

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy

**Parent-Student Handbook
2019-2020**

**70-25 Kessel Street
Forest Hills, NY 11375
Office: 718-793-2086
Fax: 718-897-2144
<https://olmercyca.org/>**

This handbook belongs to:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____
Phone _____

Philosophy

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy seeks to provide a quality Catholic education for our children. We educate the whole child through programs encompassing the spiritual, intellectual, social, psychological and physical development of our students.

Through our religious education program, we strive to develop a well-rounded Christian personality, which will be reflected by respect toward self and others as exemplified by Jesus in the Gospels.

In cooperation with families, the staff works to assist the child in developing a system of values by which to judge the use of knowledge and skills. The rules and disciplines that are incorporated are necessary for the preservation of an atmosphere best adapted to learning. In this way, students will learn to be responsible and accountable.

Mission

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy is committed to academic excellence that is rooted in the Catholic faith, affirmed by the teachings of Jesus Christ, and centered on our service to God, family, and community.

“Education cannot be neutral. It is either positive or negative; either it enriches or it impoverishes; either it enables a person to grow or it lessens, even corrupts him. The mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth, of what is good and beautiful. And this occurs through a rich path made up of many ingredients. This is why there are so many subjects — because development is the results of different elements that act together and stimulate intelligence, knowledge, the emotions, the body, and so on.”

“If something is true, it is good and beautiful; if it is beautiful; it is good and true; if it is good, it is true and it is beautiful. And together, these elements enable us to grow and help us to love life, even when we are not well, even in the midst of many problems. True education enables us to love life and opens us to the fullness of life.”

-Pope Francis



CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Administration

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy is governed by a Board of Directors and subject to the policies and regulations of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

Admissions

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy proudly accepts students of all races, religions, and countries of origin. There is a yearly registration fee of \$300 per family, along with a supply/technology fee .

New Registrants must provide the following:

- Birth Certificate
- Immunization Record
- Baptismal Certificate (if Catholic)
- Report Card (if entering Grades 1-8)

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy is open to qualified students. Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex or national origin.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Weapons Policy

Drugs and drug abuse is a major threat to the health, education and welfare of students. The use and/or possession of drugs or alcohol on school property or during school activities is strictly forbidden. Smoking or possession of cigarettes/e-cigarettes/vaping devices/etc. on school property or during school activities is forbidden. If students are suspected of any of the above, parents/guardians will be notified. Appropriate disciplinary consequences will be imposed if there is a violator of this policy. Bringing to school, or being under the influence of, alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs is grounds for immediate dismissal from Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy, as is bringing to school a weapon of any kind.

Our school is committed to the prevention of alcohol, drug and tobacco use. We have employed the use of a counselor from the Program for the Development of Human Potential (PDHP) that is funded through the New York State Division of Substance Abuse Services and sponsored by the Office of the Superintendent.

Attendance and Lateness Policy

Regular attendance is essential for success in school. Please report all absences by calling the academy office (718-793-2086) in the morning. **A written note giving the reason for the absence must be given to the child's teacher on the day he/she returns to school. If a note is not received within three days, the absence will be recorded as unexcused/illegal.** Please note that according to New York State Education Law, a vacation is considered to be an unexcused/illegal absence.

According to NYC Department of Health regulations, students may not return to school until they are free of fever and/or vomiting for 24 hours.

All appointments for doctors, dentists, etc. should be scheduled for after 3:00 p.m. Requests for early dismissal must be sent in writing. An adult must come to the school to pick up the student, and that adult must sign the

student out. The note should indicate the name of the person (if other than the parent) who will be coming for the student. A student who is absent without the knowledge and consent of the parent/guardian is considered truant.

Parents who wish to pick up absent work may notify the office in the morning by 10AM in order to provide ample time for the teacher to gather the work for the day to be picked up by dismissal time.

Homework due to Vacations/Planned Absences

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. Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignments will be given in anticipation of the vacation.

Lateness

School begins at 8:00 a.m. every morning for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. Lateness is recorded on a child's permanent record card. All students must be online at that time.

If a student arrives after that time, he/she must report to the office for a late pass before going to class. In Grades 5-8 any unexcused lateness will result in a detention. Three unexcused latenesses will result in a detention and may prevent a student from achieving honors at each marking period.

Birthdays

Students in Nursery through Grade 4 may celebrate birthdays in school with cupcakes and/or ice cream in the classroom and/or lunchroom. **Party favors, gifts of any type and invitations are not to be distributed through the school unless the entire class is invited.** Please notify your child's teacher at least one week in advance if you plan on bringing in any treats. Videotaping or taking photos of the students is also not permitted.

In Grades 5-8

All students may dress down on their birthday. If the birthday falls over the weekend or over vacation, the child may dress down on the day that school reopens.

