



Rocky Mount, North Carolina

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*Established 1939*

# Community Handbook: 2023-2024

**Contents** (To jump to any section, click on the header)

## INTRODUCTION

- Mission and Culture
- School History
- School Accreditation

## ADMISSIONS

- Statement of Nondiscrimination
- Priority Enrollment
- Age Requirements
- Application Portfolio
- Withdrawing Enrolled Students

## FINANCES

- Tuition Assistance
- Delinquent Accounts

## SCHOOL HOURS AND ATTENDANCE

- Office Hours
- Instructional Hours
- Morning Carline Procedures
- Afternoon Carline Procedures
- Tardiness
- Attendance
- Early Dismissal for an Appointment
- Unexpected Early Dismissal
- Chronic Unexcused Absences
- Excused Extended Absences

## STUDENT LIFE

- Mass
- Curriculum
- Student Resources

- Before-School Care
- After-School Care
- Library
- Athletic Program
- Lunch Program
- Field Trips
- Lockers
- Lost and Found
- Birthdays
- Gifts and Invitations

#### GRADING AND ACADEMIC POLICIES

- Grading Scale
- Report Cards
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Standardized Testing
- Student Records
- Academic Achievements and Awards
- Elementary Retention and Promotion
- Middle School Remediation and Retention
- Homework
- Missed Work

#### CODE OF CONDUCT

- Expectations
- Harassment
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Disrespect
- Illegal and Harmful Objects
- Social Media
- Cell Phone Policy
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Discipline Plan for Lower School (PK-4)
- Discipline Plan for Middle School
- Elastic Clause Concerning Conduct

#### STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Immunizations
- Medication
- Child Abuse Laws
- Responsibility to Report
- Illness
- Head Lice Policy
- Family Custodial Situations

## HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

- Inclement Weather
- Forms of Communication
- School Telephone

## HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)

### ROLE OF ADULTS

- Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution Process
- Visitors
- Volunteers

### UNIFORM POLICY

- Expectations and Consequences
- Uniform Guidelines

### RIGHT TO AMEND

### COVID HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

- Learning Environment
- Health and Safety Protocols

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

### HANDBOOK COMPLIANCE

## INTRODUCTION

### **Mission and Culture**

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School provides a strong, Catholic education based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We welcome students of diverse backgrounds, and work in partnership with parents to maximize students' spiritual and intellectual growth. OLPH is aligned to the fullness of the Catholic faith and the Magisterium.

### **School History**

Established by the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina in 1939, our school is the oldest parochial school in the Rocky Mount area. The current school building was opened in 1957. The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, originally staffed the school. Today, lay faculty teach students of elementary grades and Pre-Kindergarten. The school has maintained its tradition of serving both parish children and those of other faiths. The focus remains to further the spiritual development of children and to ensure academic excellence.

### **School Accreditation**

OLPH is fully accredited by Cognia: <https://www.cognia.org/>. Each Catholic school participates in on-going school improvement. It symbolizes the unity and commitment of the faculty and staff to ensure the existence of excellence in our school.

## ADMISSIONS

### Statement of Nondiscrimination

As a Catholic school in the Diocese of Raleigh, OLPH has a racially non-discriminatory policy for all students and admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students. Additionally, our school does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of our educational and admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletics and other school-administered programs.

### Priority Enrollment

Additional preference is given to applicants that are:

1. Current OLPH students
2. Siblings of current OLPH students
3. Children and grandchildren of OLPH staff
4. Members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and surrounding Catholic Churches

### Age Requirements

- Pre-Kindergarten programming is designed for four-year-olds.
- Children must be five years of age by August 31st to enter Kindergarten.

### Application Portfolio

Applications are available on the school website. Required supporting documentation includes:

- Copy of latest report card
- Copy of birth certificate
- Immunizations: All students are required to be up to date with immunizations. State law requires the following minimum doses: 5 DPT Shots (one required dose after fourth birthday) 4 ORAL POLIO VACCINE DOSES (one required dose after fourth birthday) 2 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) after 15 months of age. 3 HIB Vaccine doses
- Applicants with Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other psychoeducational test results are required to submit copies of those reports. While OLPH is not bound or required to comply with IEP plans, OLPH will, when feasible, attempt to accommodate students with additional needs.

**Acceptance into OLPH comes with high expectations concerning the effort and conduct of students and their families. All new students will be observed during their first quarter, and acceptance status may be revoked after that period if they are not meeting school standards. Likewise, if there is an apparent lack of trust, respect, and partnership with a family, a meeting will be arranged for the family with the administration, and the family may be asked to find another school placement.**

## Withdrawing Enrolled Students

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent/guardian using the OLPH Withdrawal Form. The school office will inform families of accounts with outstanding balances. No student records will be forwarded to another school until all accounts are settled.

## FINANCES

### Tuition Assistance

Families in need of tuition assistance may pursue scholarships and financial aid from various sources.

