

Parent/Student Handbook

Divine Mercy Catholic School

Grades: PreK-6



PHONE: School Office.... 419-263-2114
School Fax..... 419-567-1503
Parish Office..... 419-399-2576

HOURS: 8:50am - 3:25pm

Divine Mercy Catholic School • 120 Arturus Street • Payne, Ohio 45880

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The school's policy regarding background checks for teaching and non-teaching employees and for volunteers who have direct contact with students can be found here:
https://toledodiocese.org/page/protecting-youth-victim-assistance#_policy_for_the_protection_of_minors

FOREWORD

This handbook has been compiled to acquaint you with the philosophy, policies and procedures of the school. Our school is an institution wholeheartedly committed to assisting you in the education of your child. You are his/her primary educator, with the school helping in this important responsibility. This aid can be beneficial only in proportion to the harmony prevailing in the home-school relationship. Please feel free to confer with the teachers and principal if you have any questions concerning the health, safety or educational well-being of your child.

SCHOOL HISTORY

Divine Mercy Catholic School (formerly St. John the Baptist) is the only Catholic School in Paulding County. The school was originally established in 1920, in a former church building. It was staffed by the Sisters of St. Francis of Tiffin, Ohio.

The first building that housed the school burned in 1926. A portable unit of 2 rooms was brought in until 1936 when a new school with 4 rooms was constructed. In September, 1936, the Franciscan Sisters of Joliet, Illinois replaced the Tiffin Franciscans until 1960. In that year, the Tiffin Franciscans again returned to Payne.

In 1966, another new school, and the current school building, was completed. In September 1971, the seventh and eighth grades were dissolved. In 1991, the preschool, under the direction of Mrs. Paula Pritchard, was incorporated into St. John the Baptist Catholic School. In 1997, kindergarten was added to the school. This brought the levels of instruction to include: pre-school, kindergarten and grades one through six.

The school was renamed in July, 2008 when the three existing parishes (St. Mary's, Antwerp; St. Joseph, Paulding; St. John the Baptist, Payne) were combined to form Divine Mercy Catholic Parish.

ABOUT US

MISSION STATEMENT:

Academic, human, and spiritual excellence in the service of God for the transformation of the world.



Developing
Motivated
Christian
Students

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS:

Be it known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school. He is the unseen but ever present teacher in its classes. He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its students.

Divine Mercy Catholic School

120 Arturus Street
Payne, Ohio 45880

School Office: 419-263-2114

School Fax: 419-567-1503

Website: www.divinemercycatholic.com/school

ParentsWeb: <https://logins2.renweb.com/logins/ParentsWeb-Login.aspx>

Divine Mercy Catholic School Staff

Joe Linder	Principal	jlinder@dmcschool.com
Ashley Collins	Secretary (Tues/Fri)	acollins@dmcschool.com
Julie Stuart	Secretary (Mon/Weds/Thurs)	jstuart@dmcschool.com
Priscilla Warnimont	Pre-School Teacher	pwarnimont@dmcschool.com
Mindy Carter	Pre-School Aide	mcarter@dmcschool.com
Amie Ashworth	Kindergarten Teacher	aashworth@dmcschool.com
Patrice Sullivan	First/Second Grade Teacher	psullivan@dmcschool.com
Anne Gideon	Third/Fourth Grade Teacher	agideon@dmcschool.com
Kelli Bradbury	Fifth/Sixth Grade Teacher	kbradbury@dmcschool.com
Jessica Lippi	Reading (2,4,6) Teacher	jlippi@dmcschool.com
Michelle Reinhart	Intervention Specialist	mreinhardt@wbesc.org

School Advisory Council

Michelle Davis
Cassy McCord
Pam Rosswurm
Taylor Rosswurm
Jennifer Rust
Sarah Sennebogen
Darcy Stoller

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

Each fall, winter, and spring assessments are given in the areas of mathematics, reading, language arts, science and religion to all grade levels. Competency tests measure the degree to which students are mastering the student performance objectives in the Diocesan Course of Study.