Bullying/Harassment Policy and Discipline

The Diocesan Bullying/Harassment Policy is as follows:

Purpose:

The school communities within the Brooklyn Diocese believe in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. Research shows that students who learn in a safe and supportive environment succeed academically. Students have a right to learn in an environment free of any harassment that substantially interferes with their education.

Definition:

Bullying, bias-based harassment /intimidation are intentional, repeated, hurtful acts (physical, verbal, written) committed by one or more persons towards another person or persons. It usually involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power which can be physical, emotional or verbal.

If not addressed, bullying can lead to the creation of a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment and can affect a student's educational opportunities.

The behaviors include but are not limited to:

- **Physical:** physical violence, stalking, threats, aggressive or menacing gestures, exclusion from peer groups which is intended to humiliate or isolate the target (relational bullying),
- **Verbal:** taunts, teasing, derogatory language, derogatory jokes, name calling, slurs, spreading rumors,
- **Written:** written or graphic material including graffiti containing comments or stereotypes that are electronically written and transmitted via internet, social messaging sites, blogs, instant messaging, text messages, cell phone, webcams. This would also include forwarding such messages if received. This generally constitutes cyberbullying.

Reporting Procedures:

- The targeted student, parent/guardian of a student or other students in the school (bystanders), or any school staff who believe that bullying has occurred should report the incident to the principal.
- The principal needs to conduct an investigation by interviewing all parties separately.
- The parents of all involved students should be notified.
- If it is determined that bullying has occurred the child who bullied is to be subject to consequences per the school's disciplinary code.
- Parents should be advised to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if the situation warrants such a report.
- Referral to counseling should be made for all parties if deemed necessary.
- The principal must follow up to see that the offending conduct has stopped.
- All students should be notified that retaliation against anyone who makes a report will not be tolerated and those that retaliate will be subject to disciplinary actions.

The Diocesan CyberBullying/Harassment Policy is as follows:

1. **Purpose:**

One of the main duties of the Academies and Parish Schools within the Diocese of Brooklyn is to provide a safe environment for our students. With the current state of technology, internet use and digital communications, this extends beyond the bounds of the physical building. Students now have 24x7 access to each other through computers, smart phones and tablet devices which can provide both an enriching experience for learning and an unfortunate opportunity for mischief. The Diocese of Brooklyn, in an attempt to harness the good and discourage and protect from the bad, has developed the following policy and guidelines to govern cyber-bullying.

2. **Scope of Use:**

This policy applies to the use of technology both inside and outside of the Academy/Parish School. When personal outside use of a technology violates this policy in whole or in part, these actions may be subject to disciplinary measures found within.

3. Definitions of Cyber-Bullying:

The following are types of cyber-bullying that can occur. This is not a comprehensive list of every action that can be deemed cyber-bullying, and items may be removed or added without prior notice. This listing is adapted from the New York State Department of Justice Definition of Cyber-Bullying.

1. **Flaming** – The act of posting electronic messages that are deliberately hostile, insulting, mean, angry or vulgar to one or more persons either privately or publicly to an online group
2. **Denigration** – Occurs when a person sends or publishes cruel rumors, gossip or untrue statements about a person to intentionally damage the victims reputation or friendships.
3. **Bash Boards** – Online bulletin boards or forums where people post anything they choose. Generally, postings are mean, hateful and malicious.
4. **Impersonation** – The act of posing as or pretending to be another person. This can either be through a malicious attack resulting in the takeover of an existing account (hacked/stolen credentials) or through the creation of a fake account in someone else's name. Considerable damage can be done through this time of attack to the victim's reputation and relationships.
5. **Outing** – Occurs when confidential, private or embarrassing information is posted or shared publicly. Can include the forwarding of email messages, text messages or photos meant to be private to an unintended third party recipient(s).
6. **Trickery** – The act of tricking someone into divulging personal, embarrassing or private information either publicly or to a person who then uses that information for malicious intents. Information gained can be used to blackmail, post publicly online or for person gains depending upon the information.
7. **Exclusion** – An indirect method of cyber-bullying in which someone is intentionally excluded from an online group, community or activity.
8. **Harassment** – The act of sending repeated insulting, hurtful, rude or vulgar message
9. **Happy Slapping** – a real world attack which is recorded and then posted online. Often referred to as a practical joke by the attackers, hence the term "happy slapping"
10. **Text Wars or Attacks** – When several people gang up on a victim sending the target repeated emails and text messages resulting in emotional and possibly financial damage for data and messaging costs
11. **Online Polls** – potentially harmful or demeaning, they can contain malicious questions such as "Who is the ugliest person in 8th grade?" or "Who do you love to hate?"
12. **Sending Malicious Code** – When intentionally perpetrated with malicious intent, can be used for spying, tracking, stalking, or to harm devices or the victim themselves
13. **Images and Videos** - Due to the prevalence and accessibility of camera cell phones, photographs and videos of unsuspecting victims, taken in bathrooms, locker rooms or other compromising situations, are being distributed electronically. Some images are emailed to other people, while others are published on video sites such as *YouTube*.
14. **Griefing** – Chronically causing grief to other members of an online community or intentionally disrupting the immersion of another in their game play
15. **Trolling** – Lurking or "trolling" message boards and forums for the purpose of defaming, "flaming", annoying, embarrassing or otherwise being hostile to users through public posts. The victim may or may not be known to the "troll" and "trolls" are often able to act anonymously.

