OUR LADY of GOOD COUNSEL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# Preschool Parent/Student Handbook

# 2026-2027

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| *Fr. Mathias Kumar* | *Parochial Administrator* |
| *Mrs. Robin Williams* | *Principal* |
| *Mrs. Gemma Kahng* | *Assistant Principal* |

*Learn. Live. Love. Serve.*

*This school is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association whose accreditation process has been approved by the Virginia Council for Private Education as authorized by the Virginia State Board of Education.*

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*Our Lady of Good Counsel offers a balanced approach to education, developing faith-filled, lifelong learners, through a play-based and developmentally appropriate curriculum.*

Preschool is an introduction to play-based learning, an opportunity to cultivate friendships, and a time to blossom in independence and self-awareness. Through individual, small group, and whole group instruction, students begin to explore the wonders of language, literacy, mathematics, religion, and the arts. Our program thoughtfully and purposefully incorporates these concepts into everyday play and classroom activities. With a balanced and developmentally appropriate approach to social, emotional, physical, religious, and academic growth, OLGC fosters a program that allows children to grow as students and friends in a safe and nurturing environment. Your child is a blessing, and OLGC is blessed with the presence of your child.

*Laura Wood*
Preschool Director

# I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

## *DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION*

> *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations…*
> *Teaching them to carry out everything I have commanded you.*
>
> *Matthew 28:19-20*

These words of Christ, addressed to the apostles at the Ascension, bestowed on the Church the office of teacher. Obedient to this divine challenge, the Church provides education permeated with the spirit of Christ and dedicated to promoting the full development of the human person.[1] Catholic education in the United States has long been a priority of clergy and faithful alike. The American bishops in their pastoral letter on education in 1972 stated that Catholic schools are the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people.[2]

The two-fold goal of Catholic schools is to provide an environment which will foster a rich religious instruction and experience, as well as a solid academic education in a Christian value-oriented environment. As such, the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington share the following:

> The Catholic School of the future, rooted in the richness of the Catholic tradition, will be a Christ-centered learning environment, focused on cultivating the potential of children and adults within the faith community. As an educational center where Gospel values are learned, embraced, and integrated by all members, the Catholic School will be a center for lifelong learning, which both challenges and empowers persons to assess the present and to design the future. The Catholic School will create an integrated curriculum that accommodates the diversity of learners in a global society.

1 Declaration on Christian Education #3
2 To Teach As Jesus Did #118

## *DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT*

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington are an essential component in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing an education rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ where Catholic doctrine and values and academic excellence prepare each student for a life of faith, service, and integrity.

# *SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY*

## Mission

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic school community unites us to learn, live, love and serve in the Salesian spirit. We inspire lifelong learners to thrive in a global community, recognize and love God's presence in all, serve others with humility, and live Jesus.

## OLGC Philosophy of Learning

Learning develops the spiritual, academic, emotional, mental, and physical aspects of the whole child. Learning is a partnership among students, parents, teachers, priests, and other parish leaders to encourage a lifelong love of learning. Learning takes place through a dynamic framework which promotes understanding, critical thinking and ownership of new knowledge and skills. Learning transpires through active exploration, creation, communication, and collaboration to inspire stewards who contribute to our ever-changing global society. Learning magnifies our unique God-given talents and empowers us to reach our full potential.

# *STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK*

Each school shall utilize the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) template to develop and distribute a handbook for students and parents/guardians. All local policies and procedures must be in conformity with the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines, and regulations.

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook. The handbook shall be updated annually to reflect policy and procedural changes. Principals/preschool directors shall establish a process for review and revision of local school policy to ensure changes reflect the input of key stakeholders. All parents, along with students in middle and high school, are required to provide a signature of receipt acknowledging they have read the rules and regulations outlined in the handbook, and they agree to abide by those rules (*Appendix AG-3*). An acknowledgment form will be provided to students upon receipt of the handbook. The form must be signed and returned by the first Friday that school is in session. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies and/or prevent a student from enrolling or continuing to be enrolled at the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given access to all school handbooks.

In light of the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this handbook. In addition, in view of the unique and essential religious mission of the school, it is expressly understood that the school may take action in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Community of Faith.

This handbook may be modified by the school after reasonable notice to the parents/students of the effective date of any changes. Any section headings are for convenience of use and shall not affect the interpretation of any provisions. If the school should elect not to take action in a particular situation, this shall not be construed or interpreted as a waiver or preclude the school from acting in a subsequent situation of the same or similar kind.

Handbooks and all subsequent changes are subject to prior written approval by the Diocese. To the extent any local handbook or policy statement therein may be inconsistent with the policies, guidelines, or regulations of the Office of Catholic Schools, the Office of Catholic Schools' policies, guidelines, or regulations shall be of controlling force and effect.

## *PARENTAL/GUARDIAN ROLE*

In this handbook, the term "parent" refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

Since parents/guardians have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents' promise at baptism to raise their children Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, diocesan schools should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

As foundation for a faith-community, parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the school's celebration of prayer and liturgy.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the programs which are developed for the education of their children. The wide spectrum of this involvement includes volunteer work, participation in parent-teacher conferences, attendance at meetings and seminars designed to help parents assist their children at home, and active involvement in the school's Parent-Teacher Organization.

Parents are expected to support the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles and support the school policies as outlined in school handbooks (*i.e.*, annually sign the school's Handbook Agreement Form). One of the conditions for initial and continued enrollment at the school is receipt of this signed form indicating the parent's support of the school's philosophy, policies, and regulations.

The following, based upon Catholic moral values, will help parents support the school's mission and commitment when interacting with teachers, staff, adult volunteers, and anyone else with whom they come in contact relating to the school:

1. will be honest and committed to integrity.
2. will be respectful and courteous.
3. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
4. will use appropriate language.

5. will not threaten or bully.
6. will speak respectfully to and about others.
7. will respect all school property.
8. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when attending school-sponsored co- and extracurricular activities.
9. will not bring to school or school-sponsored functions/activities any weapon.
10. will not bring alcohol or illegal drugs (including marijuana) to the school or any school-sponsored function/activity, with the exception of alcohol for adult social events where alcohol is served as part of the event.
11. will not overtake the role of the school in resolving school-related incidents by, for example, directly contacting another student regarding a behavioral issue involving that student and the parent's child.
12. will not involve parties external to the school on a school issue, with the exception of the exercise of legal rights.

All of the conduct expectations apply to verbal, written, and electronic communication.

If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students, or displays disrespectful, disruptive, or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish, or diocesan staff (in verbal, written, or digital form), the school may take corrective action. Such corrective action may include, at the discretion of the Principal/preschool director (and, for parish schools, the Pastor of the parish) the following: imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff; restriction or termination of the parent's access to school or parish property; dismissal of the parent's child(ren).

The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent's conduct and the surrounding circumstances.

## *SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY*

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings and principles affirming that the body reveals each person as male or female, and that the harmonious integration of a person's sexual identity with his or her sex is an expression of the inner unity and reality of the human person made body and soul by God and in the image and likeness of God. In fulfillment of these religious truths, our Catholic educational environment shall reflect a relation to persons (including name and pronoun usage, uniforms, access to facilities and overnight accommodations, and eligibility for single-sex curricular and extracurricular activities) that is respectful of and consistent with each person's God-given sexual identity.

Recognizing that each person is created in the image and likeness of God ensures that dignity is safeguarded, and safe environments are fostered. When parents send their children to Catholic schools and when persons choose careers in Catholic education, they should expect an environment consistent with the truth that God-created sexual identity speaks to His vision for

each person's relationship to Him, oneself, and others. Behavior and expressions of a person's sexual identity within the school environment that are inconsistent with these principles and/or which cause disruption or confusion regarding Catholic teachings on human sexuality are prohibited. The full cooperation with this policy of school officials, faculty, parents, and students is required and a condition precedent to the continued enrollment of each student and the continued employment of each employee, and the enforcement of this policy by the school is deemed a spiritual mandate.

## *NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE*

Catholic schools administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, and provide equal opportunity to all qualified employees and applications for employment, as may be required of and specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school-administered programs.

This policy does not preclude the existence of single-sex schools, nor does it conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions, any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

## *NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS*

The presence of students from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic students in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the school's educational program. As such:

1. Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
2. Non-Catholic students must participate in liturgies (except for reception of the Eucharist), retreats, other religious functions, and religion classes for credit.
3. Non-Catholic students may be exempt from formal co-curricular or extracurricular sacramental preparation programs but not from the catechesis held during the school day.
4. All students are expected, for testing and discussion purposes, to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school, parents/guardians must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

# II. ACADEMICS

## *CURRICULUM*

The curriculum is not just the goals of the program and the planned activities but also the daily schedule, the availability and use of materials, transitions between activities, and the way in which routine tasks of living are implemented virtually or in person. Young children are expected to learn through active and positive manipulation of the environment and concrete experiences that contribute to concept development.

