



PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK | 2023-2024

NATIVITY OF MARY SCHOOL

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www.nativityofmaryschool.org

Pastor: Rev. Thomas M. Mahoney

Principal: Mrs. Nicole Richard



Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Nativity of Mary School. I would like to thank all parents for valuing what Nativity offers: Christian values and academic excellence. It is a privilege for me to share in your child's spiritual and academic journey.

Students, I am excited to share this year's school adventure with you. Your parents have given you the priceless gift of an education from Nativity of Mary School. In appreciation for their sacrifices and trust, I promise you an opportunity to learn in a safe and caring environment. You, too, have a role as a student here at Nativity. You must respect all of your teachers and all the other adults in the building. You must also treat your classmates with respect and kindness at all times. Lastly, you must strive to do your best academically and try your absolute hardest to follow the school rules.

Parents, please read/review *The Parent & Student Handbook* which reflects the policies of Nativity of Mary School for the 2022-2023 school year. It is the contract between home and school. **Please sign the Nativity of Mary School Handbook Agreement found at the end of this handbook and return the form to the school office no later than Friday September 29, 2023.** This agreement states that you have read this handbook in its entirety, explained it to your children and intend to abide by the policies of Nativity of Mary School during the 2023-2024 school year.

Along with the faculty and staff of Nativity of Mary School, I look forward to working with you and your family.

In partnership,

Mrs. Nicole Richard

Principal

NATIVITY OF MARY SCHOOL

Nativity of the Mary School is a Kindergarten Readiness (full day and half day) and Kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic Elementary and Middle School under the Diocese of Buffalo.

The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as the teachers. At Nativity we aim to "teach as Jesus did."

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of New York guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subjects. The curriculum is marked by current content and fresh approaches to methodology. We strive to offer a program, which makes use of many different resources and materials.

Mission Statement

Nativity of Mary is a Roman Catholic School and we subscribe to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. It is our purpose and privilege at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School to provide a positive Christian atmosphere which will aid each student's development as a total person; spiritually, mentally, academically, and physically. We strive to promote the development of self-respect in adherence with Catholic values and morals, so that each student will be able to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world.

We recognize that parents are the primary educators, teaching their children respect for God, self and others.

Philosophy

Nativity of Mary School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo.

To develop the total Christian personality by instilling in the students a respect for life and reverence for Christian living.

To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.

To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods such as small and large group instruction, departmental classes, and other tools for basic knowledge and formation.

To aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities.

To be partners in education with the parents of our students.

Absence

The Nativity Attendance Policy is in accordance with NYS Education Law 3205. Regular attendance at school is essential for student success. In order for each student to develop his/her talents, pursue academic quality, foster responsibility and leadership, regular attendance at school is essential. We encourage parental support in the educational success of children. Subjects are taught in sequence and require the understanding of each concept in the order of its presentation.

Therefore, students who are not in attendance for (30) days or the equivalent of 30 days including being tardy, unless a student is seriously ill, and has not informed or met with the school administration are in jeopardy of retention. At a conference with the school administration and teachers, alternative educational plans will be determined. It is the parent's responsibility to notify school administration of attendance concerns and to request such a conference.

Incentives/Sanctions:

Perfect Attendance Award given according to school policy.

Regular attendance determines promotion.

Excessive irregular attendance warrants notification of proper authorities.

Policy of Notification of Student Absence: When a student is absent from school, a parent should call the school nurse Mrs. Muller (at 633-7441 Ext. 318) or email her at hmuller@clarenceschools.org or call the school office (at 633-7441 Ext. 301) email Mrs. Janine Dougher at office@nativityofmaryschool.org by 8:30 am each day of the absence.

If the nurse/office does not receive a call, or email, a parent will be contacted.

Students who are tardy must provide a written note to the teacher and a parent must sign them in at the main office.

A written statement giving reasons for the absence or tardiness must be brought to the student's teacher upon the student's return to school. These notes will be retained in the office for one year.

If a written excuse is not received within three (3) days, the absence is recorded as unexcused and is therefore an illegal absence in the attendance e-school data base program.

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

Students who are absent from school due to illness have one day for each absence to make-up the missed assignment. Assignments are posted on the teacher's page on the school web site. Teachers are not required

to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacation. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation. Please check the website for homework on the Teacher's page or contact your child's teacher.

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

Tardiness: A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom at the time appointed for the session to begin (8:25 am for homeroom). Any student coming in late because of bus transportation is not recorded as tardy. Tardy students must be signed in at the main office upon arrival

Excused or Legal Absences:

Sickness

Sickness or death in the family

Required to be in court

Approved high school visit

Quarantine

Attendance to health clinic

Unexcused Absences or Illegal Absences:

Unlawful detention

Truancy

Suspension

Vacations

Review of Attendance: Pupil attendance records shall be reviewed by the principal for the purpose of initiating appropriate action to address unexcused pupil absences, tardiness, and early departure.

Absence During the School Day: Medical appointments during the school hours require a written note by the parent. Parents are required to sign out their child in the main office downstairs. If the child returns to school during the same day, he/she must be signed back into school by the parent. Students who are away from school for an appointment for 3 ½ hours or more will be counted absent for ½ a day.

Anyone signing out, who is not the official parent or guardian, must have a parent's/guardian's written permission to do so and proof of identification.

[Academic Information](#)

[Curriculum](#)

The Diocesan Curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of New York guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The entire curriculum for the Diocese of Buffalo is posted on the Diocesan website.

Standards Plus: In 2023, Nativity of Mary School adopted a new curriculum initiative, **Standards Plus**. Our goal is to teach beyond the New York State Standards in order to prepare Nativity students for high school and beyond.

Upon graduation, a graduate of Nativity of Mary School will:

- be academically competitive in high school and beyond.
- be self-motivated and will strive for their academic personal best.
- possess independent study habits and good time management.
- will be prepared to utilize 21st century tools and technology to problem solve.

The faculty at Nativity of Mary School will focus on students' strengths and weaknesses in order to scaffold instruction. Data will be utilized to drive instruction and to identify gaps and areas of weakness. Students in grades K-8 will take the STAR assessment, a universal screening tool, three times throughout the academic school year. The STAR assessment will provide actionable data to be utilized for progress monitoring, goal setting, and to challenge high achievers.

Religion: Catholic values permeate our learning environment. Catholic traditions, Bible study, community service, and prayer are included in Religion class. Students participate in morning and afternoon prayer, as well as, grace before meals. **Liturgical services are held every Tuesday morning for the entire school community.** Each class, K-8, rotates leading our school Mass.

Sacramental Policy for Schools: Preparation for the celebration for First Reconciliation/First Eucharist with children who are baptized in the Roman Catholic Church is coordinated with the parish. It is the policy of the Diocese of Buffalo that First Reconciliation is celebrated in second grade, and First Eucharist be celebrated in the third grade. Families enrolled in Catholic schools will need to register for the First Reconciliation/First Eucharist program at their home parish, which is separate and distinct from the regular faith formation schedule for those in second and third grade. Generally, the parish catechetical leader (director of faith formation/religious education) coordinates the process of preparation and the celebration under the supervision of the pastor. First sacraments are always celebrated within the context of a parish faith community.

Computer Literacy: Word Processing includes keyboarding, digital literacy, Excel Spread Sheets, Power Point, and integration with curricular subjects.

Arts: Students follow the NYS Standards in Art learning to communicate ideas, emotions, and feelings through art. Lessons give students the opportunity to work in different media and techniques. Interdisciplinary lessons with Social Studies, Reading, Math and Science are integrated into the curriculum.

Music: Music begins in our K-Readiness Program and continues through 8th grade. Classes include song, movement, dance, music history, appreciation, instruments, liturgical music, and theory. A Christmas Concert and a Spring Concert include all students.

Instrumental lessons may be available for an additional fee through an outside vendor. These students may, also participate in the school band which performs at the Christmas Concert and Spring Concert.

Handwriting: Students in grades 3-8 are expected to submit all handwritten work in cursive unless otherwise instructed.

Language Arts/Reading/Literature: The reading program begins in Kindergarten with instruction in letter sounds, phonics, sight words, decoding skills, basic grammar, comprehension, and writing. A rigorous reading program continues through the years, building on the skills already learned. Novels are introduced in 5th grade.

Our intense program in 7th and 8th grade has prepared our students well for high school as indicated by their placement in accelerated programs. Some of our 8th grade students will also be taking a 9th grade Literature curriculum to receive high school credit (credit received may depend on the high school they attend).

Students in Grades 3-8 take the New York State ELA Assessment in the spring.

Mathematics: Mathematics Skills in grades K-8 follow the New York Common Core Standards which include number sense and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, statistics, and probability.

Students in grades 3-8 take the NYS Assessment in May.

At the end of 7th grade Advanced Math students may be eligible to take Common Core Algebra 1 if the following criteria are met:

- Final average of at least a 94% in math.
- Student scores a 4 on the NY State Math Assessment.
- Recommendation from the teacher indicating the student has demonstrated a strong work ethic, consistently completed homework, motivated to work independently and displays the ability to master Algebra course material.

*Eighth grade students taking Common Core Algebra take the NYS 8th Grade Assessment in May and the Common Core Algebra test in early June.

Physical Education: Physical Education from Pre-K 4 through 8th grade offers the students an opportunity to participate in skills and games while learning the rules of the game, sportsmanship, and teamwork. All lessons are age appropriate. Most importantly, good sportsmanship, physical fitness, personal improvement of skill level, and participation are stressed.

Science: Students learn and develop scientific skills, including observation, record keeping, and drawing conclusions. Projects and lab experiences engage students in the learning process.

The New York State Science Assessment is given in grades 4 and 8 and includes both a written and a performance section.