Diocesan Testing:

Students in grades K-6 take the MAP (Measures for Academic Progress) Growth tests in the fall, winter, and spring. Students in grades K-2 are tested on mathematics and reading. Students in grades 3-6 are tested on mathematics, reading, language arts, and science. For more information, and parent resources please visit:

<https://www.nwea.org/parent-toolkit/>

State of Ohio Testing (for all Edchoice Expansion Scholarship Students):

All students who are on an Edchoice Expansion Scholarship are required to take the state tests AND are subject to the policies of the Third Grade Guarantee. State tests will be given to all students who are on an Edchoice Expansion Scholarship in the following grade levels and subjects:

Grades 3-6	Math (spring test)
Grades 3-6	ELA (fall and spring tests)
Grade 5	Science

Third Grade Reading Guarantee - Chartered Nonpublic Schools

GENERAL GUIDANCE - Ohio Revised Code 3301.163

Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, any third grade student who attends a chartered nonpublic school with a scholarship awarded under either the EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship will be subject to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision, including the exemptions prescribed by that law. In addition, each chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students with a scholarship awarded under either EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship must adopt policies and procedures for the annual assessment of the reading skills of those K-3 students. For students identified as reading below grade level, the school must notify the parents of this deficiency and the potential for retention in third grade. The school also must provide intensive reading instruction services to those students.

RETENTION PROVISION- Ohio Revised Code 3301.163(A)

Beginning July 1, 2015, any third grade student attending a chartered nonpublic school with a scholarship awarded under either the EdChoice Scholarship Program or Cleveland Scholarship Program shall be subject to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision under division (A)(2) of Ohio Revised Code 3313.608, including the exemptions prescribed by that division (see below).

Only students enrolled using an EdChoice or Cleveland Scholarship are subject to this provision. The Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision uses the promotion score from Ohio's grade 3 English language arts test.

The exemptions to retention apply to:

- A student who is an English learner enrolled in U.S. schools for less than three full school years has had less than three years of instruction in an English as a Second Language program;
- A student whose IEP, or Individual Services Plan, specifically exempts the student from retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (more information is available in the Students with Disabilities section of this manual);
- A student who demonstrates an acceptable level of performance on an alternative reading assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education. More information on alternative reading assessments is available on the department's website.
- A student whose IEP shows that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for two years, and the student was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through grade 3; and
- A student who has received intensive remediation for two years and was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through grade 3.**

**A student who is promoted under this exemption must continue to receive intensive reading instruction in grade four. This instruction shall include an altered instructional day that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific research-based reading strategies for the students who have been successful in improving reading among low-performing readers.

READING DIAGNOSTIC GUIDANCE - Ohio Revised Code 3301.163(B)

Each chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students in any of grades kindergarten through three and that enrolls students under the EdChoice Scholarship Program or Cleveland Scholarship Program shall adopt policies and procedures for the annual assessment of the reading skills of those K-3 students. Schools may use the state-developed reading diagnostic assessment or a non-department diagnostic assessment to meet this requirement.

For each student identified as having reading skills below grade level, the school must do the following:

- a. Provide to the student's parent or guardian, in writing, all of the following:
 - I. Notification that the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading;
 - II. Notification that if the student does not attain the promotion score designated under division (A)(3) of Ohio Revised Code 3301.0710 on Ohio's third grade English language arts test, the student will be retained, unless the student is exempt.
- b. Provide intensive reading instruction services, as determined appropriate by the school, to each student identified as reading below grade level.

Students in Grade 5 will take the "Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education" (ACRE) test. This test is published by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). The ACRE is designed to assist the evaluation of catechetical/religious education programs in Catholic Schools. As an integrated assessment tool, NCEA ACRE provides faith knowledge questions (cognitive domain) and related to religious beliefs, attitudes, practices, and perceptions (affective domain).

