

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School

818 West Cross Street
Benton, AR 72015
501-315-3398

Parent/Student Handbook

Revised: March 202

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School Benton, Arkansas

Our Lady of Fatima School (OLF) is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Little Rock. The school is an accredited member of the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association. It includes grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The school is administered by the principal under the direct leadership of the pastor. Our Lady of Fatima School Board is a consultative board which assists the principal and pastor in establishing policy. The school is administered according to the directives set forth in the Handbook of *Policies and Regulations for Elementary and Secondary Schools* of the Diocese of Little Rock.

The curriculum for the school is determined by the Diocese of Little Rock Office of Catholic Schools. The *In Spirit and Truth Curriculum Guide* can be accessed on the Diocesan website at www.dolr.org/schools. The school utilizes state adopted textbooks and achievement tests are administered to all students. Classroom instruction is supplemented by many support services. Educational field trips are included in the program. Our school has a central library. In addition, each classroom has computers and other technology for student use. Special software for students who need help in reading and math is provided by Title I. An aide works with Title I qualifying students on a daily basis.

Our Lady of Fatima is a Catholic school committed to the teaching of Catholic doctrine and Christian values and is dedicated to providing a quality academic program. Because we are a Catholic school, the foundation on which our school rests is our faith and the word of God. The school seeks to maintain academic excellence in all areas and yet it realizes that its reason for existence depends upon the Christian attitudes and values it imparts. It is for this reason that every child participates in the study of religion, sacred scripture and attends mass. The school recognizes the rights of individuals as children of God deserving honor and respect and works toward the following goals and objectives with the involvement and cooperation of the students', parents or guardians.

Mission Statement

The main purpose of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School is to provide quality education through academic excellence, Catholic principles, and Christian values. Each student is guided toward scholastic achievement and self-discipline, rooted in the love of God and neighbor, nurtured in an atmosphere of faith and loving concern while promoting an attitude of Christian service.

Statement of Philosophy

The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Little Rock seek to offer high quality academic programs which are integrated with religious truth and values. Students are prepared for life in today's Church and society and for leadership in society and the Church of tomorrow through a strong, basic, and contemporary curriculum which includes instruction and formation in the beliefs, values, and traditions of Catholic Christianity.

The development of the whole person (spiritually, intellectually, personally, socially, and physically), is the focus of Catholic education. The teachers, as partners with the parents, play a significant role in this educational ministry as they daily witness to the meaning of mature faith and Christian living. They are selected with care and are challenged to on-going professional and spiritual growth.

Goals

The broad goals of all Catholic schools are: to teach the Gospel message; to build a faith community; to worship God; and to be of Christian service.

Specific goals include:

- To work closely with the family in educating children toward the fullness of Christian life.
- To create a Christian educational community where human knowledge, enlightened by faith, is shared by teachers, students, and parents in a spirit of freedom and love.
- To provide opportunities for personal commitment to religious values. To teach Catholic principles and Christian values.
- To offer personal experiences in Christian living through liturgy, sacramental life, prayer, guidance, service, and example.
- To provide opportunities for staff members to grow in their faith.
- To instruct students in knowledge and skills which enable them to actively participate in the parish community and society.
- To assist each student to develop a positive attitude toward lifelong education, including the power to think constructively, to solve problems, and to reason independently.
- To facilitate and improve each student's opportunity to learn.
- To play a significant role in raising national levels of knowledge, competence, and experience.

Through its philosophy, the Catholic school fulfills the MISSION OF THE CHURCH in accepting the mandate of Jesus Christ Himself: "Full authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth; go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations...teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28: 18b-20)

HISTORY

Construction of the school began in April 1957 and was completed the following year. The school was originally named Notre Dame. Designed by the architectural firm of Wiseman-Bland of Little Rock, the building cost approximately \$60,000. Father Charles N. McGinnis led the efforts to find teaching staff for the school. In mid-August of 1959, Reverend Mother M. Phillippa, OSB of the Olivetan Benedictine Sisters of Holy Angels Convent in Jonesboro, assigned Sister M. Alberta Krebs and Sister M. Laura Schneider, OSB to teach at the school.

