



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

Mother of God School

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Dear Parents and Students,

***“What greater work is there than training the mind and forming the habits of the young?”
St. John Chrysostom***

Welcome to Mother of God School! In choosing Mother of God School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of Mother of God School. Please read this document carefully and sign the Parent Signature Sheet. Your signature states that you intend to abide by the policies of Mother of God School.

The faculty and staff of our school look forward to working with you to promote spiritual development and academic excellence in the tradition of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may continue to nurture and help us to develop according to His will.

May God bless you and your family,

Melissa Furman Sloan
Principal

Mother of God School

Mother of God School is located on the campus of the Mother of God Community in Montgomery Village, MD. The school is an independent Catholic elementary and middle school affiliated with the Archdiocese of Washington DC. Both full and half-day 3 and 4-year-old, year round, Pre-Kindergarten classes are offered in addition to Kindergarten through 8th grades.

The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as the teacher. Vatican II texts are used so that our theology is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with each other in meaningful Liturgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At Mother of God, we are attempting to "teach as Jesus did."

The Archdiocesan curriculum standards exceed those used by the State of Maryland and inform all subject areas. The curriculum is marked by current content and research-based approaches to pedagogy. There is emphasis on integrating principles with fact and on learning through problem solving rather than by precept. We strive to offer a program which makes use of many sources of reading material, a wide variety of audio-visual and technology tools, and a multi-text approach to the content areas.

HISTORY

Mother of God School is a private Catholic school affiliated with the Archdiocese of Washington. It is a ministry of the Mother of God Community, which is recognized by the Archdiocese of Washington as a private lay association of the faithful in accordance with Canon Law. Founded in 1987, the school formally affiliated with the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Washington in 1996. As an affiliated school, we follow the educational program and policies of the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese as they apply to elementary and middle schools. The school seeks to serve the educational mission of the Catholic Church by providing a quality Catholic education for students living in the upper Montgomery County area of the Archdiocese.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mother of God School seeks to prepare students who, grounded in sound academics and strong faith, go forth bearing Christ to the world in their personal and professional lives. With Mary as its model, the school accomplished this in an atmosphere of love and respect

- Through academic excellence in the humanities, arts, and sciences, and
- In living the Good News through worship and service

PHILOSOPHY

Mother of God School fully embraces the teachings of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops on Catholic Education as set forth in their pastoral messages on Catholic Education. At the heart of our school's philosophy is the belief that Catholic Education "is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded" or *To Teach as Jesus Did*. Through the education we provide, we seek to build an academic and spiritual foundation for our students which will enable them, as they mature, to participate in the Mission of the Church to "proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action." The school, under the patronage of Mary, the Mother of God, strives to empower the students and their families to bear Christ and his life to the world as Mary has done for us.

ABSENCE

The following are valid reasons for excused absences from school, if properly documented by the student's parent or guardian upon the student's return to school:

1. Illness of the student, after three days of illness, the student must provide medical documentation that indicates that the student is able to return to school
2. Death in the student's immediate family
3. Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding
4. Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by the chief administrative officer
5. Temporary closing of facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or

unsanitary conditions, or other conditions requiring closing or suspension of classes

6. Other absence(s) approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a parent or guardian. Sufficient notice should be given to the school in order to provide expected student work to be completed while absent. Work in advance is not an obligation of the school but may be given in certain situations. Failure to provide sufficient time may result in an unexcused absence.

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above categories or is not properly documented by the student's parent/guardian is an unexcused absence.

When a student is absent from school, a parent should call or email the office by 9:30 AM each day of the absence. If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of the school students.

Students should be free from fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, vomiting, or having diarrhea will not be allowed to return to school the next day.

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process. Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.

Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three additional school days to complete the missed work. If the student needs an extension, a written explanation must be given to the teacher and subsequently approved.

When a student is absent for **three or more days due to illness**, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM.

For short absences, students should make arrangement with classmates regarding assignments or check the Educate parent and student portal. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school.

Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. Assignments will not be given in anticipation of the vacation.

Arrangements for regular classroom tests missed because of an absence are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests must be taken within one week of the original test date.

Excessive absence of 40 days or the equivalent of 40 days including tardies, can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade for another year. The State of Maryland requires the school to report excess unexcused absences

Absence During the School Day

Medical appointments during the school day are discouraged. If an appointment must be scheduled during school hours a written note or email by the parent is required. Parents are required to sign-out their child. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the office. Students who are away from school for an appointment for 3 ½ hours or more will be counted as absent for ½ a day. **If parents need to pick up children early, they should make sure students are picked up by 3:00PM, 12:00PM on half-days, in order to avoid conflict with dismissal and carpool.**

ACCREDITATION

Mother of God School is accredited through Cognia. This process was most recently completed in the Spring of 2022. Previous accreditation was through the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

ADMISSION INFORMATION

Nondiscriminatory Policy

Mother of God School shall not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or age in accordance with the law but gives to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of any legally protected status in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

TITLE IX

Mother of God School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to Mother of God School:

1. Siblings of current students
2. Children of faculty and staff members
3. Catholic students
4. Non-Catholic students

Certain financial aid decisions are determined by the Archdiocese of Washington. Mother of God School separately assesses need and awards aid based on submission of financial information through mytads.com.

Children entering Pre-K must be three (3) or four (4) years of age by September 1st.

Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 1st.

At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to Mother of God School are evaluated on the basis of current standardized test scores, report cards, and MOG admissions screenings.

Enrollment requirements include:

- *Health Records
- *Immunization Records
- *Birth Certificate (original)
- *Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- *Report Cards
- *Standardized Test Results
- *Record of IEP or 504 Plan, if applicable

Students applying for admission in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine

whether the program at Mother of God School will meet the educational needs of the student.

Testing in some academic areas may be held for new incoming students.

All new students will be given a trial period in which to prove him or herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period concerns arise, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at Mother of God School.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of Mother of God School will be accepted on a space available basis.

Financial Obligations

SCHOOL PROGRAMS & TUITION (*see website for tuition rates*)

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS- made through a personal mytads.com account.

Tuition Payment Options: TADS handles all tuition payments through a personal mytads.com account.

Payment Options:

- Pay in full by July 25 (PIF discount is 2% and is prorated for part-time)
- Pay in (4) quarterly payments through TADS
- Enroll in the TADS Tuition Management Service for (10) or (12) months. Payments begin in July.
- Please note that you may pay in full for one child and utilize TADS monthly payments for another.