Without limiting the rights of the school under Section VIII of this handbook, modifications may be made in the environment and staffing patterns for children with special needs.

The daily schedule is intended to provide a balance of activities with attention to the following dimension of scheduling:

1. Daily outdoor play, weather permitting.
2. Alternating periods of quiet time and active play.
3. A balance of large muscle and small muscle activities is provided.
4. Various small group or large group activities through most of the day.
5. A balance of child-initiated and staff-initiated activity provided. The amount of time spent in staff-initiated, large group activity is limited.

Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment that project heterogeneous, racial, gender and age attributes are selected for use.

The school will use media, such as television, films, videotapes and computers, that have been previewed by adults prior to use. Another option for activity is always available. No child is required to view or interact with the program, and the staff discusses what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills. Technology is incorporated as an integral part of the day.

The goal of the school is to emphasize concrete experiential learning and to achieve the following goals:

1. foster positive self-concept;
2. foster spiritual development;
3. encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment;
4. develop social skills;
5. encourage language development;
6. enhance physical development and skills;
7. encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices;
8. encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts;
9. respect cultural diversity.

Staff provides materials and time for activities, but children choose from among several activities that the teacher has planned, or the children initiate. Staff respects the child's right to choose not to participate at times.

Children are not always required to move from one activity to another as a group. Unregimented transitions are also used as a vehicle for learning.

Planned or routine activities may be changed according to the needs or interests of children, and/or to cope with changes in weather or other situations that affect routines without unduly alarming children.

Routine tasks such as toileting, eating, dressing, and sleeping are incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children's learning, self-help and social skills. Through complementary actions at home, parents are expected to assist and cooperate with staff to make feeding and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children. Provision is made for children who are early risers and for children who do not nap.

## *LEARNING THROUGH PLAY*

Play is the most developmentally appropriate and productive avenue for young children's learning. Play has all the characteristics of a complete educational process. It secures concentration for a great length of time. It develops initiative, imagination, and interest. There is complete emotional involvement. Play is inherently individual and has no pre-determined expectations. There can be no "failure" in play. Each child is free to succeed at self-chosen tasks, and this success leads to feelings of competence, self-worth, and the willingness to try new things.

Young children are learning all the time, and it is the preschool's responsibility to guide them in the learning process. Learning takes place when children can question, explore, share information and ideas, and try new activities.

## *WHAT DID YOU DO IN PRESCHOOL TODAY?*

It is natural for parents/guardians to wonder what their children are learning in preschool. Children often answer the question, "What did you do in preschool today? by saying, "I just played." While children are playing, they are learning. Play is the most important way children learn about themselves and their world.

While each preschool day has time for teacher-directed and structured activities, play experiences will provide many learning opportunities that will serve as a foundation for more academic learning later. Young children learn through actions and through exploration in the environment. Though preschool children can be taught to memorize information such as alphabet letters and sight words, this information will not be meaningful if simply learned through rote drill. For a child to fully understand a concept, the information must be meaningful in the context of the child's

experiences and development. When learning is relevant to the young child, not only is comprehension improved, but motivation to learn is also increased.

## *SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS*

Classroom supplies and materials are provided by the school, including rest mats and blankets.

## *ASSESSMENT*

The school's program is intended to assist staff and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the program, to diagnose children's strengths and weaknesses, and to aid in the revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

## *ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES*

The school recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each student. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the challenge to provide assistance and programs to serve students with special needs according to the resources available to the school.

In order to accommodate a student who has been evaluated for special learning needs, parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. The refusal to provide such information is grounds for terminating enrollment in the school. A student may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.

If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 Plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. Students who have a documented disability, but do not qualify for services through the local public school, may be eligible for interventions through a Student Assistance Plan written at the Catholic School.

When a student qualifies for special education services through the public school and will not receive services, an Individualized Catholic Education Plan can be written following the information in the resource manual entitled Guidelines and Resources for Working with Students with Disabilities.

Students with disabilities are expected to follow the school's policies and honor code.

# *PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION*

Teachers are expected to be reasonably available to parents/guardians throughout the school year to keep the lines of communication open in the best interest of the students. Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled throughout the school year if necessary. Parents should first privately contact a teacher with any concerns about a student or class concerns before seeking intervention by the school administration.

In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parents should make an appointment for a private meeting with the child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the Principal/preschool Director may do so after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher. Similarly, parents should discuss matters of concern with the school Principal/preschool Director, and Pastor when necessary, before bringing them to the Office of Catholic Schools

**SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION**

Teachers will schedule conferences with all parents in October. Additional conferences may be scheduled as requested by the teacher or parent.

# *PROGRESS REPORTS*

Evaluation of the child must be based on teacher judgment, observation, daily performance, class participation, and effort.

Progress Reports are sent home to parents in January and June.

# *PROMOTION/RETENTION/PLACEMENT POLICY*

A major goal of education is to assist students to satisfactorily complete each academic year. The repetition of a course is recommended when it is deemed necessary and advantageous to the particular needs of a student.

The final decision to promote or retain a student is made by the Principal/preschool Director based on the student's academic performance and best interests.

Teachers will notify parents/guardians if their child is not progressing satisfactorily toward a passing grade in the course.

## *SCHOOL COUNSELORS*

In some schools, school counselors are available to confer with students in areas which may extend beyond academic matters. While the conferences are generally confidential, the counselor may need to disclose certain information to parents/guardians, school administration, or other authorities.

# III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

## *ADMISSIONS*

### DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education and who fulfill the age, health, academic, and behavioral requirements are eligible to apply for admission to the school.

The school sets registration procedures and admissions policies. The availability of space and the order of preference for admission is determined by the school according to the following general criteria:

1. Children from the parish
2. Children from parishes without schools
3. Children from parishes with schools (for sufficient reason)
4. Children from non-Catholic families

If approved by the Pastor, and where practicable, siblings may receive special consideration.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL ADMISSION

There is no testing for preschool admission. However, readiness assessment may be utilized to determine the developmentally appropriate placement in the preschool program. The following list of documents/information is required:

1. Presentation of an original birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file)
2. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
3. Proof of custody where applicable
4. Progress reports (if available)
5. Completed Diocesan Application Form (*Appendix J*)
6. A non-refundable application fee
7. A fully executed MCH 213G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or other U.S. state equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:

a. Proof of exact dates of required immunization as required by the Code of Virginia. Immunization records are required to be signed and verified by a licensed healthcare provider.
b. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH 213G within 12 months prior to the first day of school and entering a new school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A preschool physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical even if it was completed within the 12 months prior to kindergarten entry. This is because some aspects required for kindergarten are not included in a preschool physical – *e.g.*, hearing and vision screening.)

8. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former diocesan school if previously enrolled in a diocesan school.

### GENERAL CONDITIONS OF ADMISSION

A student is admitted to the school on the premise the student intends to learn the Catholic religion and be educated in a Catholic environment. In certain cases, students may be admitted on a probationary basis subject to the student successfully completing one or more subsequent interim evaluations. Students with academic or other needs (*i.e.*, behavioral), which cannot be reasonably addressed by the school, may be denied admission.

School application forms may request disability-related information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not prohibit a school from asking questions about a student's disabilities provided that information does not automatically prohibit a student from applying.

## *ATTENDANCE*

### ABSENCE/TARDINESS/LEAVING SCHOOL

Regular attendance in the program is strongly encouraged for setting the groundwork for a successful school experience. Neither the school, the Diocese, the Office of Catholic Schools, nor any of its employees/staff are responsible for ensuring actual attendance; this is the responsibility of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Except in cases of emergency as determined by the Principal/preschool Director and/or a staff member (as applicable or necessary), a child may only be released from school to another authorized adult with the prior written or verbal authorization of the child's parent. The adult will be required to produce identification before the child is released. If a child is absent, parents are required to email the preschool to report the absence.

### TARDINESS

A student who is tardy, as determined by local policy, should report to the Principal/preschool Director's office or attendance office. A student who arrives late with an excused reason (*i.e.*,

doctor's note) is counted tardy. When a child arrives to school after 8:00 am, the parent will be required to record the arrival time and sign the late arrival book.

### Absences for Other Reasons

When parents wish to take their student out of school for several days for personal and/or medical reasons, the parents should discuss the student's progress with the teacher. However, the school is under no obligation to provide a tutor, make-up work, or special testing schedules for such a period of absence. The administration has the sole discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.

### Medical Excuses

A written explanation from a physician must be provided to the Director for medical conditions which prohibit the student from participating in routine school activities.

### Anticipated Absences

In the case of a planned absence, the parent will inform the Director of the anticipated absence as early as possible.

