount, students and their parents/guardians are required to sign the “Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Agreement and Policy.” (See Addendum I). Students whose home computers or printers are not functioning, or who do not have access, must have a note from parent/guardian stating such. Students are to arrange with the computer teacher in a timely manner for the use of the school's equipment to complete assignments.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of any device which is capable of making connections using a cellular network is not allowed by students on the Mercymount campus or at any school-sponsored event. This would include all cell phones, Apple watches, as well as some electronic tablets, music/media devices, etc. Those unapproved devices need to be powered off and properly stored. They may only be used with the explicit permission of and under the direct supervision of a member of the Mercymount faculty or an authorized supervisor (for example, to make a phone call to a parent or guardian). Students are not allowed to access personal accounts not issued by Mercymount.

Personal Device Use and Media Policy

To protect the privacy and safety of all members of our school community, students are not permitted to take photos or videos while on the Mercymount campus or at any school-sponsored event unless they have received explicit permission and are under the direct supervision of a faculty member or authorized school representative.

Device Misuse – Consequences

- *First Offense:*
The device will be confiscated by the administration and returned at their discretion. The student will also receive a detention.
- *Second and Subsequent Offenses:*
The device will again be confiscated and returned at the administration's discretion. In addition, the student will lose the privilege of using personal devices at Mercymount and will receive an in-school suspension.

Additional Guidelines

- Mercymount is not responsible for the theft, loss, or damage of any student-owned device.
- All device use is governed by the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) signed at the beginning of the school year.

Cell phones must be turned off and stored in lockers or book bags during the school day. Students are not permitted to carry phones on their person at any time.

TELEPHONE USE

Students may not use the business phones in school without permission of a teacher. In the event of an emergency, the secretary will notify the parent/guardian or those listed on the emergency form. If a school event is cancelled within the same day, students will be allowed to use the school phones to secure transportation. If no one is available to transport the student, they will be allowed to go to After-Care at no charge.

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

VISITORS

All visitors (including volunteers) entering the building must report directly to the main office, and wear Mercymount identification. In order to provide maximum uninterrupted learning time, classrooms may not be visited without prior permission from the Assistant Head of School and/or teacher.

VOLUNTEERS

The Parent Association secures volunteers for all school-related activities. Each family is asked to complete the volunteer form that goes home with the PIE Memo and to volunteer as often during the year as time and circumstances allow. Parents/guardians of students in Gr. 3 – 8 who play basketball are required to assist with the weekend games at Mercymount Country Day School. (See SAFE ENVIRONMENT). Volunteers are asked to refrain from cell phone use while supervising students.

AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION POLICY

Students are not permitted to remain in the school building or on school property after dismissal unless they are participating in a pre-arranged, supervised activity. Coaches, club moderators, or other designated adults are responsible for supervising students during these scheduled activities.

For safety reasons, students may not be on campus without adult supervision at any time. If a student is not picked up promptly at the end of an activity, they will be brought to the After-Care Program, and the family will be responsible for any associated fees.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Any difficulties that may arise regarding bus transportation for the Cumberland residents should be directed to Durham Bus Company at (401) 334-3745, and North Smithfield and Woonsocket residents to RI Department of Education Statewide Busing at (401) 222-5024. In the interest of safety, Mercymount requires all who ride the bus to behave properly. Anyone who jeopardizes the safety of another due to misconduct will be asked to find other means of transportation. A student who receives more than three discipline reports during the year will be suspended from riding the bus at the discretion of the Assistant Head of School.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to follow all rules of appropriate behavior while in the cafeteria. They may not leave the cafeteria without the permission of the teacher or staff member on duty. Payments for lunch are through FACTS using a cashless system. Families are responsible for keeping accounts current in coordination with the finance office.

For the safety of all students, those with documented food allergies are required to sit at the designated allergy-safe table unless a physician provides written documentation stating otherwise. Only students with food allergies may sit at these tables; however, they are permitted to invite a friend to join them if the friend is eating the school-provided hot lunch and it contains no known allergens.

CUSTODY

Divorced or separated parents are required to file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the school's main office. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known.

EXTENDED CARE

Before Care for children in K-8 begins at 7:15 a.m. and students are dropped off at the cafeteria door by the sidewalk. Before Care for students in PS-PreK begins at 7:45 a.m. and students are dropped off right at their classroom door. There is no need to register ahead of time for Before Care. The cost is \$10/hour per child.

Mercymount's faculty and staff provide After-Care for children in grades Preschool through grade 8 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The pricing is as follows:

- \$12/hour per child
- \$10/hour per child for families with two or more children

The fees for Before and After-Care are to be paid through the ProCare app. Please contact the office about setting up an account. Once the account is set-up, no pre -registration is needed. Students are required to follow all school rules and expectations while participating in After-Care. Failure to do so may result in the loss of After-Care privileges.

