

## **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Preschool Parent Handbook**

### **Mission Statement**

As a ministry of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help School is rooted in the Roman Catholic tradition and actively cultivates the community's faith in Jesus Christ through participation in prayer, liturgies, and the sacraments within a Gospel-centered environment. Our school joyfully serves, supplements, and supports parents and families as first and primary educators of their children.

In building a culture of life, we live the fundamental truth that all life is sacred, realizing the dignity of each student through the recognition of Christ's presence in all of us.

In cooperation with parents, the Our Lady of Perpetual Help pastor, faculty, and staff develop students who are life-long active Catholic Christians, serving the Church, community, and society. We provide a strong educational foundation to well prepare our graduates for further formal education. We encourage the exploration of our students' vocational calling by forming them in Catholic truth, virtue, and fellowship while inspiring them to seek spiritual, intellectual, artistic, social, and physical excellence.

### **Philosophy**

Pope John Paul II expressed that

"... the purpose of Catholic education is to communicate Christ to you, so that your attitude toward others will be that of Christ... part of a Catholic education is to learn to see the needs of others, and to have the courage to practice what we believe. With the support of Catholic education, we try to meet every circumstance of life with the attitude of Christ."

At Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, we live our beliefs by:

- Living our baptismal call to proclaim the Good News as part of the larger Christian community
- Following the example of Mary, Our Mother, as our model of discipleship
- Recognizing, encouraging, and supporting parents as the primary educators of their children in Gospel-centered families, including the education of the whole person spiritually, intellectually, socially and physically
- Fostering individuals in developing their unique gifts as part of God's plan for

- strengthening the human family
- Integrating our Catholic Christian faith in all that we do, providing a strong foundation for our children's lifelong spiritual development and active participation in the Catholic Christian community
- Encouraging awareness of each individual's role as a member of the human family, working for social justice through prayer, charitable works, and leadership roles
- Acknowledging the sacredness of life through recognition of Christ's presence in all of us
- Valuing education and academic excellence as a means to live our beliefs, broaden our horizons, and open the opportunities for our God-given talents to come to fulfillment
- Respecting and appreciating the cultural diversity of our society

## **School Wide Learning Expectations**

### **Grades Preschool -3**

The students of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School are expected to:

- I. Love God, Love Others, and Love Yourself: Learn about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit Honor Mary Practice being like Jesus everyday Care for God's world
- II. Live in Peace with Others: Learn from one another Make good choices Ask for help and give help Pray for the needs of others
- III. Talk and Write Clearly: Read many kinds of writing Speak with classmates and adults kindly Listen to others Write neatly on all class work and homework
- IV. Learn Something New Each Day: Set goals for the day, the week, and the month Finish all class work and homework by doing your best Learn to use the Keyboard & use the Computer Ask Questions and Think about Answers

## **Goals and Objectives**

### **Spiritual**

Through Christ-centered formal teaching and role modeling, the staff will provide children with the foundations necessary to realize a personal relationship with God, to become participating members in the school and Church communities, to recognize the responsibility to respect creation, and to respond to others in need by:

1. Teaching the Scripture as a means for living the Gospel message.

2. Providing opportunities for the children to establish a personal relationship with God by participating in the Eucharistic celebration, in paraliturgies, in group prayer, and in times of quiet reflection.

### **Intellectual**

In order to satisfy individual education needs and maintain a standard of excellence, the staff will provide a successful academic program for students by:

1. Implementing a variety of teaching methodologies to provide for various learning styles and multiple intelligences.
2. Reviewing and updating curriculum.
3. Using opportunities for on-going professional development through continuing education, workshops, and professional reading.
4. Encouraging students and parents to actively participate in the learning process.
5. Recommending special testing and/or help for those children who appear to be at risk academically.

### **Physical**

The staff will attend to the physical well being of the children and develop habits that will contribute to their good health as adults by:

1. Teaching respect for and knowledge of the human body and its systems.
2. Maintaining a safe and healthy classroom environment.
3. Providing appropriate physical education activities.