### Release of Children

Parents must sign their children in/out when arriving late or being released outside of regular school hours.

## *TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL*

The school must be notified in writing by the parent(s) of a student regarding a decision to transfer a student to another school, including the last day the student will attend classes at school. All school-owned materials such as textbooks and library books must be returned to school and all fees paid before leaving. Student records will be sent to the new school upon a "Release of Student Records Form" from the new school. All fees and tuition MUST BE PAID prior to the release of the student records.

## *ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL*

Each school should formulate a policy of traffic, pedestrian, bike, and bus safety for its students and communicate this policy to all school personnel, students, and their parents/guardians.

Upon arriving, parents will park in the preschool parking lot and walk their child to the preschool doors. A staff member will assist in bringing the child into the school.

At dismissal, parents are to stand on the sidewalk outside the preschool holding a sign with their child's name. Children will be called and dismissed accordingly.

Parents picking up children from Extended Day must ring the doorbell and sign their children out.

## *LUNCH/MILK PROGRAM*

Rules for acceptance and participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs are the same for all students without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA-related activity should write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250.

Lunches are provided by Schoolhouse Grill. Parents are required to set up an account and order their child's lunches each month. Milk is available for an additional charge. No outside food is permitted in the preschool.

# IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

## *ADMINISTRATIVE*

### STUDENT CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

At the time of school entry or at any other time where a change in custody status/arrangements occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide the Principal/preschool Director with a true and correct copy of the legal document for any student for which there is a legal custody agreement or for any student not residing with his/her parent.

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

1. Custodial parents should identify, in writing, other adults who may have access to information regarding their child.
2. Non-custodial parents may receive information (when requested) regarding the child unless specific documentation to the contrary is provided in the legal custody agreement.

### ACCESS TO RECORDS

Parents/guardians have a right (unless prohibited by the courts in a custody agreement) to the timely inspection of the educational records (cumulative and confidential) of their child during school hours. The school shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

If the education records of a student contain information on more than one student, the parents/guardians are limited to the specific information about their child only.

Student records shall be open to authorized school personnel only (Principal/preschool Director, Assistant Principal, and those to whom they extend access within a given year).

The school administration may elect to provide, at cost, photocopies of a student's educational records to parents, but the documentation is to be stamped "unofficial."

In the event the records of a particular student are subpoenaed, the school administration shall immediately contact and forward a copy of the subpoena to the Office of Catholic Schools. The school is required to respond appropriately to the subpoena, which is an order of the court. The school shall not provide any records until it has consulted with the Office of Catholic Schools.

## TRANSFER OF RECORDS

In accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may disclose a student's cumulative record (*i.e.*, Permanent Record Card, Attendance Card, test results) to another school with legitimate educational interest when provided a written request for such records is received, or when those individuals to whom the custodial parent/guardian has given written permission, have requested the child's records to be released. Parent signature is required for release of a student's confidential file (*i.e.*, special education records, psychological reports, disciplinary records, anecdotal information, or reports by the school counselor).

Only copies of student's permanent record file may be released. Original health records and MCH-213 transfer with the student.

Parents/guardians may not hand-carry records to another school, except under extraordinary circumstances. The documents must be placed in a securely sealed envelope, which cannot be opened without obvious evidence, and the envelope must also be similarly marked "hand carried."

## CONFIDENTIAL ACADEMIC RECORDS

Parents/guardians are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 Plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. The refusal to provide such information is a ground for terminating enrollment in the school.

Confidential records for dis-enrolled students are merged with the students' cumulative files.

## RETENTION OF RECORDS

Permanent Record Card (to include transcripts, attendance record, and standardized test results) is to be retained indefinitely.

The following student records are to be retained for 7 years, or until the student reaches the age of 25, whichever is greater:

1. Application
2. Counselor Notes
3. Discipline Notes
4. Court Documents
5. Psychological Reports

The following student records are to be retained for 25 years:

1. IEP/ISP or 504 Plan
2. Student Assistance Plans
3. Eligibility Minutes
4. Student Support Team Minutes

### SCHOOL VISITORS

All persons other than school staff and currently registered students must first report to the school office immediately upon entering school grounds, sign in, and wear an identification tag when visiting the school.

### SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS/TAKE-HOME COMMUNICATION

All materials prepared by parents/guardians for release to the parish or school community must be approved by the Principal/preschool Director or his/her designee. Take-home communications will generally be sent home on Fridays in the students' backpacks.

### PRINCIPAL/PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR'S COMMUNICATION

The Principal sends out a weekly newsletter to the parents. The Director sends a monthly newsletter. Both of these are sent via email.

### TELEPHONE USE/MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

A telephone is available for use in the preschool office.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If, during the course of the year, the school uses inclement weather/emergency days, it may be necessary to modify the published school calendar.

If school closes unexpectedly for a single day, there will be no academic requirements for that day. If, however, the school will be closed for an extended period due to weather, public health, or community concern, the school may transition into virtual instruction for the required duration. These will be counted as instructional days.

Emergency closing of school will be determined by Fairfax County and the Principal. In the event of inclement weather, please listen to the radio or television for announcements. Announcements will also be posted on the school website at www.olgcschool.org. If school is in session and Fairfax County dismisses early, OLGC will also dismiss early. Parents will be notified of the early closing through our emergency notification system (via email and/or phone) and radio and television announcements. Parents can also sign up for emergency message notification by email from Fairfax County Public Schools. Sign up for this service at http://www.fcps.edu.

## PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA

Parents/guardians may opt their children out of participating in videotaping, audio recording, school pictures, other photography, or participation involving the internet. When a parent decides to exercise this right, the school is required to use the Waiver/Right to Object Form (*Appendix N*). All student or parental publications are subject to review and approval by the school administration prior to publication.

## MEDIA CENTER

All materials chosen for the media center must be appropriate for students, not only in age level and reading ability but also for their capacity to foster our students' moral development. All materials shall conform with diocesan policies and guidelines regarding Catholic education.

Parents, guardians, or teachers who object to print or multi-media materials must complete an Objection to Content Form (*Appendix K*) after they have read the book or viewed the media and then submit it to the school Principal/preschool Director. Those objecting to materials obtained in the school media center should complete the Objection to Content Form for Library Materials (*Appendix K-1*). A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review. The Superintendent of Schools has the final say in any subsequent question of this review.

## FIELD TRIPS

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance enhance the lessons of the classroom. Field trips, virtual or in person, are planned by teachers and approved by the school administration in order to achieve educational objectives. Financial considerations may bear on the feasibility and frequency of field trips.

Field trips are considered an extension of the school day, and the code of conduct will apply.

A permission form signed by a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must be obtained prior to a student participating in each activity (*Appendix R*, available in PowerSchool).

Each field trip must be adequately chaperoned, and chaperones must carry with them, in a sealed envelope, a copy of the Parent Permission Form for School Sponsored Trip Participation for each

student they are supervising. To protect the confidentiality of the students, the sealed envelope should not be broken unless there is an emergency which necessitates the chaperone accessing these forms.

1. A chaperone is defined as an adult volunteer (at least 21 years of age) that has been delegated by the appropriate staff person and has oversight or supervisory authority over youth during the school activity (either on or off campus) whether for occasional or regular activities. These individuals share in the responsibility and authority of the diocesan staff person designated to have oversight of a particular event or activity and its leaders.
2. All chaperones must be rated compliant by successfully completing the paperwork, background check, and safe environment training (currently known as VIRTUS) through the Diocese of Arlington.
3. Chaperones with CPR and First Aid training and those with MAT (medication administration training) certification must be identified and known to all other chaperones.
4. All chaperones will be given a copy and comply with the Code of Conduct for Personnel and Volunteers in the Diocese of Arlington. (See *Appendix G-1*).

In the event private automobiles/vehicles of students, parents/guardians, or other authorized adults of at least 21 years of age are to be utilized to transport students on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical, and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the Diocesan Claims Risk Manager. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the Principal/preschool Director for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. The Use of Personal Vehicle Form is available in PowerSchool and must be used for this purpose. The Principal/preschool Director shall have the right to prohibit, for any reason, a proposed driver from transporting student(s) on a field trip.

1. Youth weighing less than 100 pounds may not be seated in the front seat. Virginia's child safety laws require that children under eight years old are secured in a child safety seat or booster seat, regardless of height or weight. Children between eight and 12 should remain in a booster seat until they can fit in a seat belt.
2. Phone calls and texting are not permitted while driving.
3. Parents/guardians are to be furnished with detailed written information about the field trip and must be given the opportunity to "opt out" their children from the field trip.
4. Teachers and other school employees should not drive students in their personal vehicles.
5. It should be understood, in rare instances, world conditions and specifically threats of terrorism against Americans may necessitate the cancellation of school-sponsored trips.
6. School-sponsored ski trips are not permitted.
7. All medications given on field trips must comply with medication administration policies. For a student with prescription medication and/or medically necessary health related procedures or treatments, a trained individual needs to be present on the field trip such as a school nurse, parent/guardian, or designated family member to ensure care in the case of an emergency. If a trained individual of the school is unable to

chaperone the student on a field trip, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide a trained individual to accompany the student.