Enrollment/Re-Enrollment

- The \$50.00 per family Application Fee for new students must be submitted with the application. The Registration Fee of \$300 per child for new students is due upon acceptance to the school. (\$200 of this fee is credited to the tuition)
- Returning students must reserve their spot by paying the \$300 Pre-Registration Fee, which is applied to the tuition. All Application and Registration Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.

- There will be a \$25 returned check fee for all checks made payable to Mother of God School that do not clear the bank.

TADS Tuition Management Service Overview

- There is an annual non-refundable \$55 administrative fee for enrollment in the TADS program per family. This fee will be added to your tuition collected by TADS – please do not make this payment to the school.
- Pay tuition monthly for 10 months, 12 months, or quarterly depending on the option selected via personal check, money order, debit/ credit card (TADS fee applies when using cards), or automatic account debit.
- All families must register online for TADS tuition. Contact the Registrar’s office or Finance office for specific instructions

Withdrawal Policy:

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- Registered students who withdraw before June 1 will surrender their registration fee.
- Registered students who withdraw after June 1 but before the first full day of school are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw between the first day of school and December 15th are responsible for ½ of the tuition.
- Registered students who withdraw after December 15th are responsible for the full tuition amount.
- Appeals may be made to the school President in cases of job loss or moving residence more than 30 miles away.

TADS IMPOSES LATE FEES of \$35.

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICE at 301-990-2089 Ext. 15.

K-8 STUDENT FEE

(NON-REFUNDABLE FEE for K-8).....\$450.00

This covers the use of hard-cover textbooks, consumable workbooks, classroom supplies, technology, art materials, physical education equipment (playground

balls, jump ropes, etc. for use by classrooms during recess times), and Science lab fees for consumable materials; IT DOES NOT COVER FIELD TRIPS, BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE, ATHLETIC PROGRAMS (basketball, track, soccer, etc.), or other after school activities.

One-to-one program Chromebook Fee..... \$150.00

Graduation Fee Grade 8 \$150.00

Mandatory Fundraising and Volunteer Hours

ALL FAMILIES ARE EXPECTED TO MEET A MINIMUM FUNDRAISING OBLIGATION OF \$300 PER YEAR. This is readily attainable through participation in the various fundraising programs throughout the year. Fundraising obligation credits may also be applied by volunteering in the school. After the mandatory 15-hour volunteer hours are met the fundraising obligation will be credited at a rate of \$50 per ten (10) documented volunteer hours.

Options to meet the fundraising obligation (other options to be determined):

- All money raised for the "Race for Education"
- All money raised for Globalfest Raffle Ticket sales
- Cash donations
- Etc.

Mandatory Volunteer Hours Obligation: To encourage parent participation in our school community families must volunteer 15 hours during the course of the school year. Families who are unable to accomplish 15 hours in the year may fulfill the obligation by paying the remainder at a rate of \$10 per hour. Volunteer time must be documented in the Volunteer Log which is located in the School Office or through our online log. A link the online volunteer log will be placed at the bottom of every weekly newsletter. Volunteer hours must be logged in a timely fashion, preferably on the date of service, but no later than one week after the service has been performed. The areas of greatest demand for volunteers are in our Globalfest Celebration as well as participation in a variety of school functions such as the Back to School Picnic, Harvest Party, Grade Level Socials, and lunch and recess duty. Please note: any activity in which the volunteer would be supervising children, for example recess duty, requires Virtus Training and FBI fingerprinting.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

See school website for:

Policy <https://mogschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/MOGS-Child-Protection-Policy-09-2019.pdf>

Volunteer procedure <https://mogschool.com/tuition/volunteering/>

Mother of God School treasures our students and is invested in their well-being. MOG School adopted the Child Protection Policy of the Archdiocese of Washington, ADW, from its onset. A new MOG School Child protection policy was promulgated effective August 2022. This policy mirrors the ADW policy following the same procedures and even using the same vendors. This policy is available to view or download on the school website under “Child Protection Policy and Volunteering.” This policy relates to anyone who has contact with children in the school; employees, volunteers, contractors, and vendors.

The critical distinction is made for persons who have “substantial contact” with children, as defined in the ADW Policy. Those who have “substantial contact” must meet application, FBI fingerprinting, and educational requirements. Those with substantial contact with children, which includes being alone with children, must follow the procedure outlined on the MOG Volunteer Application <https://mogschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/MOGC-volunteer-app.pdf>

MOG School personnel who work or volunteer in either our Pre-K or our Extended Care Programs are subject to separate State requirements as well: COMAR Regulations. This separate protocol includes Federal and State background checks through fingerprinting. Additional forms and authorizations also apply.

Included in this policy is an age-appropriate educational component for students Kindergarten through 8th grade. This curriculum is part of the VIRTUS educational program adopted by ADW and many other organizations throughout the world.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Curriculum

Mother of God School follows or exceeds the core curriculum standards created by the Archdiocese of Washington. The school is free to adopt best-practices through research-based initiatives and looks to expand on ADW Standards.

Religion

Catholic doctrine, tradition, and scripture study comprise the core of our Religion curriculum. Students are prepared for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation. Liturgical services every Wednesday for the entire school community as well as seasonal celebrations. Our online Google calendar keeps the schedule of Liturgies. Every other week the students participate in Mass at 9 am at St. John Neumann Church. On the opposite weeks, the students participate in Mass in the school gym at 10 am on Wednesdays. The students also have the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation several times throughout the school year.

Computer Literacy

Technology is integrated into all discipline areas. All students in Kindergarten through 8th grades have a computer class each week. Students in Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 have a 1-to-1 Chromebook program and have use of an individual Chromebook during the school day. There are several other technologies deployed including mobile Chromebook labs and mobile tablet labs for use in the classrooms.

Enrichment and Resource

Enrichment classes are offered to those students in grades 5-8 who meet the criteria for the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University based on their standardized testing results and teacher recommendations. Resource support is offered for those students identified with a diagnosed need or English Language Learners. Our small classes allow for individualized classroom instruction meeting the needs of a wide range of learners.

Fine Arts

Music and Art are offered to all students in Kindergarten through 8th grades. Band participation is offered through the ADW Band Program to students in grades 4 – 8 for an additional fee.

Foreign Language

Spanish classes are offered weekly for Kindergarten through 5th grades and twice each week for middle school students.

Handwriting

Students in Kindergarten and 1st grade are taught to print. Print and cursive is taught in Second Grade. Cursive is taught in 3rd and 4th grades. Handwriting will be practiced through 8th grade.