Earth Science is an added opportunity for 8th grade students. Students eligible to take Earth Science are as follows:

- Students taking Algebra 1.
- Final average of at least a 94% in science.
- Recommendation from the teacher indicating the student has demonstrated a strong work ethic, consistently completed homework, and displays the ability to master the Earth Science course material.

Social Studies: Students engage in the study of history, geography, economics, New York State History and current events. Students acquire necessary skills to gather information, organize, analyze, use, and present information they learn.

Spanish: Instruction includes vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, songs and culture.

- Grades K-Readiness through 5th: once a week.
- Grade 6: 2 periods a week
- Grade 7 and 8: 4 periods a week

Academic Probation

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two-week improvement plan. At the end of the two-week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. Students whose average is below 70 % will not be allowed to participate in any sport until the grade has improved to passing. In compliance with FERPA guidelines, academic information will not be discussed with coaches. They will only be informed that student is ineligible to participate in their sport.

Admission Information

Non-Discrimination Policy: Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School does not discriminate based on age (in accordance with the law), and physical or learning disability (if, with reasonable effort the school can accommodate)

All students Christian and non-Christian must participate in religion classes and attend Mass on the school Mass days.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept student to Nativity of Mary School:

- Siblings of current students

- Members of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
- Members of other area parishes without a school
- Non-Catholic students.

Age Requirements:

- **Children entering K-Readiness, Year 1 must be 3 years old by December 1st**
- **Children entering K-Readiness, Year 2 must be 4 years old by December 1st**
- **Children entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old by December 1st**

STUDENTS WILL BE CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTED INTO KINDERGARTEN WITH FULL ACCEPTANCE CONTINGENT ON DISPLAYED READINESS ON THE KINDERGARTEN SCREENING. ALL NEW STUDENTS TO KINDERGARTEN ARE SCREENED IN JUNE.

Requirements Include:

- Verification of active parish affiliation
- Health Records
- Updated Immunization Records
- Birth Certificate
- \$100.00 Application fee
- Report Card(s) from previous school
- Standardized Test Results (if applicable)
- Record of IEP (if applicable)

To be considered a parishioner you must be registered at Nativity of Mary Parish, attend mass regularly and financially support the Parish.

Families belonging to Sacred Heart, Bowmansville, Our Lady of Peace, St. Teresa's, Akron, and any other parish that does not have a school, have the same obligation to their parish. However, because there is no school at these parishes, they must present a parish verification form (see Advancement Director) to Nativity School to be considered for the parishioner tuition rate at Nativity.

Families who do not fulfill these requirements will be considered non-parishioners and charged the non-parishioner rate. Tuition rates and tuition assistance may be found on the school website.

Students applying for admission in Grade 1-8 must present a copy of the current report card, an IEP (if applicable) and meet with the principal to determine whether the program at Nativity will meet the educational needs of the student.

For grades 6-8, an interview with the student and the parents is part of the admission process. All new students will be accepted for a probationary period of not less than one semester in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at Nativity of Mary School.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of Nativity of Mary School will be accepted on a space available basis. Non-Catholic students must take religion classes and attend Mass with the class.

Financial Obligations

Tuition Schedule | School Year 2023-2024

KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 8

- **PARISHIONER RATE**
 - 1 student \$5,250
 - 2 students \$7,750
 - 3 students (or more) \$10,050
- **NON-PARISHIONER RATE**
 - Per student \$7,500

K-READINESS ACADEMY

- **Year 1 Half Day** Per student \$5,200
- **Year 2 Full Day** Per student \$7,300
- **Year 2 Half Day** Per student \$5,350
- **Year 2 Full Day** Per student \$7,450

*All tuition amounts include a Technology Fee and an Activity Fee.

Tuition Rate Definitions

Parishioner Rate is available for registered members of Nativity Parish.

Parishioner Rate for Other Catholics is assessed to registered members of other Catholic parishes that do not have a Catholic school. A verification form (See Advancement Director) from your pastor is required annually to receive parishioner rate.

Non-Parishioner Rate is assessed to Catholics from other parishes that do have a Catholic school; Catholics from other parishes that do not have a Catholic school but have not provided a verification of membership form from their pastor for this year; or non-Catholics.

Tuition Payment Options:

(Please read carefully as our payment options have changed.) Pay in full by August 1 or Enroll in the FACTS® Tuition Management Service. Payments begin in August of each year.

Enrollment/Re-Enrollment

The \$100.00 Application Fee for new students must be submitted with the application. The Application Fee for new students is due upon acceptance to the school.

Returning students must reserve their spot by submitting the Application Fee with Registration Paperwork

All Application Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.

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

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE PARISH BUSINESS OFFICE at 632-8838 EXT 404.

[AHERA: Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act](#)

We are notifying you that according to AHERA regulations we are required to have an asbestos plan in place. If any parent, teacher or employee wishes to see this plan, a request can be made to the school office where the plan is filed.

[Allergy Policy](#)

Pre-K to Grade 5 Food Allergy Policy: Each year the number of students with serious allergies and strict dietary restriction continues to grow in elementary schools across the country. Schools are responsible for working diligently to place the children's safety and good health on the forefront each day.

District – Wide Classroom Guidelines

- No unwrapped bulk, unlabeled, or home baked items may be sent into classrooms.
- Any food item that is brought into the classroom for celebrating and sharing must have the specific ingredient label on the package.
- As in the past, students are not allowed to share with or purchase food items for other students during lunch and snack time. Sharing, trading, touching of another classmates' food is strictly forbidden.
- In an effort to assist parents and teachers with safe food choices, the website, SnackSafely.com, lists numerous choices that are available in local stores.
- We greatly appreciate your support and cooperation in advance. Please be advised, no exceptions will be made – no unwrapped bulk, unlabeled, or home baked items will be allowed in the classroom for celebrations. Any items that are not packaged or properly labelled will be returned home.
- Thank you for your attention and support regarding this very important matter. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact the school nurse or building principal.

Grade 6-8 Allergy Policy: In remaining consistent with the allergy policies in place in the Clarence Central School District as well as other local school districts, we at Nativity of Mary School strive to build independence in our students as they grow and mature. For this reason, we do not place food restrictions on the classrooms for grades 6-8. We ask that the parents of any students who have food allergies work with their children so that they know what foods they can or cannot eat and ways to avoid contact with these allergens. We ask the parents of students without food allergies to educate their children to be understanding of the fact that some students have severe food allergies and to respect the challenges that their peers face.

*Review/sign page 43 of this Handbook and return back to school.

[Athletics](#)

The athletic program consists of swimming, basketball, soccer, baseball, softball and track.

All students participating in after school sports are required to have a current completed physical (expires one year from date of the original physical) on file with the school nurse and have a passing average. If a student has detention on the day of a sporting event, the student may not attend. All sports programs are handled through the Athletic Director. Information about sports may be found on the school website on the Athletics Page.

Sportsmanship and Play

Participants Code of Sportsmanship:

- The purpose of competition is to make us better people, "Winning is a bonus."
- Doing your best is more important than winning or losing.
- Respect the rules and spirit of the game.
- Treat officials, opponents, teammates, and spectators with respect.
- Commit to your sport and your team.
- Play hard, play fair, and play under control.

Spectators Code of Sportsmanship:

- Cheer in a positive manner.
- Respect official's decision.
- Do not interfere with the competition.
- Keep clear of the playing area.
- Be courteous and respectful.

*Failure to comply with this Code of Behavior may lead to ejection.

Authorized Persons

A student may be released only to custodial parents, a guardian, or an authorized representative. A non-custodial parent may not take a student during school hours without the written consent of the other parent.

Under no circumstances will a student be released to an unidentified person. A form for each student must be maintained in the school office indicating the names of persons who are authorized representatives.

Birthday Observances

Students in Grades K-Readiness - Grade 8 may come to school dressed-out-of-uniform on their birthday or on the day his/her birthday is being celebrated. Portion sized treats may be brought to school for the class. Please clear the date with the classroom teacher if it is different from the actual birthday. All birthdays are to be celebrated in the classroom not in the cafeteria. Please refer to the school allergy policy when deciding what treats to bring into school.

Teachers will not distribute invitations for birthday or slumber parties. Invitations to home parties should be mailed.

Blogs

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to Facebook®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student or parent's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish.

No parent should open a Facebook® account under the name of the school or a grade or organization. The only official Nativity of Mary School Facebook® page is the one created and monitored by the Nativity of Mary Social Media Manager. A parent who chooses to create such an account may subject his/her child(ren) to separation from the school.

Board of Limited Jurisdiction

Nativity of Mary School has in place a Board of Limited Jurisdiction. This Board is broadly representative, made up of both parishioners and non-parishioners. It is an advisory board focused on marketing and growth. The Board will have limited decision-making capacity, will be self-promulgating, and will have high accountability.

Buckley Amendment

Nativity of Mary School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding 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.

Be advised that if a teacher is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will need to pay the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, parking, food, etc.).

Bullying and Cyber Bullying

Nativity of Mary School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest or online) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

See the Conduct and behavior section for more detail on our school policies regarding behavior and consequences.

Bus Conduct

The following rules have been established to ensure the safety of all students who ride the bus:

Use only the bus and bus stop assigned.

Orderly behavior is required on the bus.

Remain seated, facing front, when the bus is in motion.

Talk quietly.

Do not talk to the driver unless necessary.

Keep head and arms inside the bus.

Do not litter the inside of the bus or throw anything out the window.

Younger children should be seated in the front of the bus.

Treat other riders with respect and kindness.

Report any unacceptable behavior to the bus driver and your teacher

*If a student is planning on riding the bus to someone else's house, the student must present a written note to the office for approval before giving it to the bus driver. Students are only allowed to ride the bus to locations in which they reside (their school district). *

For example, a Clarence student may not take the bus to a student's house in Lancaster.

Car Line

Students being picked up after school are to wait with their designated teachers.