### **Emotional**

The staff will safeguard the emotional health of the children and strive to help them feel secure about themselves and their talents by:

1. Demonstrating respect for them as individuals who are unique and loved.
2. Teaching the children to be responsible for choices made.
3. Striving for fairness and justice at all levels of school operation.
4. Giving positive reinforcement.
5. Recommending special testing and/or help for those children who appear to be emotionally at risk.

### **Social**

The staff will provide an environment in which children experience respect, tolerance, freedom, security, self-discovery, and the desire to serve others by:

1. Offering activities that allow for social interaction
2. Creating opportunities to interact with the parish and other community groups.
3. Encouraging support of and involvement in school activities.

## **General Policies and Procedures**

### **Absences**

No deductions or refunds will be made for absences. The tuition contract guarantees a place for your child and is the basis for staff salaries and expenses. Please call the office by 9 a.m. if your child will be absent. A written note must accompany the child upon his/her return to preschool after an absence.

### **Admission Policies**

A copy of the "Admission Agreement & Agreement to Abide" form may be found at the end of this handbook.

### **Air Quality**

We are concerned about adequate health protection for our children from air pollution episodes that occur during school hours.

The preschool staff will take action to restrict physical activities after notification of poor air quality by the school's administrator, superintendent, and/or the County Health Services Department.

### **Arrival and Pick Up**

All preschoolers must be signed in by the transporter, parent or guardian upon arrival to school each morning.

All preschoolers must be signed out by the transporter, parent or guardian (who is at least 18 years of age) when picked up at the end of the school day. Only those adults who are on the child's pickup authorization list may check out the child. If there is any question about the person picking up a child, the staff will ask for photo identification. Non-custodial parents cannot be denied access without a court order. Any changes to the authorization list must be in writing and received by the school prior to the release of the child.

Drop off and pick up will take place at the door of the preschool. Parents must check in at the office before proceeding to the preschool. Any and all pickups during the school day must take place through the school office.

### **Back to School Night**

This program is a mandatory attendance and is for adults only. The evening is held to:

1. Strengthen the building of faith community at home and school.
2. Acquaint parents and faculty with each other.

3. Provide parents with knowledge of the academic, spiritual, and social programs and expectations of the school.

### **Before and After School Supervision**

In today's societal climate, we must do everything that we can to preserve the safety of the children. The responsibility for supervising children is serious; therefore the following policy for the safety of the children is that:

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School is not able to accept the responsibility of supervising children in the morning before the hour of 7:00 a.m. and disclaims all such responsibility.

Picking up children from preschool at the predetermined time is also important. State regulations mandates preschool programs with strict student-to-staff ratios. We hire staff based on the registration agreement. Failure to pick up a child in a timely manner can threaten the proper ratios and thus cause additional staffing needs. Families who are late picking up children will be billed beginning at 6:01 p.m. at \$1 per minute.

### **Behavior Guidelines**

Discipline is considered to be a form of guidance rather than a form of punishment. The goal of discipline is to help children develop their own problem-solving, choice-making, and self-monitoring skills rather than to allow the adult to vent anger, frustration, and display superiority and power.

The school is designed to be child-safe and to encourage pro-social age appropriate behavior from your children. A positive approach is used with children in ensuring their safety and well being while at school. The staff is trained effectively to use positive discipline approaches such as redirection, logical consequences, role modeling, time-out from the activities, and discussion with parents.

### **Birthday Parties**

Parents may provide a simple treat for the class on their child's birthday. Please make prior arrangements with the teacher or director. Unless the entire class is invited to an "out of school" birthday party, invitations may not be sent to school for distribution as it causes hurt feelings for those left out.

### **Buckley Amendment**

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School is in compliance with the Buckley Amendment regarding the reviewing of your children's records. Written notice of the intent to review them needs to be sent to school at least 24 hours in advance.

