

## **Our Lady of Consolation Kindergarten Handbook**

Welcome to Our Lady of Consolation Early Learning Center Kindergarten. This handbook is designed to answer most of your questions regarding the day-to-day operation and policies of our Kindergarten. Please keep it for reference during the school year.

Our Director and Kindergarten teacher are also available to speak with you about our program, answer questions, and handle your concerns.

Our Lady of Consolation Church Pastor: Father Victor J. Eschbach  
Director: Mrs. Janice Dagney  
Assistant Directors: Mrs. Shelly Carr & Mrs. Carol Egan

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

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### **Our Lady of Consolation Early Learning Center Kindergarten**

Parents'/Guardians' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

We have received a copy of the Parent/Student Handbook and have reviewed the contents thoroughly. We agree to accept the policies and procedures of the school and willingly support its programs.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please return this form to the school office by the end of the first week of school. Thank you.)

## **MISSION**

We believe that each child is a special gift from God to be nurtured, formed, and educated. Through coordinated, planned educational activities, a child will gradually develop intellectually, socially, and spiritually. In a safe and well-organized environment, the child will experience various age-appropriate activities for cognitive development. Constructive and free-play bring together a child's social skills. A knowledge of God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—helps the child understand and live our Catholic beliefs.

## **KINDERGARTEN OBJECTIVES**

- ◆ Provide an environment based on our Catholic faith and activities that will promote maximum physical, cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual development.
- ◆ Make a child's school experience a positive one.
- ◆ Aid each child to adjust to new situations.
- ◆ Encourage each child to solve problems independently.
- ◆ Help each child to recognize the importance of others and develop respect for them.
- ◆ Increase child's attention span.
- ◆ Encourage cooperation and sharing.
- ◆ Encourage each child to play and work well in groups and independently.
- ◆ Stimulate each child's thought process to bring greater understanding, awareness, and curiosity.
- ◆ Develop basic academic skills for greater success in primary grades.
- ◆ Create an environment where children can play together, learn together, and most importantly, learn of Jesus' love for them.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance impacts positively on a child's educational development. The number of days school is in session is prescribed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

### **ABSENCES**

- A student who has been absent from school, even for one day, is required to present a written note to his/her teacher.
- A doctor's certificate may be required for an absence of an extended nature (3 days or more).
- If your child is going to be absent or arrive late at school, you are required to call the school office. Please call by 8:15 am and leave a message. If your child's name appears on the attendance report and you have not phoned in to let us know, please expect a call from the school to verify the absence or check on your child's whereabouts. Please help us in this endeavor by calling. Your child's safety and welfare are of great importance to us.
- In case of illness, a school official will contact the parents or adult whose name has been submitted to the office with an emergency phone number.
- Any child who stays home without his/her parent's knowledge is liable to suspension. Any child who leaves school without permission is liable to suspension.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Children should not arrive at school before 8:45 am. Classes start at 8:50 am. Any child who arrives after 9:00 am will be marked late. A written excuse from the parent must be provided explaining the reason for the lateness.

Children should enter the building through the lower door. In case of inclement weather, look for the school flag in front of the Parish Center. In this instance, you may park on the circle to bring your child to the classroom or pick him/her up from the classroom.

Kindergarten dismissal is at 2:50 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your child unless other arrangements have been made. No child may leave the building prior to dismissal without the Director's permission.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL—Individual Students**

No child will be excused early except in cases of emergency. To request an early dismissal, please send a note to the teacher, who will forward it to the Director. The student will be dismissed from the Director's office. The parent or guardian must report to the office and sign the child out in order to have a child released from school.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL—General/Emergency Closings**

Please listen to KYW 1060 or WCOJ 1420 for school closings, late openings, or early dismissals due to inclement weather. Students in the Octorara School District should be contacted by a automated telephone system.

## **VACATION POLICY**

The planning of family vacations during the school year is strongly discouraged. Please contact the Director if there is a need for your child to be away on vacation during the academic year. The repeated taking of vacations during school time may be grounds for dismissal. Continuity in a young child's program is extremely important.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS**

OLC-ELC follows the direction of the Octorara School District regarding cancellation, delays and closing decisions. Please check with television and radio stations for school closing information. If your school district of residence is closed and OLC-ELC is open, you may bring your child to school and pick him/her up after school. No transportation is provided if the district is closed.

In the event of emergency closings, please instruct your child as to where they are to go. We suggest making arrangements with a relative, neighbor or friend.

All snow days will be made up. Please see the school calendar for make-up dates.

