

MATERNITY BVM

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019

Maternity B.V.M. Catholic School

Philadelphia, PA 19115

School Phone: 215-673-0235 website: www.maternitybvm.net

Advancement Director: 215-908-3329

Pre-K 3: 215-676-3420

Pre-K 4: 215-673-1422

Rectory: 215-673-8127

CARES: 215-313-4407

School Hours

Cafeteria Doors open at 7:00 AM

School Begins at 8:00 AM

Dismissal begins 2:50 PM

CARES 3:00 PM -5:45 PM

School office hours 7:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to our school! My name is Mary Zawisza and I have had the privilege of being the principal at Maternity B.V.M. School for the past ten years. Our school is dedicated to creating a safe learning environment where students explore, question, analyze and learn together. It is our goal that our students become kind, caring and respectful individuals, and share their knowledge with the world.

Maternity B.V.M. School possesses an accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools. We pride ourselves on the quality of education provided to our students, as well as the low cost of tuition. As a parent who put two children through Catholic schools, I know all too well, the sacrifices that parents make to send their children to a Catholic School. We, too, work hard to make this education affordable. Our tuition is one of the lowest in the city, yet we are ranked as one of the top 10 schools in the City of Philadelphia!

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of Maternity B.V.M. School for the 2018-2019 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of Maternity B.V.M. School during the 2018-2019 school year.

The faculty and staff of Maternity B.V.M. School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,

Mary Zawisza
Principal



Maternity B.V.M. Mission

Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School provides students with the tools needed to become successful citizens in the global community. Keeping Mary as our model, we encourage students to say “Yes” to God. Our vision is to **Be** the Change, **View** the Goodness and **Make** a Difference.

Maternity B.V.M. History

Maternity B.V.M. School began in 1948 on the rectory porch. The Sisters of Mercy, in particular, Sister Rita Marie and Sister Anne Francis, saw a need in the fast growing area called Bustleton. The school grew rapidly and soon there was a need for expansion. Within one year, the foundation for a school building was laid. On May 5, 1949, the Most Reverend J. Carroll McCormick dedicated the one-level school. Over the years, the school continued to grow and more classrooms were added.

The addition of the Parish Hall, Cafeteria (the one-time Church), Annex and North Building were welcome additions to the sprawling campus. The main building contains 17 classrooms that house Kindergarten to Fifth Grade, along with rooms for Remediation and Counseling services. The Annex is home to the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Grade classrooms, our beautiful Science Lab and an after school CARES Room. The large Parish Hall is the perfect place for Physical Education classes, plays, concerts and meetings. The North Building is where you will find our Library, Music and Spanish Rooms and our iMac Computer Lab. We are quite proud of the many technological improvements made throughout the buildings.

Mass Attendance

All Catholic parents, in choosing to send their children to our parish school, are also accepting the serious responsibility to train their children in the ways of the Catholic Faith. Among the many duties that this entails, one of the most serious is their attendance at Holy Mass, as a family, on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. A parent’s most important responsibility is to ensure eternal happiness for their child. Faithful recognition of the Precepts of the Church and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament are just two important ways parents can be role models for their children. All parents should strive to give their children a sound faith-filled foundation, including the practices of their faith. Any inquiries about the Catholic Faith can be made to the Pastor, Father Quinter or the Director of Religious Education, Sister Mary Beth.

Admission Policy

Maternity B.V.M. School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. The school does not discriminate in the administration of its educational policies, its admission policies or any school-administered program.

Grades Pre-K 3 to 8

1. Children entering Pre-kindergarten 3 must be three years of age on or before September 1st.
2. Children entering Pre-kindergarten 4 must be four years of age on or before September 1st.
3. Children entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1st.
4. Children entering First Grade must be six year of age on or before September 1st.
5. Children entering Grades second to, Eight are received on a probationary basis until the end of the first trimester, then they may be formally accepted if condition warrant acceptance.
6. Non-Catholic children are admitted to Maternity B.V.M. School as space becomes available.
7. These students are required to take classes in all academic area, including Religion, and are required to attend all liturgical celebrations.
8. Maternity B.V.M. School takes pride in our faith and our freedom; with that in mind, all students are expected to participate in Daily Prayers and the Pledge of Allegiance.

9. Parents of all new students for Grades K to 8 will meet with the principal at the time of registration for a pre-administration interview and to set up a time to take the Admissions Screening.

Requirements for Admission

The following documents and records must be presented at the time of registration:

1. Birth Certificate
2. Baptismal certificate if baptized in a parish other than Maternity B.V.M.
3. Immunization records from the doctor
4. A copy of the child's most recent report card from the school in which the child is currently enrolled and a copy of the Final Report Card **MUST** be handed in prior to the start of school.
5. Any other pertinent information that may relate to the child's achievement in a school setting (e.g. psychological, physical, learning disability testing).
6. Whenever there is a family situation involving either divorce or separation, a copy of the custody court order **must** be presented for the office file. (see Buckley Amendment below)
7. The published nonrefundable registration fee and tuition deposit per child.

PLEASE NOTE: No registration will be taken if any of the above documents and records are not presented at the time of registration.

Buckley Amendment

The School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address.

Accident/Illness

Parents will be notified in the event of sudden illness or accidents of a serious nature. IT IS OF ABSOLUTE IMPORTANCE THAT THE OFFICE AND THE HOMEROOM TEACHER HAVE AN UP-TO-DATE LIST OF EMERGENCY CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS.

Allergy Policy

The School recognizes that an allergy is an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with allergies. This school encourages children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff and pupils. Teachers and new staff are also made aware of the policy. All staff who come into contact with children with allergies are provided with training on allergies from the school nurse who has had specialized training. Training is updated as needed.

Food Allergy Policy

- The school recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies.
- In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, the school will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian, and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life threatening allergy.

- The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favorable to children with asthma or allergies. As much as possible, the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma.
- The School makes no claim to be a peanut-free school.