1. OLPH Catholic School Fund: Financial assistance is available through the OLPH Catholic School Fund. FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment conducts the financial need analysis. **To be considered for priority tuition assistance, all required information and supporting documents must be submitted and uploaded to the FACTS Grant and Aid website by March 1st.** Applications will open December 15th. Families must reapply each year. To apply click on the following link: <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3GJTV>

**Before any family can receive financial assistance from the OLPH Catholic School Fund, they must apply for the Opportunity Scholarship first. See below for more details.**

2. The Opportunity Scholarship Program expands school choice in North Carolina through scholarship grants for eligible children in kindergarten through 12th grade and is administered by the NCSEAA – North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority. An eligible student must live in a household whose income meets the Income Eligibility Guidelines established by the OSP.

Visit <https://www.ncseaa.edu/k12/opportunity/> to see if you qualify.

### Delinquent Accounts

Delinquent accounts, whether for tuition or aftercare, can result in a child being removed from the school. However, every opportunity is given to a family to help them bring their delinquent account current. **If your financial situation has changed, please inform the administration as soon as possible, and we will work with you on a resolution. The process for delinquent accounts is as follows:**

1. **First Month Delinquent:** Communication will be made with the family (via email, phone call, or letter) requesting payment.
2. **Second Month Delinquent:** If no attempt has been made to bring the account or accounts current, the family will be required to meet with the administration and/or priest to work out a payment plan.
3. **Third Month Delinquent:** If no attempt has been made to bring the account or accounts current or there is no payment plan in place, the student(s) will be (a) suspended from attending aftercare (if it is the aftercare account that is delinquent) (b) asked to leave the school for nonpayment.

## SCHOOL HOURS AND ATTENDANCE

**Office Hours:** 7:45-3:30

**Instructional Hours:** 8:00-3:00

### General Carline Procedures

**DO NOT CROSS THE CAR LINE DURING THE CARPOOL. If you are parking to get your child, the crosswalk should always be used.**

- The use of cell phones by drivers during car line is strictly prohibited for the safety of children and adults.
- An adult-to-adult transfer is required when dropping off and picking up students.
- For the safety and flow of the carline, please do not conference with a teacher. If you need to speak with a teacher or other staff member, an appointment is required.
- Please do not turn in forms to teachers and/or staff members in the car line, as they may get misplaced or lost. You may park and drop them off in the office.

### Morning Carline Procedures

Arrival drop-off begins at 7:40 a.m. Students should not be dropped off before this time, as there will be no supervision.

Drivers should pull up to the designated drop-off area in front of the school where staff help students exit from cars. Students should not exit the car without the assistance of a school staff member. Students should remain seated until the car comes to a complete stop, at which time they should be ready to exit. **For our carline to move quickly and efficiently, students should be ready, with coats on, backpacks zipped, lunchbox in hand, etc.** Drivers should remain in the car and not delay the car line by helping students out of the car. Students riding in the back seat of a vehicle should be buckled until it is time for them to exit from the passenger's side.

### Afternoon Carline Procedures

Dismissal begins at 3:00pm for PK – 8th and ends at 3:15 pm. Any student not picked up by 3:15 will be sent to aftercare and assessed with a drop-in fee. Unfamiliar drivers will be asked to pull over and go to the front office for verification of transport authorization. Students should enter their cars, secure their items, and fasten seatbelts in a timely and safe manner. Traffic directors will let drivers know when to move forward in the car line and when it is clear to exit the campus.

### Tardiness

To gain full benefit from the educational program, students need to arrive on time. Tardy arrivals disrupt the classroom and put the late arriving students in a disorganized place to start the day. Repeated tardiness will result in the need for a parent conference to address the issue. Instruction begins for students immediately following morning prayer. Students arriving after morning prayer (or when the car line has closed at 8:00am during winter months)—regardless of the reason—must come to the front office accompanied by an adult to sign them in. Tardy students should never go directly to class.

## Chronic Unexcused Tardiness

Chronic tardiness can result in serious consequences. If a student accumulates an excessive number of tardies, the following procedures will be enforced and followed:

- 10 days – documented notification to parents
- 15 days – parent conference
- 20 days – review by the administration to determine retention or future enrollment at OLPH

## Attendance

If your child is going to miss a full or partial school day, please notify the homeroom teacher. Family vacations planned during the academic school year will be recorded as unexcused. When a student is absent due to family vacation, the teacher(s) is/are not required to provide makeup work until the student returns to school; however, a parent may request work, and it will be provided at the teacher's discretion. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year, and families are encouraged to schedule trips or outings during these times.

## Early Dismissal for an Appointment

If a student needs to be picked up before the end of the school day, his/her teacher should be notified. Students must be signed out in the front office by an authorized adult. The school secretary will call the student to the office. No one should ever go directly to a classroom to pick up a student. If a student returns before the end of the school day, they must come to the school office with an adult to sign them back into the school. No student is to use a personal cell phone to call home. Avoid dismissals between 2:45-3:00pm to not disrupt dismissal procedures and compromise safety and efficiency. Please arrange schedules to accommodate this request.

## Special Permission to Transport

When a child is going home with anyone other than their parent or other authorized adult (as listed on Transportation Authorization Form), **the parent must notify the school in writing via email to the child's teacher and the school secretary by noon.** If you are unable to notify us by noon, please call the school secretary. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds with a person not listed on their Transportation Authorization Form without written parental permission and approval of school administration.