Parents are asked to remain in their cars and proceed through the car line. This is the only way students may be picked up at the end of the day. Students are not allowed to walk to a car in the parking lot. This is important for the safety of all children.

Parents are asked to pay close attention during the car line process. It is recommended that cell phones not be used at this time. Please follow directions of teachers on duty.

The school office should be advised in writing if a child is going to be picked-up by someone else or if they are using a different means of transportation on a given day.

Cell Phones

If a student brings a cell phone to school, it is to be turned off and kept out of sight in the student's backpack or locker upon arrival in the morning. At no time should a cell phone be out during the school day.

If you need to contact your child, you may call the school office. Students may use the office phone to call home in an emergency. They may not call home for forgotten assignments, books, library books, gym clothes or to ask if they can go to another student's house. This helps the process of developing independent responsible students. All students with cell phones must read and sign the school cell phone policy given at the beginning of the school year and return it to their teacher.

Change of Address

It is very important that the school office maintain an up-to-date address record. The school should be notified immediately when there is a change of address, phone number including cell number and/or e-mail address

Character Education

Character Education has been a part of the rich history of Catholic Education. It is part of our heritage. Character Education is a priority at Nativity of Mary School. Teaching our students to become young ladies and gentlemen of character has become an extension of our curriculum.

We believe Character Education begins in the home and is nurtured in the school. We feel we have developed a program which will influence positive character development of our students. Our main focus is a strong emphasis on making our students responsible and respectful citizens in our world.

Daily Mantra: *I will be respectful, I will be responsible, I will be problem solver, I will be an achiever, I will be peaceful, I will follow Christ in all that I say and do.*

Child Abuse Laws

Nativity School abides by the Child Abuse Laws of the State of New York. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

Communication

Communication is a key factor in the success of a school. Since Nativity has gone green, correspondence may be found on the school website nativityofmaryschool.org under Cougar News. Also, check the teacher's page on the school website or Google Classroom for assignments and notices. Special teachers have their own pages so if you are looking for an assignment in Spanish or Computer etc. you need to check the individual teacher page. Please contact the Advancement Director and school office if you are not receiving, having difficulty opening the e-mails or if your e-mail address has changed.

Conduct/Behavior

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Behavior Standards

Each student is entitled to a classroom that is conducive to learning. To ensure a good learning atmosphere, each teacher sets goals and guidelines for an orderly, respectful, disciplined classroom. It is important that parents be knowledgeable and supportive of these guidelines. The students will be taught to be responsible for their actions.

Acceptable student behavior demonstrates the following:

Respect for all who enter. Always stand and greet a visitor.

Come to school prepared, on time and ready to learn.

Raise hand and do not talk out of turn or interrupt/distract others.

Acceptance of responsibility for academic and moral learning.

Courtesy in speech and manner towards all adults and each other.

Follow directions of individual teachers.

Regard for and cooperation with school and classroom rules.

Kindness in speech, action, and attitude.

Always walk single file and to the right.

Proper safety habits and care of school property.

Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.

No gum chewing.

Courtesy and good manners are always expected of students.

Code of Conduct

The rules and consequences of Nativity of Mary School Discipline Policy are based on these moral principles of Christianity: "I will treat others in a way that I want to be treated".

Crisis Plan

Nativity of Mary School has implemented a "crisis plan" in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated, and students will be moved to one of two secure designated locations:

- Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church
- Off Campus – Harris Hill Volunteer Fire Department
- An alternative site may be chosen if the situation warrants

Custodial Rights

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. It is a great benefit to the child to have both parents involved in his/her education.

Disciplinary Action

We encourage all students to practice self-control in working with all members of the school community.

We encourage positive behavior and teach our students to make positive choices and decisions which result in building integrity and moral excellence.

For a comprehensive list of consequences please refer to the student behavior contracts found at the end of this handbook and on the school website.

When students choose to behave in a disrespectful or inappropriate manner the following may happen:

Demerit Slips

Demerit Slips are given out when a student refuses to comply with one of our school rules. Teachers will use discretion in the issuance of a demerit slip, giving students an opportunity to correct their behavior first. If a student receives three (3) demerit slips in one trimester, they will receive a Conduct Referral

Conduct Referral

Conduct referrals are issued when a student repeatedly refuses to correct their behavior and/or continuously refuses to follow school rules or procedures. Please refer to the Student Behavior Contracts (at the end of this handbook and found on the school website for more information). Each time students receive a conduct referral, the disciplinary action taken, will become more severe.

Detention

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom rules, cafeteria rules and/or school rules. Detention runs from 2:45 pm to 3:30 pm. Parents are sent a Detention Form with written notification of the detention day, date, and time. Detention may also be given during school time (lunch time or during a special). Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, tutoring, athletics, etc. If a student has detention on the day of a practice, or game the student may attend the practice or game but must sit out.

In-School Suspension

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school and work in the office for the entire day.

Out of School Suspension

Students who receive out of school suspension, will not be allowed to come to school on the day(s) of the assigned suspension. It will be the responsibility of the parents to provide care during the normal school hours. The student may return to school only after they have served the assigned suspension period.

Expulsion

Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from Nativity of Mary School. Students whose parents have violated the Parents as Partners agreement in this handbook may also be excluded from Nativity of Mary School.

Offenses and Consequences

Unacceptable behavior, whether listed or not, will not be tolerated. Nativity of Mary School permits disciplinary actions, including suspension and expulsion, for commission of any crime, gross immorality, gross misbehavior, persistent disobedience, or violation of written rules and regulations of the school.

In addition to the consequences of misbehavior listed below, school officials shall use all available school and community resources to diagnose and deal effectively with students who have persistent or severe behavior problems. Students whose offenses may also constitute a violation of criminal law will be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials. The expression "on school property" includes school buses and off-campus school-sponsored activities.

Behavior off school property, at any time or in any place, may also subject a student to disciplinary action.

For students who do not follow the rules, this section of the Code of Conduct explains consequences if rules are broken.

Cheating or Plagiarism

Nativity School expects students to maintain integrity in all schoolwork and to refrain from any action that would bring dishonor to them or the school. Copying the work of others and submitting it as one's own or securing or providing answers in a dishonest way is forbidden. Plagiarism from the internet is included in this offense.

Consequence: Parent notification is required. No credit will be given for the assignment or the examination. Additional disciplinary sanctions may be applied.

A student athlete who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports

Damaging School Property

Vandalizing, damaging, or destroying of school property, including books, materials, furniture, buildings, computer hardware, or software, the computer network, grounds, cars, and buses is forbidden.

Consequences may be the following: an immediate out of school suspension. Parent or guardian will be informed and restitution for the damage will be required. The student may lose privileges or be recommended for expulsion dependent upon the damage done.

Disobedience and Disrespect

Students are required to obey school rules and to respect authority of teachers, other school personnel and lunchroom monitors. Failure to do so constitutes a disciplinary offense.

Consequences may be the following: demerit slip, conduct referral, parent notification, detention (during or after school), apology, restriction from participation in extracurricular activities or special, in-school suspension, work detail assignment, suspension, recommendation for expulsion and other sanctions are possible consequences.

Fighting

Any hostile conflict between individuals is forbidden on school property.

Consequences may be the following: immediate out of school suspension, parent notification, restriction from participation in extracurricular activities, work detail assignment, and recommendation for expulsion are possible consequences.

Profanity

Profane and vulgar expressions (written, oral, or non-verbal gestures) including those communicated or displayed on clothing are forbidden on school property.

Consequence may be the following: Two conduct referrals and detention, parent notification, restriction in extracurricular activities, in-school suspension, work detail assignment.

Sexting

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion. In accordance with the law, proper authorities will be notified.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed on campus. This includes the use of e-cigarettes. Cigars, cigarettes, pipes, tobacco of any type, marijuana, e-cigarettes, or vapors are not permitted on campus. Students who are found in possession of or using any of these items will face immediate out of school suspension.

Theft

Taking the property of another without permission is forbidden. This applies whether the property belong to another student, a staff member, or the school.

Consequences May be: Immediate out of school suspension, restitution, and/or parent notification. Additional disciplinary actions may be taken. Counseling, suspension, recommendation for expulsion, and other sanctions.

Threats and Assaults against School Personnel

Threatening to inflict or inflicting bodily harm, however slight, upon any school employee is prohibited. This includes interaction over social media and via cell phone by way of calling, texting, and/or emailing.

Consequences: Parent notification, suspension, or recommendation for expulsion.

Threats, Harassment, Hazing, Intimidation or Blackmail of Students:

Threats of force, threats of injury, harassment, intimidation, blackmail, and hazing are forbidden and may violate state law. Hazing is any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers another person, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

Consequences: Student counseling, parent notification, detention, call proper authorities if necessary, and/or recommendation for expulsion are possible consequences.

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy

The Catholic Elementary School in the Diocese of Buffalo calls on Jesus as the model for our thoughts, words, and actions. Our schools have a tradition of excellence in developing youth who are sensitive to others and live in the tenets of our Catholic Faith.

Children learn best in a climate of acceptance, tolerance, and respect where bullying and harassment are not tolerated. Therefore, our schools strive to create and maintain an atmosphere absent of threat or negative interactions with peer or adults.

Bullying behaviors may include words, actions, and /or body language that happen repeatedly or present a threat to physical or emotional safety due to an imbalance of strength, power, or numbers. It may take several forms: verbal, nonverbal, and/or physical. It refers to the behavior that is usually or often repetitive, frequent, would ordinarily not be considered of a social nature, is unwelcome, offensive or fails to respect the rights and dignity of others.