4. Responsibilities of the Academy/Parish School:

In accordance with New York State Law on Cyberbullying, inappropriate, defamatory, or content found to be injurious to a Academy/Parish School community member may result in disciplinary action, even if done outside of Academy/Parish School premises or using devices not owned or controlled by the Academy/Parish School. All instances of such behavior must be reported immediately to the administration, who will investigate the matter and enforce the consequences deemed appropriate.

- Monitoring of communications of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communication
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- Measures restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them
- Educate students on cyber-bullying to encourage them to identify bullying behavior, avoid exhibiting the behavior and keep themselves from being the victim of bullying behavior.
- Provide guidance and counsel students on both sides of the conflict.

Academy/Parish School administrators, faculty and staff are responsible to ensure activities involving students do not harbor or promote cyber-bullying in any way. Inadvertent exclusion or inappropriate comments that go unseen can quickly become a serious situation. What may seem like a harmless joke in class or online could begin a cycle of bullying, or be a sign of something much larger that has been going on.

5. Responsibility of Students:

As a member of the Diocese of Brooklyn community, students are expected to act in accordance with the tenants of the Catholic Church. This includes conducting yourself in an appropriate manner in the digital realm and treating others and yourself with respect, kindness and understanding. It is imperative for each student to ensure that this is protected for both themselves and other members of their Academy/Parish School community. The following are guidelines to help students protect themselves and others and recognize situations and how to handle them.

Protecting Yourself from Cyber-Bullying and Cyber-Attacks

- Do not share personal information over the internet that could be used to facilitate an attack
- Never share account credentials with anyone other than your parents or guardians
- If you are being harassed by someone, report the user to the appropriate administrator (such as Facebook or Twitter), tell your parent/guardian immediately and do your best to take screenshots or print the offensive material to document the incident
- If the person is a member of your Academy/Parish School community, also inform the school of the incident providing any documentation that you can
- Block users who engage in bullying behavior from contacting you
- Set social media accounts such that posts need approval before they can be seen publicly on your page (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)

- Do not engage others who are looking to “bait” you into an altercation. This is often a tactic to lure victims into revealing information that is then used for the attack
- Avoid aggressive behavior that could provoke others to retaliate

Protecting Others from Cyber-Bullying

- Do not participate in any of the behaviors outlined in the definition above
- When communicating digitally, be mindful to show respect and understanding
- Refrain from using derogatory, defaming, embarrassing or vulgar language when communicating
- Report any aggressive behavior observed to the appropriate administrator, and your parent or guardian
- If it involves members of the Academy/Parish School community, inform the school as well with any documentation you can provide
- Discourage others who may be thinking, planning or talking after the fact about cyber-bullying or attacks they have/will engage(d) in

Identifying Cyber-Bullying

It is important to understand that not all undesirable interactions on the internet are cyber-bullying. By definition, bullying is a recurring behavior. Repeated attacks through email, forum posts, instant or text messages or the like constitute cyber-bullying. A single incident, while not condoned or accepted, is not necessarily cyber-bullying. The instant transfer and duplicative nature of digital mediums expands the threat of cyber-bullying and must be considered in its identification. If an act deemed to be inappropriate is conducted even once, but is then shared and transmitted repeatedly over a digital medium, that act crosses into a case of cyberbullying even if it was the first/only occurrence and must be handled as such.

7. Policy Violations:

Violation of this policy in whole or in part may result in any or all of the following and will be issued at the discretion of the school/academy principal:

- Loss of use/privileges of school/academy technology.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, expulsion, and /or legal action by the school/academy, civil authorities, and/or other involved parties.
- Compensation for damages, both physical and punitive, incurred due to actions in violation of this policy

Infractions (Grades 5-8)

Grades 5-8 Infractions may be given for any of the following: may be subject to in-house suspension, at-home suspension, or expulsion based upon the severity of the incident

- Any Uniform Violations
- Academic
 - Lack of attention/sleeping during class
 - Not doing classwork

- o Talking during class
- o Unprepared for class (materials needed to foster proper education, such as and not limited to; homework needed for class, classwork, supplies, etc)
- o Improper care of textbooks
- o Lateness
- o Neglecting to sign out for the bathroom/water fountain
- o Failure to return a detention slip signed

***Three Academic Infractions will result in a Lunch Detention**

Behavior

- o Disruptive behavior (Persistent fooling around/out of seat, causing negative attention to oneself, etc...)
- o Chewing gum/eating in class
- o Disrespect/rudeness/impertinence will result in an **automatic detention**
- o Running in the stairs/halls
- o Talking in the halls/stairs
- o Cell phone use (without permission, in halls during A.M. and P.M. lineup)
- o Improper use of Chromebook/iPad
- o Aggressive/violent behavior
- o Cyberbullying
- o Gossip
- o Talking during a fire drill/lockdown
- o Defacing school property

***Three Behavioral Infractions will result in an After School Detention**

School Discipline

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy has high standards of behavior as well as high academic standards. Students are held responsible for their words and actions. Detention will take place every Thursday from 3:00-4:00 pm for students who break school rules.