## Chronic Unexcused Absences

Chronic absenteeism can result in serious consequences. If a student accumulates an excessive number of absences, the following procedures will be enforced and followed:

- 10 days – documented notification to parents
- 15 days – parent conference and student placed on probation
- 20 days – review by principal to determine retention or future enrollment at OLPH

## **STUDENT LIFE**

### **Mass**

All students attend the 9:00am Mass each Friday that we are in school as well as Masses for Holy Days of Obligation. Students rotate by class in participating in school Masses through prayers, responses, hymns, altar serving, and other components. Everyone is expected to participate with enthusiasm, reverence, and respect. Parents and community members are welcomed and encouraged to attend these school Liturgies.

### **Curriculum**

Our academic program is developed according to the standards and benchmarks provided by the Diocese of Raleigh Office of Catholic Schools. The religious beliefs of the Catholic faith permeate the curriculum. The focus of the religion program is to impart Catholic truths and values. We establish our Catholic identity by living Christ's Gospel message of worship, prayer, and service. Religion standards are provided through the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. The goal of the academic program is to develop a lifelong love for learning. An innovative curriculum is well-planned and balanced at each grade level. It encourages critical thinking, problem solving, and independent learning. Our core academic subjects are Religion, English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. OLPH offers our students an excellent curriculum based on the Diocesan Curriculum Guides which include the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and Common Core State Standards. OLPH Catholic School is committed to ensuring that all admitted students succeed. If a learning difference is identified, requiring specialized instruction, we can provide remedial resources for most students. Our academic curriculum is enhanced by an offering of co-curricular learning opportunities including physical education, art, music, technology, and Spanish. Weekly STEM classes are offered for students in grades 6-8.

### **Student Resources**

The Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools acknowledge that there are students who require special services to meet their full human potential. OLPH is committed to all students succeeding to the best of their abilities. If a student has a diagnosed special need (documented by licensed medical personnel) accommodations may be offered that can be reasonably made within the normal general education classes and when the school has the resources (academic/staff) available to accommodate the student's needs. However, modifications to academic requirements or alterations in the general course of studies cannot be made. The Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools are exempt from the mandate of providing services for IEPs and 504 plans. If a student cannot be accommodated within the school program, every effort is made to assist with placement in another school program beyond OLPH.

### **Before-School / After-School Care**

For more information on before-school and after-school care, visit the After Care Handbook by clicking [here](#).

### **Library**

The school has a well-equipped library and media center. 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 quarterly report cards until their account is cleared. Students who lose a library book, textbook or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping.



## Athletic Program

The athletic program at OLPH addresses the school's desire to teach students to respect themselves and others through learning to compete in athletics. Coaches emphasize fair competition and team building with a focus on Christian sportsmanship, as indicated by their team's name, **The Saints**. Students learn discipline, teamwork, and the importance of displaying those traits in all aspects of their lives. Students in grades 5 through 8 are eligible to play sports if they meet the required academic and behavioral standards. The teams play other Catholic school teams in the Coastal Plains and private school teams in the Rocky Mount/Wilson area. Sports participation forms and information on fees are available on the school website.

## Lunch Program

Lunch is provided daily for a fee, or students may bring their lunch. Students should not bring glass bottles or soft drinks. If a student has forgotten lunch, the staff will provide oatmeal, cheese or peanut butter crackers, applesauce, etc. or if there is an extra hot lunch, it will be provided at the parents' expense. Parents who bring forgotten lunches to school after the beginning of classes should take them to the school office. **On special occasions, we welcome you to have lunch with your child and bring in fast food. If possible, please give notice to your child's teacher. However, we will no longer allow lunches to be dropped off on a daily or weekly basis, as this causes disruptions. Dropping off fast food is not allowed unless it is an emergency. Food delivery, such as Door Dash is not allowed.** Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with lunch monitors and parent volunteers are in order at all times.

## Field Trips

Field trips are a special part of the school experience and provide an opportunity for enrichment and learning outside the classroom. Field trips may take place in-school or off campus at a designated location. All field trips have an educational or service-based purpose. All school rules apply to field trips. For example, electronics are not permitted on field trips. Upon return from a field trip, students are expected to complete the school day and follow the routine schedule. Signing out large numbers of students (and their siblings) is disruptive to the learning environment.

Field Trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has the absolute right to a field trip. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

## Permissions

The Field Trip Permission Form must be signed by the parent/guardian and given to their homeroom teacher. Students who fail to bring in this form will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. Telephone calls or any other written notes are not acceptable. Parents/guardians will receive written notification prior to each trip listing the destination, mode of transportation, and the date and time of departure and return. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home and marked absent for the day.

## Chaperones

For some field trips, teachers may request chaperones. All chaperones must be 21 years of age or older and have proper volunteer documentation filed with the school. Chaperones are required to stay attentive to students' whereabouts and actions. Distractions such as cell phones are prohibited. The number of seats

permitting, chaperones may ride on a field trip bus. However, children who are not OLPH students for whom the field trip was designed, including younger siblings of OLPH students, may not ride on field trip buses. In fact, parents who chaperone a field trip should not bring other children on the field trip under any circumstances. Regardless of how a chaperone travels, all students are expected to ride to and from a field trip with their class in the bus provided by the school. Consistent supervision is essential to safety. Parents who are not “official” chaperones (as deemed by the teacher organizing the field trip) 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 only “official” chaperones. Participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip.