8. Alcohol shall NEVER be served to minors, regardless of cultural norms and/or parent permission while on a field trip/experience.

**OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

Overnight trips are not permitted for preschool students.

**MARCH FOR LIFE POLICY**

Students are offered varied opportunities to participate in activities that promote the sanctity of life.

Students who accompany parents on the March for Life will not be marked as absent for that day. From time to time it has been the case that world or local events raise concern about the advisability of school-sponsored student participation in the March for Life and related events. When this happens, principals/preschool directors should use prudent judgment when deciding on attending the March and should consider appropriate alternatives that can be conducted at the school level.

# *PARENT ORGANIZATIONS*

Parent-Teacher Organizations (and like-named entities) support the critical relationship between schools and parents, the primary educators of their children. These organizations support the Principal/preschool Director to advance the school's mission.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. It can help mobilize the parent community regarding legislative proposals impacting Catholic education. The work of PTOs and like organizations shall be guided by the PTO Handbook and the direction of the Pastor and Principal/preschool Director.

All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents for release to the Parish or school community must be submitted to the Principal/preschool Director or designee for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution.

All PTO monies must be deposited in the parish or school account as designated by the Pastor. In consultation with the Principal, the PTO officers should prepare a budget and submit it to the Pastor and Principal/preschool Director for approval.

PTOs shall have by-laws which establish, among other things, term limits for officers as well as the organization of committees. Persons nominated to serve as a PTO board member must receive the approval of the Pastor and Principal/preschool Director.

## *FUNDRAISING*

Any program of generating additional revenue must have the approval of school leadership (Pastor, Principal/preschool Director). These activities should be organized and executed so that the school program is not interrupted. Students may participate in, and cooperate with, worthy collections and fundraising projects conducted by the school or their parish.

## *TRANSPORTATION/PARKING*

Each child must have a transportation form on file in the preschool office. This form includes the names and contact information of those people who have parental permission to pick up the child. It is very important for your child's well-being to consistently arrive at school in a timely manner, and to arrive promptly to pick up your child at the end of the school day. Parents must park in designated spaces, assist their children in getting out of the car, and wait with their children for a staff member who will accompany the children into the preschool. Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to enter the school building unaccompanied by a staff member. Parents are responsible for their child's safety during arrival and once the child has been dismissed to the parent's custody.

# V. FINANCES

## *SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES*

A family's tuition obligation continues even if the school shifts to a virtual model. The education of each student continues with teachers planning and delivering lessons and assessing student progress. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period. If a parent/guardian cannot make the regular tuition payment, the Principal/preschool Director should be notified as soon as possible to create a payment plan.

New students pay a $500 tuition deposit per child when the application for admission is submitted. All tuition deposits are posted to the last month's tuition for the upcoming school year. Once the application paperwork and entrance testing is complete, you will be notified of acceptance by either email or a letter will be mailed to you. Your deposit is not refundable as of the date shown in your notification. Students re-enrolling must make a $500 tuition deposit per child to reserve a space for the student(s) for the upcoming school year.

Our Lady of Good Counsel utilizes Blackbaud Tuition Management to manage our entire tuition processing. Parents complete a simple one-page Family Enrollment form to choose their payment method and payment plan. (See the Payment Methods and Plans below.) Parents have available to them (24/7) three ways to obtain information about their account: 1) by talking to a person at Blackbaud Tuition Management by phone, 2) by using an automated phone help system, or 3) by accessing a secure website (https://enroll.blackbaud.school/#/findschool). Parents are able to make payments, change bank account information, obtain balances due and paid, obtain statements, and

find answers to questions. Email reminders will notify parents in advance when automatic withdrawals will be made or credit cards accessed for payments. Additionally, those paying by check will receive monthly invoices.

If you have any questions about your tuition rate, or if you wish to change your payment plan or method, please call the Parish Administration Office at 703-896-7402. No tuition assistance is available for preschool.

## *TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES*

PRESCHOOL TUITION (INCLUDES LUNCH & SNACKS)
(There is no difference in pricing for Catholic and non-Catholic students.)

Program Annual Tuition
Full day $12,500
Modified day $10,000
Extended Day $4000
Annual supply fee $105

TUITION PAYMENT PLANS & OPTIONS
One (1) Time Pay:
Payment due September 1st. Administrative fee waived.
Two (2) Payments:
Payments due September 1st and January 1st. $20.00 enrollment fee added to first tuition payment.
Four (4) Payments:
Payments due September 1st, November 1st, January 1st, and March 1st. $40.00 enrollment fee added to first tuition payment.
Ten (10) Payments:
Payments due August 1st through May 1st. $40.00 enrollment fee added to first tuition payment.
Eleven (11) Payments:
Payments due every month July 1st thru May 1st. $40.00 enrollment fee added to first tuition payment.
Non-payment of tuition and fees is a breach of a material condition of the contract. The School has the right not to certify a student's graduation or provide transcripts of the student's academic record to third parties or to issue a Certificate of Diploma if tuition and fees are not paid.

# VI. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

## *CODE OF CONDUCT*

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic moral values and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is

encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends, parents/guardians, faculty, and students work together to create a Catholic school environment. These basic components include:

1. Teachers have a right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.
2. Students have a right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, students:

1. will be honest and committed to integrity.
2. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
3. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
4. will use appropriate language.
5. will speak respectfully to and about others.
6. will complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
7. will respect all school and personal property (see *Care of School Property*).
8. will refrain from any deliberate disruption in the school.
9. will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
10. will comply with the Responsible Use Policy for Technology and Artificial Intelligence.
11. will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-sponsored co- and extracurricular activities.
12. will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
13. will adhere to the dress code (see *Dress Code*).
14. will not give or receive unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes, or assignments.
15. will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the Principal/preschool Director.
16. will not bring to school or school-sponsored functions/activities, nor possess at school or school-sponsored functions/activities, any real or toy knives, guns (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension or expulsion may result (see *Substance Abuse/Weapons* and *Inappropriate Materials*).
17. will maintain, and support others who maintain, a safe and drug-free environment at school with the understanding that possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or any other substance that may be harmful or dangerous is forbidden (*e.g.*, vaping devices and e-cigarettes) and will result in suspension or expulsion from school.
18. will not engage in any physical or verbal contact with another student which could be interpreted to be an inappropriate display of affection. Such conduct is prohibited on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities.
19. will, at all times, whether at school or in the community, conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the Catholic values and principles of the school.

All of the conduct expectations apply to verbal, written, and electronic communications and student use of the internet.

The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic social teachings. The role of the Principal/preschool Director, staff, and faculty is to work with the students and parents/guardians to assist the students in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

# *DISCIPLINE*

An important goal for Catholic Education is for students to learn self-discipline which strengthens and promotes the values incorporated in our Catholic faith community. As the school builds community, it develops in the students the awareness that sensible rules serve to safeguard the individual's freedom and provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. Disciplinary measures should have as an end the development of the human person who respects oneself, other persons, and those in authority.

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this handbook empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

In justice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular school setting.

Classroom rules are designed to protect persons and property and to promote pro-social behaviors, such as sharing and taking turns. If problems arise, the children in question will be reminded of acceptable behaviors and redirected to more positive activities.

### USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In cases where a student is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the Principal/preschool Director of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation.

Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others should receive disciplinary action. Each offense should be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the student, the nature of the infraction, and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

### SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that will arise, this handbook empowers faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

**SUSPENSION**

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the Principal/preschool Director. Once the Principal/preschool Director suspends a student, parents/guardians may be required to sign a behavioral contract in which they signify their understanding of the problem and agree to work with the school in correcting the situation.

The failure of the parents to execute the above-referenced agreement shall preclude the student from returning to the regular instructional program. This policy applies to in-house and out-of-school suspensions.

**EXPULSION**

Expulsion may be resorted to when one or all of the following are present:

1. a serious infraction of school rules occurs;
2. the student has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual;
3. the student's continued presence in the school is considered by school officials to be a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community;
4. a parent/guardian repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students or displays disrespectful, disruptive, or harassing behavior toward teachers, school, parish, or diocesan staff.

If the Principal/preschool Director believes it necessary to expel a student, the Principal/preschool Director will notify the student and the student's parents/guardians about the student's action and provide them with an opportunity to respond in accordance with the school's disciplinary hearing process before making any final decision on the matter.

A parent/guardian whose student is expelled may appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 5 working days from the time of written notification.