Report Cards/Mid-term Reports - Report cards and midterms will be posted online using ParentsWeb. You can view grades at any point during the year using ParentsWeb. Since grades are always available, paper reports may not always be printed. Report cards are issued every 9 weeks at the end of the grading period. Should there be any questions regarding the grades, parents are urged to contact the teacher to set up a conference. Mid-term reports are given to students in grades K through 6. These reports are to inform parents of the child's present progress. If there are any questions concerning the reports, parents are asked to contact the child's teacher and set up a conference.

ADMISSION POLICY

For kindergarten, the child must be five years old before August 1st. For first grade the child must be six years old before August 1st.

In accordance with Christian Principles, Divine Mercy Catholic School recruits and admits students of any race, religion, color or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies or extracurricular activities.

Parents of students presently enrolled in kindergarten and grades first through sixth have the opportunity to register for the coming year starting in February.

When registering for the first time, the person responsible for the child must present the school with a copy of the child's birth certificate and copies of records from the previous school of attendance (if applicable) (Ohio Revised Code section 3313-672).

AIDS

In accord with Diocesan Policy, students with AIDS seeking enrollment in a school of the diocese should be permitted to attend in the least restrictive setting. There is no need for mandatory screening of students entering school at any age level. Once a student is enrolled, periodic and continuing evaluation should be conducted. The matter of attendance of a student with AIDS is a local decision. A student who is excluded from school because of risk to himself or others should be assisted in attaining appropriate educational programs. The identity of a student with AIDS and all health records and other pertinent files shall be kept confidential and to the minimum needed to assure proper care of all students and to detect situations where the potential for transmission may increase. As needed, the principal will refer to the Diocese of Toledo General Policy on AIDS for further details.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance by all students is very important. Sometimes it may be necessary for a student to miss school for reasons of illness, death of a relative, religious reasons or an emergency. Each student who is absent must immediately, upon return to school, make arrangements with his/her

teacher(s) to make up work missed.

In keeping with the Ohio Law for missing children the following is necessary. If a student is absent, the child's legal guardian is required to call the school before 9 a.m. If no call is received the school is required by law to contact the legal guardian to obtain the reason for absence. A written excuse, signed by the guardian, stating the reasons for the absence is required when the student returns.

Absenteeism Policy:

Tardy - anyone that comes in after 8:50 a.m., but before 10:00 a.m.

One/half day a.m. absent - anyone that comes in after 10:00 a.m., but before 12:00 p.m.

One/half day p.m. absent - anyone that leaves after 12:00 p.m., but before 3:00 p.m.

Early dismissal - nothing counted against them if they leave after 3:00 p.m.

A child is counted as tardy if he/she is not present when the bell rings. Tardiness due to late arrival of a bus is excused. Tardy students are to report to the office for class admission.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- Personal illness or injury
- Medical or dental appointments (partial days, in most cases)
- Illness or death in the family
- Funeral of immediate family member or relative
- Quarantine
- Religious holiday (not counted against the nine (9) day rule)
- Appointments for court
- Absences approved in advance by the principal
- Emergencies and other reasons deemed good and sufficient by the principal.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES AND TARDIES

The school administration will make the final decision whether an absence/tardy is excused or unexcused. In general, unexcused absences/tardies include (but are not limited to):

- Missing the school bus

- Experiencing transportation problems at home or on the way to school
- Remaining at home to complete school assignments
- Missing school without legitimate illness
- Oversleeping. Alarm clock (student's or parent's) failed to work.
- "My mom didn't get me up."
- Not having suitable clothing to wear to school
- Babysitting
- Any form of recreation (unless pre-approved absence)
- Personal business that can be done after school or on weekends
- "Helping at home" or "Was needed at home"
- "I had a game last night"

If a child is to be excused during the regular school day, a written note is required before the request is granted. If possible, parents are asked to avoid medical appointments during school hours. Parents who need to take a child out of school during the day must first report to the office. No child will be released without proper approval by the principal. If a child will be leaving the school grounds with someone other than a parent or guardian or car pool ride, a written note is required.

If there is to be a change in your child's means of transportation during the year, parents/guardians are asked to notify the office of such a change. Unless a written notification is sent, or a phone call is made, the child will be sent home by the usual means of transportation.