Language Arts

The Language Arts curriculum offers instruction in Reading, English, Spelling, Vocabulary, Composition, Library Skills, and Literature. A Latin component is added in 3rd through 5th grades.

Mathematics

All the students follow the rigorous standards put forth by ADW. Students in grades 5-8 are advanced to provide students the opportunity to complete Algebra 1 in 8th grade. More advanced students in grades 5-8 may have the opportunity to take Math in the class of the next grade up. This decision is not made lightly and is based on standardized testing scores, class performance, student willingness and work ethic, and teacher recommendations.

Physical Education

PE classes are offered to students in Preschool through 5th grades twice per week and in middle school once per week.

Science

General sciences and laboratory experiences are offered in Kindergarten through 5th grades. Grades 6 – 8 focus on more specific topics including hands-on laboratory experiences. Science & Engineering fairs or engagement in regional competitions take place each year. Grades 6-8 students participate at varying levels.

Social Studies/ History

Our curriculum has been upgraded to provide a more thorough knowledge of History than the ADW standards dictate. In addition to ADW standards, 3rd grade will have Ancient History, 4th grade Medieval History, 5th grade US History, 6th grade Ancient Civilization to Medieval, 7th grade World History, and 8th grade US History.

TESTING

The MAP test is given in Grades 1 through 8 two to three times per year:

- a pre-test in September
- a benchmark assessment to determine progress mid-year (not always given to all students)
- a final assessment at the end of the year

Parents will receive a copy of their child(ren)'s MAP results:

- in November at Parent/Teacher Conferences
- with the final report card on the last day of school

The High School Placement Test, HSPT, is given to students in Grade 8. Students in 7th grade will take a practice HSPT in the Spring.

Middle School students (Grades 6 – 8) may be given a **maximum of three quizzes or tests per day.**

Middle school students may be involved in a Math final exam to assess the cumulative knowledge taught during the academic year. The Math final exam will help students be more fully prepared for the assessment challenges and expectations of high school.

GRADING SCALE

<u>Grades 4-8</u>	A	93-100
	B	85-92
	C	77-84
	D	70-76
	F	Below 70

<u>Grade 3</u> <u>& Related Arts</u>	E	Excellent
	G	Good
	S	Satisfactory
	I	Improvement Needed
	U	Unsatisfactory

Kindergarten, 1st, **& 2nd grades**

- EE = Exceeds grade-level expectations**
- ME = Meets grade-level expectations**
- AE = Approaching grade-level expectations**
- NE = Not approaching grade-level expectations at this time**
- X = Not assessed at this time**

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll applies to students in Grades 4-8.

Guidelines and Requirements:

- Principal's Honors: All A's
- First Honors: All A's and One B
- Second Honors: All A's and no more than two B's
- All Grades for Special Subjects must be E or G.
- All Behavior grades must be E or G.

Report cards are designed to ensure that behavior counts. Among all that we are teaching our students, honor and character are among the most important. If students are disrespectful to their teachers or classmates or if they disrupt classroom instruction, they cannot be on the Honor Roll. Our hope is, rather than being punitive, that students recognized with these Honor Roll Awards grow to be men and women of strong character.

Penmanship is not included when determining Honor Roll status.

GRADE PORTAL

Our Student Information System, SIS, is Educate. It is part of the TADS company that is used for admissions, enrollment, and financial aid. All parents with students in the school will have a personal login to the Educate portal. This is how report cards will be distributed for 1st-3rd quarters in grades 1-8 and 2nd-3rd quarters for Kindergarten. Other important parent specific information, links, and classroom information will be shared via the portal.

In middle school, grades 6-8, students will have access to the portal as well. All teachers in grades 6-8 will post grades within two weeks of any assignment. Parents and students will be able to check academic progress and see what work is missing in real time. This eliminates the need for progress reports for each student in middle school. Students with a D or F will continue to receive a progress report to assure effective communication with parents. Students in grades 3-5 will continue with universal progress reports. Portal access will be distributed after the students return to school.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two-week improvement plan. At the end of the two-week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. Students must have a C average to participate in any extracurricular activity. Once disqualified a student will have to improve their grade before being considered to resume this activity. In some cases, a student who is disqualified from participating in an extracurricular activity such as a specific sports or a Drama production, may not be allowed to resume midway through the season or production once already disqualified, if it negatively impacts others.

AWARDS

Christian Character Award

K- 2nd grades: One boy and one girl in each homeroom each marking period

3rd-8th grades: One student per homeroom each marking period

Student exemplifies the spirit of the mission of Mother of God School.

Criteria:

+Spirit of reverence

- +Academic effort
- +Appropriate conduct
- +Respect for others
- +Integrity
- +Evidence of service (willingness to help)
- +Exhibits leadership
- +Goes above and beyond the norm

HOMEWORK

Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences.

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.

Students in grades K-4 will rarely receive homework for the weekend except for Math. Students in grades 5-8 should expect Math and other weekend homework. Teachers will try to avoid having projects due on the first day of the week.

All homework assignments are posted on the student and parent Educate portal by 4:30 PM the day they are assigned.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Advancement to the next grade in Mother of God School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report Cards will be given four (4) times during the academic school year or every nine (9) weeks. Report cards will be sent electronically through the Educate portal for Quarters 1-3. The final report card will be printed and sent home on the last day of school.

Progress Reports

- In 3rd-5th grades, progress reports will be given to all students mid-way between each nine-week grading period.
- In 6th-8th grades, progress reports will be given to all students receiving a D or F in a subject area mid-way between each nine-week grading period. All students or parents may check their grades at any point in the quarter through their Educate parent and student portals.

Families will not be given a Report Card if tuition, fees, library fines, or Extended Care Program fees are in arrears.

CONDUCT

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them. The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises. Developmental maturity will always be taking into account.

Items such as, but not limited to, white-out, radios, toys, trading cards, cell phones, electronic devices, cameras, or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time unless approved by the teacher for use in a particular lesson. **Key chains and toys may not be attached to student backpacks.** Knives, guns, matches, laser lights cigarettes, questionable books or pictures, pagers, and tasers are **never** allowed in school and possession of such may result in suspension or expulsion.

The school administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. **Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) only.**

CELL PHONES

At no time during the day should a cell phone be taken out of a student's backpack or be in his/her possession. Teachers reserve the right to collect cell phones during the day to be handed out before dismissal. Students found using or carrying cell phones during the day will have the phone confiscated. This includes Extended Care hours. **Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) only.**

GUM

Students should not chew gum at any time that they are at school. This includes before school, during school, and after school. Disciplinary action will occur for students who chew gum during the course of the school day or during carpool.