Incidents of bullying/harassment will be addressed by the principal or designee and a response initiated in a timely manner. The following steps of investigation will be taken:

- Individual discussions with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the targets and the students responsible for the behavior.
- Individual discussions with the target and the student responsible for the behavior.
- Discussions with direct witnesses or bystanders.
- Discussion with the supervising adult.
- Completion of an Incident Report.
- If required by diocesan policy, report the incident to the Department of Catholic Education.
- If required by law, report the incident to law enforcement.
- Follow up with the target within 48 hours of the report.
- The Incident Report, complete with a plan of action and follow up summary, will be filed in each student's records.
- If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt attention and disciplinary action will be taken immediately. In the event the investigation reveals that a student has not engaged in any wrongful behavior, the principal will inform both parties of such. Reasonable measures will be taken to protect the confidentiality of the student who files a complaint and to protect the reputation of any student wrongfully charged in a complaint.

A plan of action will be age and incident appropriate. For example, the target may agree to an action that limits contact with the bully such as a change in seating or alternate activity circumventing the responsible individual. She/he may also agree to talk to a counselor, follow up with a teacher/principal, or peer mentoring. The bully will provide an apology and face disciplinary action such as the possibility of entering into a behavior contract, appearing before a peer conflict board (if available), seeking counseling. Consequences of the behavior will be in accord with the school's Discipline Policy (Conduct and Discipline Code) and the principal will review the effectiveness of all school policies annually.

Cyberbullying

Cyber bullying is the fastest growing form of bullying. Bullying occurs via cell phone, websites, email and blogs. Be a part of the solution. Learn how to protect children from the dangers of unsupervised internet access. Know how to talk to children, learn the language youth are using to communicate online.

Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behavior directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Nativity of Mary School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest) face detention, suspension and/or expulsion.

Examples of bullying:

Physical - hitting, kicking, tripping, and pushing.

Verbal -name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist or homophobic comments.

Social - excluding others from a group, spreading gossip or rumors.

Technological - spreading rumors, images, hurtful comments through the use of e-mail or any social network, cell phones, text messages or any other technology.

Students at Nativity will prevent bullying by doing the following:

Treat each other respectfully, kindly, and peacefully.

Refuse to be a bystander and allow others to be bullied (watch, laugh, or join in).

Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out.

Report bullying to an adult.

Sexual Harassment Policy for Students

It is the policy of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Buffalo that all students have the right to be free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment in the school environment. Sexual Harassment may take

different forms. The following acts, although not automatically sexual harassment, may constitute sexual harassment under certain circumstances:

Verbal - Sexual innuendoes, jokes of a sexual nature, and sexually degrading language to describe an individual.

Nonverbal - Displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, leering, and making obscene gestures.

Physical - Unwanted physical contact or touching, brushing up against the body and any other type or coerced sexual activity.

Sexual harassment does not refer to behavior or occasional compliments of a social nature. It refers to behavior, which is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that fails to respect the rights and dignity of others.

Any student who believes he/she has been a subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately to the principal.

ALL CLAIMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT WILL BE THOROUGHLY AND IMMEDIATELY INVESTIGATED BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.

If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt attention and disciplinary action to stop the harassment and to prevent its recurrence will be taken. The disciplinary action taken with respect to each violation of this policy will be determined in accordance with the seriousness of the particular offense and may range from written warnings, parent conferences, mandatory counseling, suspensions, dismissal or a combination of actions. The school administrator will advise the complaining party that corrective action has been taken.

In the event that a thorough investigation of an alleged incident of sexual harassment reveals that a student has not engaged in any actions or conduct constituting sexual harassment, the school administrator will inform both the student and the complaining party that a thorough investigation has been conducted and that there exists no grounds or basis to substantiate the alleged sexual harassment.

All schools in the Diocese will take reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the student who files a complaint, to encourage the reporting of any incidents of sexual harassment, and to protect the reputation of any student wrongfully charged with sexual harassment.

Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo do not condone and will not tolerate any type of unlawful harassment.

Reporting Procedures

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment involving persons affiliated with Nativity of Mary School should report the alleged acts immediately as outlined in these procedures: Any student who alleges sexual harassment by any other person should report this to his/her teacher or principal. A friend may be brought along for support.

When a student at Nativity School makes a complaint of alleged sexual harassment, he/she will be asked to put the following information in writing:

- Name of the complainant
- Name of the alleged harasser
- Description of the incident, including dates and places it occurred
- Names of any witnesses
- Description of action taken by the complainant to resolve the matter.

Confidentiality of all parties will be respected, to the extent that the report and names mentioned in the report will be shared only with those parties involved, and at the discretion of the administration, with parents of a minor child. However, if the issue is not resolved at the school level, the names and events will need to be shared with others in charge of investigating and taking appropriate action.

Appropriate Action

Nativity School will act if it deems necessary and appropriate when a complaint is received alleging sexual harassment by any other student, staff member or visitor to the school. A substantiated charge against any student will result in disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the administration as noted in the student handbook.

Procedure and Timeline

Once a written report of alleged sexual harassment has been filed, the principal will begin to interview all parties involved within 48 hours.

A decision will be made by the principal as to what action will be taken and who else will need to be notified. All parties will be notified of the principal's decision within 3 school days from the time all interviews have ended.

Parents will be notified of principal's determination and action.

Retaliation

Verbal and/or physical retaliation toward the person making a complaint of sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Anyone who attempts to stop a complaint or who threatens a person making such a complaint will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the administration.

Rights of the Complainant

Anyone who believes him/herself to be the victim of sexual harassment has the right to make a report to the designated official and to expect this complaint to be investigated and a final determination to be made without delay. Furthermore, nothing in this policy is intended to deprive an employee or student of the right to file a grievance with outside enforcement agencies such as the New York State Division of Human Rights, The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Civil Rights, the Department of Health Education and Welfare.

Substance Abuse Policy

Misuse of drugs and alcohol is harmful to a student physically, spiritually, mentally and socially. All students will be given the opportunity to present their cases openly and listened to in the entirety. When a decision is reached, both parents and students have the right to know the basis for it. The following procedures are to be followed in handling specific drug/alcohol related incidents:

Any student in an Elementary School of the Diocese who is selling, giving, or dealing drugs or alcohol to other students in school or at a school-sponsored event is liable to expulsion. The student will be suspended immediately and a conference with the student, parent(s) or guardian(s), principal and pastor (if applicable) will be arranged soon after the student has been caught selling, giving, or dealing with such substances. If not expelled, the student will be put on probation. A second serious offense against any school rule while on probation will result in expulsion of the student.

Any student in an Elementary School of the Diocese who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol in school or at a school-sponsored event will be suspended and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified immediately. After consultation with the pastor (if applicable) a conference with principal, parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student will be arranged. In addition to recommending counseling, the principal will impose suitable penalties which may include probation, or expulsion.

Any student in an Elementary School of the Diocese who is in possession of drugs or alcohol in school or at a school-sponsored event will be suspended by the principal. Parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified, and a conference arranged among the student, parent(s) or guardian(s) and principal. In addition to recommending counseling, a suitable punishment will be administered by the principal which could include probation.

Any student in an Elementary School of the Diocese who has drug or alcohol paraphernalia in his or her possession in school or at a school-sponsored event will be assigned a suitable punishment by the principal. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the incident and of the disciplinary action.

Nativity of Mary School reserves the right to discipline students for conduct, whether inside or outside school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school.

Emergency Drills

State Law requires that fire drills be held each year. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

- Rise in silence when the alarm sounds.
- Close windows and doors.
- Walk briskly to the assigned destination, in single file and in silence.
- Stand in rows of two's in the designated area, away from the building.
- Return to the building quietly when the signal is given.

Entering the School

Enter through the double doors facing Main Street. Visitors will be permitted to enter after ringing the intercom doorbell. When you are let in, go to the window on the first floor left of the staircase (School Office) sign in and receive a visitor's pass. The administrative assistant at the window will direct you where to go.

If you bring a forgotten item for your child, please leave it at Main Office.

Facebook® and other Social Media Postings of Student Photographs

Nativity of Mary School works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. Nativity of Mary School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at Nativity of Mary School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their personal Facebook® page. Such postings are a violation of the Nativity of Mary School's adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from Nativity of Mary School.

Field Trips

Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.

Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.

Field trips are re-evaluated each year.

A field trip is a privilege not a right.

Class participation in a field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.

All grades do not have the same amount of field trips.

Costly assemblies may take the place of a field trip.

Individual teachers, in consultation with the administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny any student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or conduct.

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.

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.

A telephone call will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission form signed by a parent/guardian.

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.

All monies collected on a field trip are non-refundable.

Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.

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.

Official chaperones may not take younger children on the field trip. This takes away from the duties of a chaperone.

Parents who are not "official" chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company ensures the "official" chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other "official" adults on the trip.

Grading Policy

Report Cards are important for communication. Report cards are given three times a year every 12-13 weeks. Progress Report will be given mid-way between each marking period. Grades K-2 will receive a standards-based report card.

A= 94-100

B=88-93.9

C=80-87.9

D= 70-79.9

F= below 70

Promotion and Retention Policy: Advancement to the next grade at Nativity School is based on student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of the teachers, and the student's ability to complete work at the next level.

Administration may recommend the repetition of the grade, summer school or tutoring as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically and emotionally for the next grade.

Health Services

The school nurse for the school year will be in the building from 7:45 am – 3:00 pm. They are assigned to Nativity of Mary School by the Clarence Central School District. We at Nativity follow the same strict guidelines as the Clarence School District. The nurse is responsible for the maintenance of health records, routine health checks, vision screening, parental contact concerning health problems and care of minor injuries. The nurse is also responsible for dispensing medicine in accordance with New York State Law. If your child must take medicine in school, please be advised of the following:

- Our school nurse will cooperate with family physicians and parent/guardian and administer medication to students during school hours.
- This will be done only under the following conditions: The school nurse must have on file a written request from the family physician in which he indicates the frequency and dosage of a prescribed medication and a written request from the parent to administer the medication as specified by the family physician.
- Please request the Medication Administration Form from the school nurse which will accomplish both purposes.
- The medication must be delivered to the school by the parent or guardian in the original labeled container.
- This process also applies to over-the-counter drugs such as Aspirin, Tylenol, etc. This will be strictly enforced.