Family vacations taken during school days are discouraged. If a vacation needs to be taken during the school year, it is the responsibility of the parents and students to make arrangements with the teacher for a record of assignments during the absence. It is also the responsibility of the parent to make sure that the assignments are completed by the stipulated deadline.

BICYCLES

Students who ride bicycles to school are to park them in the bike rack area in the front of school. No students are to ride a bike on the school grounds during school hours, or during bus dismissal time. All students are to stay away from the parked bikes during school hours. Since the school will not be responsible for lost or damaged bikes, it is recommended that bikes be locked.

BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES

Teachers may have parties or treats on special occasions such as birthdays etc. Teachers may ask parents to assist in the planning and coordination of the parties. Parents are encouraged to provide simple and nutritious treats.

Unless all the girls or boys of a given grade are given an invitation, we ask that no invitations be passed out at school to a party after school hours.

CALENDAR

The school year calendar can be found on our school website:

<https://files.secure.website/wscfus/10530219/26399372/2020-2021-school-calendar.pdf>

CERTIFICATION OF FACULTY

All teachers are certified according to the Standards of the State of Ohio and have received degrees and are qualified in their field of instruction. In addition to state certification, teachers of religion are required to take specific courses and be certified by the Diocese of Toledo. Teachers are in continuing education as mandated by state and diocesan regulations.

CLASS DAY

The class hours for students in kindergarten through sixth are from 8:50 a.m. to 3:25 p.m. Monday through Friday. Non-bus students are asked not to arrive before 8:40 a.m.

Anyone coming to pick up a child for the 3:25 p.m. dismissal is asked to wait for the child at the southwest corner of the school gym exterior, or in his/her car.

The pre-school has morning classes from 8:50 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and afternoon classes from 11:30 a.m. to 3:25 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. For more specific information on when each age group meets, you will need to talk with the pre-school teacher or the principal.

COMMUNICATION

An electronic newsletter outlining special activities and notices will be sent home each week on Wednesdays. The oldest child in each family will be given any paper forms from the office. Additional notices will be sent home as the need arises.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

There is no corporal punishment at Divine Mercy Catholic School. However, Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.41 gives school personnel the authority to use reasonable physical force to separate and control student(s) to prevent injury to themselves or others.

CURRICULUM

Divine Mercy Catholic School curriculum is based on and follows the Course of Study as designed and adapted by the Diocese of Toledo. These courses of study per subject meet standards that have been approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is based on respect for one's self and others. Our school's goal is to have good discipline at all times. To achieve this goal, parents and the school must work together in forming proper student attitude. Teachers will be in communication with parents should a problem arise with a student who is unable to conform to the rules in the school environment (See Appendix A for the School Code of Conduct)

Teachers have these basic rights:

1. To establish a classroom structure and routine that provides an optimal learning environment.
2. To determine and require appropriate student behavior which meets the needs and encourages positive social and educational development.
3. To ask for help in achieving these goals from parents, the principal, etc. when assistance is needed for improper student behavior or attitude.

Students have these basic rights:

1. To have a teacher who is in a position to help a child limit his/her inappropriate self-disruptive behaviors.
2. To have a teacher who is in a position to provide the child with positive support for proper behavior.

3. To choose how to behave and be aware of the consequences that follow.

With all respecting the rights of others, the end result will be a good classroom atmosphere designed for educating and learning. It is impossible to make a complete listing of all school rules and regulations. Generally teachers will establish basic classroom rules and inform students of other established rules such as playground rules, general school rules, etc.

It is the policy of the school administration to solve problems and concerns at the lowest possible level. Parents who have a problem or concern about his/her child should contact the classroom teacher who will set up a conference to work out a mutually agreeable plan of action. If the teacher is having a problem with a student the parents will be contacted and a conference will be scheduled in order to work out a mutual solution to the problem. If the concern of the problem is repeated, or if it involves the whole class or whole school, the principal will become part of the problem solving process. **(See Appendix A for School Code of Conduct)**

Matters that seem to have serious implications in the whole parish or community should be brought to the principal's and pastor's attention. The pastor, as our superior, sets the tone of our education system. He delegates to the principal the responsibility of the daily operation of the school.