The school opened its first four grades in fall of 1959 with an enrollment of 39 students. Two and a half years later, the school was officially blessed and dedicated by Bishop Albert L. Fletcher on Sunday, January 22, 1961. On October 30, 1980 the official name of the school was changed from Notre Dame to Our Lady of Fatima by the Parish Council. In the fall of 1996, Our Lady of Fatima was moved into the current educational facility. In September of 1996, Bishop Andrew J. McDonald came to celebrate Mass and to dedicate and bless the school.

The last Olivetan Benedictine Sister of Jonesboro retired from teaching at Our Lady of Fatima in 1998. On May 17, 1998, Our Lady of Fatima school and parish held a special Mass and celebration to thank the sisters and to say good-bye. An angel and plaque were placed in front of the entrance to the school in honor of the years of service provided by the Olivetan Benedictine Sisters of Holy Angels Convent.

In 2003, McGinnis Hall was renovated to expand the existing gym and parish hall. On September 13, 2003, Bishop J. Peter Sartain blessed and rededicated the building, which now houses the gym, cafeteria, school library, computer lab, and meeting room.

In the fall of 2018, the Pre-K program was moved into the lower level of Our Lady of Fatima Education building.

Role of Parents

Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children.

It is particularly in the Christian family, enriched by the grace and Sacrament of Matrimony, that from their earliest years children should be taught according to the faith received in baptism, to have a knowledge of God, to worship Him, and to love their neighbor. Religious and positive attitudes and values are rooted in home attitudes and values.

While belonging primarily to the family, the task of imparting education requires the help of society as a whole. As for Catholic parents, the Council calls to mind their duty to entrust their children to Catholic schools, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along with them for the welfare of their children.

Declaration on Christian Education - Vatican Council II

ADMISSIONS

Nondiscriminatory Policy

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Little Rock admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Little Rock do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic, and physical abilities, and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs

Admission Priority:

- Catholic families in the parish
- Catholic families in neighboring parishes
- Other families

All new students will be accepted on a probationary status for one-quarter. Transfer students must present previous school records and schedule an interview prior to acceptance and admission.

Children entering Pre-K must be four (4) years of age by September 1 of such school year. Children entering kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 1 of such school year.

IMMUNIZATION

All students attending Catholic schools in the Diocese of Little Rock are subject to the immunization laws of the State of Arkansas, which can be found on the Arkansas Health Department website. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-18-702)

A school may temporarily admit a child provided that the child becomes appropriately

immunized, is in-process of receiving the needed doses of vaccine, or shows proof that he/she has applied for an exemption for those vaccines they have not received within thirty (30) calendar days after the child's original admission.

An exemption to the immunization law may be made only by a certificate issued by the Director of the Arkansas Department of Health.

An accurate and current list of all exempt and deficient students must be maintained at the school.

OLF will use the Arkansas Immunization Information System, named WebIZ, to obtain the vaccination record.

Communicable Diseases

Any student having or suspected of having a communicable disease as defined in the Arkansas Department of Health Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Reportable Disease will be excluded from school for the period of time designated in these regulations.

Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) must report any communicable diseases to the principal.

The identity of the infected student, as well as all health and other pertinent records, shall be kept confidential, and the number of people who are aware of the student's condition will be kept at a minimum.

Before returning to school, the student must be past the period of communicability; that is, free of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours, and able to participate in normal classroom activities.

BIRTH AND BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES

All students must present a birth certificate at time of registration.

Each new Catholic student, not baptized at Our Lady of Fatima Church, must present a baptismal certificate at time of registration.

TUITION

Tuition is paid on a twelve (10) month basis beginning August 1st via monthly bank draft through FACTS Tuition Management System. Drafts are made on the 2nd or 16th of the month according to the family's choice. Tuition may be paid monthly, quarterly, or by semester. All fees are non-refundable and are paid through FACTS in the month of July. June tuition is used for the purchase of books and July tuition is used for building maintenance. If a family pays on a quarterly, semester. If a student is withdrawn within the school term, prepaid tuition will be refunded on a prorated basis.