## **CODE WORD FORM**

This is the security system for parents and other people who will be picking up and/or dropping off your child. A form will be provided for you to list other people who will be picking up and dropping off your child. Choose a **Code Word**. Please give this code word to the designated people listed on your form. The teacher will ask for the **Code Word** and a form of personal identification from these people. This is for your child's safety.

## **CONFERENCES/REPORT CARDS**

We schedule an evening during the first month of school for parents as a group to meet the teacher in the classroom setting. The teacher will present the goals and objectives for kindergarten and outline expectations for the students. Parents are strongly encouraged not only to attend but also to participate in the question and answer dialog.

Individual kindergarten parent conferences are held near the end of October. This is an opportunity for the teacher and parents to share mutual observations on the educational growth of the child.

Final kindergarten parent/teacher conferences are held near the end of the school year. This is a student-led conference, which means your child will be leading the conference.

If you wish to schedule an individual appointment at any other time, please send a written request to the teacher and include a suggested time and your telephone number. The teacher will contact you to confirm the appointment.

## COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is the single, most important factor that assures a positive relationship between home and school. Several modes of communication exist at our school to help keep parents informed of policies, activities, upcoming events and student progress. Regular forms of communication include this handbook, a school-year calendar, weekly newsletter, communication folders which go home each week, parent-teacher conferences, PTO meetings, and Report Cards.

It is the responsibility of the child to provide the parents with all written communications.

**Parents are asked to check school bags and folders regularly for such communications.**

**Please remove the correspondence from the communication folder.** Any communications, forms, money, etc. that are brought to school are forwarded to the office through the teacher. Students should not be instructed to deliver items directly to the teacher.

## CURRICULUM

Because young children learn best in a secure, stimulating environment, the kindergarten curriculum has been developed to help each child develop his/her individual talents and abilities. An integrated, thematic approach promotes learning and development across spiritual, cognitive, linguistic, physical, social and emotional domains.

**Religion** is a key component of all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum centers on the development of faith and trust in God through the study of Catholic Doctrine. We strive to make the study and practice of religion not merely a lesson learned in school, but a life lived at all times. The teachers will provide a variety of experiences and activities to help children understand more fully the goodness of God, His message, and His love. However, it is the responsibility of the parents—the first and primary educators of their children—to fulfill this obligation. It is vital to the child's spiritual development that they participate in the Eucharistic Celebration and parish life with their families.

The **Integrated Language Arts** program combines reading, writing, thinking, listening and speaking. The result is that reading and language arts become a unified whole, which helps young children understand the relationships and connections in the learning process.

The **Mathematics** program focuses on the Standards for School Mathematics. Problem solving for communication and reasoning is an integral part of the program. Application of mathematical concepts is integrated into the child's daily routine.

In **Science** and **Social Studies**, the curriculum is developed to channel the child's natural curiosity about the world around them. Through a variety of hands-on activities, children develop critical thinking skills that are fundamental to future academic success. They also begin to develop and understanding of the interdependence of all life, their responsibility to God and to each other, and the proper use of the natural resources of our earth.

**Music, Art, Physical Education** and **Computer Skills** are integrated into all curriculum areas.

## **DRESS CODE**

Neatness and cleanliness in personal attire and grooming are part of a child's education and the responsibility of the parents. When a child looks and feels good about himself/herself, he/she acts and works accordingly.

### **KINDERGARTEN UNIFORM**

The kindergarten uniform is designed to allow children freedom of movement in their activities. The uniform can be ordered from First Class Advertising and/or Flynn & O'Hara.

*Fall Uniform: See calendar*  
*Winter Uniform: See calendar*  
*Spring Uniform: See calendar*

#### **Girls**

##### **Winter:**

- Khaki drop-waist jumper with school logo or khaki slacks
- Forest green turtleneck shirt with school logo
- Forest green knee socks or tights/white cuffed or crew socks
- Sneakers

##### **Fall/Spring:**

- Khaki walking shorts or skort
- Forest green short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
- White cuffed or crew socks
- Sneakers

#### **Boys**

##### **Winter:**

- Khaki slacks
- Forest green long sleeve turtleneck or polo shirt with school logo
- White cuffed or crew socks
- Sneakers

##### **Fall/Spring:**

- Khaki walking shorts
- Forest green short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
- White cuffed or crew socks
- Sneakers

#### **Gym uniform for boys and girls: (ordered through Comfy Cozy)**

- Gray sweat pants/gray shorts and green shirt with school logo
- White cuffed or crew socks
- Sneakers

**Hair:** Well-groomed and neatly styled. Boys' hair must be short and above the collar of the shirt. No extreme styles or colors.