Students learn to be responsible, make positive choices, and demonstrate respect for their peers, teachers, and themselves. The students learn in an environment that models mutual respect, friendship, and cooperation. Some expectations are:

- Demonstrating respect and consideration for teachers and peers
- Abiding by the policies of the academies
- Wear the school uniform with pride
- Respecting academy and parish property; keeping the academy free of graffiti and litter
- Demonstrating responsibility by completing all homework and classwork
- Arriving to the academy on time

The suspension of a student from school is a serious matter that requires a meeting with the student's parents/guardians and the principal. Any serious violation of school regulations including, but not limited to: disrespect, violence, fighting, theft, foul language, endangering others, vandalism, or repeated academic failure, may result in suspension. The purpose of the meeting with the principal will detail the reason for the suspension and the corrective measures which must result in discernible improvement in the student's conduct. Repeated suspensions or failure to meet school standards may result in the expulsion of the offending student.

The principal will make the final determination on expulsion of students. Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy reserves the right to expel any student who in the judgment of the administration has committed a serious offense involving drugs, violence, alcohol, theft, violation of the technology policy, weapons possession, abuse of a teacher/student, vandalism, failure to meet academic standards, or commits any combination of acts judged serious enough by the administration.

Bus Service

Bus passes are subject to the guidelines of the New York City Transportation Bureau. All requests for bus service must be made in writing.

Catholic Identity

Christ is the reason for our school. The Religion curriculum follows Diocesan guidelines and standards. Students in Nursery and Grades K-8 will receive daily religion lessons that educate them to informed and active Catholics. Students will be made aware of Christian values in their daily lives.

Students in Grade K-8 will attend a monthly school mass every First Friday. Grades K-8 will go to Mass with their class either on a Tuesday or Thursday at least once a month. Family members are always encouraged to attend.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policy

Students are not permitted to use a cell phone and/or the office phone unless permission is given by the principal or school secretary. Student use of the phone is for emergencies only. Students in all grades will have their cell phones and any other electronic devices collected each morning, stored in a locked closet, and returned at the end of the day.

Students are never permitted to use their cell phones in the school building. It must be turned off as they enter the school building. Students may not take pictures with their cell phones on school property. No other electronic devices (iPods, iPads, PDAs, gaming systems, etc.) may be used in the school building.

Any child found using a cell phone or electronic device will have it collected by the principal, member of the faculty, or staff member. For the first offense, it will be returned to the child at the end of the *following* school day. For the second offense, it will be returned to the child *one full week* after it is collected. For the third offense, it will be returned on the last day of school.

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy assumes no responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen electronics that were not given to the teacher in accordance with school policy.

Communication between Academy and Home

Information from the academy is sent home regularly. Parents are asked to return all required notices promptly. In addition, the academy uses *Option C*, a telephone broadcast system and an e-mail broadcast system to keep parents informed of school closures and upcoming events. Teachers have 24 hours to respond to an e-mail or letter.

For the safety and security of all students and staff, all visitors, including parents, must come to the school office upon entering the building and get a visitor's pass. The permission of the principal is necessary before

parents and other visitors proceed beyond the office.

Parents are offered the opportunity to conference with teachers twice a year at report card conferences. In addition, teachers are available by appointment whenever the need arises. Teachers are to be given adequate notice for scheduling a conference, which may never take place during a teacher's class time. Teachers and/or the principal may also request conferences with parents. Parents are asked to respond to these requests when they are made.

Parents are to be exemplary models of behavior for their children. Therefore, it is expected that the parents will support the school policies and rules.

Option C should be checked on a regular basis for any missing assignments.

Crisis Management and Safety Procedures

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy has implemented a "crisis plan" in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. Lockdown procedures will be practiced at least once per trimester. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated and students will be moved to one of two secure designated locations:

1. Our Lady of Mercy Parish Hall
2. PS144
3. Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Academy

Drop-off and Dismissal Procedures

Drop-off

Nursery AM classes meet on Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

Nursery Full Day classes meets on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM. These classes meet on Wednesdays from 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

Pre-K for All classes meet on Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 AM -2:50PM.

Nursery and Pre-K students will enter from the side door closest to the church.

Grades K-8 classes meets on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:00 AM – 2:45 PM. These classes meet on Wednesdays from 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM. All students should enter through the main entrance. Teachers will be supervising the students on all floors.