As noted above, students may not return to classrooms or lockers after 3:15 p.m.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned by the teacher for specific educational or cultural goals. The school requires the written consent of a parent or guardian before a child is permitted to go with his/her class on a trip. Permission by telephone is not acceptable. Students may be denied participation in field trips if they fail to meet educational or behavioral requirements.

Chaperones are not allowed to bring siblings or other children on class field trips, nor may non-chaperones shadow a field trip. The School Nurse does not attend field trips. Teachers do not dispense medication other than an Epi-pen as necessary in an emergency.

FUNDRAISING

Mercymount provides various fundraising activities each year in order to meet the budgeted expenses. Each family is expected to participate in fundraising activities according to its financial ability. The major three are the Fall Fundraiser, the Auction (spring) and the Annual Fund drive. Others, such as a Book Fair for library books, Pot-of-Gold Tournament supporting the sports program, or the Golf Tournament for technology needs, are optional.

LOCKERS

Lockers are provided for the convenience of Middle School students and may be accessed between classes. Students are expected to manage their time responsibly and arrive to class on time. If a student is repeatedly late, the matter will be addressed to help support their learning and ensure they are making the most of instructional time.

Maintaining a clean and organized locker is the student's responsibility. While students may personalize the inside of their lockers, decorations should be non-permanent and easily removable—items may be attached using magnets or painter's tape only. Stickers, decals, or any permanent materials are not permitted.

Lockers are intended for storing school supplies and personal items needed during the school day. They should not be considered secure storage areas; valuable items should be left at home. Locks are not permitted on school lockers.

As school property, lockers may be inspected at any time to ensure they are properly maintained and free of prohibited or unsafe items.

LOST AND FOUND

The best assurance against loss of personal belongings is to mark clothing and books with the student's name, especially younger students. Found clothing and articles are kept in our lost and found area; they are periodically given away if not claimed.

PARTIES

Classroom teachers may plan parties for special occasions during the school year. Children's birthday parties, however, are not allowed during school hours. Food treats of any kind, flowers, balloon-grams, etc. are not allowed. Birthday parties given by children for teachers are inappropriate and are also not allowed.

Students should not be dismissed early from school to attend birthday parties or similar social gatherings. Early dismissals for these events disrupt the school day and may create feelings of exclusion among students who are not invited. Families are encouraged to schedule birthday celebrations and other social events outside of school hours.

To avoid excluding or embarrassing certain children in a class, invitations to parties may not be distributed in or on school property unless the entire class is invited.

Any exceptions to the above must be obtained from the Assistant Head of School.

PETS

Personal or family pets, especially dogs, are not allowed on school property except in a vehicle. Service dogs are welcome.

PHOTOS/VIDEOS

Mercymount reserves the right to use pictures or videos of students in school publications, curriculum projects, news releases, promotional materials, on the school website and school-run social media. Any parent/guardian who does **not** wish his or her child's picture or video or name posted will indicate so on the online form prior to the start of school.

SOLICITATIONS

Solicitations of any kind are not allowed without the express permission or approval of the Head of School including requests for donations to a cause or for classroom or faculty gifts.

ADDENDUM I

Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Mercymount provides students with Google for Education accounts to support learning. These accounts—and all associated tools—must be used strictly for educational purposes, both on and off campus. All rules outlined in this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and the Student Handbook apply to the use of school-issued Google accounts.

Students may not change their account passwords without teacher permission, and any password changes must be reported and recorded by the designated technology instructor. Sharing passwords is prohibited. Accounts will be disabled when a student is no longer enrolled at Mercymount.

Mercymount does not guarantee the security or privacy of files stored on the Google system. The school is not liable for materials acquired or damages incurred through its use. Accounts are considered school property, and administration and faculty reserve the right to access them at any time.

Any personal storage device (e.g., USB drives) used on school computers may inadvertently carry viruses or malware. Mercymount is not responsible for any resulting data loss or system damage.

Internet access is provided to students, faculty, and staff as an academic tool. While we use internet filters to limit access to inappropriate content, no filtering solution is perfect. Users may still encounter material that is illegal, inaccurate, offensive, or inconsistent with Mercymount's mission.

We believe the educational benefits of online access outweigh the potential risks. However, students are expected to act responsibly and follow all computer and internet use rules to maintain a safe and productive learning environment.

This policy ensures the responsible and ethical use of school technology in alignment with Mercymount's mission. All students must conduct themselves with integrity when using the school's digital resources. Violations may result in the suspension or loss of privileges and, if warranted, additional disciplinary action.