### **Lockers**

Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> are assigned a locker in which to store clothing and textbooks. To maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specified times. Lockers must not have any decoration on the outside, unless authorized by a teacher. Student schedules and pencil holders facilitate learning and may be posted with magnets or Command Strips on the interior. The locker area is to be kept clean, with no books or coats strewn on the floor. Locks are not permitted on lockers. OLPH administration and teachers reserve the right to open student lockers at any time without probable or reasonable cause. The lockers are the property of OLPH. Students will be responsible for any damage done to the lockers.

### **Lost and Found**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school secretary to be placed in the Lost and Found basket. Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items are donated to charity.

### **Birthdays**

Parents wishing to send in a treat for their child’s birthday should notify the teacher ahead of time. The treat will be shared with the class at a time that works best for the teacher’s instructional day.

### **Gifts and Invitations**

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students, and the activity distracts others from learning. Gifts, including flowers, should not be sent to school for students. Invitations for any party should not be distributed at school unless an invitation is given to every student (or at least every student of a given gender) in the entire grade.

# GRADING AND ACADEMIC POLICIES

## Grading Scale: PreK

PreK students will receive a skills assessment every quarter.

Grades 2-8		Grades K-1 and Special Classes	
Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Letter Grade	Grading Scale
A	93-100	O	Outstanding
B	86-92	S	Satisfactory
C	77-85	N	Needs Improvement
D	70-76	U	Unsatisfactory
F	Below 70		

Students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> will receive a letter grade in math, language arts, science, social studies, and religion. Spanish, art, physical education, music, and technology will be graded with O/S/N/U.

Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> will receive a letter grade in math, language arts, science, social studies, religion, and Spanish. Special subjects including physical education, music, and art will be graded with O/S/N/U.

No score on a test or quiz below 50 will be recorded in the gradebook; the actual grade will be noted in the comments.

## Report Cards

Report cards are one method of communicating a student's academic progress within the classroom setting. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the teacher involved to obtain clarification. Report cards are electronically generated at the end of each grading period. The academic year is composed of four nine-week grading periods. Grades are posted weekly in Renweb.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved in their child's education and to establish communication with their child's teachers. One conference will be required by parents/guardians after the first nine weeks. Furthermore, your child's teacher will request conferences as needed, throughout the school year. Conference requests may be made by parents/guardians via email or a note to the teacher sent with their child. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian within 24 hours to set a meeting time.

## Standardized Testing

Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, OLPH will no longer administer the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. i-Ready will now be our standardized testing program.

i-Ready is an online program for reading and mathematics that is administered three times per year (beginning, middle, and end) in grades K-8. Results help teachers determine student needs, personalize their learning, and monitor progress throughout the school year.

The i-Ready Diagnostic is an adaptive assessment that adjusts its questions to suit each student's needs. Each item a student sees is individualized based on their answer to the previous question. For example, a series of correct answers will result in slightly harder questions, while a series of incorrect answers will yield slightly easier questions. The purpose of this is not to give students a score or grade, but instead to determine how best to support student learning.

### **Student Records**

OLPH 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 by fax or through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents/guardians to transport to the new school. Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the school office. No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

### **Academic Achievements and Awards**

The A Honor Roll is an acknowledgement of outstanding academic achievement when students earn A's in all subject areas and all O's or S's in non-academic subjects. Students in grades 2-8 are eligible.

The A/B Honor Roll is an acknowledgment of noteworthy academic achievement when students earn As and B's in all subject areas and all O's or S's in non-academic subjects. Students in grades 2-8 are eligible.

### **Elementary Retention and Promotion**

Advancement to the next grade at OLPH 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. If a student's performance or emotional maturity indicates that they are not ready for the next grade level, careful consideration will be given to promotion.

### **Middle School Remediation and Retention**

Failure of a core subject may result in OLPH summer school remediation. Remediation courses and assignments will be determined by the administration. Parents will be notified of the plan one week after final reports cards are issued.

### **Homework**

Homework is assigned to reinforce concepts and curriculum taught in class. It is also valuable for learning self-discipline, personal responsibility, and time management. It reinforces study habits. Accomplishment requires work, practice, and consistency. Parents/guardians should avoid frustration and teach their children the value of homework. They should give assistance, but keep in mind that homework is the student's opportunity to learn. Parents/guardians can reinforce homework responsibility by reviewing the assignment. 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. However, if you feel your child is taking longer than expected, please contact the teacher. Students must gather all materials needed for homework before

dismissal—at which time classrooms are closed. Parents and students may not enter classrooms without a teacher or administrator.

### Missed Work

Students who are absent have two days for each day of absence to make up missed assignments. When a student is absent due to illness, a parent may call the school office **before 10:00 a.m.** to arrange for missed assignments. Missed assignments may be picked up at the school office **between 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.** the day of the first absence. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school. 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.

If missed work is not picked up by a parent/guardian, elementary teachers will provide the student with the missed assignments, etc. Parents/guardians should check the student planner and take-home folder and make sure their child completes any missing work. In middle school, missed assignments are the student's responsibility.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Expectations

Each student has the right to learn in a caring and safe environment that is conducive to their growth and fulfillment academically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Students are expected to always support and participate in the learning environment, and disruption of the learning process is unacceptable. Our discipline policy encourages personal growth because students are responsible for their choices and should understand the consequences.