CHEATING

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. A student athlete who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports.

CHILD ABUSE LAWS

Mother of God School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Maryland. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, AND HARRASSMENT

Mother of God School believes and teaches that each of us is called to love our neighbor and to treat them with respect. We are committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation in any form, including cyberbullying. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation of any member of the school community is prohibited. All reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. Developmental age of the child will be taken into account.

The reprisal or retaliation against anyone who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation is strictly prohibited. All reports of reprisal or retaliation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Bullying is **unwanted, aggressive** behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived **power imbalance**. The behavior is **repeated**

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be **aggressive** and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Cyberbullying is verbally threatening or harassing behavior conducted through such electronic technology as cell phones, email, social media, or text messaging.

Harassment and intimidation mean any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including electronic communication that:

1. Physically harms an individual, damages an individual's property, substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment, or places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property

2. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, on a school transportation vehicle or bus, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

Students and parents should be especially aware of their communication on electronic devices, as any communication that could be deemed as harassment is very serious and could involve legal ramifications.

Students involved in bullying, harassment, or intimidating behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Sexual Harassment by one employee of another, by an employee of a student, by a student of an employee, by one student of another, by a parent of a student, or by a student of a parent is unacceptable conduct. Employees, students, or parents who engage in any type of sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension and/or dismissal. Retaliation in any form against an employee or student who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited, and will itself be cause for appropriate disciplinary action.

Any employee, parent, or student who knowingly makes false charges against an employee or student in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse, or embarrass that individual shall be subject to the sanctions for misconduct set forth above. All incidents need to be reported to the Principal and subsequently the School Board.

SEXTING

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos or content on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Students who possess drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks used by the student must have a proper book cover. No writing in textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

DISCIPLINE

Demerits

Classroom teachers maintain their own behavior management systems. In addition, at a teacher or supervisor's discretion, demerits may be given to a student at any school activity to provide a consequence for a variety of behaviors including uniform violations.

In 4th and 5th grades, demerits will be given to and maintained by the student's homeroom teacher. Three demerits will result in a lunchtime detention.

In 6th-8th grades, demerits will be signed by both the principal and the parent. A copy will each be given to the homeroom teacher, the parent, and the principal. Three demerits in one academic quarter will result in an after school detention. Detention will take place from 3:30-4:30 on the date specified by the principal on the detention form sent home for signature.

Detention

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. Parents are provided with a Detention Form with written notification of the detention. Detention may result from 3 demerits in one academic quarter or an individual situation may be severe enough to merit an automatic detention.

In 4th and 5th grades, detentions are served during lunchtime. At the principal's discretion, an after school detention may be warranted.

In 6th-8th grades, detentions will take place after school. Detention will take place from 3:30-4:30 on the date specified by the principal on the detention form sent home for signature.

Detention should take precedence over practices, lessons, tutoring, ballgames, etc.

Suspension

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and complete work given them. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is a serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from Mother of God School. Students may also be expelled for repeated offences and apparent inability to respond to teacher's discipline. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal.

Students whose parents have violated the Parents as Partners agreement in this handbook may also be excluded from Mother of God School.

SCHOOL HOURS

Office hours are from 8 – 4 and may close early on half days.

The school day is 8:15 AM – 3:30 PM. Students not in their homeroom at 8:40 AM are considered tardy. Excessive tardiness will have a direct impact on a student's academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade.

At Mother of God School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents of children in K-8 should allow their child (ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning using carpool drop-off. Various classes invite parent involvement or visitation on particular occasions.

The school doors are opened for students at 8:15 AM. Students arriving earlier than that time should be registered with the Extended Care Program.

Prayer and afternoon announcements begin at 3:25 PM each day. Dismissal immediately follows. Please check the school calendar and weekly parent email communication for early dismissal dates.

Students not picked up by the end of carpool, at approximately 3:45 PM, will be sent immediately to the Extended Care Program. There will be a \$5 charge. After 15 minutes the full \$15 aftercare fee will be charged.

Parents are to make arrangements for their child (ren) to arrive at school on time and be picked up at dismissal time, unless arrangements have been made to use aftercare.

CAR POOL

CARPOOL PROCEDURES

At the beginning of the year, an emergency information form that includes data about who is allowed to pick up children from school is sent home. Please complete this form and return it to the school before the first day of school. Any change in this information during the school year must be sent to the school office. In addition, parents/guardians should notify the school office via a note, or a phone call in case of emergency, of any changes in the regular carpool arrangements.

Morning Drop-off : 8:15 – 8:35

- **ENTER the school grounds and turn right.**
- **DRIVE** down to and around the circle.
- **DROP OFF** students at the gym building sidewalk where the Safety patrols will open the car door for your child/ren.
*NOTE: Students should be dropped off onto the sidewalk. Do not allow children to open car doors on the left side of the vehicle into dangerous oncoming traffic. A faculty member must be present before children may be released from the car.

Drop off ends at 8:35 AM and the staff member on duty places the orange cones in the driveway. **Once the cones are up, parents must park in non-reserved spots and walk their child into the main office and sign them in.**

Use of drop-off is strongly encouraged, however, parents wishing to walk younger children to their classroom door must park in the upper lot by the white building and use the sidewalk next to Goshen House which leads behind the main school building. Parents should plan to arrive no later than 8:30AM in order to ensure they have enough time to escort their children safely to their classroom door before morning carpool ends. Please note: **children may not be dropped off at this back sidewalk, as there is no staff supervision.**

Afternoon Pick-up – Parking lot opens at 2:45- FIRST CARPOOL

Please do not arrive prior to 2:45PM. If you do, please park in the upper lot to wait until a staff member has moved the cones. At no time should a parent or guardian move the cones.

- ENTER school grounds and turn RIGHT.
- PARK in one of the spaces closest to the gym building. Back into a space. **Turn off the ignition.**
- STUDENTS are escorted from classrooms to the sidewalk where they wait until all cars are parked and ignitions are turned off. The teacher on duty will blow a whistle signaling students to go to cars. **No student should be in the parking lot before the first whistle blows.** A second whistle means all should be in their cars.
- All ignitions are to remain **OFF** until all students are safely in their cars and the staff member in charge of dismissal signals cars to move.