Attendance

If your child is to progress favorably in school, he/she should be in good health and be able to attend school daily. Good sense dictates that it is most inappropriate for your child to come to school when he/she is ill. Your child needs to remain at home during illness so recovery will be quick and other students are not exposed to the illness. We ask you to protect your child and our students by keeping your child at home during the time of his/ her illness.

Absence

- On the morning of your child's absence and on each subsequent day of absence, call the school office at **215-673-0235 and press #2 between 7:30 AM and 8:30 AM** to report absence and whether or not someone will be picking up any assigned work. If you have registered your child for CARES Program, please be sure to mention this and a message will be forwarded to the staff members.
- If you inform us of your intention to pick up your child's homework or missed class work, it will be available to you **in the Main Office between 2 PM and 3 PM**
- On the day of your child's return to class after an illness or other absence, he/she must present from the parent/guardian to his/her homeroom teacher a **written absence note** stating the length of the absence and the reason for the absence. **If a student has been absent due to illness on three or more consecutive days, a doctor's certificate must also be presented with parental note.**

Books

- Are to have clean paper covers at all time. Covers may not have drawing scribbling, or inappropriate writing on them. **Contact paper may not be used to cover textbooks.**
 - Are to be carried to and from school in a book bag.
 - May not have any pencil or ink marks in them.
 - In the event of lost, stolen or damaged book, the books are numbered and the teacher keeps a list of students names that correlate to the number in order to identify the responsible party.
 - Must be returned to school in June.
1. **Workbooks and copybooks**
 - Are to be covered in clear contact paper.
 - Must be kept neat, legible, in good condition and free from all unnecessary writing.
 - Must be carried to and from school in book bag.
 - All workbooks, except the Religion Book, must be returned to school in June.
 2. **Lost or damaged books**
 - Students are responsible for all books and materials assigned to them.
 - Books and/or materials lost or damaged by the students are to be replaced by the student responsible:
Cost for textbooks: publisher cost Workbooks: \$10.00 per book

Bullying and Cyberbullying

- Bullying is never tolerated in any form (physical, verbal, cyber, etc.). The school reserves the right to dismiss any student who takes part in any form of bullying. Maternity B.V.M. School strives to protect the rights of all faculty and students and works hard to build an atmosphere of safety and security.
- **Off-Campus Conduct:** The administration of the school reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off campus behavior includes, but is not limited to cyber-bullying.

Calendar

A tentative yearly calendar is sent home at the beginning of each year. An additional monthly calendar is sent home to note dates and times of events for each month. The school calendar can also be viewed on the school's website www.maternitybvm.net or on Option C as an alternative to sending home a paper copy.

Car Riders

- All cars riders are dismissed from the school parking lot.
- We request that you not have your child picked up at alternate spots on Welsh Road as we have no way of knowing if they are picked up by you. **ALWAYS KEEP YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY FIRST.**
- **No parent should leave the parking lot until all children have entered cars and the school staff directs you out.**
- Parking is also prohibited in the lot behind Sts. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church and Galzerano Funeral Home. **Everyone must park in the School parking lot**

CARES

Maternity B.V.M. offers an after school program (Children Are Receiving Extended Services). Information is available in the school office or the school website regarding registration and fees for this program.

Catapult Counseling

A certified counselor serves the needs of students and parents through class and individual consultation.

Changes in address, e-mail, and/or telephone

It is necessary for parents/guardians to notify the homeroom teacher and the school office concerning any change in address and or telephone number, whether it is a change at home or place employment. This should be done as soon as changes are made. This is very important both in case of emergency and in keeping our records up-to-date. If you wish to receive the phone call reminders and e-mails, you must provide the principal with the correct phone numbers and e-mail addresses, in order for the Phone Messaging System to work correctly. If you are not receiving phone messages, please contact your child's homeroom teacher to confirm the accuracy of the information we have on file.

Communications

Effective communication is the single most important factor that assures a positive relationship between the home and the school. Several forms of communication exist at our school to keep parents informed of policies, activities, upcoming events, and student progress.

Regular forms of communication include:

- School Handbook
- Monthly calendar of events
- The Principals Newsletter –The Buzz
- Communications Folder
- Teachers Web-sites
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Option C
- School Website
- School Facebook Page
- Parish Bulletin
- Home & School Association Newsletters and Facebook page

Communications Folder

Each week the communication folders are sent home containing tests from the previous week and the child's conduct folder. Each child receives a folder. Information from the office is sent home in the folder with the youngest child. Parents are asked to sign the test and the conduct chart of each child and return it the next day. These folders will go home every Wednesday and should be returned on Thursday.

Conferences

Conferences between teachers and parents are necessary in the educative process. The parents of each student will meet with their teacher on a scheduled date for report card conferences. Additional conferences may be held upon the request of either the parent or the teacher. This can be done by scheduling an appointment either by note, e-mail or a phone call to the teacher these conferences must be either before or after school.

The following communications policy is to be maintained:

1. The teacher is the contact.
2. The principal is the second contact.
3. The pastor is third to be contact, only if a resolution has not been made.

Please follow this chain of command. You must first contact the classroom teacher by note, email or phone call. **Parents must make an appointment to speak with the teacher and should never assume they can enter a classroom during the instructional day without an appointment. The flow of education must not be interrupted.**

CORA

Families today are facing problems in a complex world, and CORA Services is responding to an increased demand for our services. While CORA Services provide new and innovative programs to meet the changing needs of the Philadelphia area, the focus on prevention and intervention remains the same.

For schools, CORA Services provide educational support, guidance counseling, occupational therapy, speech services and psychological evaluations. For the community, CORA Services offer individual and family counseling, after school and summer programs, and pre-school education. These services are available to our school through government funding.

Crisis Plan

Maternity B.V.M. has two emergency plans in place, one for evacuation and the other for lock down.