Up-to-date Health Appraisal Forms are required for students entering grades K-Readiness, Kindergarten, 1, 3, 5, 7, and all new students.

[Immunization Requirements](#)

Immunizations are one of the most important ways to keep your children and adolescents healthy. Under Section 2164 of the New York State Public Health Law, all students must have certain immunizations prior to their entrance to school.

Under the same law, schools are required to collect written documentation from your child's health care provider. All immunizations are listed on the following chart, if you have any questions please contact your school nurse or the district's nurse coordinator.

New York State has implemented vaccine requirements for school entry. All Grade 7 students **MUST HAVE** Meningitis vaccines to enter school. Contact your health care provider to be sure your child has what they need to enter school this Fall. A copy of the immunization record must be on file in the School Health Office **BEFORE** September 1 each year.

2023-24 School Year New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance/Attendance¹

NOTES:

All children must be age-appropriately immunized to attend school in NYS. The number of doses depends on the schedule recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Intervals between doses of vaccine must be in accordance with the "[ACIP-Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule](#)." Doses received before the minimum age or intervals are not valid and do not count toward the number of doses listed below. See footnotes for specific information for each vaccine. Children who are enrolling in grade-less classes must meet the immunization requirements of the grades for which they are age equivalent.

Dose requirements MUST be read with the footnotes of this schedule

Vaccines	Pre-Kindergarten (Day Care, Head Start, Nursery or Pre-K)	Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	Grades 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11	Grade 12
Diphtheria and Tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine (DTaP/DTP/Tdap/Td) ²	4 doses	5 doses or 4 doses if the 4th dose was received at 4 years or older or 3 doses if 7 years or older and the series was started at 1 year or older		3 doses
Tetanus and Diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine adolescent booster (Tdap) ³		Not applicable		1 dose
Polio vaccine (IPV/OPV) ⁴	3 doses		4 doses or 3 doses if the 3rd dose was received at 4 years or older	
Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccine (MMR) ⁵	1 dose		2 doses	
Hepatitis B vaccine ⁶	3 doses		3 doses or 2 doses of adult hepatitis B vaccine (Recombivax) for children who received the doses at least 4 months apart between the ages of 11 through 15 years	
Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccine ⁷	1 dose		2 doses	
Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) ⁸		Not applicable	Grades 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11: 1 dose	2 doses or 1 dose if the dose was received at 16 years or older
Haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine (Hib) ⁹	1 to 4 doses		Not applicable	
Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine (PCV) ¹⁰	1 to 4 doses		Not applicable	

Screening

The school nurse will provide hearing and vision screenings to all new students and students in Kindergarten, and grades: 1, 3, 5, and 7.

Scoliosis screening will be provided for girls in grades 5 and 7 as dictated by NYS guidelines.

Allergy Policy- Please see the “Allergy” section of the Handbook.

When to Keep A Child Home

Fever: If a student has a temperature of 100 degrees or more, parents should keep their children home. Often temperature rises during the day. A slight fever in the morning will get much higher by noon. If they have 100 degrees or more fever at school, parents will be called to come to pick up their child. They need to be fever free without taking medication for 72 hours before returning to school.

Vomiting and diarrhea: Keep them home! Often children will feel better after vomiting but will quickly become ill again. Keep them home until they are free of symptoms for at least 72 hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea.

Cough and Cold: Staying home is necessary when there is constant nasal drainage/sneezing and/or a significant uncontrolled cough that makes the child uncomfortable, disrupts the class or if the child is unable to consistently cover their mouth. Further, a sore throat that is severe, and accompanied by a fever may require a doctor visit.

All Antibiotic Treatment: If your child is on antibiotics for a communicable disease, such as strep throat, pink eye, etc. keep them home until they have been on the antibiotics for a full 24 hours. If they need to continue antibiotic treatment at school, be sure to follow the school’s medication policy

The exception would be for pertussis (whooping cough). They need to stay home for 5 full days of antibiotic treatment before returning to school.

Pink eye: Only a doctor can diagnosis whether it is viral or bacterial. Bacterial pink eye needs to be treated with antibiotics, usually eye drops for 24 hours before returning to school. Students should not attend school until the discharge has resolved.

Rash: Any undiagnosed rash must be evaluated by a primary care provider and deemed non-contagious. Please provide a note to the nurse.

Impetigo & Ringworm: May return 24 hours after treatment starts. Areas should be covered when the student returns to school.

Head lice: Once children with head lice have been treated and had the nits carefully removed from their heads, they can return to school. When they return, parents are to bring them to the health office to have their heads checked before going to class. They will be examined again at intervals to make sure no head lice were missed.

Surgery, Major illness, or an Accident: Should your child have surgery, major illness, or an accident please notify the School Nurse so that we may assist with safe and appropriate care upon return to school.

Remember, whenever your child will be absent from school, please call the school nurse (716-633-7441 Ext. 318) or the school office (716-633-7441 Ext. 301) by 8:30 am each day of the absence to report your child's absence. A written note is required within three days upon their return. The note should include the child's name, grade, teacher, and reason for absence.

Homework

Formal home study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement, and enrich class work and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences. It is important for the student (not the parent) to be responsible for doing homework and assigned projects.

Students are to complete and hand in assignments, book reports and projects on time. Points are deducted for late or incomplete work 5 points for each day late. After the third day the student receives a zero. If a student is absent ample time is given to make up the work. Responsibility is an important part of each class.

Homework Due to Vacations/ Planned Absences

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

Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Please do not ask the teacher to make an exception or offer payment for homework given in advance of an absence.

Homework Policy Due to Illness

When a student is absent for three or more days, a parent may call the school office for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office.

For short absences, students should make arrangements with classmates regarding assignments. Students may also, receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school.

Students will be allowed one day for each day of absence due to illness. For example, a student who was absent three days should be given three school days to complete the missed work.

Kids' Club

Our Kids' Club Program is an affordable answer to your afterschool childcare needs. This program is run by Nativity staff and runs every day after school until 5:30 PM. Registration is required for Kids' Club and space is limited. To obtain information to register your child, please contact the school office or Miss Kiss.

If you decide to register your child(ren) for Kids' Club, please make sure it is for regularly scheduled attendance.

There is a "No pay, No stay" policy in effect for Kids' Club. Future attendance will not be allowed until your account is current.

Kids' Club will not run during scheduled half days, holidays, or school breaks.

Lockers

Each student in grade 6-8 is assigned a locker in which to store textbooks. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students can go to their lockers at specified times. The school reserves the right to inspect the lockers at any time without probable or reasonable cause. If a student has a lock on their locker, it must be a combination lock and the combination must be given to his/her teacher.

Lost and Found

Any items found in the school building or on the school ground should be given to the Administrative Assistant. After 30 days, items will be donated to charity. Please label clothing, so that it can be easily identified and return to the proper owner.

Lunch Program

Nativity of Mary School offers a hot lunch program daily. Students may pay for lunch daily or they put a certain amount on account and the cost of the meals will be deducted and a notice sent home when additional funds are needed.

Students may choose to bring their own lunch each day. Students should not bring glass bottles, soda, or excessive amounts of candy.

Lunch Account Procedures

At Nativity of Mary School, we believe that no student should ever go hungry. Therefore, no student will ever be denied a meal. However, snacks and a la carte items cannot be charged if the account has a negative balance. Payments to the student's meal account may be sent to the school in the form of cash (in an envelope) or check payable to School Lunch Fund.

Once the student's account balance exceeds \$20 owed, a phone call will be made, and a letter mailed to the parent/guardian to collect the debt or determine Free and Reduced eligibility. New York State and the Federal government have a direct certification process for free and reduced meals in addition to the application process. If the account balance exceeds \$50 owed, the school principal will be notified to assist in collection of the debt. All negative owed balances must be paid by June 30th of each year. **If you have any questions, please contact Joan DiBartolomeo at jdibartolomeo@clarenceschools.org.**

Lunch Behavior

Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Students are to remain seated until their class is called up. Lunch time is a time to sit and talk with other students, at the same table, and enjoy your break. No table hopping is allowed, and all students are to remain seated during lunch. Courtesy and respect are to be shown toward other students. Respect and cooperation toward lunch monitors are always in order. Please wait for a teacher to exit you orderly and quietly. If these rules cannot be followed students will have lunch detention.

Lunch Monitors

All Nativity families are required to Lunch Monitor at least once a month or pay a \$50.00 monitoring fee for the year. If you miss your scheduled time and do not find a substitute or contact the Food Service Manager to notify them of any changes at least one week in advance you will be billed \$5.00 for that month.

There will be three lunch periods from: 11:00-11:30 am, 11:30-12:00 pm and 12:00-12:30 pm.

We ask parents who are monitoring to arrive at school no later than 10:55.

Monitors are asked to call the classes up one class at a time to buy their lunch.

Help the younger students open containers and packages or cut up their meal.

Wash the tables after each lunch period.

Ensure students are following all rules

Students are to be seated on their bottoms.

No table hopping.

Always show respect.

Speak in indoor voices.

Grades Pre-K – 3rd need to raise their hand for help.

This should be a pleasant experience for all concerned. If there are any concerns, please call the office.

National Elementary and Junior Honor Societies:

See By-Laws posted under Honor Society on the school website nativityofmaryschool.org

Off-Campus Conduct

The administration of Nativity of Mary 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 school day. This off-campus behavior includes but is not limited to cyber-bullying.

Office Records

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

Parents as Partners

As partners in the educational process at Nativity of Mary School we ask parents to:

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 at the end of the day on time.

Is picked up on time from extra-curricular/sports activities.

Is dressed according to the school dress code.