SECOND CARPOOL

- CARS ARRIVING after 3:20PM, 12:20 PM on early dismissal days, will not be permitted to take a right into the parking lot. They will be directed to turn LEFT and park. Parents will back into a parking place, turn off ignition, and remain in the car. First carpool will be closed before 3:20 or 12:20 when all of the spots to the left are filled.
- While the main parking lot is being released, teachers will escort the students behind the building to wait on the balcony until it is safe to be released to the upper lot.
- If you are late for the second pick up from the left parking lot, you will turn right, park, and meet your child(ren) in the aftercare program in the gym.
- The students who have not been picked up in the upper lot will be escorted to aftercare. After a brief grace period, charges will apply.

Important NOTE

We ask that **NO** cars park in the St. John Neumann parking lot and walk across the road. Traffic on Goshen Road makes this crossing too dangerous. Please cooperate with the school in our attempts to keep everyone safe.

VISITORS

School visitors, including parents, must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign-in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign-out at the time of departure.

Parents who volunteer to serve lunch or who volunteer in another capacity in the school **may not drop into a classroom to see their child** during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

WEATHER

Mother of God School follows the emergency weather closing and delay announcements of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). However, if Mother of God School has a half day and a two-hour delay is announced for MCPS, school will be cancelled. Register for Alert MCPS for text messages <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/alertmcps.aspx> While infrequent, if MCPS has a scheduled day off which differs from the MOGS schedule, then MOGS will follow weather announcements made by the Archdiocese of Washington.

If there is a delay, any before school activities are cancelled and morning day care will open on a delayed basis (e.g., for a two-hour delay, morning care will open two hours late).

If school closes early due to inclement weather conditions, after care will contact parents to come as soon as possible so that our staff can have extra time to get home safely.

Please check online, listen to the radio or television announcements and act on the announcements accordingly. If an emergency arises at the Mother of God School, we will post information on our website (www.mogschool.com) and alert through our text notification system.

Alert MCPS: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/alertmcps.aspx>

Radio & Websites: WTOP: 103.5 FM, www.wtop.com etc.

Website- school

The Mother of God School website www.mogschool.com will house important information on their parent page. There is no longer a login to the page. All information that needs to be safeguarded with a password will be held on our new Educate parent and student portal.

CRISIS PLAN

Mother of God School has implemented a “crisis plan” in case of an emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, circumstances permitting, students will be moved to a secure designated location:

1. PRIMARY- St. John Neumann Church (across the street)
2. SECONDARY- Goshen Elementary School

EMERGENCY DRILLS

State Law requires that emergency drills be held regularly. During evacuation drills, students should follow these procedures:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds
2. Close windows and doors
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in a single file line, and in silence
4. Stand in a line facing the supervising adult
5. Return to building when signal is given

Tornado/ extreme weather drills are held periodically. The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in a single file line
3. Sit, face the wall, and put his/her hands over their head
4. Return to classroom when a signal is given

Other drills include- Active shooter, earthquake, shelter-in-place etc.

Active shooter drills will not be called that to the students. They are all called emergency preparedness drills. We follow the ADW guidelines for the use of A.L.I.C.E. training. All drills will be used to make the students feel safe and done in a non-scary and developmentally appropriate way. Discussions and drills for

emergency situations will look differently in a Pre-Kindergarten classroom than it will in an 8th grade classroom.

EXTENDED CARE

Mother of God School offers an Extended Care Program for all students. Extended Care hours are 6:30 AM to 8:20 AM and 3:30 PM until 6:00 PM. In case of emergency, the Extended Care staff can be reached during Extended Care program hours on 202-430-0360.

Parents who will be using the program on a regular basis will be billed the contract monthly rate by the Business Office. Families that use the program occasionally may just drop their child off in the morning or call the office before 3:00 to ask that their child go to extended care that day. These families will be billed for days used.

Parents are to make arrangements for their child(ren) to arrive at school on time and be picked up at dismissal time, unless arrangements have been made to use aftercare. Students who are not picked up by the time aftercare closes will receive:

1. a phone call reminding you to pick up your child(ren) on time
2. a charge of \$1/ minute late after the second time
3. Repeated failure to pick up your child from Extended Care on time may result in your child not being allowed to attend the Extended Care program.

FIELD TRIPS

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the trips compatibility with curricular goals.
3. A field trip is a privilege and not a right.
4. There are no “traditional” field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
5. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
6. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.

7. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
8. A written **official permission slip**, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip. Verbal permission **cannot** be accepted. Permission slips are due in the office forty-eight hours after receipt of the permission slip.
9. A **telephone call** will **not** be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
10. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the permission slip. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
11. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus, or official transportation, to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.
12. All money collected for the field trip is **non-refundable**.
13. **Cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
14. Parents who are not “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company insures the “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip.
15. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.
16. All chaperones must be 25 years of age or older and have completed the MOG School Child Protection Program (includes fingerprinting and Virtus training) if they are alone with children.

LIBRARY

The school has a well-equipped library. Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. The following rules are to be observed:

1. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition.
2. Books damaged or lost must be paid for by the student before any other materials may be checked out. Students who have lost or damaged books do not receive progress reports or quarterly report cards until their account is cleared.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at Mother of God School. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist, form the core of instruction in 1st and 2nd grades. Confirmation preparation occurs in Grade 8. Candidates receive these sacraments in their own parishes and parents should check with their parish to find out what the requirements are in each parish.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

SERVICE PROJECTS

Mother of God School seeks to provide students with the opportunity to make a difference through various service and support programs. We support the St. John Neumann Food Pantry through monthly collections of needed food items. “Pennies for the Poor” helps the mission of the Little Sisters of the Poor as they care for the needy elderly. Other service opportunities are provided throughout the year.

STUDENT DIRECTORY

A Student Directory listing students’ and parents’ names, addresses, home telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses is available through the parent and student personal log-in to the Educate portal. All access to the portal will be provided after the first day of school.

The Student Directory should be used to acquaint parents with the names of their children(s)’ classmates and parents. These directories should not be **used** or **sold** for other purposes.

LOST AND FOUND

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school receptionist to be placed in the Lost and Found basket. **Unclaimed items are donated to charity 3-4 times per year.**

Students who lose a library book, textbook, or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Mother of God School offers a Lunch program daily through YAY Lunch. Meals are prepared through the services of an outside vendor. Lunch menus can be accessed through YAY lunch dashboard. Ordering for lunch is done monthly or weekly online and payment must be made at the time of the order. Students will eat in the gym unless a special event is scheduled in which case students will eat in their classrooms.