- The first, Crisis Management Plan is activated when, for any reason, the school needs to be evacuated. The plan **calls for us to walk the students to the Upper Church at 9200 Old Bustleton Avenue, where parents /guardians may come to pick up their child(ren). In case of emergency where evacuation is necessary,**
- **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL OR THE RECTORY OR THE CHURCH.** Our plan is to leave the building immediately and meet parents/guardians at the Church. In this type of emergency evacuation, there will not be time or personnel to answer phone calls; instead, go immediately to the Church and follow the directions provided.
- The second, Shelter in Place Plan, is activated when the school is to be locked down.
- This will happen if our school is called by the police, or fire department or the Office of Catholic Education and instructed to do so.
- NO ONE IN, NO ONE OUT is imperative. The police department will be onsite to enforce this regulation.
- This plan is not meant to last more than three hours, at which time the Police Department will have buses on site to remove our students to a safe location which would be announced through the media and the emergency alert system to the community at large.
- This means that parents must go to the designated evacuation site to pick up their children.

- The parent Messaging System will be used as emergency contact. Parents MUST follow the directions given in these messages and not come to the school!
- **Fire/Shelter in Place:** The Philadelphia Fire Department, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania conduct fire drills on a periodic basis as directed. Directions are posted in each classroom for the proper procedure to exit the building. The children must exit quickly and in silence for the safety of all concerned. In addition, each school is to practice a shelter-in-place drill annually.

Curriculum

Maternity B.V.M. School offers 11 years of continuous academic development. Our school has been fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Maternity B.V.M. School follows the Guidelines and Common Core State Standards in Math and ELA as directed by the Office of Catholic Education of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. NOTE: the entire curriculum is posted on Archdiocese Website. <http://www.aop Catholicschools.org/elementary-schools/curriculum/> Maternity B.V.M. School offers students opportunities for growth in the following major subjects: Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Technology, Spanish, Music, and Physical Education.

Discipline

Clear and concise rules are essential for effective management in any situation. It is a necessary reflection of the Catholic School Philosophy. This philosophy attempts to develop children who are fully committed to the observance of just rules and regulations that will assist them in responding to the responsibilities and obligation they have to themselves and to others.

The code of conduct of Maternity B.V.M. School has several objectives:

- The first is the Safety and well being of the entire school community.
- Secondly, to form students who are mature, responsible, self-disciplined individuals who live the Gospel message of Christ.
- The third objective is that the school attempts to create an environment conducive to learning.
- If a student violates the code of conduct, they must realize that there will be consequences for his/her action. As individuals gifted by God's grace, they must realize their choices are their own responsibility. If they make poor choices, they must accept the consequences.
- In order to accomplish this goal, a demerit system is in place.
- Minor Discipline Offenses included but not limited to those listed on the Demerit Form. This form is sent home on Wednesday afternoon in the Communication Folder.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to check this on a weekly basis. If **two** demerits are issued a warning phone call should be made by the homeroom teacher, because when a **third** demerit is issued, a detention is given.
- **Whether or not the demerit is signed, once it is given, it is a matter of record and will be counted, unless the teacher whose signature is on it officially takes it away.**
- **Detention will be scheduled twice a month on a day of the week agreed upon by faculty. Detentions are served from 3 to 4 PM. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to see that the student gets home safely after the detention is served.**

Early Dismissal of Student per Parent Request

Appointments during the school day are **discouraged**. If an early dismissal is required, a written note must be sent in to the teacher prior to the pick-up time. The note must include the FULL name of the student, the class, the reason for the request and the time and date of the pick-up. If someone other than the parent or guardian is picking up a child, written notification must be sent to the office prior to the pick-up. The principal or designee is responsible to ascertain the identity of the person who calls for the student. The parent/guardian must report to the office and sign their child out on the log sheet provided. It is imperative that the office knows about each

child who leaves the building during school hours. "School hours" include the lunch/recess period. **No parent may go into a classroom to pickup a child. No child can be picked up after 2:00 pm for an appointment, if you have an appointment that requires your child to miss school in the afternoon, please be sure to come for them BEFORE 2:00 pm. Any child who leaves school early, should not be considered for Perfect Attendance - missed instructional time is HIGHLY DISCOURAGED.**

Electronic Device Policy

Cellular telephones, iPods, handheld electronic games or personal music players or games of any kind that may be distracting or disruptive to the learning environment are not permitted. In a situation where a cell phone is necessary, the student must hand it in to the homeroom teacher, who either sends them to the main office or locks them in a classroom closet. No student may use a cell phone during the day. If a parent/guardian feels that it is necessary for their child to carry a phone before or after school, they must fill out a form giving the student permission to carry the phone and acknowledge that the phone may not be used on school property for any reason, including after school activities, CARES or detention. A Bring Your Device Policy may be used at the discretion of the classroom teacher for special projects. **THE USE OF CELLPHONES IN THE CAFETERIA BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL IS NOT PERMITTED.**

Field Trips

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the compatibility of the field trip with curricular goals.
3. A field trip is a privilege and not a right.
4. There are no "traditional" field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
5. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
6. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.
7. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
8. A written **official permission slip**, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission **cannot** be accepted. Permission slips are due in the office forty-eight hours after receipt of the permission slip.
9. A field trip permission slip is printed at the end of this book. This is the only format that may be used to allow a student to leave school during school hours. If your child fails to bring his/her permission slip home, you may tear out and use or copy the form provided. Call the school for information needed to complete the form. **Note:** a fax does not take the place of an original signature.
10. A **telephone call** will **not** be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
11. 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 with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
12. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.
13. All monies collected for the field trip are **non-refundable**.
14. **Cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
15. Parents who are not "official" chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. School risk management insurance company insures the "official" chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other "official" adults on the trip.
16. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.

17. All chaperones must be 25 years of age or older.

Grading

Grades are calculated based on a variety of assessments such as: tests, quizzes, projects, class participation and home and school assignments. Parents are notified if the child is in danger of failing mid-way through the trimester by sending home a Deficiency Report that must be signed and returned. All students may view their grades through the Option C.