**Jewelry:** One set of small post earrings for girls; no earrings for boys. No other jewelry is allowed.

**Nail Polish:** Clear only—no colors.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is fundamental to life. It is important that a positive sense of self-discipline be developed in order to provide an environment that is conducive to learning. The kindergarten teacher will usually handle individual discipline issues. Classroom rules will be reviewed with the children. The Director will be involved in cases involving serious or repeated misbehavior.

The complete Discipline Code is on file in our school's office.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT FORMS**

The parent(s) or guardian(s) of each child is required to complete an emergency contact form provided by the Early Learning Center. It is important that the information on this form is accurate and up to date so that we may contact you in the event of an emergency with your child.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

The purpose of every field trip is to expand the intellectual, cultural and social experiences of each child.

Parents of each child will be expected to drive their child to each field trip. If a parent cannot drive, please make other arrangements with a relative, neighbor, or another parent in their child's class to drive your child. Child car seats are mandatory. It is important to remember that these trips have been designed as extensions of the curriculum; therefore, only the child enrolled in the class should attend the field trip with the accompanying adult.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Monthly fire drills are required by law and are an important safety measure. At the sound of the alarm, it is essential that **everyone** in the building leave promptly, quietly and quickly. Fire drill routes are displayed in each room. The last person out of the room should turn off the lights and close the door. Silence and order is mandated.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents should notify the school of any serious physical problems or handicaps their child may have and of special treatment or care needed to be given in an emergency. Emergency cards are on file for each student. It is important to keep the information current. If it is determined that a child needs to leave school, the parents or emergency contact will be notified. Students must be excluded if vomiting or a fever greater than 100°F is present.

**A child should remain home at least 24 hours without fever and vomiting following an illness.** When given an antibiotic by a physician, they must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Keep your child home when he/she has: fever, chills, unusual skin rash, enlarged glands, vomiting, abdominal pain, sore throat, or inflamed eyes.

The student must present a doctor's note upon returning to school after contracting these illnesses: streptococcal infections, chicken pox, measles, mumps, German measles, and eye infections. If your child has lice, at least one treatment with specific lotion must be completed before the child can come back to school. Families that are involved will be notified.

In the case of an emergency, Brandywine Hospital will be used, unless parents indicate another preference.

## MEDICATION POLICY

It is recommended that **NO** medication, including cough drops, be given during school hours. Most medications can be given before and/or after school hours.

If any medication **MUST** be given in school, it must be in its original container accompanied by a signed school district consent form, which may be obtained in the school office.

If these guidelines are followed, in the absence of the school nurse/nurse substitute, the Director or her designee may give prescribed medicine with written and/or verbal consent, i.e. Emergency Cards, or On-going Prescription Medication Form.

All medicines will be kept in the office in a locked cabinet. It is the student's responsibility to come to the office to receive this medication, with the teacher's permission. No student is to administer medication himself; it is to be administered by the nurse, Director, or designee.

Students on long-term medication that must be taken in school must have the appropriate On-going Prescription Medication Form completed by their parent or guardian. This form may be obtained in the school office.

The nurse, Director or designee may give medications listed on the signed emergency procedure card that is on file in the office.

## **Medical Records**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has mandated that all children entering Kindergarten or First Grade present documented proof that the following immunizations have been received:

- Diphtheria, 4 doses Toxoid—one after fourth birthday
- Tetanus, 4 doses Toxoid—one after fourth birthday
- Polio, 3 doses Trivalent Oral Vaccine
- Measles, 2 doses of vaccine
- Rubella, 2 doses of vaccine
- Mumps, 2 doses of vaccine
- Hepatitis B, 3 doses of vaccine

After the basic series of three Oral Polio Vaccine, Diphtheria and Tetanus, boosters are due between four and six years of age. This should be followed by a Diphtheria-Tetanus booster between 14 and 16 years of age, with a subsequent booster every 10 years thereafter. Please inform the school office, in writing, when boosters are given. Other immunizations may be required by the State.

The State does not require Pertussis, Haemophilus Influenza B (HBT) or Smallpox vaccinations, but parents should check with their physician for current practices.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

We follow the regulations as stated in the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. If a parent wishes to review their child's official file, the request must be made in writing twenty-four hours prior to the review. The Director or her designee must be in attendance while the file is being reviewed.