On Fridays students may participate in Pizza Fridays! Order forms to participate in Pizza Fridays will be sent in the school newsletter to be filled out electronically. An order will be taken twice per year in August and March. Orders may only be placed in August and March. This program is optional.

Students may choose to bring their lunch each day. Students should not bring glass bottles, soft drinks, energy drinks, or excessive amounts of candy. **Please follow the School's Nut-Free Policy** when packing lunches and snacks.

Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with lunch monitors are in order at all times.

TELEPHONE

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from the school receptionist. Students must submit a note from their teacher. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, lunch, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

BIRTHDAYS

Students may come to school dressed out-of-uniform on their birthday or half-birthday day, for summer birthdays. **Birthday treats may be brought to school to share with classmates but must be limited to one simple treat per child.** For older students, in 4th through 8th grades, it will be up to the discretion of the homeroom teacher whether the treat is distributed in the lunch room or during class.

Please be mindful of food allergies and Mother of God School's nut-free school policy when bringing birthday treats to school. All birthday treats must have an ingredient label and be brought to the Front Office to be checked.

GIFTS

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture can create hurt feelings among other students. Invitations for slumber parties or birthday parties should be sent to the homes of students unless an invitation is being given to every student in the entire grade. Valentines **will not be** distributed at school unless there is one for every child in the class. This only contributes to hurt feelings.

PARTIES

Students are permitted three class parties a year. Room parents may assist the classroom teacher with these parties. We request that treats be already prepared into individual servings. **Please be mindful of food allergies and our nut-free school policy when purchasing and preparing treats for classroom parties. All treats and food served for classroom parties must have ingredient labels and be brought into the Front Office for review before distribution.**

Student birthdays may only be celebrated “simply” with a single, nut-free, treat sent to school for every member of the class.

OFFICE RECORDS

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS AGREEMENT

As partners in the educational process at Mother of God School, we ask parents:

- To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
 - Gets to bed early and at a consistent time on school nights
 - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
 - Is dressed according to the school dress code
 - Completes assignments on time
 - Has hot lunch or a nutritional snack and lunch every day.
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences
- To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers
- To meet all financial obligations to the school
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education

- To support the religious and educational goals of the school
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example if Catholic
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student concerns

Parent's Role in Education

We, at Mother of God School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators in areas of faith and morals of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life; physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Mother of God School exhibits a desire for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God and with each other, will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Mother of God School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years of Preschool through 8th grade, your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn, however, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times,

your child may perceive discipline as restrictive, however, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best version of the person God is calling them to be.

Home and School Association (HSA)

Mother of God School Home and School Association, HAS, work to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, and building community are goals of this organization.

Open HSA meetings will be held three times per year, at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

HSA leadership meetings will take place more frequently as needed to prepare for events.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

In order to insure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, Mother of God School uses email. A weekly email newsletter is sent to each family. It is important that the school be notified if a family's email address, mailing address, and/or phone number change. Families without access to email may request a paper copy to be sent home with their child. Important messages, documents, and papers are posted on the school's website, www.mogschool.com. The monthly Google calendar is also available on the website. The calendar is updated frequently and should be checked weekly for new information.

STUDENT HEALTH

The well-being of our students is of prime concern. At the beginning of each school year, or when a child joins Mother of God School, parents are asked to submit their child's medical record and a completed dental card. From this information the school keeps a register of health issues, such as allergies and

asthma, which is available for all school staff to assist in the care of the students. All health information is kept in the strictest confidence.

Illness

Students should remain home if they have a contagious illness and seek medical care, as appropriate. To prevent the spread of illness, students should be free of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Medications

While most medications will be given at home, there are circumstances in which medications should be kept on-site for administration as needed at school (e.g., epi pens, inhalers). Any medication that will be administered at school must be brought to the Health Room by the parent along with an appropriate doctor's authorization form, which can be found on the school's website. All prescription medication must be provided in a container with the pharmacist's label attached. Over-the-counter medications must be in an unopen container with the manufacturer's original label. The school does not supply or provide medications for student use. Please note: cough drops are considered to be medication and must follow the aforementioned procedures in order to be kept in the Health Room for the student's use.

Food Allergies and Nut-Free School Policy

Mother of God School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, Mother of God School maintains a nut-free school policy. Foods sent in for lunch, snack, or any class event should be carefully checked to make sure they are peanut and tree nut free. **When purchasing any birthday treats or treats which are intended to be shared with the class, please read the ingredient label carefully.** Common allergens are typically summarized at the end of ingredient labels (e.g., Contains Wheat, Soy, Milk and Eggs). **Please do not purchase anything to bring into school that indicates that it contains nuts or may contain nuts.** Be sure to leave the ingredient label on the product because we have other students with different food allergies and we may need to examine the label to ensure those children can safely consume the treat. If you are baking items yourself, please be sure to bring in the ingredient list(s). Parents'

understanding and support in reading the label on every package and complying with the nut restrictions is greatly appreciated as we strive to provide a safe environment for all students.

TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET USAGE

Students shall use all technology equipment, including, but not limited to computers, networking systems, Internet, mobile devices, communication devices, cell phones, email, social networking sites, calculators, DVD players, and cameras with care and respect, whether at school, at home, or elsewhere. Students shall not type, send, or otherwise use any inappropriate or offensive words, or display, send, or otherwise use inappropriate or offensive images, sounds, or messages from or on technology equipment. Students shall not use technology equipment in a manner which violates any local, state or federal laws. Students shall immediately report to a teacher or supervising staff member any inappropriate material or misuse of Technology Equipment of which the student becomes aware. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in any way to engage in cyber-bullying behavior. Any student use of cell phones and mobile devices during school hours, carpool, or extended care is prohibited, with the exception of medical emergencies.

When using the school's technology equipment, all students:

- shall not reconfigure any school hardware, software, or network settings
- shall print, download, or otherwise transfer only that information approved by the teacher or supervisor
- shall obtain the permission of a teacher or supervisor before loading a file or disk onto a school computer
- shall not use any school technology equipment to create, store, transfer, or use software or electronic content in a manner which violates copyright law
- shall not plagiarize works on the internet
- shall not load any software onto school computers without first obtaining the teacher's permission
- shall only use the internet for school-related projects and shall only visit the sites assigned by the teacher
- shall not surf the internet or visit any social networking websites while at school
- shall not use the internet without permission from a teacher or supervising staff member
- shall not give out, post, or otherwise distribute personal information of students or staff such as photographs, home addresses, telephone numbers,

parents' work addresses, or telephone numbers, or the name and location of the school

TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. **No student records will be forwarded to another school until Business Office accounts have been settled.** (See previous section on Student Records for transcript information.)