Completes assignments on time and they are done neatly.

To actively participate in the parent organization called the Home School Association. This group meets every other month starting in September;

To actively participate in Parent-Teacher Conferences;

To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;

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, newsletters, visit the school website and teacher web pages and show an interest in the student's total education;

To support the religious and educational goals of the school;

To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;

To treat all teachers with respect when discussing student problems or concerns.

To not post negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration on social media.

Parent's Role in Education: We, at Nativity of Mary School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of your children. 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 Nativity of Mary School

involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Setting a good example for your children 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 examples of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter partnership with us at Nativity of Mary School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K-8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical and spiritual 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 school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as the parent must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation, certain distractions 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, there are 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(ren) to become the best person he/she can become.

Custody: If parents are divorced or separated, the school presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right. A copy of the document providing such evidence must be kept on file in the school office. Information will be sent via e-mail about the Cougar News and weekly communication to both parents. It is the responsibility of each parent to read the Cougar News, read the teacher's page for homework and what is happening in the classroom. You will need to check the individual special teacher's pages to see what is happening in art, music, and computer etc. One conference time will be set up for both parents to attend and receive the same information at the same time from the teacher.

Non-Custodial Parent: If there is a court order denying access to the records and information, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Normal Process for Handling Grievances Between Teachers and Parents: When a parent has a complaint/criticism/issue with a teacher, the parent should contact the teacher requesting a meeting to civilly discuss the complaint.

The teacher should respond promptly to any such request for a meeting.

If complaints/issues are not resolved by the parent and teacher, only then should a meeting with the principal, inclusive of both parties, be arranged. Again, all parties shall treat this conversation as confidential.

Normally, the exchanges referenced here are to be about serious matters that can be verified as such by all involved.

All issues raised and ensuing discussions are to be documented. A file that includes pertinent facts about the issue, summaries of conversations and copies of documents and/or relevant emails should be assembled and retained in the Principal's office for a period of seven years.

Guidelines:

The Christian expectation is one of mutual dialogue toward an amicable resolution of the perceived complaint. Mutually respectful conversation is critical to this dialogue. Both parties should treat their interface as confidential.

These procedures are meant to protect the right and responsibilities of all concerned parties.

Behaviors can receive differing interpretations. A sincere attempt must be made by all involved to find the most accurate interpretation of events.

Parent Organization

The Nativity of Mary Home School Association works to enhance the education of Nativity students. Fundraising is the major job of this organization, to bring in monies for field trips, assemblies, textbooks, workbooks, magazines, classroom supplies, and Teacher Appreciation Recognition just to mention a few.

The HSA (Home School Association) usually meets every other month. The first meeting is in September. Visit the Home School Association section of Nativity's website for details and schedules.

Sacramental Policy for Schools

Preparation for the celebration for First Reconciliation/First Eucharist with children who are baptized in the Roman Catholic Church is coordinated with the parish. It is the policy of the Diocese of Buffalo that First Reconciliation is celebrated in second grade, and First Eucharist be celebrated in the third grade. Families enrolled in Catholic schools will need to register for the First Reconciliation/First Eucharist program at their home parish, which is separate and distinct from the regular faith formation schedule for those in second and third grade. Generally, the parish catechetical leader (director of faith formation/religious education) coordinates the process of preparation and the celebration under the supervision of the pastor. First sacraments are always celebrated within the context of a parish faith community.

Returning to the School Building After Dismissal

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after the 3:00 PM dismissal unless accompanied by a teacher. Students who choose to return to school after 3:00 PM without a teacher, face detention, suspension, or expulsion. This policy is designed for the protection of your child in addition to helping your child to become more organized and personally responsible.

School Hours

Grades K through 8, 8:00 am - 2:40 pm. Students not in their homeroom by 8:30 are considered tardy. At Nativity of Mary School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on his/her own each morning. Students new to the school and Kindergarten students may be walked in the first two to three weeks.

For the safety of all students they may not report to their classrooms until 8:00 am. Teachers are not in their rooms until 8:00 am.

Prayer and afternoon announcements begin at 2:35 PM each day. Dismissal immediately follows. Please check the school calendar and weekly newsletter for early dismissal dates.

We ask that parents do not visit the classrooms in the morning (8:00-8:30 am) to speak with the teachers. The teachers are responsible for the safety of your children and are busy preparing for the day. If you need to speak with a teacher, please contact them via email or Google Classroom.

School Office Hours

The school office is open on all school days, Monday-Friday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.

School Safety

Nativity of Mary School strives to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest or online) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

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.

If the school suspects danger to a student or the school community, the school reserves the right to call the police.

See Anti-bullying/Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy for Students

Search

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

Service Projects

The purpose of the stewardship program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 is to provide students with the opportunity to make a difference in our Church and surrounding communities through various service projects that will take place throughout the school year.

Student Directory

Early in the school year, each family receives a Student Directory listing students' and parents' names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Under the laws of FERPA, parents may choose to exclude any personal contact information from the Student Directory.

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

Student Records

Nativity of Mary School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.

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

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

Technology:

Blogs: Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to Facebook®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student or parent's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish.

No parent should open a Facebook® account under the name of the school or a grade or organization. The only official Nativity of Mary School Facebook® page is the one created and monitored by the Nativity of Mary Social Media Manager. A parent who chooses to create such an account may subject his/her child(ren) to separation from the school

Cell Phones: If a student brings a cell phone to school, it is to be turned off and kept out of sight in the student's backpack or locker upon arrival in the morning. *See the "cell phone" section for additional information.*

Electronic Devices: Kindles, iPads and other electronic games are not allowed to be used in school.

Facebook® and other Social Media Postings of Student Photographs: Nativity of Mary School works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors.

Nativity of Mary School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at Nativity of Mary School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their personal Facebook® page. Such postings are a violation of the Nativity of Mary School's adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from Nativity of Mary School.

Instagram®/Snapchat: Photos and captions on a student or parent's Instagram® or Snapchat account that depict the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish in a defamatory way may result in disciplinary action.

Surveillance Cameras

Nativity of Mary School recognizes that attempting to maintain the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors to our school is implemented with a multifaceted approach. To the extent that modern technology provides tools to maintain safety and security, the use of video surveillance cameras may be in place in the school and on school property. Cameras will not be permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Technology | Social Media Policy:

The following outlines Nativity of Mary School's Social Media Policy and expectations. Social media refers to online tools and services that allow any Internet user to share, create and publish content. Such platforms include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok, to name a few.

To maintain a safe and productive living and learning environment, Nativity requires all students who access or create social networking sites through NBVM networks (LAN or WIFI) or other wireless/Internet provider to know and abide by the following:

- You are responsible and will be held accountable for the content of your communication(s) posted.
- Think before you click; Please take the necessary amount of time to consider the short and long-term consequences and effects before communicating online. You are responsible for what you like, comment, post/tweet, share, subscribe to, download, view, etc.
- Students are prohibited from using any electronic device to capture, record, and/or transmit test, quiz, exam, or other class information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty and students are prohibited from using electronic devices to receive such information.
- Please report inappropriate online behavior to help maintain a positive living and learning environment for all.
- Maintain respectful discourse and acceptable behavior online. This includes objectionable/inflammatory language or pictures (ethnic/racial slurs, offensive comments,

defamatory comments, personal insults, etc.). Nativity of Mary School views anything said/done online as if done in person. These acts are considered acts of harassment and are unacceptable.

- Do not cyberbully others online. Cyberbullying is considered an act of harassment and is unacceptable. See the Anti-Bullying Policy section of this Handbook.
 - Students are prohibited from using any electronic device to transmit material that is obscene, threatening, disruptive, or sexually explicit, and/or that can be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based upon their race, color, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, culture, ancestry, or political beliefs.
 - Students are prohibited from engaging in “sexting” – i.e. sending, receiving, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, emails, or other materials of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form.
 - Violation of these prohibitions shall result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, such actions will be reported to local law enforcement if illegal (child pornography, sexting, etc.) and/or child services as required by law.
- Anything communicated through social media should not disrupt the learning atmosphere, educational programs, school activities, and/or infringe on the rights of others.
- Do not violate privacy, confidentiality, or legal guidelines. Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential or private.
- Protect yourself and others by not sharing private or confidential information.
- Ask permission before posting pictures, videos, or audio of others.

Sexting

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

Social Networks

Engagement, but not limited to TikTok, Snap Chat, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc., may result in suspension or expulsion; if the content of the student's message includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the administration, the faculty/staff, other students or the parish.

Telephone

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

Texting

Students should at no time be involved in texting during the school day. Students involved in texting may have the following consequences: loss of phone, detention, suspension and/or expulsion.

Virtual Reality Sites

These sites pose a developmental and moral risk to the life of a student. Parents are cautioned to be aware of the online sites visited by their children, knowing that predators are often, not living in a neighborhood, but within the home via a computer.

Testing

Students will not be permitted to retake a quiz or a test to improve their academic standing.

Each year the students at Nativity of School in grades 3-8 take part in the NYS Common Core ELA and Math Exams.

Students in grades 4 and 8 take part in the NYS Science Exams.

Students in grades 3-8 will be involved in Final Exams and/or projects to assess the cumulative knowledge of subject matter taught during the academic year. Final Exams and/or projects will help students be more fully prepared for the assessment challenges and expectations of high school.

Transfer of Student

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parents in writing using the Withdrawal Form. This should be submitted to the Director of Advancement. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. Parents will be asked to fill out an exit form upon withdrawal. No student records will be forwarded to another school until business office accounts have been settled (See previous section on Student Records on transcript information).

Uniforms & Dress Code

The Nativity Dress Code is simple, neat, and reflective of Christian values. The Dress Code enhances education by providing fewer distractions in the classroom. The primary responsibility for enforcing the Dress Code lies with the parents, not the school. Please abide by the proper uniform style especially with jumpers, skirt, and blouses. Items are to be purchased at Land's End, Stuart's, or Flynn O'Hara.