Dismissal

Nursery and Pre-K students will be dismissed at 2:50 through the side door closest to the church. Dismissal for students in Grades K-8 will be at **3:00 PM**. Students in Grades K-2 will be dismissed in the courtyard. Grades 3-8 will dismiss from the main entrance.

A note must be submitted to the school office when a child is released early and must specify to whom the child may be released to. A parent or guardian signs the child out of the main entrance. Any designee of the parent

must show picture identification when picking up the student.

Please do not double-park your car on Kessel Street. This creates a hazardous situation for our students and everyone involved.

The school grounds are not playgrounds. Students will not be permitted to play in the following areas:

- The grassy areas on Kessel Street and Juno near the school, church, rectory, and convent
- No ball playing, bicycles or scooters are permitted at any time.

Please do not block the driveways of our neighbors or double-park your car. This creates a hazardous situation for our students and everyone involved.

Extended Day Program

An Early Drop Off and an After School program are important services offered by the school. Qualified personnel supervise these programs. The fees and time schedules are available from the office. Payments are due at the end of each week.

Field Trips

Field Trips are privileges offered to students and are expected to attend as part of their academic grade. Students can be denied participation in them if they fail to meet the academic or behavioral requirements of the school. In grades 6-8 the severity of detention(s) can prevent a student from attending a field trip. Students with an Epi-Pen may have restrictions for attending a field trip.

To participate in the trip, the student must return a properly filled out form provided by the school at least twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled trip. **No other form, written letter or phone call will be accepted.**

Parent chaperones are chosen randomly from those parents who have completed Virtus Training. Every parent has an equal opportunity to chaperone once. Parents who are not “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on a field trip. Our insurance company insures “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip.

Depending on the return time of the class trip hot lunch may not be served to students and therefore he/she is expected to bring in a bagged lunch (no glass bottles) on the day of the trip.

Financial Policies

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy offers parents a private school education for their children at an affordable cost. The tuition and fees are reviewed annually and adjusted as necessitated by the budget. The operation expenses of the academy are met by the tuition, fees and fund raising.

It is expected that all parents will support the academy’s fundraising events throughout the year. There is mandatory participation in the candy sale in January (one carton per student) and pay a fee of \$200.00 for lunchroom supervision. All families are asked to participate in the Home Academy Association.

Tuition is paid over ten months from August through May.

No child may begin class on the first day of the new school year if there is any balance from the previous year. Students leaving Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy for any reason will have all transfer records withheld if any money is owed to the school. In arrears tuition will result in the withholding of report cards.

Grading

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy follows the current marking code of the Office of Catholic Schools of the Brooklyn Diocese:

<u>ACADEMIC CODE</u>	<u>PROGRESS CODE</u>
A+ 97-100	1 Does Not Meet Standard
A 93- 96	2 Approaching Standard
B+ 89-92	3 Meets Standard
B 85-88	4 Meets Standard with Distinction
C+ 81-84	X Not Assessed this Trimester
C 77-80	
D+ 74-76	
D 70-73	
F Below 70	

Students are graded using a variety of measurement tools including: Class work, homework, independent work/projects, cooperative learning projects, tests, and student portfolios.

Report Cards are distributed at Parent-Teacher Conferences in December and March. They are given to students in June. Progress reports are issued approximately one month before report cards. They must be signed and returned to the teacher within three days.

Homework

Homework is a mandatory aspect of the school curriculum. It is the student's responsibility to complete regular and make-up homework assignments. If a student is absent, a homework "buddy" will assist in the gathering of assignments and books. Parents should sign their children's homework assignments to indicate that they are aware that their child has done their homework.

Returning tests and graded assignments with a parent signature is part of a child's homework grade, and is required in Grades 1-8.

Homework assignments are posted daily on our website – www.olmercyca.org . The teacher will attempt to contact a parent after the second missing homework, but it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that homework assignments are copied into their daily planners and completed at home.

Teachers are not required to accept homework assignments after their due date, with the exception of excused absences. Any late assignments accepted are at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Students will not be permitted to return to their classroom after 3PM to retrieve any belongings.

In Grades 5-8

Late assignments will only be accepted **two school calendar days** after the assignment is due. If the student is absent he/she will be given the opportunity to make up the missed work. A grace period will be given for any extenuating circumstances due to an absence. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with their teachers for any missing work after being absent.

Honor Roll

Students in Grades 3-8 who consistently excel in all areas will be eligible for the Honor Roll each trimester.

The criteria for the Honor Roll is as follows:

Principal's List: 97% average in major subjects with no grade below 93% in major subjects, no failures in minor subjects, conduct must be satisfactory or better, no more than five latenesses.

First Honors: 95% average in major subjects with no grade below 90% in major subjects, no failures in minor subjects, conduct must be satisfactory or better, no more than five latenesses.