No child of a parishioner will be denied the opportunity to attend Our Lady of Fatima school due solely to the inability to pay full tuition. Financial aid scholarships are available to eligible Catholic students by submitting an application to FACTS Grant and Aid. See the school principal for more information.

FEES

Athletic Fees – When athletic programs are reinstated there will be a fee to cover the cost.

Lunch Fees – Currently there is not meal program offered. Students bring their own lunch.

Extended Care Fees – When there is a need to support paying staff the cost will be \$30.00 a week.

Other Fees - Students may participate in a no uniform day for \$2.00 once each month. Additional fees include periodic field trips and bus costs. Other costs may include bake sales, weekly snack sales, school yearbook, individual and class pictures.

ATTENDANCE

Arrival

The school day begins at 8:00 am and ends at 3:00 pm. Students who arrive early (7:30 - 7:45 am) will report to designated areas and will be supervised by a teacher until the 7:45 am bell rings.

Dismissal

Students are escorted to the dismissal area at the end of the school day. Parents enter the dismissal area from Cross Street and wait for the student to be dismissed by the duty teacher.

Please notify the school office if anyone other than the designated person is going to pick up your child. All students must be picked up by 3:15 pm.

Tardy

Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. are tardy. Students who are tardy, will report to the school office before going to class.

First Friday

The first Friday of each month is designated for teacher professional development. School will dismiss at 1:30 on the first Friday of each month.

ABSENCES

Reporting an Absence

Successful education depends on continued daily attendance. If your child is ill, please call the school office (501-315-3398) and notify the school your child will not be in attendance or send a note with the student upon their return. Failure to communicate will result in the absence being recorded as an unexcused absence. Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Absence During the School Day

If a student needs to leave during the day for an appointment, please send a note to the school office in the morning. The parent, or whoever has been designated by the parent, will check in at the school office and sign the student out. The office will notify the classroom teacher to send the student to the office for check out.

No student may leave the school premises during school hours without the express permission from the office and being signed out.

Students who have doctor, dentist or other professional appointments on a regular basis which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours are urged to stagger the time of appointments so that the same class is not missed repeatedly.

Make-Up Work

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. Upon returning to school from an absence, a student should collaborate with his/her teachers and ask for assignments and tests to be made up. Students have one day per day of absence to complete make-up assignments and tests.

Excessive Absences

Generally, a pupil who has accumulated twenty-five (25) days of absences during the school year will be required to make up the work missed or to repeat the grade.

Absences due to scheduled vacations are unexcused. Teachers are not expected to prepare advance assignments when a student will be out for a scheduled vacation.

Withdrawal 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 all accounts have been settled.

CURRICULUM

Religion

The religion text is selected from the recommended and approved texts by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Students in grades 1 - 8 attend mass approximately three (3) days a week. Kindergarten students attend mass on Friday and special days.

Academic Subjects

Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Music, Art, and Physical Education.

The *In Spirit and Truth* Curriculum Guide is the designated curriculum for the Diocese of Little Rock schools. Textbooks and other resources are used to teach the rigorous curriculum.

Homework

Homework 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. A good range would be 10 minutes for each grade. Full credit cannot be given to students who do not turn in assignments completed on time.

Grading

Grades are determined by a number of factors - daily work, test scores, projects, class participation and class preparation.

First to Eighth Grade Grading

A	Superior Work	90%-100%
B	Above Average	80%-89%
C	Average	70%-79%
D	Passing	60%-69%
F	Failure	Below 60%

Pre-K & Kindergarten Grading

O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement

Learning Differences

Grades for students with documented learning differences are used to indicate a student's progress in relation to his/her ability and not in relation to an expected grade norm. A modified grading scale may be used in the areas of difference of each student. Each child with a documented learning difference will receive a modified academic plan stating the modifications for grading.