DRESS CODE

Students, staff, and school building volunteers are to dress in a manner that will not present health or safety problems or cause any type of school disruption. They are required to be dressed appropriately for the classroom and church. Seasonal weather will dictate the type of clothing that will be worn, but it must conform to the Student Dress Code **(See Appendix B)**. Parents are required to cooperate in enforcing the dress code.

EDCHOICE EXPANSION SCHOLARSHIP

Financial aid from the state of Ohio is available to families. This scholarship is an income-based scholarship that is applied towards a student's tuition. Families can check student eligibility by checking to see if they meet national poverty levels that are set each year. Information on how to check your eligibility will be sent home to parents each year.

Students who are on an Edchoice Expansion Scholarship are required to participate in state testing, which is organized with grade-specific requirements (see Academic Assessment).

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire Drills - These drills are conducted each month weather permitting. Drills are executed promptly, silently and in an orderly fashion. Students are taught to use their regular exit as well as alternate doors. Each class has an assigned area to report to away from the building. Each teacher must be the last one to leave the room. He/she takes attendance to verify that all students are accounted for. The fire alarm is the signal for a fire drill.

Tornado Drills - The directions for the Civil Defense Authority are implemented in the school to assure the safety of the students in an emergency. To execute the drill, students have assigned areas to take cover and are taught how to best protect themselves. Five whistle blows is the signal for a tornado drill.

Rapid Dismissal Drills - These drills are used to instruct students in the correct procedures to follow should a situation arise where the building must be evacuated quickly and it is known that children will not be permitted to re-enter the building for a lengthy period of time. During this drill students will be instructed to exit the building in the same procedures that are used in a fire drill. Signal for rapid dismissal is a constant bell ringing.

A.L.I.C.E. - Since the 2011-2012 school year, Divine Mercy Catholic School has implemented the A.L.I.C.E. program to help students and staff decide what to do if there is a violent intruder in the building. It takes a more proactive approach to the situation instead of advocating students just remain in a lockdown position waiting for help. With cooperation from the Paulding County Sheriff's Department, all of the educators and students have learned new ways to handle school violence. In the past, the message was to lockdown, turn out the lights, lock the door, and hide under the desk. That method alone has proven to not always be the most effective and in some cases has actually led to children being at higher risk. The new, nationally recognized approach is called A.L.I.C.E, or Alert, Lockdown, Information, Counter and Evacuation.

EXTRA CURRICULAR

CYO Basketball

If coaches are available and there are enough players, basketball is offered for boys and girls in grades 4-6. Prior to the opening of basketball season, parents will receive information regarding the responsibilities of parents, players and coaches. Parental permission is required before any student is eligible to attend practice and become a member of the team or squad (See Appendix C for Basketball Regulations). Parents of children who participate in sports are asked to help in a variety of ways; transportation for away games, set-up and clean-up of the hall for home games, and helping at the concession stand.

FACULTY MEETINGS

Regular faculty meetings are held once a month before or after school. Special in-service days are also offered each year so teachers can stay current with teaching practices as well as diocesan and state regulations. The principal, too, is expected to attend workshops planned by the Diocesan Catholic Schools office in Toledo.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are first-hand educational experiences that bring additional meaning to the lessons in the classroom. Parents will be notified in advance as to the time, place, means of transportation and cost. Written permission from the parents is always necessary in order for a student to participate in a field trip. A general permission form for these field trips is provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

GRADING SYSTEM

The following grading system of letters is used for Grades K-3.

- E = Excellent
- S+= Above Average
- S = Satisfactory
- S- = Below Average
- NI = Needs Improvement

The following grading system of letters and percentage equivalents is used for Grades 4-6.

A+	99-100
A	96-98
A-	94-95
B+	92-93
B	88-91
B-	86-87
C+	84-85
C	78-83
C-	76-77
D+	74-75
D	67-73
D-	65-66
F	Below 65

In addition to the letter grade for Grades 4-6, there are statements under each subject which the teacher will mark when necessary to explain more completely the work of your child.