Nativity's Dress Code can be found on the school's website under "Important Information".

Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in. Long sleeve shirts are not to be rolled up. When a tie is worn the top button of the shirt is buttoned.

The classrooms in our school can get quite warm. On very warm days the teacher may ask the students to remove sweatshirts/fleeces.

Fad Haircuts of any kind and colors ARE NOT ALLOWED for boys or girls.

Earrings for boys ARE NOT ALLOWED.

Girls are not allowed to wear make-up or nail polish. Simple jewelry may be worn. No dangle earrings.

PE Uniform

All students in grades KR-7th must wear the designated PE uniform from either Stuart's Sports Spirit wear Sale or Land's End. Students are required to wear them to school on their designated PE day. 8th Grade Students must wear the PE uniforms on designated gym days.

During winter months, students must wear the PE uniform sweatpants or athletic pants. They may wear their PE uniform shorts under them if they wish to be in shorts for PE class.

Out of Uniform Guidelines

Students May Not Wear:

Shorts shorts (must reach below your fingertips when hands are placed at your side)

short skirts and dresses

Flip-flops

Low cut blouses or crop tops

Spaghetti Straps or Tank Tops

Clothing that is extremely tight or very short

Biker shorts

Tee shirts with inappropriate images or text

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

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

Visitors

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Visitors may be asked to show identification in the form of a driver's license or other government issued identification.

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

Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of all Catholic Institutions. Nativity of Mary School has many opportunities for you to get involved in your child's education. We look forward to working together as partners in Catholic Education.

All individuals who volunteer in the school must complete the Virtus Application Packet and will be asked to complete the Diocesan mandated background check. All regular volunteers must attend a one- time class "Protecting God's Children" and keep current with the bulletins via e-mail.

The main responsibility of a volunteer is to assist the administration or teachers. For this reason, pre-school siblings are not allowed to accompany parent volunteers to school for meetings, to lunch monitor, to assist with class parties, or on field trips

Weather Emergencies

If it should be necessary to close the school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over local radio and television stations. In addition, an email, phone call, and/or text will be issued via the School Messenger System. Cancellation of school only takes place during circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis.

Nativity of Mary follows the Clarence School District. In inclement weather, if Clarence closes, we close. In the unusual circumstance where school must be cancelled during the day, we will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision at their home before releasing them from school. It is necessary that you have an emergency plan in place for your child. Parents are required to designate an alternative destination for their child(ren) in the event no one would be home. The alternative destination should be indicated on the Emergency Form.

When school is closed because of an emergency or inclement weather, there will be no after school activities, including sports.

Right to Amend

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Cougar News or through e-mail communication.

Nativity of Mary School Phone List

The best way to contact your child's teacher is through email or Google Classroom.

School Phone Number: 716-633-7441

Staff Phone Extensions

Principal: Mrs. Nicole Richard | nrichard@nativityofmaryschool.org

Director of Advancement: Mrs. Amy Connolly | aconnolly@nativityofmaryschool.org | ext. 317

School Office: Mrs. Janine Dougher | office@nativityofmaryschool.org | ext. 301

Nurse: Mrs. Hana Muller | hmuller@clarenceschools.org | ext. 318

Cafeteria Manager: ext. 324

CLARENCE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Food Allergy Safety Guidelines

There are students in every grade level in Clarence Schools who have allergies to nuts and nut products. This includes almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, sesame seeds, and walnuts. Strict avoidance of all nut products is the only way to prevent life-threatening allergic reactions. Even touching a small amount of a product or accidental ingestion of food containing nuts could result in a life-threatening situation.

- To keep children with nut allergies safe, **all classrooms are nut-free.**
- **Nuts and nut products are allowed in the cafeteria**, where nut-free tables are available for students with nut allergies in elementary schools. Any student may sit at the nut-free table if they have a nut-free lunch.
- **Class treats must be store-bought, prepackaged, and in the original container with the contents label visible.** They must be totally free of nuts and nut products and **MUST** be delivered by the parent directly to the teacher or school nurse. We also need to consider the needs of children who are allergic to foods other than nuts. Unapproved items will be returned home. CCSD Food Services provides an order form to purchase nut-free classroom celebration foods. See the school's web page under Departments -> Food Services.
- **Unscheduled celebrations will not be permitted.** No food can be brought into the classroom without prior teacher approval. Consider providing an alternative to food such as stickers, pencils, or donating a book/game in your child's name. Your child's teacher will be happy to provide suggestions to you.

We appreciate your support and cooperation. We believe all families understand a parent's concern and worries about safety and that you will join us in ensuring that our school is a safe learning environment for all children. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Please keep this portion for your review.



Please sign, cut along the dotted line and RETURN TO SCHOOL.

I have read and understand the peanut/nut-free classroom procedures. I agree to comply with this policy to ensure that our school is a safe learning environment for all students.

Child's name: _____ Teacher _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Form #32 5/22

Nativity of Mary School Cell Phone Policy

The Nativity of Mary staff acknowledges the fact that in today's day and age, many children have cell phones. Whereas the use of cell phones has become vital in many situations, during the school day children who bring a cell phone to school must adhere to the following guidelines.

All students' cell phones must be turned off and remain off once they have entered the school building

After 2:35 phones can be used OUTSIDE of the school building.

If a parent or guardian receives a call from his/her child's cell phone during the school day, that child is in direct violation of this policy. Students are instructed to inform the teacher of any emergency.

Should a parent or guardian have to speak with his or her child for an emergency during the school day, please call the school office at (716) 633-7441 ext.301

Cell phones should be stored in a student's secured backpack. Phones are not to be visible at all during the school day.

As with other personal property brought into our school, Nativity of Mary School is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.

Should a student violate the guidelines listed above, the following steps will occur:

First Offense: The phone will be confiscated by a school administrator, teacher, or school employee and be brought to the main office. A copy of this policy will be given and reviewed. A detention may be given to the student as well.

Second Offense: The phone will be confiscated by a school administrator, teacher, or school employee and brought to the main office. The student's parent or guardian will be notified by the administration that this is the second offense and that the phone will remain in the school's possession until the parent retrieves it. Another copy of this policy will be disbursed, and the student will be given a detention.

Third Offense: The phone will be confiscated by an administrator, teacher, or other school employee and brought to the main office. The student's parents will be notified that this is the third and final offense and that the student will no longer be allowed to bring the phone in question or any other cell phone to school for the remainder of the year. The parent will be asked to sign a form stating that he/she understands that his/her child cannot bring any cell phone to school for the remainder of the year. Additionally, the student may receive an in-school suspension for his/her continued disregard for these guidelines.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form to your child's teacher by Sept. 29, 2023



Nativity of Mary - Note to School

Date: _____

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Parent: _____

Absence Excuse

- My child is returning after an absence on the following days: _____
- Due to: _____

Late Arrival

- Late due to: _____ Time in: _____

Early Pick Up

- Leaving due to: _____ Time Leaving: _____
- Will they be returning? [] Yes [] No Time Back: _____

Pick Up

- Today my child will be picked up by: _____ at the 2:40pm dismissal

Bus

- Today my child will ride the Bus home
- My child will ride bus _____ home with _____ . They reside at Street _____ City/Zip _____



Nativity of Mary - Note to School

Date: _____

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Parent: _____

Absence Excuse

- My child is returning after an absence on the following days : _____
- Due to: _____

Late Arrival

- Late due to: _____ Time in: _____

Early Pick Up

- Leaving due to: _____ Time Leaving: _____
- Will they be returning? [] Yes [] No Time Back: _____

Pick Up

- Today my child will be picked up by: _____ at the 2:40pm dismissal

Bus

- Today my child will ride the Bus home
- My child will ride bus _____ home with _____ . They reside at Street _____ City/Zip _____

Parent/Student Handbook 2023-2024 | Grades K-8

Please return this agreement to the school office by Friday September 29, 2023.

I have read and discussed this handbook with my child(ren) and we agree to be governed by the rules stated within this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I will follow the rules as stated in the Handbook. I will be responsible for my behavior and complete all work on time. I will always do my best and respect all students and adults.

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Nativity of Mary School Student Behavior Contract | 2023-2024 School Year | Grades 3-5

At Nativity of Mary School, we are working to provide our students with an environment in which all students can learn and grow. We aim to foster growth academically, emotionally, and spiritually, allowing our students to reach their full potential in the classroom and as a person.

To facilitate this process, it is crucial that we as a school set in place clear guidelines as to what we expect from our students and the behaviors that will not be tolerated at Nativity of Mary School.

The rules and consequences of our school Discipline Policy are based on the Christian moral principal: "I will treat others the way that I want to be treated".

The Behavior Standards for our school are as follows:

Each student is entitled to a classroom that is conducive to learning. To ensure a good learning atmosphere, each teacher sets goals and guidelines for an orderly, respectful, disciplined classroom. It is important that parents be knowledgeable and supportive of these guidelines. The students will be taught to be responsible for their actions.

Acceptable student behavior demonstrates the following:

- Respect for all who enter. Always stand and greet a visitor.
- Come to school prepared, on time and ready to learn.
- Raise hand and do not talk out of turn or interrupt/distract others.
- Acceptance of responsibility for academic and moral learning.
- Courtesy in speech and manner towards all adults and each other.
- Follow directions of individual teachers.
- Regard for and cooperation with school and classroom rules.
- Kindness in speech, action, and attitude.
- Always walk single file and to the right.
- Proper safety habits and care of school property.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- No gum chewing.
- Courtesy and good manners are always expected of all students.

We also understand that as students are going through the process of learning and growing, that they will make mistakes. As an educational team, both school and parents must work together to help students learn from mistakes. To do this we must be clear on the consequences that will occur when students make mistakes with their behavior.