TESTING

All students in grades K-8 are given the NWEA Map testing three times a year during testing windows in the fall, winter, and spring. The purpose of the testing is to better assess where students stand on the acquisition of curriculum standards and goals and growth throughout the year.

TECHNOLOGY

The use and purpose of technology at Our Lady of Fatima School is to enhance traditional curriculum approaches and to equip our students with the technological knowledge and hands-on experiences that will benefit them now and in the future.

Acceptable Use Policy

Internet access is available to students and teachers at Our Lady of Fatima School. We believe the internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Access to the school's network is a privilege, not a right, and all access must be consistent with the main objective of the school. In accordance with federal law, Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Our Lady of Fatima internet is filtered and monitored. Access to the internet provides the opportunity to explore thousands of information resources. Due to the nature of the internet, no technology protection measure or filtering device can stop all inappropriate material. Parents should be aware that every effort is made to supervise students and to filter inappropriate content, but that it is impossible to control all material. Our Lady of Fatima helps protect students browsing the internet through blocking and monitoring software. The use of school owned technology resources is secure, but not private. Students should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, receive, or display when using the school network, devices, internet access, email system or other technological resources owned or issued by the school, whether the resources are used at school or elsewhere, and even if the use is for personal purpose. The school reserves the right to determine which uses constitute acceptable use and to limit access to such uses. The school also reserves the right to limit the time of access and use. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions, and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement.

Students Responsibility

All students will receive instruction on the proper use of devices and online tools. The student assumes full responsibility for any cost, liability, or damage arising from the way he/she chooses to use school devices. In order to use our network, students are expected to abide by the following rules. Violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action.

- Students are responsible for the use of their individual accounts and should take reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person.
- Students are only allowed access to the Internet, Chromebooks, and/or computers under the supervision of teachers/staff/administration.
- Students are not to take pictures or videos of themselves/student/teacher or administrator using their school device, except under the supervision of teacher/staff/administration.
- Students may not download programs or files from the Internet, except under the supervision of teacher/staff/administration.
- Students must follow copyright laws. Cite sources when using others' work. Do not make illegal copies of music, games or movies.
- Visiting and posting to social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter) is strictly prohibited on school devices.
- Students must notify the teacher immediately if inappropriate material is found on a school device.

Personal Electronic Technology Devices (PTD)

Personal Electronic Technology Devices (PTD) including, but not limited to, smart phones, laptops or tablets are to be used only when permission has been granted by teacher/staff/administration.

- Personal commercially available networks (i.e. ATT, Verizon, etc) are not allowed to be activated on a student's PTD on the school campus.
- Never capture, transmit, or store images or recordings without the express permission of the person being recorded, parent permission of a minor and/or approval of teacher/staff/administration.

- Such recording devices may never be accessed, turned on or operated in restrooms, dressing rooms, or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- The content of an PTD device may be reviewed by OLF teacher/staff/administration as part of an investigation of policy violation or other suspected inappropriate, immoral and/or illegal use.
- To protect the safety and well-being of young people, guests, staff and other community member's personal property and to avoid disruption; OLF teachers/staff/administration reserve the right to confiscate or collect any PTD.
- If an illegal act is discovered, local law enforcement officials may be contacted.
- OLF school and organizations are not responsible for any harm to PTDs, including but not limited to loss, theft, damage, or destruction.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying brought to the attention of the administration will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Once substantiated, students involved in such incidents (seriously or in jest) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Posting slurs or rumors or other disparaging remarks about students or school staff members on a website or social networking site.
- Sending e-mail or instant messages that are mean or threatening.
- Using a camera phone to take and send embarrassing photographs/recordings of students or school staff members or posting these images on social networking sites or video sharing sites.
- Posting misleading or fake photographs of students or school staff members on websites.
- To the extent permitted by the First Amendment, instances of cyber-bullying off school grounds that disrupt the school environment or interfere with the learning process will be considered violations of the Acceptable Use Policy

Consequences for Violation

Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's technology resources. Further discipline may be imposed by the school administrator up to and including suspension or expulsion depending on the degree and severity of the violation.