Graduation

Any eighth grade student who fails the subject of Math or ELA in two trimesters on his/her report card or who has a failing composite average, is required to attend an Archdiocesan summer school if they wish to attend an Archdiocese High School in the Fall. If a student fails to achieve the basic academic performance necessary for graduation, that student will be excluded from the graduation ceremonies. Finally, should any student's tuition be unpaid, he or she will be excluded from participating in graduation ceremonies and any eighth-grade school closing activities. Participation in closing ceremonies is a privilege, not a right. The school reserves the right to deny a student from participating in the closing exercises if, in the view of the school, the student's academic or disciplinary record indicates that this privilege should be rescinded. The Graduation for Eighth Grade is always scheduled for the Wednesday prior to the closing of school.

NO CHILD WILL BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY END-OF-YEAR CELEBRATIONS, IF FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS ARE NOT UP-TO-DATE.

Harassment

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Health Habits

A healthy child responds better to instruction. Help your child to practice proper health habits, which are taught in school. Among these are:

- Proper sleep – a bedtime for your child should be established and effort made to be consistent with this time.
- Proper diet – your child should eat a healthy breakfast and bring a proper lunch to school, (any child who comes to school with out a lunch should report this to the lunchroom monitor)
- Proper clothing - your child should be sent to school with clothing that prepares him/her for the weather.
- Proper bathing – your child should be taught respect for his/her body by parental guidance. Cleanliness of body and clothes should be encouraged.

Health Services (Nurse)

Although a school nurse is present 2 or 3 days per week (five days in a 2-week period), she is not permitted to diagnose or treat illnesses. If a child is sick in the morning, please do not send the child to school. The school nurse's duties are to: maintain health records for each child; screen each child for vision, hear, height and weight; check immunization records; inform parents when necessary of the need for Physical Examinations (Grades K and Six). We receive these services through the school district of Philadelphia and have no control over the number of days the nurse is present.

Homework

In accordance with the principles of effective education, the school's policy is to assign homework to all grades each day. Homework takes priority over extra curriculum activities. On weekends or over holidays, homework is at the discretion of the teacher. Homework is a necessity because it reinforces skills taught in class, trains the mind through memorization and enhances critical thinking. Homework may take any of the following forms: written assignments, assignments not completed in class, reading assignments, study and review assignments and long or short term projects or reports. The amount of time for homework is based on students with average ability. Some students will need less time while other may need more time. This time schedule includes times for written as well as study assignments.

Grades K - 15 minutes
Grades 5 & 6 – 90 minutes

Grades 1 & 2 - 30 minutes
Grades 7 & 8 – 120 minutes

Grades 3 & 4 - 60 minutes

Home & School Association

The Home & School Association works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, and building community are goals of this organization.

Hours of Operation/Schedules

- The school day begins with prayers at 8:00 AM when the Prayer Bell rings.
Morning Schedule: Grades Kindergarten to 8 can report to the Cafeteria beginning at 7:00 AM; at 7:45 AM, safeties take Kdg., 1 and 2 to their classrooms.
- Dismissal begins with the Prayer Bell ringing at 2:45, with dismissal lines called beginning at 2:50.
- **Early Dismissal Schedule**

Prayers:	11:40
Dismissal	11:45
Or	
Prayers	12:55
Dismissal	1:00
Or	
Late Start Schedule	
Prayers	10:00
Dismissal	2:50

Inclement Weather

If there is a chance of inclement weather, please listen to Radio Station KYW 1060 AM. Our school will be closed if the announcement reads, **“All Philadelphia Public and Archdiocesan Schools are closed.”** **If by any chance the announcement says, “There is a two-hour delay” our school day will begin at 10:00 AM. (The school will open at 9:00 AM)** If there are any special changes made to a schedule a School Reach Phone Call will be placed to all families. If school is already in session and a message comes in to close school, we will activate the School Reach Phone Messaging System to notify you of the change in schedule. Please be aware that it is of utmost importance that we have the correct phone number and e-mail address in order for you to be reached in a timely manner.

Note: School closings and delays will also be posted on the Schools Web Site and Facebook Page.

Internet Use

Unauthorized and inappropriate use of the Internet in or out of school is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Inappropriate student Internet use at home that in any way associates his/her wrongful conduct with the school, students of the school and any teacher or staff member, may be cause for disciplinary and legal action if the use affects the administration of the school generally, or the relationship of the school to

the student specially. Thus, for example, the posting of an Internet site from home containing threatening and/or derogatory comments about a teacher, student or school official may be grounds for dismissal. This is particularly applicable where the site creates an atmosphere of fear or otherwise adversely affects the educational and religious mission of the school. See Acceptable User Policy for Technology for Catholic school of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at the conclusion of this handbook. (*See new Acceptable Use Policy revised 9/2011)

Items Brought into School

The School is not responsible for loss or damage to any items brought to school by a student. This includes, but is not limited to all electronic devices.

Lateness

- If a student oversleeps or is late for some other reason, send him/her to school. It is better to be late than to miss class completely.
- It is the PARENTS' responsibility to see that their child gets to school on time. We must prepare our children to become responsible citizens, being on time, is the first of many steps. Set a good example.
- Upon arrival in school, the student is to report to the main office to obtain a late slip.
- Any student arriving after 8:00 in the morning is late. **If a student is late 5 times in one month, in grades 3, 4, or 5 the student will be given a detention slip. This is separate from the Behavior demerit.**
- **Any child in grades 6, 7, or 8 who accumulates 5 lateness slips, will be issued a detention, whenever it occurs.**
- **LATENESS DOES AFFECT PERFECT ATTENDANCE.** You cannot receive Perfect Attendance, if you have a chronic problem with punctuality.
- In grades K to 2 any child who missed classwork, will be expected to make it up during lunch/recess.

Lunch

All students stay for lunch during the school year. The 45-minute lunch period is divided into 30 minutes for lunch and 15 minutes for Recess.