### Harassment

Harassment in North Carolina is defined as: “knowing conduct, including written or printed communication or transmission, telephone, cellular, or other wireless telephonic communication, facsimile transmission, pager messages or transmissions, answering machine or voice mail messages or transmissions, and electronic mail messages or other computerized or electronic transmissions directed at a specific person that torments, terrorizes, or terrifies that person and that serves no legitimate purpose.” Any student who harasses and/or uses a gender, racial, or ethnic slur towards an adult or another student may be suspended from school. A second incident will result in a parent/guardian conference to determine whether the student will be allowed to continue at OLPH.

**In a case where an alleged sexual assault, harassment, or behavior (including vulgarity or obscene gestures) has been reported, the administration will be contacted immediately to intervene.**

Any student who physically or verbally threatens an adult or student will be referred to the administration and will result in suspension or expulsion. Fighting includes intentionally hitting, elbowing, shoving, scratching, biting, blocking passage of, or throwing objects at another person with intent to do harm. It also includes acting or making statements that would cause others to fight. A second incident will result in a parent/guardian conference to determine whether the student will be allowed to continue at OLPH.

## **Bullying/Cyberbullying**

Bullying is defined as when a student or group of students targets an individual repeatedly over time using physical or psychological aggression. When bullying situations arise, the administration and teacher(s) will conference with all involved students (including bully and victim), determine the appropriate consequences warranted, and conduct follow-up. A second confirmed bullying incident by the administration may result in a parent/guardian conference to determine whether the student who bullied will be allowed to continue at OLPH. Administration reserves the right to modify this policy as needed.

## **Disrespect**

Any student who demonstrates an attitude of severe disrespect towards an administrator, teacher, staff member, fellow student, or a parent/guardian volunteer will be referred to the administration. A second incident may result in out-of-school suspension. A third incident will result in a parent/guardian conference in which it will be determined whether the student will be allowed to continue at OLPH.

## **Illegal and Harmful Objects**

Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs will not be carried or used at any time. Matches, fireworks, knives, guns, slingshots, chemicals, and objectionable materials or objects are not to be brought to the school at any time.

## **Social Media**

If the content of a student's online activities includes defamatory comments regarding the school, faculty, other students, or the parish, parents/guardians will be contacted. It could lead to suspension and/or expulsion upon the discretion of the administration with consultation from the pastor.

## **Cell Phones**

Students are allowed to bring cell phones to school, but they must be stored in the school office during the day. Students are to check in their cell phones at the school office in the morning before reporting to class and retrieve their phones at the end of the school day. Students should retrieve it at the end of the school day. If a student is caught with a phone during the school day, it will be confiscated and turned in to the office where parents/guardians may retrieve it.

## **Suspension**

Suspension is a severe disciplinary procedure that will be imposed after serious disregard for school or classroom policies. The time out of school will be determined by the administration based on the severity, duration, and frequency of the inappropriate action. Students who receive either in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension (OOSS) will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities and/or sports events during the time of their suspension. In addition, students who receive OOSS will also not be allowed on campus during their suspension.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion is most serious and will be invoked to the extent possible after all other means of discipline have proven ineffectual, and a student's conduct is a definite hindrance to the welfare and progress of the school community. There may be situations which demand immediate removal of a student from school.

If the serious nature of the situation warrants it (e.g., drugs, alcohol, vandalism, possession of a weapon or anything that looks like or could be used as a weapon), expulsion may be invoked for a first offense.

### **Discipline Plan for Lower School (K-4)**

To encourage students to behave appropriately and productively, teachers and staff will reinforce positive behaviors. When students disrupt the learning environment or otherwise stray from good conduct, the following plan will be implemented.

#### **Tier 1: Classroom and School Procedures:**

Each classroom will develop and maintain a plan for classroom management consisting of:

- Clear classroom expectations/procedures and rules
- Positive behavior reinforced, rewards system in place.
- A partner classroom for major episode cooling off (send parent/guardian communication)
- System of parent/guardian communication and documentation for discipline

Most daily disciplinary issues should be handled locally in the classroom according to the classroom discipline plan.

#### **Tier 2: Office Referral**

Behaviors of the following will result in office referral and administration communication home:

- Physically aggressive action with the intent to harm or intimidate others
- Age-inappropriate language that is considered lewd, vulgar, crass, or offensive within our school environment
- Disobedience of school staff

#### **Tier 3: Sent Home**

Behaviors of the following will result in the student being sent home for the day, and depending on the severity of the behavior, suspended for multiple days, or expelled from school.

- Physically aggressive action with the intent to harm or intimidate others (second instance)
- Behavior that makes peers feel unsafe in the school environment
- Continued disobedience of school staff; a general refusal to comply with instructions

#### **Tier 4: Patterns of Behavior**

Repeated behaviors from either Tier 2 or Tier 3 will result in:

- Parent/guardian meeting with administration
- Behavior plan created.
- Failure to change repeated pattern of behavior after steps outlined above may result in future parent/guardian meeting with administration and potential removal from the school.

**Discipline Plan for Middle School: see Code of Conduct distributed by middle school teachers.**

## **Elastic Clause Concerning Conduct**

Since it is impossible to foresee all problems that can arise, this clause empowers the administration to take disciplinary actions for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of OLPH Catholic School, even if not specified in the discipline issues addressed herein.