Our Lady of Fatima reserves the right to modify or change any policy. Conditions or circumstances not specifically covered by the expectations outlined in this policy may arise. On such occasions, the school administration will make decisions or pursue courses of action, which, in its judgment, can best sustain the wellbeing of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School, including the health and safety of the faculty, staff, and student body.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are required for all students attending Our Lady of Fatima school. Monogrammed Polo shirts, school t-shirts and sweatshirts can be obtained from Sports Shop in Benton (and ordered through the school) or the school resale shop.

Girl's Uniforms

- Plaid jumper in school paid (drop waist only) or plaid pleated skirt (it is advisable for girls to wear shorts under jumpers and skirts)
- White or red monogram knit polo shirt
- White, red or navy socks or tights
- Navy uniform shorts with belt (April - October 31)
- Red school t-shirt
- Uniform navy or plaid pants
- Girls in grades 6 - 8 may also wear khaki uniforms shorts and pants
- Navy sweatpants, leggings, or tights may be worn under skirts/jumpers

Boy's Uniforms

- White or red knit monogrammed polo shirts
- Navy uniform pants with belt
- White or navy socks
- Red school t-shirt
- Boys in grades 6 - 8 may also wear khaki uniform shorts and pants

Belts should be leather-type (black, brown, navy)

White, red or navy socks covering ankles

Shoes should be conservative - closed toe, closed heel shoes only. Shoes should not have heels
Uniform outerwear may be worn during the school day. Non-uniform jackets, sweatshirts, etc may be worn outside only.

Navy cardigan, v-necked sweater, or plain navy sweatshirt may be worn.

SAFETY

Safe Environment

Safe Environment - All employees and volunteers must complete the Safe Environment training through Catholic Mutual Group - <https://www.dolr.org/safe-environment>

- students will also complete age-appropriate lessons called "The Circle of Grace".

Crisis Plan

Our Lady of Fatima acknowledges the necessity to prepare emergency management guidelines in the event an emergency should occur. Any event that threatens safety and security will be considered an emergency. Our Lady of Fatima has a Crisis/Safety Plan that will be implemented if needed.

Wireless Telephone Use

A driver of a motor vehicle shall not use a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle when passing a school building or school zone during school hours when children are present and outside the building, except for emergency purposes.

Medication at School

Medication of any kind will not be provided by the school. If a student needs to take medication during the school day, the medicine must be brought to the school in the original container. A written directive signed by the parent or guardian stating the dosage and time the medication is to be administered will be kept on file in the school office. Any medication brought to school will be stored in a designated place under the control and supervision of appropriate school officials.

Students having need for the use of an EPI-Pen must have written documentation on file in the school office from his/her physician stating the necessity for the student to have it with him/her at all times.. Any student with a medically complex condition must have a medical plan signed by parents(s) or guardian and a healthcare professional on file in the school office.

Accidents

Minor accidents are taken care of by the teacher or playground supervisor. In case of a serious accident, the parents will be contacted as soon as possible. If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency number on file will be tried. If the emergency number cannot be contacted, the injured child will be taken to the hospital immediately at the expense of the parents.

Student accident insurance may be purchased through <https://www.kandkinsurance.com/sites/K12Voluntary/Pages/Home.aspx>

Smoke Free/Drug Free

Our Lady of Fatima campus is a smoke-free/drug-free environment. Appropriate action will be taken against anyone who violates this policy. Any student that brings illegal drugs or weapons onto school campus is liable for suspension or expulsion.

DISCIPLINE

The main purpose of good discipline at Our Lady of Fatima is to lead the student to self-control. Self-control on the part of the students is essential to good classroom order. Students are to be courteous at all times, in all places. Reasonable quiet, conducive to study, and good order is expected of every student.