STUDENT RECORDS

Mother of God School adheres to the Buckley Amendment, Family Education Rights and Privacy, regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school. The exception to this rule is documentation related to a medical or educational diagnosis. This includes but is not limited to IEPs, 504s, CAPs, ICEPs, neuropsychological, or educational psychological testing. These documents belong to the parents and students. They will not be transferred to another location. A copy can be picked up at any time by the parent or guardian.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents.

No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE

Mother of God School is a professional learning environment. Our school uniform appearance helps to reinforce this environment for our students and visitors. The neat appearance in our students' dress exemplifies the dignity they have as children of God. We ask our parents to ensure that our students are dressed in a clean, proper uniform each day.

- All students (PreK-8) must be in uniform every day. Out-of-uniform days will be announced during the course of the school year. There is a dress code for out-of-uniform days included in this handbook.
- If there is a time when the prescribed uniform cannot for some legitimate reason be worn, *a note from the parent/guardian must be written or emailed to the homeroom teacher.*
- PE uniforms will be purchased through Flynn & O’Hara Uniforms.

UNIFORM DATES

- Shorts maybe worn through the first quarter and again beginning in the fourth quarter.

Uniforms may be purchased through Flynn & O’Hara Uniforms and Lands’ End

- Flynn & O’Hara Uniforms, Rockville, MD: 301-838-8958 or www.flynnohara.com
- Lands’ End Catalogue: 1-800-469-2222 or www.landsend.com
MOG School Number: 90003467-9
MOG Logo Number: 9838393K

There is an additional charge for the logo embroidering when placing orders with Lands’ End. Lands’ End will return 3% of all sales to the school for orders from our school families when the preferred order number and logo number are used to purchase uniforms.

THE DRESS CODE

GIRLS & BOYS IN PRE-K

Mother of God School uniform creates a neat appearance for our students, allows students to care for themselves, and helps ensure children are dressed appropriately for Pre-K activities.

- All Pre-K students must be in a clean, Mother of God Pre-K uniform every day.

All uniforms for PreK should be purchased through Flynn & O’Hara Uniforms

301-838-8958 or www.flynnohara.com

5210 Randolph Road, Rockville, MD 20852

THE DRESS CODE for GIRLS & BOYS IN PRE-K

- Navy mesh uniform shorts *with school logo*
- Long Sleeve or Short Sleeve grey T-Shirt, *with school Logo*
- Sweat shirt: navy blue or red sweat shirt, *with school logo*
- Sweat pants: solid navy blue fleece sweatpants, with or without pockets
 - *No logo, image, or writing, other than school logo, no cargo pockets*
- Plain white socks that cover the ankle or higher
- The uniform should be clean and without holes or stains.
- The pants and shirt should cover the child's bottom when he or she is seated.

For all PreK students, **VELCRO** is **required** unless the child has mastered tying their **OWN** shoes.

ATHLETIC SNEAKERS WITH WHITE SOLES ONLY:

- *No flat soled shoes (i.g Converse), high top, roller skate, or light-up shoes are permitted.*
- *No sandals, high heels, open-toe, or open-back shoes are permitted.*



GUIDELINES:

HAIR ACCESSORIES

- All students – hair should be neat.
- Girls' "scrunchies" (navy, red, white or school plaid pattern), hair clips, rubber bands, pony tail holders, etc., must stay in the hair.
- Beads can be a choking hazard and are often a distraction for students.

EXTERNAL WEAR

- **Earrings-** Girls may wear a single stud
- **No other Jewelry-** unless approved by the Pre-K Director
- **No Watches**
Hats may not be worn inside the building **on out-of-uniform days**

BOYS K-8:

- **Shoes:**

- **Solid black** leather, low-top, flat-soled (up to 1/2" heel is acceptable), lace, Velcro, or slip-on style shoe. Velcro or slip on shoes are recommended for younger students. Laces must be black.
- **Tan Boat Shoe**- plain solid tan, Sperry style but any brand is acceptable
- **Not permitted: boot-style, sneaker, canvas, high top, moccasin or open toe.**
- **Socks:** plain navy or white socks. Socks must cover the ankle.
- **Pants & shorts:** khaki-colored only and without cargo pockets. Elastic waist pants are permitted for boys in Kindergarten through 2nd Grade. Shorts are not required, but permitted in warmer weather.
- **Belt:** black or brown belts are REQUIRED for grades 3-8
- **Shirt:** SS or LS navy blue polo, *with school logo*, tucked in at all times. Only white undershirt or T-shirt, are acceptable underneath.
- **Sweater/ sweatshirt/ fleece-** Allowed, but not required,
 - Navy cardigan or crew neck sweater, *with school logo*
 - Navy or red PE sweatshirt, *with school logo*
 - Navy fleece, *with school logo* (Lands' End item #430912-AK7)

GIRLS K-5:

- **Shoes:**
 - **Solid black leather**, low-top, flat-soled (up to 1/2" heel is acceptable), lace, or slip-on style shoe. Laces must be black in a black shoe.
 - **Black Mary Jane style shoe**, in this case, it should still be a flat-soled shoe (up to 1/2" heel is acceptable).
 - **Tan Boat Shoe**- plain solid tan, Sperry style but any brand is acceptable
- **Socks:** plain/solid navy, red, or white knee socks, tights, or above ankle short socks. Socks must cover the ankle.
- **Leggings:** Solid/plain/logo free navy, red, or white leggings. Matching navy, red, or white socks, covering the ankle with no logo, must be worn with leggings.
- **Jumper:** plaid uniform jumper. Jumpers must be **no shorter than one inch** above the top of the knee throughout the school year. These are available only through Flynn & O'Hara.
- **Shirt:**
 - **With jumper-** SS or LS white collared blouse, a red or white turtleneck under a sweater, or sweatshirt may also be worn.