HEALTH SERVICES

Divine Mercy Catholic School shares the services of the Wayne Trace School Nurse. In accordance with Ohio Department of Health guidelines, hearing and vision screenings for students are as follows:

Hearing screenings and referrals for Grades K, 1, 3, 5 and new students

Vision screenings and referrals for Grades K, 1, 3, 5 and new students

Children who become ill during school hours will be sent home only after contact has been made with the parent(s) or person(s) named to be contacted if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

Emergency Medical Authorization forms must be filled out annually by the parents. These forms must be completed and returned during the first or second week of school.

HOMEWORK

Study at home should be a purposeful continuation of classroom projects to complete the learning situation or to reinforce it. As a Divine Mercy student

you will be expected to do homework that is assigned to you by your teachers.

Student Responsibilities

- Understand assignments before leaving class
- Complete work legibly and neatly
- Turn work in on time
- Have resources and materials needed to complete assignments
- Make up assignments missed due to absence

Teacher Responsibilities

- Assign homework with specific instructional purposes
- Recognize the range of student abilities and needs
- Check completed homework
- Communicate with other teachers
- Advise parents of any problems associated with homework

Parent Responsibilities

- Provide appropriate time and place to complete homework
- Monitor that homework is done
- Guide and assist work but never do the work for the child
- Communicate with the teacher as necessary
- Be familiar with the homework policy
- Recognize that some students will take more time than others to complete the same assignments

The approximate schedule for home study is as follows: Kindergarten - starts the year with around five minutes and by the end of the year around twenty minutes. Grades 1 and 2, twenty to twenty-five minutes; Grades 3 and 4, thirty to forty-five minutes; Grades 5 and 6, approximately sixty minutes.

When a student is absent from school, he/she is to obtain the missing assignments from the classroom teacher. Assignments will be available at the end of the school day.

The student will be permitted a sufficient amount of time to make up assignments. "Sufficient time" is relative to the length of the absence and the nature of the assignment missed.

A 10% deduction will be given to all late assignments. Should an emergency arise at home and it is impossible for a student to complete an

assignment, a parent should notify the teacher of this in writing, otherwise a 10% deduction will be made on an assignment that is handed in late.

An assignment, other than those related to illness, that is late for more than 2 days will be considered as a MISSING ASSIGNMENT. The teacher will assume the responsibility of making sure that the child understands the material even though the assignment is missing. Exceptions to this policy can be made by an individual classroom teacher who possesses sufficient reasons for doing so.

A MISSING ASSIGNMENT shall convert to an “F” for any portion of assigned work that is not completed by the end of the quarter. In case of extended excused absence, a longer period determined by the teacher and the principal may be granted.

IMMUNIZATION

Immunizations required prior to admission to school can be found by searching:

[Immunization Summary for School Attendance Ohio](#)

At the beginning of each school year, or at a pupil's initial entry, a pupil's records will be checked to make sure that there is written evidence in his/her health file that he/she is in compliance with the State School Immunization Law. Parents will be asked to supply any missing evidence of such records. Divine Mercy's School maintains a complete health record file for each child.

LIBRARY

Divine Mercy Catholic School's library of over 3,000 hardback and 3800 paperbacks are available for the children. The classes visit the library once a week and all students are encouraged to borrow books from the library. Books may be renewed, however, if books are not returned by the due date a fine may be charged. A fine will be charged for damaged or lost books.

LUNCH

Children may bring a packed lunch or buy a hot lunch. Milk (chocolate, white, or strawberry) is available for anyone who wish to order it for his/her packed lunches. Milk is included with the hot lunch. The cost of the lunches and milk is announced at the beginning of each school year. If a child does not want milk he/she may bring a juice drink. We ask that no child bring pop for lunch (occasionally the upper grades will have class parties where pop is allowed).

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

- The parent will be notified immediately of the child's condition.
- A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or guardian.