Harassment

In keeping with the philosophy of Our Lady of Fatima School that each person is a sacred individual, it is the policy of OLF School to provide for its students and employees an educational environment free from harassment. Harassment based on gender, race, religion, or physical appearance will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with each individual situation and according to the principal's discretion. Students will not commit acts that tend to injure, degrade, disgrace, or threaten the safety, privacy, and respect of other students, teachers, or staff members. Should substantiated misconduct outside the school environment come to the attention of the school, this too may serve as ground for discipline as students of our school are expected to conform their lives to Christian principles at all times. Policies that apply at school or on school premises, also apply at school functions after hours or off school premises.

Threats or Acts of Violence

Any threat by students to inflict harm to themselves or others will be taken seriously and addressed immediately. Whoever hears a threat should report it immediately to the principal. The parents or guardians will be notified (both of the student that made the threat and of the student that was threatened). The principal and/or pastor will decide if any proper authorities need to be notified.

Property Damage

Students defacing or damaging property will be required to pay for damages and will be subject to disciplinary action and/or legal action. Student damaging teacher property will be subject to disciplinary action and subject to the laws applicable as well as being fully responsible for payment of damages.

MINOR INFRACTIONS

The following student behaviors are considered inappropriate for school. This is in no way a complete list, but should illustrate the types of behavior that are inappropriate. Infractions of these and similar violations will result in disciplinary measures, as appropriate to the age of the child, which are outlined later in the section.

- Tardiness to class
- Not having materials
- Homework or classwork not turned in
- Excessive talking
- Disregard for procedures
- Gum chewing
- Uniform violation

MAJOR OFFENSES

The following is a list of violations of the school community rules that are considered most serious. Each situation will be assessed in terms of severity, intent, and in light of students' prior behavior when determining consequences. The principal is to be notified immediately and each incident will be thoroughly investigated. Each of these offenses could result in suspension or expulsion from school.

- Defiance of school authority-i.e. Principal, teachers, staff, playground supervisors, etc
- Cruelty to other students - verbal and/or physical

- Willful destruction or defacing of school or church property. Students will pay for any damage incurred.
- Fighting
- Profanity, verbal abuse, obscene gestures or conduct
- Leaving campus or designated area without permission
- Theft
- Bringing pocket knives, slingshots, firearms or any type of weapon to school-including toys suggestive of violence
- Bringin or using alcohol, tobacco (in any form) and/or illegal drugs on school grounds
- Verbal threats of a grave nature
- Cheating on tests or exams

CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR

Corporal punishment is contrary to Diocesan policy an is not to be used as a means of student control. Emphasis is placed on positive values rather than on punishment. When violations do occur, each one will be dealt with patiently, respecting the personal dignity of the student, the teacher, and all who have been offended by the student's misconduct.

Classroom Rules

Students are made aware of classroom rules. Failure to adhere to rules will result in age/grade appropriate discipline procedures. For students in grades 3 - 8, infractions affect a student's conduct grade. The nine-week conduct grade is reflective of the student's behavior throughout the entire nine-weeks' period.

Suspension

Suspension is defined as a definite period of time a student will not be allowed to attend school or a school-sponsored activity.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the permanent dismissal of a student from school. A written report, containing reasons for the expulsion, will be sent to the student's parents(s)/guardian(s) and to the Diocesan Superintendent.

The principal in consultation with the Pastor will make decisions regarding suspension or expulsion.

Deliveries and School Parties

Floral Arrangements

Floral arrangements, balloons, and gifts shall not be sent to children at school for birthdays and other special occasions. If brought to school, the delivery will not be accepted.

Parties

Room parents assist the teachers in classroom activities and parties. During the school year, three(3) parties are permitted: Christmas, Valentine's Day and one (1) to be decided by the teachers. The parents provide the refreshments for the students and help plan and supervise the parties.

Dances are not permitted as a school sponsored function.

Invitations for parties should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. Mail unless an invitation is being given to every student in the entire grade.

Food Allergies

Food allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools work with students, parents, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment. A meeting with the parents, principal and child's teacher will be set up to discuss the best plan for the student.