Each teacher at Nativity has a set of classroom rules to facilitate a productive and appropriate academic environment for all students.

In Grades K-5, each teacher will implement a classroom management program including appropriate consequences. In Grades 6-8, each teacher will implement a classroom management plan.

Failure of a student to comply and cooperate will result in the issuance of a Demerit Slip. Examples of non-compliance may include refusal to follow instruction, talking out of turn, gum chewing, failure, or refusal to complete an assignment and/or other.

Upon receipt of the third Demerit Slip from any/all teacher(s), a Conduct Referral will be issued (refer to below). Every third Demerit Slip will result in the issuance of another Conduct Referral. Demerit Slips will be “forgiven” with each new trimester; however, the resulting Conduct Referral(s) will not be “forgiven.”

Should a student consistently breach a teacher’s rules or if he/she has a particularly grievous offense, the school has established a higher form of discipline, which is encompassed in the Conduct Referral Program described on the subsequent pages.

Discipline Policy for students in Grades K-8th:

Reasons for Disciplinary Referrals resulting in Conduct Referral(s) may include:

Disrespect for teachers, staff, and other students (includes name-calling)

Disobedience or disregard of school policies and rules (including repeated dress code violations)

Forging a parent’s signature

Disruptive behavior

Excessive talk

Every third demerit slip accrued

Skipping classes

Misuse and/or unauthorized use of computers, electronic equipment, and the Internet

Disciplinary Action – K to 5th Grades

1st Offense – A conduct referral will be given to the student to be signed by the parent and returned the very next day. If the student comes to school without the signed referral, he/she will be sent to the office to phone their parents before being allowed in class. The referral must be signed and returned the very next day.

2nd Offense – The teacher immediately brings or sends the child from class to the office and has the child call the parent (either at home or at work) to explain the offense. The teacher also talks with the parent and recruits his/her help in solving the matter. For record keeping purpose and follow-up, a second disciplinary referral will be sent home.

3rd Offense – Set up a date for a conference, within a week of the offense with the teacher(s), parents, and administrators.

Double Offenses

The following are some examples of offenses that result in a “double referral,” which counts as two conduct referrals:

Cheating

Bullying/harassment/intimidation (Refer Parent-Student Handbook)

Use of Profanity and/or vulgar words

Sexual Harassment (refer to the Parent-Student Handbook)

For Grades K to 5th grade who receives an Automatic Detention the Disciplinary action is:

1st Offense - The teacher immediately brings or sends the child from class to the office and has the child call the parent (either at home or at work) to explain the offense. The teacher also talks with the parent and recruits his/her help in solving the matter. For record keeping purpose and follow-up, a conduct referral will be issued, signed by the parent.

2nd Offense – Set up a date for a conference, within a week of the offense, with the teacher(s), parents, and administrators.

Automatic Out-Of-School Suspension for Grades K to Gr. 8

Suspension from school is a severe penalty which may be imposed only upon students whose conduct endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others. (Education Law S3214(3)).

This out-of-school suspension could range from 3 to 5 days. Additionally, these offenses would also automatically equal a “double referral,” which counts as two conduct referrals. That would include:

Drugs/Alcohol/Smoking

Defacing school property

Weapons -The Police Department will be notified immediately

Theft

Fighting – if a physical injury occurs to one or both parties, a police report will be filed. The student(s) will be removed immediately from the premises by a parent. A conference will be held with the student, teacher(s), parents, and administration of the school to determine the best course of action for the student(s) in a case-by-case basis.

All Conduct Referrals will be kept in the student’s file and may be sent to any transferring new schools.

A single particularly egregious and unacceptable violation of the Code of Conduct may result in expulsion, following due consideration by the teachers, principal, and pastor.

Nativity of Mary School Student Behavior Contract | 2023-2024 | Grades 3-5

Please return this agreement to the school office by Friday September 29, 2023

I have read and discussed this Discipline Contract with my child(ren) and we agree to be governed by the rules stated within this Contract.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I will follow the rules as stated in the Discipline Contract. I will be responsible for my behavior and complete all work on time. I will always do my best and respect all students and adults.

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Nativity of Mary School Student Behavior Contract | 2023-2024 School Year | Grades 6-8

At Nativity of Mary School, we are working to provide our students with an environment in which all students can learn and grow. We aim to foster growth academically, emotionally, and spiritually, allowing our students to reach their full potential in the classroom and as a person.

To facilitate this process, it is crucial that we as a school set in place clear guidelines as to what we expect from our students and the behaviors that will not be tolerated at Nativity of Mary School.

The rules and consequences of our school Discipline Policy are based on the Christian Moral Principal: "I will treat others the way that I want to be treated".

The Behavior Standards for our school are as follows:

Each student is entitled to a classroom that is conducive to learning. To ensure a good learning atmosphere, each teacher sets goals and guidelines for an orderly, respectful, disciplined classroom. It is important that parents be knowledgeable and supportive of these guidelines. The students will be taught to be responsible for their actions.

Acceptable student behavior demonstrates the following:

- Respect for all who enter. Always stand and greet a visitor.
- Come to school prepared, on time and ready to learn.
- Raise hand and do not talk out of turn or interrupt/distract others.
- Acceptance of responsibility for academic and moral learning.
- Courtesy in speech and manner towards all adults and each other.
- Follow directions of individual teachers.
- Regard for and cooperation with school and classroom rules.
- Kindness in speech, action, and attitude.
- Always walk single file and to the right.
- Proper safety habits and care of school property.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- No gum chewing.

We also understand that as students are going through the process of learning and growing, that they will make mistakes. As an educational team, both school and parents must work together to help students learn from mistakes. To do this we must be clear on the consequences that will occur when students make mistakes with their behavior.

Each teacher at Nativity has a set of classroom rules to facilitate a productive and appropriate academic environment for all students.

In Grades K-5, each teacher will implement a classroom management program including appropriate consequences. In Grades 6-8, each teacher will implement a classroom management plan.

Failure of a student to comply and cooperate will result in the issuance of a Demerit Slip. Examples of non-compliance may include refusal to follow instruction, talking out of turn, gum chewing, failure or refusal to complete an assignment and/or other.

Upon receipt of the third Demerit Slip from any/all teacher(s), a Conduct Referral will be issued (refer to below). Every third Demerit Slip will result in the issuance of another Conduct Referral. Demerit Slips will be “forgiven” with each new trimester; however, the resulting Conduct Referral(s) will not be “forgiven.”

Should a student consistently breach a teacher’s rules or if he/she has a particularly grievous offense, the school has established a higher form of discipline, which is encompassed in the Conduct Referral Program described on the subsequent pages.

Discipline Policy for students in Grades K-8th:

Reasons for Demerit Slips resulting in Conduct Referral(s) may include:

Disrespect for teachers, staff, and other students (includes name-calling)

Disobedience or disregard of school policies and rules (including repeated dress code violations)

Forging a parent’s signature

Disruptive behavior

Excessive talk

Every third demerit slip accrued

Skipping classes

Misuse and/or unauthorized use of computers, electronic equipment, and the Internet (Refer to Parent-Student Handbook)

When a demerit slip is issued, the issuing teacher will send communication home to inform parents that a demerit has been given.

Disciplinary Action – Grades 6 to 8

All referrals must be signed by a parent and returned to school the next day. Blue copy of all referrals will be sent to the school office the day it was issued.

1st Offense – A conduct referral will be issued. Student will be warned of the consequences for additional conduct referrals.

2nd Offense – A second conduct referral will be issued and will result in a detention.

3rd Offense – A conduct referral will be issued and will result in two (2) consecutive days of one (1) hour detention to be designated by the issuing teacher. The student will also lose a school privilege that may occur ANY time during the school year. This may include field trips, school assemblies, sports activities, dress-down days, and Catholic School Week activities, etc. at the discretion of the teacher and principal. A parent conference will be held with the parent, student, teachers, and principal.

4th Offense – A conduct referral will be issued and may result in a 1-3 day in-school suspension (number of days to be determined with consultation of teachers and principal). It will also result in a second loss of a school privilege as outlined in the third offense.

5th Offense – A conduct referral will be issued and may result in a 2-3 day out-of-school suspension. The student loses all school privileges for the remaining school year. An individual Student Contract may be required stating what is required from the student to remain a student at Nativity.

6th Offense – A conduct referral will be issued, and the student may receive an out-of-school suspension for one (1) week (5 school days) and a conference will be held during that time with parents, teachers, and principal. The student may be expelled from Nativity. After consultation with the Pastor, principal, and the teachers, the final decision about the student's placement will be rendered.

Double Offenses

The following are some examples of offenses that result in a "double referral," which counts as two conduct referrals:

Cheating

Bullying/harassment/intimidation (refer to the Parent-Student Handbook)

Use of Profanity and/or vulgar words

Sexual Harassment (refer to the Parent Student Handbook)

Automatic Out-Of-School Suspension for Grades K to Gr. 8

Suspension from school is a severe penalty which may be imposed only upon students whose conduct endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others. (Education Law S3214(3)).

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Weapons -The Police Department will be notified immediately

Theft

Fighting – if a physical injury occurs to one or both parties, a police report will be filed. The student(s) will be removed immediately from the premises by a parent. A conference will be held with the student, teacher(s), parents, and administration of the school to determine the best course of action for the student(s) in a case-by-case basis.

All Conduct Referrals will be kept in the student's file and may be sent to any transferring new schools.

A single particularly egregious and unacceptable violation of the Code of Conduct may result in expulsion, following due consideration by the teachers, principal, and pastor.

Nativity of Mary School Student Behavior Contract | 2023-2024 School Year | Grades 6-8

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Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I will follow the rules as stated in the Discipline Contract. I will be responsible for my behavior and complete all work on time. I will always do my best and respect all students and adults.

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Grade: _____