- **With pants or shorts-** SS or LS navy blue polo, *with school logo*, tucked in.
- **Pants & shorts:** khaki-colored only and without cargo pockets Shorts are not required, but permitted during first and fourth quarters. Pants and shorts must be uniform not “skinny” style pants and shorts.
Shorts must be **no shorter than one inch** above the top of the knee throughout the school year
- **Belt:** black or dark brown (required if pants or shorts are worn)
- **Sweater/ sweatshirt/ fleece-** Allowed, but not required,
 - Navy cardigan or crew neck sweater, *with school logo*
 - Navy or red PE sweatshirt, *with school logo*
 - Navy fleece, *with school logo* (Lands’ End item #430912-AK7)

GIRLS 6-8:

- **Shoes:**
 - *Solid black leather*, low-top, flat-soled (up to 1/2” heel is acceptable), lace, or slip-on style shoe. Laces must be black in a black shoe.
 - *Black Mary Jane style shoe*, in this case, it should still be a flat-soled shoe (up to 1/2” heel is acceptable).
 - *Tan Boat Shoe* – (see uniform policy for color and style)
- **Socks:** plain/solid navy, red, or white knee socks, tights, or above ankle short socks. Socks must cover the ankle.
- **Leggings:** Solid/plain/logo free navy, red or white leggings (matching navy, red or white socks covering the ankle w/no log must be worn with leggings)
- **Skirt:** plaid uniform skirt* (must be no shorter than one inch above the top of the knee) *(available only from Flynn & O’Hara)
- **Slacks:** khaki-colored (NOT stone-colored, NOT Cargo-style) slacks of proper fit. NOT required, but permitted from November through April.
- **Belt:** black or dark brown (REQUIRED if slacks are worn)
- **Shirt:** SS or LS navy blue polo *with school logo*, tucked in at all times. A red or white turtleneck under a sweater, sweatshirt or fleece may also be worn.
- **Sweater/ sweatshirt/ fleece-** Allowed, but not required,
 - Navy cardigan or crew neck sweater *with school logo*
 - Navy or red PE sweatshirt *with school logo*
 - Navy fleece *with school logo* (Lands’ End item #430912-AK7)

For modesty, the hem of the jumper or the skirt should be no more than an inch above the top of the knee and **girls should wear shorts**, that will not show below

the hem, **underneath the jumper or the skirt**. The waist band of the skirt may not be rolled over. Pajama type pants may not be worn.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM K-8

PE uniforms must be purchased through Flynn & O’Hara or from our used uniform closet.

- Navy mesh uniform shorts, *with school logo*
- LS or SS T-Shirt, *with school Logo*
- Sweatshirt: navy blue or red sweat shirt, *with school logo*
- Sweatpants: solid navy blue fleece sweatpants, with or without pockets
 - *No logo, image, or writing, other than school logo, no cargo pockets*
- Gym shorts are always worn under sweatpants during the winter months.
- **Lace up athletic sneakers with white soles**
 - *No flat soled shoes (i.g Converse), high top, roller skate, or light-up shoes are permitted.*
- White socks that cover ankle

GUIDELINES

SHOES

No sandals, open-back shoes, or no shoes with a heel over 1 inch, measured from the back exterior of the shoe, are permitted. Shoes with laces must be tied at all times. Sneaker Velcro or slip on shoes is highly recommended for younger students.

HAIR

- **All students** – hair should be neat with bangs above the eyebrows. Extreme styles (i.e. fad haircuts, Mohawk, mullet, razor cut, or razor design, etc.) or excessive lengths or color are not permitted.
- Boys’ hair should be above and not touching the shirt collar and trimmed around the ears. Facial hair must be close shaved.
- Girls’ “scrunches” may be navy, red, white, or school uniform pattern, hair clips, rubber bands, pony tail holders etc. must be in the hair, **not worn on wrists**.
- **Unnatural or extreme hair coloring and bleaching** is not permitted.
- No scarves should be worn in the hair. Uniform plaid, navy, red, white, brown, black, or neutral color headbands are allowed.

COSMETICS and EXTERNAL WEAR

- No **cosmetics** or artificial **nails** may be worn. Girls may wear clear or light pink nail polish.
- No visible **tattoos** of any kind. No **Hologram** contact lenses.
- No body **piercing** except pierced ears.
- **Girls** may wear one stud earring per ear not larger than a dime or one very small hoop earring.
- **Boys** may not wear earrings of any type.
- **Jewelry** should be limited to one watch, one ring, one bracelet, and a simple necklace.
- **Watches** with a beeping device should be disconnected during the school day. Watches that beep will be taken away and may be claimed on the last day of the school year. No internet or bluetooth capable watches are permitted.

The uniform should be clean and without holes or grass stains with all buttons attached and hem intact. Shirts should be tucked in while a student is on campus.

BROWNIES & SCOUTS

Brownie/Scout Uniforms – Students may wear the scout uniforms on meeting days.

VIOLATIONS

Demerits may be given for continued or deliberate uniform violations. If the infraction cannot wait until the end of the day, for example a very short skirt, a replacement can be borrowed from the principal's office or a parent could be called to bring a replacement. Parents will be notified by the homeroom teacher of repeated violations.

OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAYS

Occasionally students are permitted to dress out-of-uniform. Some days are whole-school events. These days promote school spirit or provide an incentive for participation in a school-sponsored project. Sometimes individual students are rewarded as a thank you for service to the school. Students may have an out-of-uniform day on their birthday.

Rules for dressing out-of-uniform:

1. Closed toe shoes.
2. No hair dye or face paint is permitted unless specified.
3. No “spaghetti” straps or shirts that expose the midriff
4. Shorts may only be worn during first and fourth academic quarters.
5. Shorts or skirts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee
6. No inappropriate messages on clothing.
7. If leggings or similar tight pants are worn, the student’s shirt must cover the student’s bottom.
8. If students are not dressed appropriately, parents may be required to bring a change of clothes to school and students may not be allowed to participate in future free dress days.

****RIGHT TO AMEND**

Mother of God School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via e-mail and posting in the “Weekly Communication” section of the school website.

Uniform Policy amended 2/27/15 WHM
Demerit and Detention policy amended 2/27/15 WHM
2015-2016 amendments 8/18/15 WHM
2016-2017 amendments 7/25/16 WHM
2017-2018 amendments 6/30/17 WHM
2018-2019 amendments 8/15/18 WHM
Uniform Policy amended 6/15/19 MD
2019-2020 amendments 8/1/19 MD & WHM

2020-2021 amendments 7/3/20 MD & WHM
2021-2022 amendments 6/25/21 WHM
2022-2023 amendments 7/26/22 MFS
Uniform Policy amended 7/26/22 MFS

Parent/Student Signature Page

I/We have read the Parent /Student Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Family Name (Please print)

Parent signature Date

Parent signature Date

Child signature Date