## **STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Immunizations**

All students attending OLPH must be in compliance with North Carolina state law and regulations regarding immunizations (see <http://www.immunize.nc.gov/schools/schools.htm>) or submit valid medical or religious exemption documentation.

### **Medication**

All students requiring prescription or over-the-counter medication of any kind during school hours are to turn in the medicines to the school office in their original containers. The medicine should be accompanied by a Student Medication Form, signed by a physician, indicating the patient's name, specific dosing amounts and times, side effects, and emergency procedures (if any). Parents/caregivers should sign off on the form that the school is authorized to follow the instructions as outlined in the doctor's note. Over-the-counter medications will not be dispensed by the front office without a signed Medication Form. Medication Forms must be resubmitted each year. Should a medication, such as an inhaler or EpiPen, need to be kept with the student at all times (versus in the front office only), special authorization from a doctor will be needed. The school will log the details each time any type of medication is administered.

### **Child Abuse Laws**

OLPH abides by the child abuse laws of the State of North Carolina. Under the law, all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect must be reported to Child Protective Services and the Rocky Mount Police Department. For information on child abuse and neglect reporting procedures, visit the following North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services website: [www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/cps/about.html](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/cps/about.html)

### **Responsibility to Report**

Any adult in the OLPH community who suspects that a child has been hurt or abused by any school or church personnel has a responsibility to report the incident immediately and directly to the administration. All allegations of abuse should be made in writing and will be reported to civil authorities. In addition, the bishop has established an office to investigate allegations openly, and the principal and pastor will follow the related guidelines. Moreover, if an individual has been the victim of sexual or physical abuse by church personnel, this office provides support and counseling.

### **Illness**

Keeping children home when they are not feeling well is good for both the child and the community. If a student has been out of school due to illness, OLPH requires following these guidelines:

- A child should be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- A child should be free from vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- A child should not return to school until they have been able to eat and drink.



- A child being treated with antibiotics for a contagious illness should be on medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

### Head Lice Policy

At any time during the school year, school staff may inspect any student for head lice. Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. Staff will notify families of the inspection and results the same day. Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice. Both the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) advocate that “no-nit” policies should be discontinued. “No-nit” policies that require a child to be free of nits before they can return to schools should be discontinued for the following reasons:

- Many nits are more than ¼ inch from the scalp. Such nits are usually not viable and very unlikely to hatch to become crawling lice, or may in fact be empty shells, also known as casings.
- Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people.
- The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the risks associated with head lice.
- Misdiagnosis of nits is very common during nit checks conducted by nonmedical personnel.

### Family Custodial Situations

In cases of custody arrangements that may require special attention to authorized transport, communications needs, or other issues should be conveyed to school administration and the homeroom teacher. A copy of the court decree bearing the case number, pages referring to child custody as it relates to school, and the page bearing the judge’s signature are to be submitted for the child’s confidential file.

## HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

### Inclement Weather

We want every member of the OLPH community—students, teachers, and staff—to arrive at school safely. Since school closings and delays affect work schedules and childcare, school staff begins monitoring the weather at the first predictions of snow and ice. We regularly check the local and national weather reports.

Official school-wide emergency communications are sent using an electronic phone system. In case of inclement weather, announcements will be sent via email and text messages. Announcements will be posted on our website and usually on WRAL.

### Forms of Communication

To ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, parents are expected to check their email regularly. Additionally, OLPH utilizes blue folders/take-home folders each Wednesday, which holds correspondence from the school including student work, letters, calendars, order forms, announcements, etc. Please check your child’s folder each Wednesday and return to school on Thursday.

OLPH also maintains a website that is updated regularly with communications from the administration. Please make sure you check the website regularly to avoid missing essential information.

### **School Telephone**

To maintain a positive learning environment, interruptions should be kept to a minimum. Therefore, parents/guardians should not call asking to speak with or leave a message for a child at school. The school secretary will only seek out students in real-time to relay urgent messages. Similarly, teachers are not available for unscheduled phone conversations during the school day. Teacher conferences may be requested by e-mail. Because teachers focus on instruction during the day, please realize that they might not retrieve messages until several hours or even the next day after they are sent. The school office telephone is not for general student use. Students should only request permission to use a school telephone for emergencies or other special circumstances. Students are expected to come to school prepared such that calls for homework, lunch, carpooling arrangements, and so on should be unnecessary.

### **HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The Home and School Association (HSA) is the organization for parents in Catholic schools. The HSA supports the goals of the school by helping with fundraising, recruiting volunteers, and organizing community events. The HSA Board consists of a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. All are encouraged to attend HSA meetings.

### **ROLE OF OLPH ADULTS**

OLPH teachers and staff are privileged to be partners in education and faith formation with parents and guardians. Each of these adults within the OLPH community has special responsibilities as role models whose actions are consistent with Christian values. Our goal is to create and maintain a positive, cooperative atmosphere that focuses on students and supports students' growth. We seek to identify, understand, and address issues and problems as they arise. The OLPH Code of Conduct applies to all OLPH School community members and is essential to fulfilling our mission. Code of Conduct: OLPH Catholic School adults should be committed to the spiritual development and education of all members of our faith community. Thus, OLPH Catholic School adults will:

- Be cooperative and committed to school goals.
- Be respectful and self-disciplined.
- Separate personal desires and conveniences from what is in the best interest of all within the school community.
- Respect the diversity of people and opinions within our community.
- All interactions (phone calls, meetings, electronic communication – i.e., social media, emails, text messages) should be respectful, positive, productive, and mission aligned.
- If continued negative interactions occur and communication is no longer positive or productive, school administration may ask the parent and student to succeed elsewhere.