During the pendency of any appeal, the expelled student shall be removed from the school community in compliance with the expulsion notice unless otherwise directed at the discretion of the Principal/preschool Director.

Students who have been expelled from any diocesan school may not apply for admission to that school or another diocesan school for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of expulsion.

# *STUDENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES*

Privacy of individual students must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare, and safety of other members of the school community. As such:

## SEARCHES OF STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY

The Principal/preschool Director or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's person and/or personal property (*e.g.*, automobiles, etc.) on school property or at school activities may be conducted by the school Principal/preschool Director or other designated officials. It is necessary that a search be reasonable and related to the school rights in this regard. The failure of a student to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

## INTERROGATION OF STUDENTS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

Unless provided with a court-issued warrant, the Principal or preschool Director and the Office of Catholic Schools must first be consulted before law enforcement authorities are allowed to speak to any student for interrogation purposes of alleged illegal activities or threatened illegal activities. This policy does not apply to Child Protective Services (CPS) officers, who are by law entitled to interview students.

The questioning by police officers of students in school or on school grounds about alleged illegal activities or threatened illegal activities shall meet the following conditions:

1. The Principal, the preschool Director, or the Principal's/preschool Director's designee shall be alerted.
2. The police officers shall report to the Principal's office.
3. The Principal, the preschool Director or the Principal's/preschool Director's designee will learn the purpose of questioning. In the rare instance when CPS is involved, contact Office of Catholic Schools and/or General Counsel for guidance.
4. Permission from the student's parent/guardian must be acquired, either by phone or in person, prior to any questioning.
5. The Principal/preschool Director or a school representative shall be present.
6. The questioning shall be conducted in a private room where participants cannot be seen or heard by students and/or other school personnel.

The police officers may take legal actions that they deem necessary.

## STUDENTS AND STUDENT PROPERTY

Students are solely responsible for their own personal property. The school accepts no responsibility for items left unattended in the common areas of the school. Items of personal property or clothing not directly related to academic or athletic events sponsored by the school should not be brought to school.

# *CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY*

Students are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Students who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial restitution. If library books are not returned, students will be assessed an amount equal to the value of the book or its replacement, whichever is greater, as determined by the Principal/preschool Director.

# *DRESS CODE*

The dress code provides a standard for our students, which fosters an environment conducive to learning and respectful behavior.

Final decisions regarding the school uniform and dress code rest with the Principal/preschool Director.

**DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION**

UNIFORMS
The preschool uniform is available through Lands' End www.landsend.com and Flynn and O'Hara www.flynnohara.com. The summer uniform consists of navy blue shorts and a light blue t-shirt. A skort is optional for the girls. The winter uniform consists of navy blue sweatpants, light blue t-shirt, and a navy blue sweatshirt. All uniform pieces have the OLGC logo. It is imperative that the uniform pieces fit appropriately so that the child can successfully and independently manage his/her clothing during the school day and when using the bathroom.

SHOES
Closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes will ensure that students will be able to run, jump, and play comfortably.

OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAYS
On designated days, students should dress in clothing that is comfortable and suitable for active play and rest. Students should wear clothing that they can manage independently when using the bathroom.

BACKPACKS
Students should bring a standard size backpack to school on Fridays or the last day of the school week. The backpack should be large enough to hold schoolwork and the rest blanket.

# *INAPPROPRIATE MATERIALS*

Students are not permitted to possess the following items on school property or at school functions:

- Real or toy guns
- Real or toy knives

•Vapes or other smoking paraphernalia
• Laser pointer devices
• Shock pens
• Sharp objects
• Skateboards, roller skates, rollerblades
• Matches, lighters iPods, MP-3/CD players, radios, tape recorders or other recording devices
• Fireworks
• Remote control devices, video games
• Devices that cause explosion
• Beepers, pagers, cell phones, walkie-talkies
• Fitbits and Apple watches
• Any other items deemed disruptive by the school administration

## *PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS*

All children using the OLGC Preschool playground must be supervised by an adult at all times.

## *LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS*

Given the risk of potential harm, students' access and use of microwave ovens is prohibited in grades preschool through grade 5. Student meals provided by parents/guardians must not be heated in microwave ovens by school personnel and/or school volunteers.

All students at OLGC Preschool will be provided with a nutritious snack and beverage each day. All students will be provided with a lunch and beverage each full school day. Children's birthdays will be celebrated in class. However, no treats may be sent in from home.

## *SHOW & TELL*

Children are allowed to bring toys from home for the purpose of Show and Tell only. Weapons (whether real or toys) of any kind are not appropriate Show and Tell items and shall not be brought to school for any reason. If weapons of any kind are brought to school, the child shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action which may include, but not be limited to, expulsion. Each teacher will determine a class schedule for Show and Tell.

# VII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

## *STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE*

Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the health and well-being of their children. School health services supplement, rather than substitute for, parental care and concern for the health of the students.

### PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse generally applies to all clergy, all employees, and all volunteers.

It is the policy of the diocese that sexual misconduct and/or child abuse while performing any work or activity under the auspices of the diocese is contrary to Christian principles and outside the scope of any authority, duties, and/or employment of any clergy, employee, or volunteer.

Virginia law imposes upon school personnel the legal responsibility of reporting to the local child protective services agency any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect.

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services (CPS) and to the school Principal/preschool Director (who in turn will call the Vicar General). The school Principal/preschool Director should complete the approved Diocesan Incident Reporting Form designated by the Office of Child Youth Protection and Victim Assistance, which must be sent to the Vicar General. The school Principal/preschool Director must inform the superintendent as well.

In accordance with Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-118, "Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing *in loco parentis*, or school personnel."

### WELLNESS POLICY

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy meets minimum federal standards and establishes goals for physical education, nutrition, and healthy environments in schools. All schools must develop, and continue to evaluate, local school wellness policies. The local policies create a framework for increased student activity, staff wellness, safe and healthy environments, and the elimination of foods of minimal nutritional value during the school day. All schools have wellness committees to implement, sustain, and evaluate the local wellness program.

### STUDENTS WITH SUICIDAL IDEATION

The Diocese of Arlington is committed to providing a safe environment that allows students to develop and prosper academically, physically, and spiritually, consistent with Catholic teachings

and principles. When a student has expressed to any adult that he/she wants to harm or kill him/herself, it is the responsibility of any adult employee in the school to act immediately in the interest of the safety of the student by alerting an administrator.

The school may require documentation and information from the parents regarding the threat of self-harm in order to evaluate whether accommodations exist that would permit the student to safely remain in school, or if the student should be removed from school until his/her health has improved. The school will require a letter from a licensed health care professional stating that the student is permitted to return to school. In addition, a documented return-to-school plan, coordinated between the school, the mental health professional, and the parents, may be required.

### ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The parents/guardians of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the Principal/preschool Director or the Principal/preschool Director's designee as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority of providing assistance to the student.

If an incident results in a medical condition or injury which can be reasonably known to the appropriate supervisory faculty/staff member and/or the Principal/preschool Director, the school and/or its staff are authorized to render reasonable basic first aid if such direct medical assistance would, in the opinion of the school, serve to minimize the severity of the injured person's condition. In addition, staff may secure a professional diagnosis and/or treatment if such action, in the opinion of the school, appears to be reasonably warranted. The school and school officials shall be expressly held harmless from any liability costs or expenses associated with the professional diagnosis and/or any treatment or first aid provided (including, but not limited to, the cost of transportation), such costs or expenses being the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents/guardians.

### AIR QUALITY AND PREVENTION OF HEAT- /COLD-RELATED ILLNESS

When students and activities require time outside, schools will monitor weather related to the "feels like" temperature. To prevent heat- and/or cold-related illness, outside activities may be restricted based upon a heat index or wind chill factor which registers in the caution level. Schools will consult local weather reports and *Appendix F-15* for guidance in outdoor activities. Schools that do not have air-conditioned classrooms are permitted to provide early dismissals in accordance with *Appendix F-15*.

### GENERAL ILLNESS PROCEDURES

Each school will provide a health office or comfortable space, apart from the student population, where children who become ill or injured can be cared for following *Virginia School Health Guidelines*.

Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health

regulations. Once it is determined that a child needs to go home, a parent or guardian must pick up their child from school within a reasonable amount of time to control the spread of illness. If a parent or guardian is not available, the emergency contact will be called. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a health care provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.

When a student is requesting a waiver from participating in Physical Education classes and/or recess, parents are required to submit a written statement from their child's physician which states any activity restrictions with regard to participation in Physical Education classes and/or recess. The statement is expected to include a specific timeframe for the activity restrictions.

**MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW**

All clinic employees, administrators, and staff are required to administer medication within the framework of the procedures outlined in the diocesan policy and summarized here.

All prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications may be administered during the school day under the following conditions:

1. When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration);
2. After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
3. When the parent/guardian provides and transports the medication to and from school and the medication is given directly to the school nurse/health assistant or a member of the school administration;
4. When there is a licensed health care provider's written order signed by the parent/guardian requesting the school administer the medication or to permit the student to self-administer the medication;
5. When the medication is brought to the school in its original container stating the name of the student, the dosage, and method of administration prescribed by a licensed health care provider (LHCP). It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription. The new prescription must also be brought to the school in the original container as stated above;
6. When the appropriate medication authorization form (*Appendix F-6*) has been completed, signed by the parent/guardian, and accompanies the medication;
7. For any medication, parents must document the number of tablets or dosages to be secured for administration by authorized school personnel. If tablets are to be divided, the parent or guardian is responsible for dividing the tablets in order to achieve their child's proper dosage;
8. Herbal and homeopathic medications/supplements will not be given in diocesan schools without written authorization by a LHCP that shall include desired and adverse effects. Protein and/or other OTC supplements will not be administered unless directly requested by a physician with a health treatment plan (*Appendix F-6*);
9. Students should not attend school while taking prescribed Schedule II narcotics (*e.g.*, Percocet, oxycodone, hydromorphone) for any legitimate reason. If a student needs a

Schedule II narcotic analgesic, they shall remain home until they are able to control pain with OTC medications;

10. Benzodiazepines (*e.g.*, klonopin, Ativan, diazepam) prescribed as needed (prn) should not be administered in any school setting. This does not apply to students diagnosed with a seizure disorder.

Under no circumstances are medications and/or OTC supplements to be shared with other students.

If a student with a known condition warrants oxygen treatment at school, the treating LHCP and registered nurse shall develop a written plan of treatment including all equipment and supplies.

The Diocese of Arlington does not permit the use, possession, or transfer of marijuana including Cannabidiol (CBD), Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC-A) and Cannabis Oil for any purpose. Students who qualify under local law to use marijuana for medical purposes may not possess, store, use, or share marijuana on school property or school-sponsored events.

PICC Lines, Heparin/Saline Locks, and Central Venous Lines may be present in students with specialized health care needs. Dressing changes, heparin flushes, and other medication administration via these lines are to be done at home and should not be done at school.

When the medication is epinephrine, trained school employees are permitted to administer EpiPen injections when:

1. the parents advise the staff most directly involved with the student of the situations when an EpiPen may need to be administered (*e.g.*, symptoms indicating that a person is suffering from severe allergic reaction, basic procedures for administering the EpiPen with a suitable demonstration);
2. parents of students requiring such injections provide a licensed health-care provider letter attesting to the life-threatening allergy;
3. parents agree to execute the release of liability/hold harmless agreement regarding the use of the EpiPen.

All diocesan schools will maintain non-student-specific school stock epinephrine. This school stock epinephrine can be used in an allergy-naïve student when anaphylaxis is suspected. Employees at the school will be informed of the location where the medication will be stored, and they will be appropriately educated on its use.

All diocesan schools will maintain naloxone, an opioid antagonist, to be available for use if opioid overdose is suspected in any individual on school campus. Any student receiving naloxone will be transported via EMS to the local emergency room and cleared to return to school. All staff will be trained in how to recognize opioid overdose and administer naloxone.

A student is NOT permitted to self-medicate. The school does not assume responsibility for medications taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for students who demonstrate the capability to carry and self-administer emergency lifesaving medications (*e.g.*, inhaler, EpiPen).

All OTC and prescription medications are to be kept locked in the clinic/school office and be administered by the school nurse, clinic aide, Principal/preschool Director, or trained designee. No student is to carry/possess medications without appropriate medical authorization. No medication will be administered unless the school has received a signed copy of the Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*). OTC medications do not require a health care provider's signature unless the medication is required for four (4) or more consecutive days.

It shall be the student's responsibility to come to the clinic/school office at the appropriate time for medication unless a health care provider or parent/guardian indicates in writing that the student cannot do this.

Within one week after expiration of the effective date on the order or on the last day of school, the parent/guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed within that period will be destroyed.

## LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY POLICY

Schools will utilize current resources and reputable materials such as Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) and the CDC's *Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs* to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications.

All schools must provide an annual in-service for school faculty and staff. Training will include minimizing the risk of exposure to life-threatening allergens in the school setting as well as anaphylaxis recognition, medical management, and incident reporting.

Parents/guardians of students with a life-threatening allergy must inform the Principal/preschool Director and school health personnel of any allergies and provide the school with the appropriate and fully executed diocesan documents. Parents/guardians are expected to supply schools with any emergency medications as prescribed and may additionally provide the student with "safe" foods for classroom celebrations involving food. Schools will utilize diocesan documents to formulate an emergency care plan for the student and will share this care plan with those involved with the student including, but not limited to: teacher(s), food service employees, bus drivers, and janitorial staff.

## CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY POLICY

A concussion is both a medical and an educational concern. It can affect a student's health, thinking, learning, and participation in school activities. Because of this, recovery often requires coordination between health care providers, school staff, and families.

When a student is diagnosed with a concussion, the parent/guardian must notify the school and provide written documentation from a licensed health care provider. School staff will work with the family and the health care provider to determine appropriate temporary academic or activity adjustments that support the student's recovery.

Students recovering from a concussion may need a gradual **"return to learn"** (academic activities) and **"return to play"** (physical activity and sports). Adjustments may include changes to workload, rest breaks, reduced screen time, or temporary limits on physical activity.

In most cases, additional medical documentation may be required to confirm that a student is cleared to return to full academic and physical activities without accommodations.

### TELEHEALTH

Medical appointments made via telehealth cannot be facilitated in the school building. If a student has been scheduled for a telehealth visit for medical reasons, the parent/guardian will need to check his/her student out of the school building and complete the appointment in the privacy of their vehicle or at home.

If a school is able to adequately support virtual regularly scheduled therapy sessions in the building (*e.g.*, occupational or speech therapy) for students with a documented diagnosis, they can do so on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the specific circumstances.

### SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS

The parent/guardian of any student on a continuing regimen for a non-episodic condition shall inform the school Principal/preschool Director and identify, in writing, the student's supervising health care provider. If necessary, and with parental/guardian written consent, there may be occasions when the school needs to communicate with the health care provider regarding possible effects on the student's healthcare management, special emergency procedures, or behavior at school.

### TOILETING/INCONTINENCE

Although the vast majority of school staff would assist in an emergency situation, as no child should be left in wet or soiled clothing, it is important to note that there is no expectation that routine and predictable incidents are to be dealt with by school staff. Parents will always be contacted in incidents of soiling.

The exception to this policy is the student with a prescribed health-related treatment or procedure plan obtained in writing from a LHCP, with proper authorizations in writing by the parent or guardian.

For preschool students, it is recognized that continence training is an area of development which is reached at different ages for all children and that every child has individual needs which are respected. The preschool Director will determine age-appropriate protocols for the student population.

### USE OF CRUTCHES AND OTHER ORTHOPEDIC/ASSISTIVE DEVICES

An order and/or statement from a licensed healthcare provider is required to use crutches, braces, casts, slings or other orthopedic or assistive devices at school. More importantly, the statement is expected to include activity restrictions and timeframe for the activity restriction. If a clearance to resume full activity is needed based on the initial provider note, a follow-up note will be expected to indicate clearance. If a student arrives at school on crutches without a licensed health care provider order and/or statement, the parent will be called to take the student home.

## *CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES*

### DISEASE

Parents/guardians must notify the school within 24 hours if their child or any member of the immediate household has developed a communicable disease. Parents must notify the school immediately if the disease is life threatening. Parents must pick up their sick or injured child in a timely manner when contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child.

The protection and welfare of each individual student is of importance in the schools of the Diocese of Arlington. In an effort to enhance protection of students:

1. No daycare/preschool, elementary, middle, or secondary school student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with the Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by a licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form MCH-213G (*Appendix F-2*).
    a. A certificate of immunization is not required for any student for whom the school has written certification from a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy, licensed nurse practitioner, or the local health department, that one or more of the required immunizations may be detrimental to the student's health. The certification must indicate the specific nature and probable duration of the medical condition or circumstance that contraindicates immunization. The Virginia School Entrance Health Form (MCH-213G) provides a space for such a certification to be made.
    b. On a basic level, for the good of society, the Catholic Church generally encourages the use of immunizations. The Church teaches that questions of immunization are "left to a matter of conscience" and parents have the right to decide about the health of their children in this matter. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that this conflicts with their religious tenets or practices must produce a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption Form (*Appendix F-18*), which will be retained in the student health record. Schools may request a statement from their parish priest or affiliate, describing such objection to specific immunizing agents. If an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness occurs, the

student who is not immunized against that disease will be excluded from school for an undetermined period of time as per the instructions of the State Health Commissioner and the public health department.

2. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for three months or more, where tuberculosis is common, are required to provide documentation, prior to school entry, of a negative tuberculosis skin test or chest x-ray result. All diocesan schools are responsible for compliance with local health department regulations pertaining to tuberculosis screening and treatment.
3. Students with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to the Virginia Department of Health regulations. (See *General Illness Procedures*.)
4. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the Virginia School Health Guidelines, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.
5. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish-based influenza vaccination clinics due to the liability associated with the vaccination of children. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school-based vaccination clinics for children during school hours, and in the absence of the parent, with the exception of a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school influenza vaccination program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement. Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the signing of any contract for services.
6. Parents and guardians of students learning in a virtual environment must make the school aware of the student's illness as it may impact the student's ability to learn.

### LICE

All students identified as having an active case of lice will be excluded from school until they receive treatment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide appropriate and adequate treatment for the student and home environment as recommended by their health care professional. Readmission to school is determined by the school nurse based upon re-inspection and the effectiveness of treatment. Follow-up treatment is expected and verified by the school nurse. Classroom contacts may be inspected.

## *BLOODBORNE DISEASE*

The Christian community is called to respond to the sick in our midst with compassion and justice. The diocese recognizes its obligation to protect the rights of individual students infected with Hepatitis and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and to provide a safe environment for students, staff members, and the public. Students who are infected with bloodborne Hepatitis, HIV, or HIV-related conditions must be provided the opportunity to receive a Catholic school education.

Since it is known that bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV are not transmitted through casual contact, any student who is infected will continue education in a regular classroom assignment unless his

or her health status requires otherwise. It is the intent of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools to follow the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health which state that most bloodborne Hepatitis and HIV-infected children be allowed to attend school in an unrestricted setting, and that decisions regarding school attendance be based on the medical condition of each child and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting.

Persons involved in the implementation and monitoring of this policy shall maintain confidentiality of records in compliance with federal and state law and diocesan policy. All diocesan schools shall also maintain a program of information and training for school staff members to ensure a consistent and accurate understanding regarding the prevention of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This includes training related to the proper application of universal/standard precautions.

## *FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS*

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly. Fire drills, severe weather (shelter in place) drills, and simulated lockdown drills are conducted throughout the year.

## *HARASSMENT*

"Harassment" is threatening, intimidating, demeaning, humiliating or hostile conduct toward an individual because of his/her race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or disability, or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates, which conduct:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, demeaning, humiliating, hostile, or offensive environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance.

Harassment can take place in person or in writing and can be physical, verbal, or electronic. Regardless of its form, the Diocese of Arlington prohibits it.

This policy applies to the school site itself, to all school-sponsored and affiliated activities and events, whether in school or out of school, including but not limited to special events, field/service trips, retreats, and/or other overnight trips, sporting events and practices, to all forms of transportation used by school personnel and students to come and go to the school and school-affiliated activities, and to all forms/use of technology.

Furthermore, since student behavior, whether inside or outside of school, reflects on our schools and can have a significant impact on life at school, there are times when it is appropriate and important for school administration to respond to incidents that occur outside of school and beyond school hours. Therefore, the schools reserve the right to discipline those in the school community

who engage in harassment of other school community members at any location, including online environments and at any time if such harassment takes the form of obscene, libelous, slanderous language or incites violence, invades the rights of others, or contributes to a substantial disruption of the school community. Therefore, if the school learns of harassment outside of school and is able to verify the harassment has occurred, appropriate action will be taken to maintain a safe and respectful work and academic environment.

As the primary educators of their children, parents have the responsibility to handle harassment issues not involving the school that occur outside of school.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who has reported these behaviors is prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. Students, parents, employees, and service providers are responsible for reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or retaliation on campus. School principals/preschool directors will ensure that all potentially illegal behaviors and/or threats to engage in illegal behavior are reported to the appropriate local authorities and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools immediately.

Students: Reporting a Concern

If something happens to you or a friend that makes you uncomfortable or worries:

1. Tell a teacher, counselor, nurse, Principal/preschool Director, or other trusted adult at school.
2. Tell a trusted adult outside of school.

Students will not get in trouble at school for telling an adult about a concern. Speaking up helps keep everyone safe.

Parents/Guardians: Reporting a Concern

If a parent or guardian is aware of potentially concerning behavior, they are encouraged to share this information with school staff, including their student's teacher counselor, or Principal/preschool Director.

Our school uses a standardized response system to teach students and adults how to notice problems early and how to help each other in a caring way. This system is also used to review concerns and complaints in a consistent manner.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND/OR SEXUAL ABUSE – STUDENTS**

"Sexual harassment" is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" includes, but is not limited to, the deliberate making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate display of sexually graphic materials which are not necessary for school purposes, either in person or via any media source.

Sexual abuse/assault is physical contact with a sexual or intimate part of the body without consent. It includes various forms of sexual intercourse as well as lesser forms of sexual touching. Further:

1. Sexual or intimate body parts include, but are not limited to: breasts, buttocks, genitals, the groin area, and upper thighs.
2. Lack of Consent: occurs when one is physically forced or verbally intimidated into doing something sexual, or submitting to a sexual act, or when one has explicitly indicated a lack of consent or when the circumstances make it obvious that consent has not been given.
3. Circumstances that make it obvious that consent has not been given include, but are not limited to: (1) being too intoxicated to say "no" or resist, (2) being asleep and therefore unable to consent, or (3) situations in which someone is deemed to be physically or mentally incapable of giving valid consent, whether due to the use of intoxicants or any other reason.

Behaviors which can be considered to be sexual harassment:

1. Unwelcome verbal harassment of sexual nature.
2. Unwelcome pressure to engage in sexual activity.
3. Unwelcome, sexually motivated or inappropriate patting, pinching, or physical contact.
4. Unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's educational status.
5. Unwelcome behavior, verbal or written words or symbols directed at an individual because of gender.
6. The use of authority to emphasize the sexuality of a student in a manner that prevents or impairs that student's full enjoyment of educational benefits, climate or opportunities.
7. The use of photos taken with or without the person's knowledge and distributing them on social media with or without crude or sexual comments.
8. Sexting, defined as sending or receiving or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, images or videos, real or digitally generated, via cell phone, social media or other digital platforms. This behavior will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and notification of law enforcement.

No student is to sexually harass or sexually abuse another person. All reports of harassment or abuse will be thoroughly and appropriately investigated and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate, up to and including expulsion. Instances of sexual abuse that has been investigated and confirmed will result in suspension at a minimum. If it appears that a violation of criminal law may have occurred, the matter will be reported to law enforcement authorities or CPS, if applicable. Schools will cooperate with law enforcement if they have been notified of any illegal or potentially illegal conduct. During the investigation of an alleged crime, the suspected student perpetrator may be asked to remain off campus or be restricted in his/her movements at school.

Any student who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed or abused needs to immediately report such information to a trusted school employee. If a student makes a report, the school

employee will report the information to the Principal/preschool Director. A student who is uncomfortable for any reason with reporting such alleged harassment/abuse to a trusted school employee, or is not satisfied in doing so, may report the matter directly to the Superintendent of Schools. Any information reported shall, to the extent possible, be treated as confidential.

No student will be subject to any retaliation or disciplinary action on the part of the school for reports of sexual harassment/abuse made in good faith.

Children under 17 years of age cannot legally consent under Virginia State Law to having sex or sexual contact with an adult. **Any sexual contact between a student under 17 and an adult is a crime. It must be reported to the police.**

In addition, any sexual or romantic conduct between a school employee or an employee of a contracted service provider and a present student of any age, even if 17 years of age or older, and even if consented to or welcomed by the student, is strictly prohibited by this policy while the student is attending a diocesan school and for one year post-date of graduation and any such scenario will result in dismissal of the adult involved. This policy also prohibits "sexting" between students and employees or employees of contracted service providers as well as the showing of pornography to any student by any such adult. Such activity will result in the dismissal of the adult involved and the reporting of such conduct to the appropriate authorities.

In an effort to prevent/address sexual harassment/abuse, students in grades 6 to 12 must annually receive appropriate age-level instruction pertaining to harassment by September 30th of each school year. Schools are encouraged to use to use the education modules provided by the Office of Catholic Schools.

**BULLYING**

"Bullying" is intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of power and the ongoing nature of this behavior leaves the victims feeling powerless and fearful.

"Rude" is inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else. In children this takes the form of social errors. Incidents of rudeness are usually spontaneous, unplanned inconsideration, based on thoughtlessness, poor manners, or narcissism, but not meant to actually hurt someone.

"Mean" is purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice). Unlike unthinking rudeness, mean behavior very much aims to hurt or depreciate someone. Very often, mean behavior in kids is motivated by angry feelings and/or the misguided goal of propping themselves up in comparison to the person they are putting down. Both rudeness and mean behavior require correction; they are different from bullying in important ways that should be understood and differentiated when it comes to intervention.