- Please include in your child's lunchbox, 2 napkins, one for the table and one for the lap.
- Students bring their lunch to school each day except when they order special lunches in advance. IF FOR SOME REASON YOUR CHILD FORGETS HIS/HER LUNCH, THEY WILL BE GIVEN A PACKAGE OF CRACKERS AND A DRINK or if available, a soft pretzel. Many times, other children will have extra food and share their food.
- Chocolate milk, white milk, and iced tea are available for the students to purchase at the lunch period each day. Students eat in the school cafeteria unless otherwise specified (in unusual circumstances).
- A well-prepared lunch is a parent's responsibility. While reality is that these will be days when lunches are forgotten, the school will NEVER allow a student to go without.
- In order to concentrate and comply with the Diocesan Wellness Policy, the school STRONGLY DISCOURAGES parents from bringing in lunch from a 'fast food' establishment. Not only is it unhealthy; it is not fair to the other students sitting at the table. If it is used as a 'special treat' for your child, please examine alternate ways of providing a treat for your child.
- Students are expected and required to eat with appropriate table manners.
- Students are to speak in conversational tones to those students at their assigned table.
- Students may not leave their seat without permission.
- Inappropriate behavior such as throwing food or fighting will result in disciplinary action. It is expected that the students will follow the directive of the lunch monitor when cleaning up their place, disposing of trash and moving to the recess area or classroom after lunch.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten students eat lunch in their classrooms.

Lunch/Recess Schedule

Grades Kindergarten & First		11:15 to 11:45
Grades 2 to 5	Cafeteria	11:50 to 12:25
Recess/Bathroom		12:30 to 1:00
Grades 6 to 8	Recess/Bathroom	12:00 to 12:30
Cafeteria		12:30 to 1:00

Special Lunches

Three days a week the school offers a hot lunch in the cafeteria. Forms are sent home and orders are placed a month in advance. If there are extras on Hot Lunch Day, the children may purchase one at that time.

Math Matters – Advance Math Program (Grades 5-8)

Participation in this program is based on a student's academic performance in math, must be have a high G.P.A. and be recommended by their teachers.

Media Center

- Students have access to materials in the school Media Center.
- Books may be borrowed with permission from the Media Specialist.
- Replacement charges will be made for lost or damaged books.
- In respect for others' needs, quiet is expected in this Center.
- Students may be denied access to the Media Center when their behavior is a disturbance to others or the child refuses to cooperate with the teacher in charge.

Medication

- The city of Philadelphia provides a school nurse to Maternity B.V.M. school 2 or 3 days per week (5 days in 2-week period).
- **The school encourages all children on medication to take their medication, where appropriate, before coming to school. In rare cases where medications may be administered during school. Those children who are old enough to take the medication should do so by themselves in the presence of the school nurse or in the presence of a staff member when the nurse is not present.**
- Medication may not be taken in a classroom or carried on the person of a student.
- For children who are not able, due to their age or for other reasons, to take their medication when required during school hours, the school encourages parents, where and when possible, to assist the children in taking medication.
- Only as a last resort may the school assist children in taking medications. In those cases, appropriate instructions must be provided to the school, signed by the parent or guardian. This is necessary so a record of the dates and times for administration of the medicine can be kept in the Main Office. All medications **MUST** be properly labeled and brought to school by a parent/guardian. Children may not carry medication to or from school.
- All medication will be kept locked in the nurse's office.
- Parents need to inform the homeroom teacher, the school nurse and Main Office **IF** and **WHEN** a child is using an inhaler or in need of an Epee pen.

Modifications

The school modifies curriculum for students with diagnosed and documented needs. A student with modified curriculum will receive a grade followed by the letter M on the report card to indicate modification.

Money

Use the following procedure for turning in all money:

- **Put money in an envelope.**
- Mark the envelope clearly with student's name, grade, room number, amount of money and the purpose for the money.

Physical Education

Phys. Ed. classes are held each week for students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. Instruction is provided in various physical disciplines. Children learn how to properly perform certain exercises and the rules of various sports. Students also learn skills such as good sportsmanship and fair play. All activities are based on the Guidelines provided by the Office of Catholic Education. Students in all grades sign a Behavior Contract at the beginning of the year; failure to comply will result in a dismissal from the class for the remainder of the trimester. See Dress Code for proper gym uniform.

Option C

Option C is our online grading and communication system. This system is not only used for keeping attendance and tracking student progress; it is the system that I use to send out emails, text messages and phone messages to parents.

Parties

- On a student's birthday, **with permission of the teacher**, a small treat may be sent in for the class.
- No student may distribute party invitations in school at any time.
- Party invitations should be distributed outside the school environment so that social functions do not create unnecessary stress to some students who may not be included on the guest list.
- Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.

Promotion of Student

A. Retention

Students are recommended for retention only for very serious reasons. It is recommended that intervention take place as soon as possible in the form of private tutoring and/or remediation from CORA or Catapult Services in our school to enhance student skills. **A student who has a prolonged absence without sufficient homebound tutoring to ensure mastery of grade level skills would be candidate for retention.**

B. Conditional Promotion

Any student in grades 1 to 7 who fails the subjects of Math or ELA in two trimesters on his/her report card must attend a recognized summer school program or be tutored by a professional educator before he/she is admitted to Maternity B.V.M. School in September of the following academic year. Reports indicating the skills reviewed and student performances must be forwarded to the principal by August 20th in order for a decision to be made regarding the student's education at our school. If the reports are acceptable the student will continue in our program.

Parents of eighth grade students will be notified by March 31st if a student is in danger of failing. However, the school reserves the right to notify parents of grade 8 students at any time during the second or third trimester that a student is experiencing academic difficulty and may fail for the year. If indeed, the student should fail a major subject, a diploma will not be awarded until satisfactory completion of a certified summer school program. Eighth graders are not permitted to repeat 8th grade at

the same school. Maternity B.V.M. School does not provide summer school. Finding an appropriate summer school or tutoring program is a parental responsibility.