## **Care of Property**

1. All articles of clothing, lunch boxes, and bags need to be marked with the student's name and grade.
2. Damage to property which occurs because of violation of school regulations or willful malice or undue carelessness must be replaced by the student/parents.

## **Child Abuse**

Child abuse is any act of omission or commission that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and/or development. The major responsibilities of school personnel are:

1. To identify incidents of child abuse.
2. To comply with laws requiring reporting of suspected child abuse to proper authorities.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School and its employees comply with the reporting requirements of California's Child Abuse Reporting Law. The school will immediately report any known or reasonably suspected incidents of child abuse to the proper child protection agencies (Diocesan policy 4710).

## **Class and Individual Pictures**

The school contracts with a professional photography company to take pictures of the students in the first few weeks of school.

## **Sample Daily Schedule**

8:00 a.m.	Welcome Children
8:10 a.m.	Circle Time (Calendar, Attendance, Story, Singing)
8:30 a.m.	Bible Education
9:00 a.m.	Activity Stations (Math, Science, Art and Learning Games)
9:30 a.m.	Outdoor Play, Restrooms, Snack
10:15 a.m.	Early Literacy Learning (Phonics, Letter Recognition, Activity Stations)
11:15 a.m.	closing Circle Time
11:30 a.m.	Lunch
12:00 p.m.	Outdoor Play
12:15 p.m.	Restrooms/Napping
2:15 p.m.	Outdoor Play/Snack/Restrooms
2:45 p.m.	Closing Circle Time (reinforce morning learning with different activities)
3:00 p.m.	Dismissal

## **Dress Code**

The dress code for preschoolers is the same as that of the rest of the school. All uniform items may be purchased at Dennis Uniform Company.

**Boys:** Blue shirt with OLPH logo, dark blue shorts or pants, dark blue sweatshirt with OLPH logo (in winter). Sweater or sweater vest with logo is worn each Friday for Mass.

**Girls:** Blue shirt with OLPH logo, dark blue shorts or pants (or the blue plaid jumper or skort may be worn), dark blue sweatshirt with OLPH logo (in winter). Sweater or sweater vest with logo is worn each Friday for Mass.

**Both:** Cougar Wear may be worn every Thursday.

Other guidelines regarding proper dress:

1. No makeup of any kind may be worn to school. This includes no nail polish.
2. Only stud type earrings are allowed to be worn at school for girls. No earrings may be worn by boys.
3. Shoes are to be black, brown, white or blue and must be worn with white socks that cover the ankle. No open-toed or open-heeled shoes may be worn.
4. No oversized clothing or ill fitting clothes may be worn at school or school related functions.

All students must have a full change of clothes at the preschool at all times. The clothing should come to school in a plastic bag with proper identification on it.

## **Hair Policy**

All students' hair must be neat and clean at all times. Boy's hair may not be longer than the hairline on their necks. Bangs for girls and boys may be no longer than the eyebrow, and the hair may not be dyed, tinted, or bleached. No hairstyle, whether for girls or boys, may be such that it is a distraction for others. Hairstyles that may be considered inappropriate will be handled on an individual basis.

## **Emergency Card**

Emergency forms must be complete and turned into the Director prior to the first day the child arrives to preschool.

The office must be notified immediately of any change in a student's address or phone number, and of any change in the emergency numbers on file at school. This will guarantee prompt action in case your child becomes ill or has an accident while at school.

## **Field Trips**

OLPH Preschool will only go on field trips that are within walking distance of the school. The primary purpose of a field trip is to provide educational or spiritual enrichment for our children. Guidelines for each trip will be provided by the teacher.

## **Fundraising**

We encourage parents of preschoolers to actively participate in the Parent Club fundraisers.