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate another person; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and the target; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying"

includes cyber bullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary/developmental teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical intimidation or assault
2. Extortion or blackmail
3. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
4. Malicious teasing
5. Putdowns
6. Name calling
7. Threatening looks
8. Gestures or acts of aggression (overt and covert)
9. Cruel rumors & false accusations
10. Social isolation
11. Cyber bullying

School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying are expected to report it to appropriate school personnel (*e.g.*, Principal/preschool Director, teacher, school counselor). Staff members who become aware of an incident of bullying or cyber bullying are expected to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members’ safety. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the Principal/preschool Director for further investigation.

In cases of reported bullying, the Principal/preschool Director or designee shall interview all students involved (*i.e.*, the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s)) and investigate as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians and school staff, review of school records, and identification of parent/guardian and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include (note: this list does not imply that all disciplinary situations will proceed through all of these steps before a student may be suspended, asked to withdraw, or expelled when circumstances warrant):

1. Outside professional counseling
2. Parent/guardian conference
3. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the Principal/preschool Director may also report incidents of bullying to law enforcement.

## HAZING

Hazing is defined as the imposition of strenuous, often humiliating, tasks as part of a program of rigorous physical training and initiation and is intended to leave the victim feeling powerless and fearful.

Hazing is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any hazing on diocesan school grounds or in virtual school, or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of hazing are expected to report it to appropriate school personnel (*e.g.*, Principal/preschool Director, teacher, school counselor). Staff members who become aware of an incidence of hazing are expected to report the hazing to school administration for further investigation.

In cases of reported hazing, the Principal/preschool Director or designee shall interview all students involved (*i.e.*, the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s)) and investigate as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians and school staff, review of school records, and identification of parent/guardian and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting hazing will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who engage in hazing shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include (note: this list does not imply that all disciplinary situations will proceed through all of these steps before a student may be suspended, asked to withdraw, or expelled when circumstances warrant):

1. Outside professional counseling
2. Parent/guardian conference
3. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the Principal/preschool Director may also report incidents of hazing to law enforcement.

## RACISM

“Racism” is the sin that says some human beings are inherently superior and others essentially inferior because of races. It is the sin that makes racial characteristics the determining factor for the exercise of human rights. It mocks the words of Jesus: "Treat others the way you would have them treat you." (US Catholic Bishops. (1979). Pastoral Letter on Racism. USCCB). Indeed, racism is more than a disregard for the words of Jesus; it is a denial of the truth of the dignity of each human being revealed by the mystery of the Incarnation.

Racism is defined as prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized. This includes any comments, jokes, gestures, or behaviors – whether in person or online – that demean, stereotype, or exclude someone based on race, skin color, ethnicity, or cultural heritage.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Discrimination
2. Victimization
3. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
4. Malicious teasing
5. Putdowns
6. Name calling
7. Threatening looks
8. Gestures or acts of aggression (overt and covert)
9. Cruel rumors and false accusations
10. Social isolation
11. Cyber-racism (racism that takes place using digital devices).

Racism is prohibited. School personnel will not tolerate any racism on diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of racism to report it to appropriate school personnel (*e.g.*, Principal/preschool Director, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of a racism incident to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. Every instance of suspected racism should be brought immediately to the attention of school leadership.

In cases of reported racism, the Principal/ preschool Director or designee shall interview all students involved (*i.e.*, the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting racist behavior will be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students engaged in racist behavior shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

1. Outside counseling
2. Parent/guardian conference
3. Suspension and/or expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the Principal/preschool Director may also report incidents of racism to law enforcement.

# *ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION*

**ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION**

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos-containing building materials.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours.

## *VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS*

School leadership at each individual school must install video surveillance cameras in order to maintain a safe and secure environment.

1. Video surveillance cameras must be placed in public locations deemed appropriate per diocesan policy. Such locations must include, without limitation, school entrances/exits, lobby areas, hallways, cafeterias, athletic areas, gathering spaces, and outdoor grounds, as well as school buses.
2. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
3. It is recognized that it will not be possible to monitor all building areas, rooms, and grounds, or to monitor any location at all times.

Schools will provide notice to staff, students, and parents/guardians, by means of inclusion of this policy in their respective handbooks, that video surveillance will occur on school property. In addition, school leadership will install signs at building entrances or other locations deemed appropriate to inform visitors and invitees that video surveillance will occur.

To the extent video images may be deemed appropriate to create student records or personnel records, the school shall comply with any applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance, retention, and confidentiality.

Video images obtained by the school shall be viewed by authorized school and diocesan personnel as necessary. The school and the diocese may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of diocesan or school policies, regulations codes of conduct, building rules, and other applicable laws or rules, including, but not limited to, use of such images in student disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images may become part of a student's educational record in accordance with applicable law.

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 60 days and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee, and will only be released where permitted by law and consistent with the confidentiality of student records.

# VIII. PROGRAM INFORMATION

## *LICENSING INFORMATION*

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents/guardians that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. The Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the religious exemption law.

## *RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION*

In compliance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, ALL Diocese of Arlington Preschools and extended day programs are religiously exempt from licensure and are classified as a "religiously exempt child day center."

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please call the Office of Child Care Licensing toll-free at 833-778-0204.

## *CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN*

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly.

## *OVER-THE-COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS*

All non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product.

For all over-the-counter skin products:

1. Written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
2. Shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
3. Does not need to be kept locked but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;
4. Any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypo-allergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;

When insect repellent is used, a record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application, and any adverse reaction. Manufacturer's instructions for age, duration, and dosage shall be followed.

## *INSURANCE*

The program is covered by public liability insurance through the Diocese of Arlington and the Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America. Student insurance must be provided by the family through their own policy or purchased through an independent school insurance provider.

## *TAX INFORMATION*

Because the Internal Revenue Service requires identification of caregivers in order to claim a credit for child and dependent care expenses, the program staff will complete and return to the parent/guardian any W-10 that is sent in, provided Part II is already completed by the parent/guardian.

## *PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT*

In compliance with state regulations for state-licensed programs, a custodial parent/guardian shall be admitted to any child day program. Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program (63.2-1813 of Code of Virginia).

# IX. APPENDICES

Diocesan Forms:

- Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)
- Confidential Student Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)
- Confidential Student Health History Update (Spanish) (*Appendix F-1B*)
- Confidential Student Health History Update (Vietnamese) (*Appendix F-1C*)
- Virginia School Entrance Health Form (*Appendix F-2*)
- Virginia School Entrance Health Form Instructions (*Appendix F-2A*)
- Asthma Action Plan with Indemnification (*Appendix F-3*)
- Anaphylaxis Action Plan with Indemnification (*Appendix F-4)*
- Diabetes Quick Reference and Indemnification (*Appendix F-5*)
- Virginia Diabetes Medical Management Plan (*Appendix F-5A*)
- Diocese Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*)
- Wind Chill Factors/Heat Stress Index (*Appendix F-15*)
- Certificate of Religious Exemption CRE-1 (*Appendix F-18*)
- Seizure Action Plan (*Appendix F-20*)
- Policy on the Protection of Children/Young People and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse (*Appendix G*)
- Code of Conduct for Personnel and Volunteers in the Diocese of Arlington.English (*Appendix G-1*)
- Codigo de Conducta para el Personal y Voluntarios en la Diócesis de Arlington.Spanish (*Appendix G-2*)
- Photo, Press, Audio, and Electronic Media Release for Minors (*Appendix N*)
- Website and Social Media Policy (*Appendix P-1*)
- Parent/Guardian Permission Form for School Sponsored Trip Participation (*Appendix R*)
- Permiso De Los Padres Para Excursiones Patrocinados Por La Esquela.Spanish (*Appendix R-A*)
- Use of Personal Vehicle (*Appendix R-1*)
- Elementary-MS Parent Handbook Agreement Letter (*Appendix AG-1*)

OUR LADY of GOOD COUNSEL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# PRESCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM 2026-2027

Parents must sign as indicated below.

Student 1 First/Last Name_____ Teacher_____

Student 2 First/Last Name_____ Teacher _____

## Parent/Guardian

I understand that the Preschool Parent/Student Handbook is available to me on the Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School's website. I have explained the content of this document to my child. I acknowledge and agree to the policies contained therein and will require my child to comply with the policies which apply to students.

I also realize during my child's enrollment at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School I will be informed, formally or informally, of various changes in school and/or Diocesan policies. I understand that the school and/or the Diocese reserve the right to change policies at any time with or without advanced notice. I further understand it is required for me to sign this form in order to continue my child's enrollment at the school.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Print Parent/Guardian Name: _____