Second Honors: 90% average in major subjects, no grade below 85% in major subjects, no failures in minor subjects, conduct must be satisfactory or better, no more than five latenesses.

Honorable Mention: 85% average in major subjects, no grade below 80% in major subjects, no failures in minor subjects, conduct must be satisfactory or better, no more than five latenesses.

IESP Procedures & the Evaluation Process

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy can accommodate many specifications found in an IESP. For us to do so, the parent must provide a copy of the IESP and meet with the principal to determine if and how the child's needs will be met.

Services currently provided on site include: Speech Therapy, SETSS, and Counseling. An evaluation may be requested at any time and may be initiated by the parent, the teacher, or the administration.

Inclement Weather

If it is necessary to close the academy, an announcement will be made via telephone broadcast (*Option C*). The announcement may also be a general one announcing that all of the schools in the Diocese of Brooklyn are closed on television and radio. You may also check the school website: www.olmercyca.org for information. Please do not call the academy and/or the rectory.

Insurance

The mandatory supply/technology fees purchase insurance for all students at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy. They are covered during the school day and during school activities through this enrollment program.

Lunchroom Regulations

Lunch boxes and food/drink containers should be labeled. Glass bottles or glass containers are not allowed. Please do not send in any food that needs to be heated. Outside food (McDonalds, Subway, etc.) is not permitted. Students are expected to be respectful and courteous to each staff member supervising a lunch a period and to each other.

Medical Policies

Please provide the school office, nurse, and teacher with up-to-date medical information. It is necessary for us to know if your child has any medical conditions such as heart problems, epilepsy, asthma, or allergies. Upon the first day of school, your child will be required to have a medical form completed by their pediatrician. This form will also require up-to-date immunization information.

Prescription medicine must be brought to the nurse's office with a note from the parent/guardian and instructions from the doctor. **Medication of any type (prescription or over-the-counter) is not allowed in the classroom for safety reasons.**

Immunization

The New York City Department of Health requires all children from Nursery through Grade 8 to have a complete physical examination before entering school. In addition children must be immunized according to age specifications against the following diseases:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio
- Whooping Cough
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Hib (Influenza Type B)
- Chicken Pox
- Hepatitis B
- Pneumococcal (For students born after 1/1/2008)
- Tdap (for students in 6th grade)
- Meningitis
- Flu (For students in Nursery and Pre-K)

Information on age specific requirements may be obtained from the Department of Health.

As per New York State law, no religious exemptions will be accepted.

Height and Weight

A record is kept of each student's height and weight reported by the parent on the Emergency Cards distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Vision Screening

The Department of Health Vision team screens children in grades K, 1, 3 and 5 and those recommended by the teacher or nurse. If your child does not pass this screening, you will be notified in writing.

Communicable Diseases

Parents must report communicable diseases to the school office. These include, but are not limited to

measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever, rubella, head lice, hepatitis, tuberculosis, whooping cough (pertussis), Fifth's disease or meningitis.

Illness in School

If your child becomes ill while in school, we will attempt to make the contacts indicated on your Emergency Contact Card. It is necessary for the child to be signed out by the adult who will be taking him/her home. No child will be allowed to go home alone during the school day.

Accident or Injury

We will follow the same procedure described for illness. All of the children are enrolled in the school insurance plan issued by American Home Assurance Company. It provides coverage during school hours or during any school affiliated activity.

Administration of Medication

If a student must take medication during school hours, the parent and the child's doctor in accordance with New York City and State requirements must fill out authorization forms. Only a school nurse can administer medication. School personnel are not permitted to administer medication.

Non-Custodial Parent and the Buckley Amendment:

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

Report Cards

Students must achieve a level of academic proficiency and social/emotional development in order to be promoted to the next grade. Any student who is in danger of being retained will receive notice with the March report card. Grade 8 students who fail to meet academic requirements will have their diplomas withheld. Parents in Grades 1-8 may check Option C for regular updates of their child's grades. Students may be required to attend summer school if they do not meet the requirements for promotion.

We have three formal parent/teacher conferences:

- September (Orientation meeting)
- December (1st Trimester Report Card Conference)
- March (2nd Trimester Report Card Conference)

Children in Grades 1-8 will receive progress reports at the midpoint of the first, second, and third trimesters. Please consult the school calendar for distribution dates, and return the signed report on the following school day.

Supervision of the Play Street

Teachers supervise the students during lunch recess. During lunch recess, students may not reenter the building without the teacher's permission. Students are to remain in the center of the play street – away from the grass and corners for safety reasons.

Technology

The use of the computers is for educational endeavors only. All students are expected to use the technology appropriately and sign the acceptable use policy. Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, Instagram®, Facebook®, Snapchat®, Whats App®, etc., may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

Acceptable Use Policy Agreement of the Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy

Here at Our Lady of Mercy, the students have access to the Internet. Our goal is to provide a safe and educational environment for your child to use the internet and computer technology at school. We provide convenient, supervised access to search engines on all our internet terminals.