## **Health and Immunizations**

Health: The school is a place for well children. Children with signs of contagious infections will not be accepted at school. Children must be free from fever 24 hours before they can return to school. If a child is sent home with a fever, he/she may not return the next day. Children need to stay at home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms: diarrhea, fever, cough with mucous secretion, rash or skin infection with drainage, vomit, pink eye or conjunctivitis, head lice or nits.

Health and Safety of Your Child: Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, you must file with us the necessary forms, which includes the Diocese of Fresno Emergency Medical Treatment Form.

Dispensing Prescribed And/Or Over-the-Counter Medication: In order for school personnel to assist in the dispensing of any form of medication, a "Parent or Guardian Request for Assistance with Non-Prescribed or Over-The-Counter Medicine Waiver of Claims and Release of Liability" or "Parent or Guardian's Request for Assistance with Physician Prescribed Medicine Waiver of Claims and Release of Liability" form must be completely filled out (samples at the end of this handbook). The medication must be given directly to a teacher or the director from the parent or guardian.

Immunization: The following immunizations are necessary prior to a child being admitted to preschool:

- 3 Polio
- 4 DTaP
- 3 HepB
- 1 MMR, on or after first birthday<sup>1</sup>
- 1 Hib, on or after the first birthday<sup>1,3</sup>
- 1 Varicella (chickenpox)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Receipt of the dose up to (and including) 4 days before the birthday will satisfy the child care entry immunization requirement.

<sup>2</sup> If a child had chickenpox disease and this is indicated on the Immunization Record by the child's



physician, they meet the requirement. Write “disease” in the chickenpox date box on the blue card.  
<sup>3</sup> Required only for children who have not reached the age of 4 years 6 months.

Medical or Dental Emergencies: In case of medical or dental emergency pertaining to your child, the preschool staff will follow instructions as given on your "Consent for Medical Treatment" form.

### **Meals and Snacks**

A healthy morning snack following mandated nutritional guidelines will be provided by the school. An afternoon snack will also be provided. A monthly snack menu will be sent home. Parents may purchase lunch for their child or they may choose to bring send a lunch. All lunches meet the minimum mandated nutritional guidelines. Monthly lunch menus will also be sent home.

### **Naptime**

Each parent is to provide a sheet for naptime which is to be taken home for laundering every other Friday. Preschoolers may have a small blanket and a small comfort toy (such as a stuffed animal) for this period.

### **Non-discrimination Policy**

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students of any race, color, and national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at OLPH School. Our Lady of Perpetual Help School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and/or ethnic origin, age, gender, or disability in the administration of its education policies, admission policies, tuition assistance, and athletic or other school-administered program.

Likewise, Our Lady of Perpetual help School does not discriminate against any employees or applicant for employment on the basis of gender, age, race, color, national and/or ethnic origin.

This statement is based on diocesan policies 3211 and 4110.

### **Parent Volunteers**

We depend upon volunteer help for many tasks at school, and understand that because of other jobs, responsibilities, and family obligations, everyone cannot give the same amount of time and help. A minimum of ten (10) hours of annual service is required as part of the parent participation requirement. A charge of \$20 per hour not volunteered will be assessed by June 15th for the previous year.

Parent Classroom Helpers – The OLPH Preschool welcomes parent helpers into the classroom. In order to help out in the classroom or on field trips, parents or guardians must have a cleared TB skin test (within the past year), cleared fingerprints on file, and attendance of a Safe Environment course.

### **Tuesday Packet**

Each Tuesday, an online newsletter will be emailed to each family. At times, extra papers will be sent home in a folder with your child on Tuesday afternoon. Please make sure that you have a current email address on file in the school office. You can also sign up for the weekly email by visiting the OLPH School Website at [www.olphschool.net](http://www.olphschool.net). In addition, a letter pertaining to preschool activities and news will also be published on a weekly basis.

### **Vacations/Holidays**

The OLPH Preschool will closely follow the OLPH School calendar.

We understand that family vacations occur. However, you will still be expected to pay for the full month of tuition regardless of your child's attendance during that particular month.