### **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT\***

We abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child(ren). If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

\*Note: If there is a divorce or child-custody litigation, the custodial parent is required to file a court-certified copy of the child custody section with the school.

## TUITION

Tuition must be paid in full each year by May 15<sup>th</sup>. The first payment is non-refundable and is due by July 15<sup>th</sup>. The remainder of the tuition is due in monthly payments payable by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, or according to the Full Payment or Three Payment plans available. Payments received after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will be subject to a \$10 late fee. We appreciate your cooperation in making payments promptly; it helps us meet our operational expenses.

There will be a \$30 charge for all checks returned to us because of insufficient funds. If there has been *two* returned checks due to insufficient funds, we will no longer accept a check for tuition. Payment must be made either by cash or money order.

Should a difficulty arise in your situation, please discuss this with your Pastor or the Director at once. The payment of tuition is your responsibility; please do not let your child be embarrassed through your forgetfulness.

**See attached sheet for current tuition rates and plans.**

## LUNCH AND SNACKS

All children stay in school for lunch during the school year. The forty-five minute lunch period is divided into 20/25 minutes for lunch and 20/25 minutes for play. If a parent wishes to have a child leave school at lunchtime, prior arrangements must be made through a note sent to the teacher and forwarded to the office. The child must have an adult with him/her when leaving for or returning from lunch.

Please include in your child's lunch box at least two napkins as well as plastic ware if needed. This is most appreciated as a means of helping with the clean-up at the end of each lunch period. Students are expected to clean their places after eating, pick up papers, dispose of them in the trash containers, and walk to the playground area when dismissed.

Milk will be provided for a small fee monthly.

Hot lunches will be offered when we have at least 15 children enrolled in Kindergarten.

Each child's parent(s) will be responsible for providing a snack for his/her afternoon snack. Spring Water will be provided. All snacks should be healthy ones—e.g., fruit, cheese, crackers, pretzels, etc. Birthday celebrations are the exception. You may bring cupcakes, cookies, donut holes, cupcakes in cones, etc. (individual servings please) for you child's birthday treat.

If a child in the class has food allergies that prohibit him or her from consuming a particular treat, we will alert all parents and ask that they be sensitive to this when providing birthday treats.

## **SAFETY**

For your child's safety, the doors will be locked at 9:20 am and unlocked at 11:20 am for pre-school arrival and dismissal; locked at 12:50 pm and unlocked at 2:40 pm for afternoon arrival and dismissal. If you arrive after the doors are locked, you must ring the doorbell, and a member of our staff will let you in. Please be considerate of this policy not to interrupt our valuable class time.

There will always be two adults in the building whenever children are present. Children will not be allowed out of the classroom without an adult. Children will always travel in pairs and with an adult when going to places outside of the classroom.

Each teacher and aide will be certified in CPR and First Aid and have required background checks.

Running is not permitted within the school building or in moving from one place to another on the school premises.

Entry is not permitted into the school building before school in the morning, at recess or lunch, or after dismissal at any time, unless a member of the school staff gives explicit permission to do so.

No student may leave the school premises at any time without permission. A violation of this regulation will result in automatic suspension. Every student must stay within the established boundaries when outdoors for recess.

All visitors must report to the school office.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents and guardians must weigh seriously their obligation to educate their children in an atmosphere of love and respect for God and others. The home is the first school of the social virtues essential to any well-ordered society.

Active cooperation of parents and guardians is expected and required as follows:

- Sending their child to school physically fit, clean and properly dressed and fed.
- Assisting their child's spiritual, academic and moral development through careful attention to his/her progress reports, supervision of home study and behavior, and cooperation with the school in matters of activities, recreation, academics and discipline.
- Discovering their child's special interests and talents so that they may be developed to the fullest.
- Sending a written explanation each time their child is absent from school.
- Setting a good example by personally refraining from any activity that would violate school policy, Catholic teachings or the law.
- Taking an active role in the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

The failure of a parent/guardian to take seriously his/her responsibilities in this area is grounds for action by the school, including dismissal of the student.

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

All parents are required by the Early Learning Center to fulfill a 10-hour minimum of volunteer hours throughout the school year. We have many volunteer opportunities ranging from within the classroom to weekends and evenings for those working parents.

Below is a form we would like you to fill out and return stating that you would like to participate in our Volunteer Program. If you are unable to volunteer, there is a charge of \$100 that must be paid by the end of the school year.

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## VOLUNTEER HOURS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I will fulfill the 10-hour minimum of volunteer hours.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I am unable to participate. Check is attached.