To prevent any abuse of internet activities, and the school's technology equipment, each student in grades 3 to 8 and their parents/guardians are required to read and return signed our Acceptable Use Policy Agreement. No student will be allowed access to our school's computers without this form being signed and returned to school.

RULES OF CONDUCT

- Computers will not be used for anything other than teacher directed use. The installation, downloading, or modification of any software by students without permission is prohibited.
- Students will respect copyright laws and licensing agreements, there will be no plagiarism.
- Students will not make any attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted files or networks. Including other student's saved work.
- If a student comes across any material that is, or they feel is objectionable or questionable the student will advise a teacher immediately.
- Students will not visit chat rooms or instant message anyone, unless supervised for educational purposes.
- Checking web based e-mail and social network accounts without permission is prohibited.
- Sending e-mails or instant messages (IM's) that are offensive and/or threatening in any manner will result in disciplinary action.
- No student will give out any personal information about themselves or any member of the school over the Internet.
- Vandalism of computer hardware, software or other school property is not tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.
- Taking of pictures or videos during the school day by students is prohibited without the permission of the teacher and/or school administration.

Uniform

All Uniforms are supplied by Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company.

Nursery, Pre-K and Kindergarten Uniform

The following tops and bottoms may be mixed and matched:

Tops: White Short-Sleeved "Golf" Shirt, Light Blue Tee shirt, White Turtleneck, Navy Blue Sweatshirt

Bottoms: Navy Blue Gym Shorts, Navy Blue Walking Shorts, Navy Blue Skort, Navy Blue Sweat Pants

Footwear: Navy or White Crew or Knee-Hi Socks, Shoes with a Velcro Closure

Grades 1 – 4

Summer Uniform for Boys (Worn May 1st through October 15th)

- White Knit Short-Sleeved “Golf” Shirt
- Navy Walking Shorts
- White Crew Socks
- School Approved Sneakers or School Shoes

Summer Uniform for Girls (Worn May 1st through October 15th)

- White Short Sleeve Polo Shirt
- Navy Skort
- Navy Walking Shorts
- White Crew Socks
- School Approved Sneakers or School Shoes

Gym Uniform for Boys and Girls (Must be worn on Gym Days)

- Light Blue Gym T-Shirt
- Navy Micromesh Gym Shorts
- Navy Blue Sweatshirt (In Cold Weather)
- Navy Blue Sweat Pants (In Cold Weather)
- White Crew Socks
- School Approved Sneakers

Boys:

ALL BOYS IN GRADES 1-4 MUST OWN ONE (1) WHITE BUTTON DOWN SHIRT AND ONE (1) SCHOOL TIE FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

- Navy Pants
- Shirts: White Button Down Collar (Long or Short Sleeves), White Polo with school logo (Long or short sleeve),
- White Turtleneck with school logo
- Plaid Tie (To be Worn With Button Down Shirt Only)
- Navy or White Crew Socks
- Belt
- Sweaters (all with school logo): Navy V-Neck Cardigan, Navy V-Neck Pullover Sweater, Navy V-Neck Sweater Vest, Navy Polar Fleece
- Shoes: Uniform shoes are stocked by Flynn & O’Hara or Da Bar Too Shoe Store

Girls:

ALL GIRLS IN GRADES 1-8 MUST OWN ONE (1) COLLAR BLOUSE FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS. SKIRTS MAY NOT BE WORN MORE THAN TWO INCHES ABOVE THE KNEE.

- Grades 1-4: Black Watch Plaid Belted Tunic Jumper
- Blouses: White Polo Shirt (long or short sleeve) with school logo, White
 - Turtleneck with school logo. Grades 1-4: Peter Pan Collar Blouse (long or short sleeve)
- Navy Dress Slacks

- White or Navy Crew Socks or Knee-Hi Socks
- White or Navy Tights
- Sweaters (all with school logo): Navy V-Neck Cardigan (Grades 1-4), Navy V-Neck
- Shoes: Uniform shoes are stocked by Flynn & O'Hara or Da Bar Too Shoe Store

Grades 5-8 Uniform Policy

Uniform Policy must be followed and will be strictly enforced throughout the year.