Reporting Student Progress

- A good system of reporting student progress is one which helps build the student's self-respect and knowledge, social and emotional behavior, and spiritual and physical development.
- Maternity B.V.M. School treats the reporting of student progress by use of four methods: personal conferences (in person or by phone), interim progress reports, report cards, and achievement assessment.
- **It is the parents' responsibility to log-in to the online grading system (Option C) to see how well the student is progressing academically.**
- **Interim Progress Reports**
- These reports are distributed to the students at the mid trimester point.
- After reviewing the progress report, parents/guardians must sign it and return it to the homeroom teacher.
- This also serves as a warning of potential failure in a given content area.
- If at the mid-point of the trimester a student has either an I or U or a numerical grade of 79 or below, caution should be taken and student test scores should be monitored more carefully by the parents.
- **Pre-K and Kindergarten do not issue mid-term Progress Reports.**

Report Cards

Report cards provided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are issued to students three times during the academic year so that parents are informed of their child's strengths and weaknesses in maintaining grade level skills. Parents should review the report card carefully and note any particular weakness so that they may guide the child in improving this particular curriculum area. Grades are based on total participation of the students: oral and written work, assessment, projects, homework, etc. If a report card indicated that a student's work is not satisfactory, parents should confer with the teacher as soon as possible. The report cards are distributed at the end of each trimester. Please see calendar for dates. Report cards can be viewed online using the online grading system Option C. The school only issues a paper copy of the Report Card when a parent requests it.

Archdiocese Marking Code for Major Subjects

Grades 1~3

- O: Consistently produces work of high quality and applies learned skill
- VG: Regularly produces work of high quality and applies learned skill
- G: Frequently produces quality work and applies learned skill
- S: Produces work of satisfactory quality and usually applies learned skill
- I: Produces work of inconsistent quality and needs frequent re-teaching
- U: Produces work of unsatisfactory quality

Grades 4~8

Marks are determined by test, class work, homework, class participation, independent projects and a variety of assessment practices in the subjects of Religion, ELA, mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Grades are number grades from 70-99.

In the subject of Handwriting, Art, Music, Physical Education, Technology, and World Languages the following is the grading system:

1. Little or no growth in area
2. Partial mastery
3. Meeting expectations
4. Exceeds expectations for level

Personal and Social Growth & Effort and Study Skills

Grades 1~ 8

Number indicates the level of performance the student has demonstrated.

- 4-Exceeding
- 3-Developing appropriately
- 2-Needs Improvement
- 1-Unsatisfactory

Safety Drills

Fire/Shelter in Place

The Philadelphia Fire Department, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania conduct fire drills on a periodic basis as directed. Directions are posted in each classroom for the proper procedure to exit the building. The children must exit quickly and in silence for the safety of all concerned. In addition, each school is to practice a shelter-in-place drill annually.

Student Council/Government

At Maternity B.V.M. School, Student Council is open to any student in the sixth through eighth grades. Students must have a conduct grade of 3 or better for each trimester and maintain an average of 85 in all subject areas.

Eighth grade students serve as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, seventh grade students are nominated and elections are held for these positions in the Spring. The elected students are responsible for all duties of their position. They are responsible for reporting to the principal after each meeting to get approval for the items discussed.

Every sixth, seventh and eighth grade homeroom has two representatives elected by their peers. Homeroom representative elections are held in September and each candidate is required to give a speech to his/her homeroom. The elected representatives are responsible for attending meeting and keeping the homeroom up-to-date as to what is going on in the school. If for any reason, an officer or representative breaks a school policy, they are put on probation. If another infraction occurs, they will be relieved of their position.

Student Ambassadors

Ambassadors serve as liaisons between the student body, the administration, the alumni, and the entire parish community. Students chosen as Ambassadors will represent Maternity B.V.M. at functions including alumni reunions, open houses, fund raisers and other special events specified by the principal. They will act as gracious hosts/hostesses to guests of the parish and assure that Maternity B.V.M.'s events run smoothly and that visitors have a pleasant experience. The Ambassador program is designed to showcase students who accurately represent the current student body of Maternity B.V.M. to former students, members of the parish community and its surrounding neighborhoods.

***The honor of serving on Student Council and Ambassadors is a privilege, not a right.**

TECHNOLOGY

Purpose

Technology is a valuable and real world educational tool. Our schools are committed to teach its faculty, staff, students and school community to work and to learn effectively with technology and to endure responsible use of the equipment. The policy outlined below applies to all technology use including Internet use. The *Acceptable Use Policy for Technology* applies to all students, faculty, staff, volunteers or community members allowed access to technology resources. In some cases outside or personal uses of technology may be applicable under this policy.

Scope of Use

We recognize that the digital world allows anytime, anywhere access. Uses mentioned in this policy apply to inside school use and may in certain instances apply to personal technology use and/or outside of school. Where personal outside use of technology threatens a likelihood of substantial disruption in school or extracurricular activities, these activities may be viewed as a violation of the Acceptable Use Policy and may be subject to the disciplinary measure found herein.

N.B. the types of electronic and digital communications referenced in the AUP include, but are not limited to, social networking sites, cell phones, digital cameras, text messaging, email voice over ip, chat room and instant messaging.

Goal

The school's goal is to prepare its members for life in a digital global community. To this end, the school will:

- Integrate technology with curriculum to enhance teaching and learning
- Encourage critical thinking, communication, collaboration and problem solving skills
- Facilitate evaluation and syntheses of information
- Encourage ethical practices and provide education for internet safety and digital citizenship
- Provide a variety of technology based tools and related technology skills

Responsible User

Our school will make every effort to provide a safe environment for learning with technology including Internet safeguards. The faculty, staff, students and school community are granted the privilege of using the computer hardware peripherals, and electronic communication tools, including the Internet. With this privilege comes the responsibility for appropriate use.

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, we use information and technology in safe, legal and responsible ways. We embrace the following condition or facets of being a digital citizen.

- **Respects one's self.** Users will select online name that is appropriate and will consider the information and images that are posted online.
- **Respect Others.** Users will refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications.
- **Protect One's self and Others.** Users will protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate material or communications.
- **Respect Intellectual Property.** Users will utilize and cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.
- **Protect Intellectual Property.** Users will request to use the software and media others produce and protect license agreement for all software and resources.