Playground Supervision

The playground is supervised at all times by teachers and staff. All students should attend outside recess during good weather. If for health reasons a student cannot go outside, a written note from the parents/guardians should be sent to the teacher.

Telephone

If a parent needs to contact a child during the school day, please call the school office and the message will be delivered. Neither teachers nor students are called to the telephone during class hours. If a student has a cell phone, the phone must be turned off during the school day and kept in the students' backpack.

Health Examinations

- Vision and hearing tests are administered to grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7 and any other student referred by the teacher and all new students to Our Lady of Fatima School.
- Scoliosis screening will be given to girls in the sixth and eighth grade and boys in eighth grade.

Fire and Tornado Drills

- Fire drills are held monthly
- Tornado drills are conducted periodically during the year

Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)

The purpose of the PTO is to enable the parents' partnership role to become a reality in education. The PTO consists of all parents or guardians of students, the Pastor, the Principal, and the faculty.

School Board

Unlike a public school board, the Catholic school board is not autonomous. According to the Code of Canon Law, all parish boards are consultative. Actions of the board become effective only upon the approval of the pastor. To be a school board member is more than just a commitment, and is distinctly different from a political appointment. It is to contribute one's talents, wisdom, experience, faith life, and good will to the mission of the school. Individual board members exercise no official consultative role outside the board meeting.

Visitors

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc) 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. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Visitors may be asked to show identification in the form of a driver's license or other government issued identification. school office before going to any classroom.

Volunteers

All individuals who wish to volunteer in the school will be given the options at the Open House in August. Volunteers are required to complete Safe Environment training at <http://www.dolr.org/safe-environment>

Emergency Closing

When bad weather necessitates the closing of school, a message will be sent using the FACTS notification system and the local media.

If the weather deteriorates during the school day and the school remains open, each family will have to decide whether to pick their child up early.

Extended School Closures

If school is closed due to weather or a public health concern, parents/guardians will still be responsible for payment of tuition. The education of each student will continue with virtual/remote/e-learning. Teachers will continue to plan standards-based lessons and evaluate student work. Report cards will be distributed at the end of each grading period. If a parent/guardian cannot make the regular tuition payment, the principal should be notified as soon as possible to create a payment plan.

Photo and Video Consent

For all students under the age of 18, parents(s) and/or guardian(s) are required to sign a consent form allowing photographs and videos of their child to be utilized in school and Diocesan websites and/or other publications. Please be sensitive to the fact that some parents do not wish for their children's pictures to appear on social media. Take particular caution when posting group photos of events, class parties, field trips, etc.

PARENTAL RIGHTS: NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

It is required that the custodial parent provides the school with an official, updated copy of the court-ordered parenting and visitation rights plan. Non-custodial parents are not to use the school as a meeting place to visit with their child(ren). The school will follow the rights for the non-custodial parent(s) that are outlined in the court order. If there is no court order on file in the school office, it will be assumed that both parents have equal rights. Upon request, a copy of the child's report card will be provided to the non-custodial parent.

DHS Requirement

It is a requirement of DHS that any suspected sign of child abuse or neglect be reported to the Child Protection Agency. If an employee suspects child abuse he/she is required to file a report and call the child abuse hotline. It is then left up to the proper authorities to investigate. Any staff member or child enrolled at Our Lady of Fatima may be subject to an interview by DHS officials.

PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS

General Complaints

Any person feeling aggrieved concerning any matter connected with the school will contact the individual concerned, before discussing it with others.

Contact the Teacher - if a person has a complaint about a teacher, the person will first contact the teacher and try to find a solution to the problem.

Contact the Principal - if the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the person will contact the principal for an appointment.

Contact the Pastor - if the problem is still not resolved, the person will contact the pastor to discuss the matter.

Contact the Superintendent - If no solution is found to the problem, the matter will be referred to the superintendent.

RIGHT TO AMEND

Our Lady of Fatima School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents.