Computer and Internet - Terms and Conditions

1. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior while using school technology, just as they would in the classroom or hallways.
2. Access to network services is a privilege, not a right. Misuse of school technology may result in the loss of privileges. Administrators determine what constitutes inappropriate use, and their decisions are final. At no time may a student use a cell phone to create a personal hotspot to bypass the school network.

3. Users are expected to abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette and conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical, and polite manner while online.
4. Users may not use computing resources for commercial purposes, product advertising, political lobbying, or political campaigning without written permission from the head of school.
5. Users may not access, transmit, or store material that is illegal, threatening, defamatory, obscene, sexually explicit, or otherwise inconsistent with the values and mission of Mercymount Country Day School.
6. Physical or electronic tampering with computer resources is not permitted. Damaging computers, systems, or networks intentionally will result in a loss of privileges and liability for repair costs.
7. Users must respect copyright laws protecting software, art, and written work. Plagiarism in any form is prohibited. Use of AI tools like ChatGPT to complete assignments without teacher permission is considered academic dishonesty.
8. Security is a high priority. Users must report any suspected security issues to a system administrator and not share or demonstrate these issues to others. Using another person's password or accessing unauthorized files is prohibited.
9. Mercymount makes no warranties of any kind for the service it provides. The school is not responsible for loss of data, delays, or service interruptions. Use of the internet is at the user's own risk.
10. Users should have no expectation of privacy. The school may monitor usage and review files to maintain system integrity. Illegal activity may be reported to authorities.
11. Students may not access social media, games, streaming services, blogs, or personal online accounts not issued by the school. Instant messaging, using full names, or unauthorized downloading is also prohibited.
12. Unauthorized disclosure of personal information is prohibited. Written authorization is required to share such information.
13. If students accidentally access inappropriate content, they must immediately report it to a teacher and not share it with others.
14. Students must never meet with individuals they have encountered online and must report any such attempt to a teacher.
15. Any violations may result in loss of access and other disciplinary or legal action. Users are subject to all applicable laws.

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT (Grades 4–8):

By signing the school handbook (via online form), I confirm that I have read and understand Mercymount’s Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to follow these rules and understand that violations may result in the loss of technology privileges and other disciplinary actions.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

By signing the school handbook (via online form), I confirm that I have read and understand Mercymount’s Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I grant permission for my child(ren) to access the Internet for educational purposes and understand that their use will be monitored. I acknowledge that the school is not responsible for materials acquired online or any potential damages resulting from the use of its technology resources.



ADDENDUM II

Cumberland School Department Policy Manual

STUDENTS
Head Lice

J
J-9

Head Lice

Head lice are a common problem among school age children. Head lice are not a medical or public health hazard as they are not known to spread disease. The greatest concerns relative to head lice are social stigma, loss of school time and toxicity due to over-treatment with pediculicide shampoos.

Head Lice do not jump, fly or swim and can only crawl short distances. The usual mode of transmission is through direct head to head contact. Transmission via clothing, hats, furniture and other objects can occur but the likelihood is low because head lice can only live off the host for 1 to 2 days.

The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages head lice screenings, which have not been proven to have a significant effect over time on the incidence of head lice in the school setting. Children should be checked only when demonstrating symptoms of head lice or as determined by the School Nurse Teacher.

1. Egg cases farther from the scalp are easier to discover, but these tend to be empty (hatched) or nonviable and, thus, are of no consequence.
2. Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people.
3. The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the risks associated with head lice.
4. Misdiagnosis of nits is very common during nit checks conducted by non-medical personnel.

General case management of head lice:

A child with an active head lice infestation should remain in class but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others. As a child with an active head lice infestation has likely had the infestation for 1 month or more by the time it is discovered and poses little risk to others from the infestation.

The School Nurse Teacher will notify the parent/guardian by telephone or by having a note sent home with the child at the end of the school day stating that prompt, proper treatment of this condition is in the best interest of the child and his or her classmates.

Criteria for return to school:

Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice.

When repeated infestations occur for a child, at the discretion of the School Nurse Teacher a note from the child's physician may be required to assure the child's safety.

Upon return to school the School Nurse Teacher will recheck a child's head and communicate with parent/guardian if needed.

Supporting documents:

<http://www.health.ri.gov/publications/protocols/HeadLice.pdf>

<http://www.health.ri.gov/for/schools/#lice>

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS CLINICAL REPORT: Guidance for the Clinician in Rendering Pediatric Care

Adopted by Cumberland School Committee: 5/14/1998

Revised by Cumberland School Committee: 1/10/2008

Amendments Reviewed and Approved by Policy & Procedures Sub-Committee: 8/11/2015

Amendments Approved by Cumberland School Committee: 8/13/2015