Educational Purpose/ Appropriate Use: School technology is to be used to enhance student learning. Students must not access social networking sites or gaming site, except for **educational purposes under teacher supervision.**

Copyright/ Intellectual Property: All sources obtained for teacher and student work should be properly cited. Users are to respect the right of and the intellectual property of others in accordance with Federal Copyright Law. Transferring copyrighted material to or from a school without expressed permission of the owner is a violation of Federal Law.

Communications: Electronic and/or digital communications with students should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and employ only school-sanctioned means of communication. The school sanctioned communications methods include:

- Teacher school web page
- Teacher school email
- Teacher school phone number
- Teacher created, educationally focused networking sites

Teachers or administrators in their normal responsibilities and duties may be required to contact parents outside of the school day. A teacher or administrator is free to contact parents using a home phone or personal cell phone. However, they should not purposely distribute a home phone number or personal cell phone number to students. If a student contacts a teacher or administrator using a teacher or administrators' personal numbers email or networking sites, the teacher or administrator should immediately report this to the administrator or proper authorities.

Electronic and Mobile Devices, Cell Phones: Users must adhere to local school policy that may further define uses of mobile devices. The administrator of the school will determine access. If a particular mobile device is to be used for educational purpose, the school administration and/or teacher will provide parameters for the use.

Examples of Unacceptable Uses – Users are not to:

- Use technology to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
- Post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane or sexually oriented material. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about any persons, students, staff or any other organization.
- Use of photography, image, video or likeness of any student, or employee without express permission of that individual and of the principal.
- Attempt to circumvent system security
- Deliberately visit a site for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objective. Students must not access social networking sites or gaming sites, except for educational purposes under teacher supervision.
- Violate license agreements, copy disks, CD-ROMs, or other protected media
- Use technology for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school or system employees.
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school or system in the community.
- Transmit any material in violation of any local, federal and state laws. This includes, but is not limited to: Copyright material and threatening or obscene material.

Reporting: Users must immediately report any damage or change to the school's hardware/software that is noticed by the user.

Administrative Rights: The school has the right to monitor both students and employee use of school computers and computer accessed content. Due to evolving nature of Technology, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Office of Catholic Education reserves the right to amend or add this policy at any time without notice.

Personal Use of Social Media

This section of the policy refers to the personal use of social media sites such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, You tube, and Myspace.

Teachers and students may not mention members of the school community without their consent unless the subject is of public concern and the speech falls under applicable constitutional protections.

'Friending' of current students is forbidden on a **teacher's personal social networking site**. Personal posts must use appropriately respectful speech, and refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.

Policy Violations

Violation of the above rules will be dealt with by administration of the school. Violation of these rules may result in any or all of the following:

- Loss of use of the school network, computers and software, including Internet access. The student will be expected to complete work on a non-networked, stand alone computer system.
- Issuance of demerits/detention, if applicable.
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involve parties.

Tuition

All families of students attending Maternity B.V.M. School are expected to adhere to the terms of the contracted payment schedule for tuition and related school fees. Request for exceptions in extraordinary circumstances MUST be directed to the rectory. Failure to comply with the contract may result in student dismissal.

Beginning with 2012-13 school year, each family is expected to sell 50 raffle tickets at a cost of \$5 per ticket (\$250). Tuition liability will be prorated for families who do not sell 50 tickets.

Transfer

A parent or guardian of a student who transfers from Maternity B.V.M. School to another school must complete a transfer request in the Main Office. A transfer form for the new school will be presented to parents at this time if all fees and tuition have been paid in full. When a parent or guardian presents the transfer to the receiving school and registers his/her child, the receiving school will request student records from our school. These records will be **mailed** to the receiving school. **Due to the integrity of students records, all records are mailed to receiving school.** It is a school policy that records are not given to parents/guardians for hand delivery to the receiving school.

Transportation

- In the beginning of the school year parents/guardians are asked how their children will arrive at and leave school.
- Any change in transportation arrangements must be made in writing, even if it is a change for only one day.
- Transportation changes will not be made over the phone. Dismissal lines include Bus riders, Car riders, CARES and Walkers.

Bus Riders

Buses in the afternoon follow two trips. After first trip is dismissed, the remaining bus riders report to the cafeteria, along with those students going to the CARES Program. Car riders and Walkers are then dismissed.

Bus Transportation Conduct

Busing is provided by the School District of Philadelphia. Students may only ride on the bus assigned to them by the office. **No student may ride another bus.**

- For the safety of all students, all regulations on the school bus must be obeyed at all times.
- Parents should be aware that students could lose their busing privilege if their behavior results in any disciplinary infractions while riding the bus.
- Disrespect and disorderly conduct will prevent a student from riding the bus.
- Screaming, standing, fighting, name-calling, changing seats, eating, chewing gum, defacing property, throwing things, etc. are all violations of good conduct and will lead to disciplinary action. If the bus driver issues a written complaint, the student will meet with the principal that day. **After receiving two**

bus reports the student will lose busing privileges for a week. Should there be a third violation, the student will lose privileges for the rest of the year. Parent must provide transportation during suspension.

Uniforms

Uniforms with the exception of sweaters, are worn beginning with the first day of school.

Girls: Grades K-5 (winter): Plaid jumper, knee length; Grades 6 to 8: Plaid skirt, knee length (which means: nothing shorter than 1 inch above the knee) and may not be rolled).

- White, long or short sleeve blouse (undergarment must be PLAIN WHITE)
- Navy blue V-neck long sleeve or sleeveless sweater (Grades 6 to 8) from November through March
- Navy blue knee socks or leotards
- Navy blue MBVM School cardigan (OPTIONAL)
- Regulation navy blue oxford shoe (Docksiders and loafers are not permitted) must be tied
- Summer Uniform is optional: Short sleeve regulation polo shirt (with logo) *Stated below*
- Make-up, nail polish and artificial nails are not permitted; only clear nail polish is permitted
- Fad style haircuts (THIS MEANS NO MOHAWKS, RAZOR CUTS LINES ON THE SIDE, ETC.) or coloring are not permitted;
- Only one pair of post earrings is permitted. One earring in each ear.
- One ring on each hand is permitted
- One thin bracelet and a watch are permitted
- A religious medal on a thin chain is certainly permitted and encouraged
- No other jewelry is permitted, such as thick gold or silver chains leather or rope necklaces.