### **Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution Process**

If issues and/or conflicts arise, all members of the community should treat one another with compassion and seek a reasoned approach to addressing the issue and reaching a peaceful resolution. If you have a question or concern or are involved in a conflict, please follow these guidelines:

- (1) Focus on the issues. Attack the problem, not the person.

- (2) Talk directly to the person or people with whom you have a concern. For example, if you have a concern about classroom life, talk first with your child's teacher. If you have a question about the Home and School Association, talk to an HSA board member.
- (3) If you want help after your initial communication with the person involved, contact the principal.
- (4) Avoid involving other members of the community that are not involved with the issue at hand. A
- (5) If needed, request a meeting with the pastor. If after this last step, the parties involved cannot reach an agreement, the decisions of the pastor and principal will bind them.

## Visitors

For safety reasons, visitors must report to the office and sign in. Visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a visitor sticker that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Parents/guardians 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.

## Volunteers

A volunteer commitment is an expected part of the partnership of school and parent. Not only does volunteering at school send your child the message that you value education, but it also allows you to keep informed about school matters and keep tuition costs low. All OLPH families are expected to perform 15 hours of volunteer help or to pay \$150.00 in lieu of volunteering. Volunteers who work around or with students must have a background check and Safe Environment Training. More information can be found on Safe Environment Training [here](#). To register for a training session, click [here](#).

## UNIFORM POLICY

The OLPH Catholic School uniform was established to identify us as a community and to focus our attention on the inner qualities of students. Uniforms are mandatory for all students.

OLPH maintains a uniform closet with gently used uniforms that our school families are welcome to have at no cost, but remember, we may not have all the items you need. Please take whatever you need but be considerate of others' needs as well. For example, items such as plaid jumpers and skirts are usually in short supply, so each student may only take one from the uniform closet.

## Expectations and Consequences

Depending on the severity of the infraction, parents/guardians may be called immediately. Otherwise, when a student is out of uniform the following consequences will occur:

- First offense: Parents/guardians will be notified through Renweb.
- Second offense: Parent will be called.
- Third offense: Parent will be called to bring the correct uniform.
- Repeat offenses: Resolution of repeat offenses will be at the discretion of the administration.

Middle school students will also receive demerits for being out of uniform. (See Middle School Code of Conduct.)

Any middle school student out of uniform on PE days will not be allowed to participate.

Uniform Guidelines	Girls	Boys
Bottoms (Non-PE Days)	<p><u>Elementary (PK-5)</u>: Navy shorts, skorts, pants, or plaid skirt (no knit or jeggings)</p> <p><u>Middle School (6-8)</u>: Khaki shorts, pants or skorts, or plaid skirt. (no knit or jeggings)</p> <p>Skirts and shorts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee.</p> <p>No capris, skinny-leg, cargo pockets, elastic-bottom pants, or jean-style pockets.</p> <p>White, navy, or black leggings or tights (with no decorations, prints, or stripes) may be worn under skirts or jumpers.</p>	<p><u>Elementary (PK-5)</u>: Navy pants or shorts (no knit or jeggings)</p> <p><u>Middle School (6-8)</u>: Khaki pants or shorts with brown or black belt</p> <p>Shorts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee.</p> <p>No skinny-leg, cargo pockets, elastic-bottom, or jean-style pockets.</p>
Tops (Non-PE Days)	<p><u>Elementary (PK-5)</u>: White knit polo shirt (long or short-sleeved) with school logo</p> <p><u>Middle School (6-8)</u>: White or navy knit polo shirt (long or short-sleeved) with school logo</p> <p>Navy or white mock turtleneck can be worn under knit shirt.</p>	<p><u>Middle School (6-8)</u>: White knit polo shirt (long or short-sleeved) with school logo</p> <p><u>Middle School (6-8)</u>: White or navy knit polo shirt (long or short-sleeved) with school logo</p> <p>Navy or white mock turtleneck can be worn under knit shirt.</p>
Mass Uniform (Friday and Holy Days of Obligation)	<p><u>Elementary (PK-5)</u>: Plaid jumper with white Peter Pan-collar shirt or plaid skirt with white knit polo with school logo</p> <p><u>Middle School (6-8)</u>: Plaid skirt with white or navy knit polo with school logo</p>	<p><u>Grades PK-2</u>: Navy pants or shorts with white knit polo with school logo</p> <p><u>Grades 3-5</u>: Navy pants (no shorts) with white knit polo with school logo</p> <p><u>Grades 6-8</u>: Khaki pants (no shorts) with white or navy knit polo with school logo; black or brown belt</p>