Grade 5-8 Summer Uniform for Boys (Worn May 1st through October 15th)

- White Knit Short-Sleeved "Golf" Shirt
- Belt with Navy Walking Shorts (Knee-Length)
- White Crew Socks
- School Approved Sneakers or School Shoes (No Light Up)

*** All Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times. ***

Grade 5-8 Summer Uniform for Girls (Worn May 1st through October 15th)

- White Short Sleeve Polo Shirt
- Navy Skort (Knee-Length)
- Navy Walking Shorts (Knee-Length)
- White Crew Socks or navy knee high stockings
- School Approved Sneakers or School Shoes (No Light Up)

Grade 5-8 Gym Uniform for Boys and Girls (Must be worn on Gym Days)

- Light Blue Gym T-Shirt
- Navy Micromesh Gym Shorts (Knee-Length)
- Navy Blue Sweatshirt (In Cold Weather)
- Navy Blue Sweat Pants (In Cold Weather)
- White Crew Socks
- School Approved Sneakers (No Light Up)
- Warm-up Suit

Grade 5-8 Winter Boys: (October 16th- April 30th)

All boys in grades 5-8 must wear a white button down shirt and school tie:

- Belt with Navy Pants
- Shirts: White Button Down Collar (Long or Short Sleeves) with Plaid Tie or White Turtleneck with school logo
- Navy, Black, or White Crew Socks
- Sweaters (all with school logo): Navy V-Neck Cardigan, Navy V-Neck Pullover
- Sweater, Navy V-Neck Sweater Vest, Navy Polar Fleece
- Shoes: Uniform shoes are stocked by Flynn & O'Hara or Da Bar Too Shoe Store

*** All Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times. ***

Grade 5-8 Winter Girls: (October 16th- April 30th)

All girls in Grades 5-8 must wear one of the following uniform options:

- A white (non Peter-Pan) collar blouse, school vest, and tie with a Black Watch Plaid Wrap Around Kilt

- (Knee Length). Navy Opaque Stockings or Navy/White Knee Highs
- White Turtleneck with school logo with a Black Watch Plaid Wrap Around Kilt (Knee Length). Navy Opaque Stockings or Navy/White Knee Highs
 - A white (non Peter-Pan) collar blouse, school vest, and tie with Navy Dress Slacks. White or Navy Crew Socks
 - White Turtleneck with school logo with Navy Dress Slacks. White or Navy Crew Socks

Please keep in mind that all skirts must allow for growth throughout the year.

*** All Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times. ***

Sweaters (all with school logo): Navy V-Neck Sweater Vest or Navy Polar Fleece

Shoes: Uniform shoes (with a strap or shoe laces) are to be purchased from Flynn & O'Hara or Da Bar Too Shoe Store

Grades 5-8 Acceptable Jewelry

- Small Simple Earrings (plain studs or hoops only)
- One chain tucked inside blouse/shirt
- One Ring
- One Watch

No Bracelets or Sweatbands are to be worn

Grades 5-8 Make-up: The following is NOT permitted:

- Facial Makeup (eyeliner, mascara, eyeshadow, etc.)
- Nail Polish/Fake Nails
- Colored or Bleached Hair

Makeup, lip gloss, nail tips, colored nail polish, rings (other than class ring),bracelets, and anything of similar nature are not allowed. The same policy is in effect on Dress Down and Gym days.

Clear nail polish is permitted

Dress Down Guidelines

Students may wear:

- Jeans
- Sneakers
- Short socks
- Shorts no shorter than two inches above the knee
- Skirts no shorter than two inches above the knee
- Skorts no shorter than two inches above the knee
- Sweatshirts
- Sweatsuits
- Dresses no shorter than two inches above the knee
- Slacks

Students may not wear:

- Leggings

- Crop tops (if you raise your hand, your stomach should not be showing)
- Flip-flop sandals
- Open back shoes
- Tank tops (spaghetti straps)
- T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- Peep Shoulder/Off the Shoulder shirts/sweatshirts
- Sneakers that convert to roller skates
- Any shorts shorter than two inches above the knee (Ex - Biker shorts)
- Pajama pants
- No jeans with holes
- Make-up, nail polish, jewelry
- Low-cut blouses/tops (Mid-drift should be covered at all times)
- Clothing that is extremely tight or form fitting (Ex -short tight shirt or bodysuit)
- Hats

All uniform regulations and guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Teachers and Principal.

Volunteers

Parent volunteers are highly encouraged. To volunteer at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy and to attend field trips, parents must complete free VIRTUS training. You can find a listing at www.virtus.org under the Diocese of Brooklyn organization. Please bring a copy of your certificate to school.

Wall of Fame (Grades 1-8)

In order to earn a Wall of Fame dress down ticket and ice cream, students must be prepared for class and have:

- o No Missing Homework
- o No Infractions
- o No Uniform Violations
- o No Unexcused Absences
- o No Unexcused Lateness

Students on the Wall of Fame will get a special Celebration Day when they will be allowed to dress down and will receive ice cream. They will also be photographed and their picture placed on the Wall of Fame bulletin board.

The Policies in this Handbook May be Amended at Any Time by the Principal

HANDBOOK AGREEMENT (2019-2020)

I certify that I have read this handbook and will abide by all policies within. I understand that the principal has the authority to revise this handbook as needed, and will notify parents of any changes in writing. I understand that failure by families to comply with policies may result in dismissal from Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy.

Student's Name _____ Grade ____

Student's Signature (Gr. 1-8) _____

Parent's Signature (All Grades) _____