Summer Uniform (Optional)

- Navy blue skirt: One-flap, plain, No buckles, zippers or pleats
- Short sleeve regulation white polo shirt –with navy Maternity B.V.M. logo
- White sneakers with white quarter length or crew socks

Boys: Grades K-8

- Navy Blue trousers (No corduroys)
- Navy blue tie (No tie for Kindergarten)
- White, long or short sleeve shirt (with plain white T-shirt underneath)
- Navy blue V-neck long sleeve or sleeveless sweater (November through March)
- Short sleeve regulation polo shirt (Fall and Spring) with logo *Stated below*
- Regulation black oxford shoes (Docksiders are not permitted) which must be tied at all times
- A belt (black or blue)
- Hairstyles, including cultural or ethnic variations, are to be cut in conservative style: not touching the collar, above the eyebrows and cut/trimmed around the ears. **No tracks, tails or fad styles are permitted. Spiked, colored or excessive use of gel will NOT be allowed.** Sideburns must be above the earlobe. Upper grade students must be clean-shaven (no beards, mustaches, or other facial hair).
- EARRINGS ARE NOT PERMITTED
- **Kindergarten students only wear the white golf shirts (long and short sleeve): they should not wear the vest, shirt or tie.**

Summer Uniform

- Navy Blue walking shorts
- Short sleeve polo shirt: white with Maternity B.V.M. logo
- White sneakers with white quarter length or crew socks.

Physical Education

(All pieces must have the Maternity B.V.M. logo)

- To be worn only on Gym Days or when otherwise directed
- Light blue regulation T-shirt
- Navy blue regulation sweat pants with logo
- Navy blue regulation sweat shirt with logo
- Navy blue regulation shorts with logo
- All students **MUST** wear sneakers in order to participate in Physical Education (can be any color)
- No cut offs or sweats permitted
- **ABSOLUTLY NO JEWELRY OF ANY KIND MAY BE WORN ON GYM DAYS**

Dress Down Day Attire

Students may wear:

- jeans
- tennis shoes
- short socks
- shorts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee
- skorts
- sweatshirts
- jogging suits
- jewelry
- dresses
- slacks

Students may not wear:

- flip-flop sandals
- no open back shoes
- tank tops
- T-shirts with inappropriate writing
- tennis shoes that convert to roller skates
- biker shorts
- pajama pants
- yoga pants
- leggings worn as pants – leggings must be worn with a dress or skirt
- make-up
- nail polish
- low cut blouses/tops
- clothing that is extremely tight
- hats

Good Rule: If you think you shouldn't wear it, you shouldn't.

ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL.

Violent-Threatening-Harassing-and Inappropriate Acts by Students and Parents

It is the intent of Maternity B.V.M. School to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility and offensive and inappropriate behavior. Such improper conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct, verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, and behavior otherwise not conducive to the educational and religious mission of our school. These include, but not limited to:

- Disrespectful behavior of any kind toward or about staff, student or other parent of students
- Insubordination
- Fighting
- Bomb scares or triggering other false alarms
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Use or possession of drugs or alcohol
- Smoking
- Stealing
- Weapons possession of any kind
- Intimidation, harassment, or threats of any kind

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The school is responsible for determining what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior both in and out of the classroom, in the school community generally as well as outside the school community where such improper behavior affects the community. Conduct by students or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious vision of the school is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where warranted.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment in any form, including oral, written or electronic, by a student against any member of the school community, the student, is suspended but not dismissed, the student may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school. The student may also be put on a Behavior Contract at the discretion of the administration.

Vacations and Non Medical Absence

The school year calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt the learning process.

- Vacations while school is in session are strongly discouraged.
- Teachers also have no obligation to assign work ahead of time and/or re-teach missed lessons due to vacations. Teachers have no obligation to assign 'make-up' work.
- **Students will be expected to complete all school and homework assignments upon their return from vacation.**
- If vacations take place during assessment, a student must take that assessment immediately upon returning to school with the time and place of the assessment at the discretion of the teacher. Credit will be lost for oral and written class work, assignments, projects, reports, test, etc. that are not completed due to absences for vacation.

Visitors and Volunteers

For the safety of the students and faculty:

- All visitors and volunteers to the school must check in at the main office.
- Visitors may be asked to show identification in the form of a driver's license or other government issued identification.

- No visitor or volunteer may go to any area of the school without first signing in at the office and receiving a “Visitors Pass”.
- This pass must be worn while you are in the building and be returned when you leave.
- Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure
- Parents who volunteer to serve lunch or who volunteer in another capacity in the school **may not drop in to a classroom to see their child** during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

Walkers

- Students are walked to the corner of Welsh Road and Old Bustleton Avenue and are crossed at the intersection.
- Students may not go into 7-Eleven on the corner. Parents must not pick up their children in the parking lot, either. This is a safety issue and traffic nightmare.

IN CLOSING:

Parents as Partners

As partners in the educational process at Maternity B.V.M. School, we ask you:

To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time; and
- Has lunch money or nutritional snack lunch every day.

- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
- To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy; (these notes are kept for one year)
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school; To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student’s well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student’s total education;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems;
- To not post negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration on social media.

Parent’s Role in Education

We, at Maternity B.V.M. School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child’s life, physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Maternity B.V.M. School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

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

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Maternity B.V.M. School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K 3 to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. **To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority.** If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child's teacher at home will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. Parents are encouraged to let their child experience a logical consequence for an inappropriate action or behavior. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

Right to Amend

The school reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Wednesday Folder or through e-mail communication.