PE Uniforms	<p>Plain gray (short or long-sleeved) t-shirt with OLPH logo; no logos or brand names visible OR gray OLPH Saints t-shirt OR gray Praying in School t-shirt OR Field Day t-shirt</p> <p>Plain navy cotton or nylon shorts; no logos or brand names visible. Shorts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee.</p> <p>Plain navy cotton sweatpants in colder weather; no logos or brand names</p> <p>Tennis shoes</p>
Socks	<p>Solid white, black, navy, or gray</p> <p><u>Not allowed:</u> prints, decorations, stripes, or brand logos</p>
Shoes	<p>Tennis shoes of any color are permitted if they are safe for the playground.</p> <p>Dress shoes: white, black, brown, gray, or navy (no more than one inch heel)</p> <p>Deck shoes: white, black, brown, gray, or navy</p> <p><u>Not allowed:</u> light-up or roller shoes, open-toed, open-heel, boots, sandals, flip-flops, Crocs, clogs, or mules</p>
Outerwear	<p>Only cardigans, pullover sweatshirts/hoodies, and zippered hoodies with the school logo are allowed in the classroom.</p> <p>Outerwear must be free from visible brand names and brand logos such as North Face, Nike swish, etc.</p> <p>The hood of a hoodie or hooded jacket may never be worn on the head when inside any school building.</p>
Hair	<p>Boys' hair should not extend beyond the collar and should not cover the eyes.</p> <p><u>Not allowed:</u> mohawks, mullets, or any other distracting hairstyles, including artificial hair color</p> <p>All hair accessories, including hair ties should be navy, black, white, red, school plaid, gray, or khaki. Any hair accessories out of compliance will be taken out and sent home.</p> <p><u>Not allowed:</u> animal ear headbands</p>

<p>Jewelry, Accessories, Perfumes and Colognes</p>	<p>Pierced ears (girls only): Single small silver or gold post, religious earrings, or very small silver or gold hoops are allowed. Dangling earrings or multiple piercings are not allowed.</p> <p>Necklaces: Crucifix/cross, religious medals, or scapulars only</p> <p>Hats, caps, and scarves are only allowed outside.</p> <p><u>Not allowed:</u> rings, bracelets, makeup, nail polish, perfumes, or colognes</p>
<p>Other Supplies and Accessories</p>	<p>School supplies and/or accessories (key chains on bookbags, etc.) may not support any political affiliation or organization not consistent with Catholic teachings.</p>
<p>Dress-Down Days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clothing must be modest and appropriate for school.</li> <li>• Clothing must be in good condition.</li> <li>• Neckline must be modest and appropriate for school.</li> <li>• No spaghetti straps and tank tops are to be worn to school.</li> <li>• Skirts and shorts must not be shorter than three inches above the knee.</li> <li>• Nice jeans (not too tight, baggy, too long or hip huggers [low rider] pants). Tight spandex, Lycra stretch pants, or leather/pleather pants are not appropriate for school.</li> <li>• Logos depicting violence, rock groups, tobacco, alcohol, monsters, etc. or any political statements or organization not consistent with Catholic teachings are not acceptable.</li> <li>• Snug fitting shoes are to be worn at school (NO flip-flops, Crocs, clogs, dress boots, wedge sole, or high heels).</li> <li>• No pajama-type clothing.</li> </ul>

**RIGHT TO AMEND**

OLPH Catholic School reserves the right to amend this handbook. Changes made during the 2023-2024 school year will be noted in red type online and will be mentioned in the principal’s newsletter.

It is expected that all families attending OLPH Catholic School comply with all guidelines and requirements herein. The administration, after consultation with the superintendent, reserves the right to dismiss a family that does not respect the guidelines and requirements of the school.

**COVID HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURE**

**Learning Environment**

I acknowledge and agree that changing circumstances occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate changes in the school’s delivery of instruction and other programming. These changes may include, but are not limited to, the substantial reduction or elimination of on-site instruction; the provision of distance/remote instruction to some or all students; the reduction, modification or elimination of athletics and other extracurricular activities; and the modification of the academic year calendar,

including the dates, length, and sequence of academic breaks. By signing this addendum, I acknowledge and agree that:

- The school retains the right to implement any such changes, whether prior to and/or during the academic year, in its sole discretion
- No adjustments can be made regarding students attending virtual/in-person outside of the school's policies.
- No adjustment will be made to the current school year's tuition charges in response to such changes.

### **Health and Safety Protocols**

I understand and agree that if my child returns to campus, he/she will be required to comply with the school's health and safety protocols to limit the spread of COVID-19 and that failure to comply with such protocols may result in the immediate removal of my child from campus.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge and agree that OLPH School cannot guarantee a COVID-19 free environment, and that, while school will continue to follow the guidance of NC DHHS to mitigate the likelihood of transmission, there is a risk that my child may contract COVID-19 if and when my child returns to the physical campus or at any time during my child's presence on campus. By consenting to my child's presence on the school campus, I acknowledge and accept the risk on behalf of my child. OLPH will abide by COVID-19 protocols as determined by the State of North Carolina and the Diocese of Raleigh throughout the year. Guidance may change at any time, and we will keep the school community informed of changes as they occur.

### **HANDBOOK COMPLIANCE**

It is expected that all families with children attending OLPH Catholic School will comply with all guidelines and school requirements set forth by the administration in the Community Handbook. Our handbook is available on the school website: [www.olphrm.com](http://www.olphrm.com) . Printed copies are available upon request. Parents/guardians should review the contents of the handbook with their student(s) prior to the first day of school.