FEVER: If your child's temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, he/she should remain home until he/she has been without fever for a full 24 hours. Remember, fever is a symptom indicating the presence of an illness. Tylenol or Motrin may temporarily reduce the fever, but they do not cure the illness.

CHICKEN POX: Symptoms include a skin rash consisting of small blisters which leave scabs. A slight fever may or may not be present. There may be blisters and scabs all present at the same time. Your child should remain home until all blisters have scabbed over, usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the first crop of blisters.

COMMON COLD: Symptoms include an irritated throat, watery discharge from the nose and eyes, sneezing, chilliness, and general body discomfort. Your child should remain home if symptoms are serious enough to interfere with the student's ability to learn. Consult your child's physician if symptoms persist beyond 7-10 days or a fever develops.

FLU: Symptoms include an abrupt onset of fever, chills, headache and sore muscles. Runny nose, sore throat, and cough are common. Your child should remain home from school until symptoms are gone and the child is without fever for 24 hours.

HEAD LICE: Lice are small, grayish-tan, wingless insects that lay eggs called nits. Nits firmly attach to the hair shafts, close to the scalp. Nits are much easier to see and detect than lice. They are small white specks usually found at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Following lice infestation, your child may return to school after receiving

treatment (according to physician's instructions). Additionally, when the student returns to school, he/she must report to the office to be examined by the staff.

IMPETIGO: Symptoms include blister-like lesions which later develop into crusted, pus-like sores. Your child should remain home from school until receiving 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and sores are no longer draining.

PAIN: If your child complains, or behavior indicates, that he/she is experiencing persistent pain, he/she should be evaluated by a physician before attending school.

PINK EYE: Symptoms include redness and swelling of the membranes of the eye with burning or itching, matter draining from one or both eyes, and/or dried crusts on the eyelids. Your child should remain home from school until he/she has been on antibiotics for 24 hours, has been seen by a physician and has no drainage from the affected eye(s). Spread of infection can be minimized by keeping the hands away from the face, good hand washing practices, using individual washcloths and towels, and not touching any part of the eyes with the tip of the medication applicator while administering antibiotic ointment or eye drops.

SKIN RASHES: Skin rashes of unknown origin should be evaluated by a physician before your child is sent to school. When the doctor approves a return to school, please send a physician's note to the clinic.

STREP THROAT/SCARLET FEVER: Strep throat begins with a fever, sore/red throat, pus spots on the back of the throat, and tender swollen glands of the neck. Scarlet fever shows the same symptoms as strep throat with the addition of a strawberry appearance to the tongue and a skin rash. High fever, nausea, and vomiting may also occur. Your child should remain home from school until 24 hours of antibiotic therapy has been administered and no fever or vomiting has occurred for 24 hours. Most physicians will advise rest at home for 1-2 days after a strep infection. Antibiotics ordered for strep infections are to be taken until all medication is gone. Only when these directions are followed correctly is the strep bacteria completely eliminated from the body, no matter how well the child feels after the first few days of receiving medication.

VOMITING AND DIARRHEA (INTESTINAL VIRAL INFECTIONS):

Symptoms include stomach ache, cramping, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea, possible fever, headache, and body aches. Your child should remain at home until vomiting, diarrhea, or fever has ceased for a full 24 hours. If your child has any of these symptoms during the night, he/she should not be sent to school the following day.

Note to Parents/Guardians: In any potential illness situation, good hand washing is always the best first line of defense. Please encourage your child to practice thorough hand washing, particularly before meals and after sneezing or coughing.

MEDICATION

Whenever a student **MUST** take prescription medication during school hours the appropriate physician request and parent release forms (form available in office) must be on file in the student's health folder and available to the person designated by the school, before the student will be allowed to begin taking the medication in school.

The following is the procedure for administering medication in school.

1. All medication is given to and kept in the school office. The principal, teachers or secretary may oversee the administering of medication.
2. A log will be kept indicating when medication is to be administered.
3. No "over the counter medication" is to be given by the school officials unless sent in by the parent/guardian with written permission to give the medicine.

Parents are asked to notify the teacher if a student is taking medication (in or out of school) on a regular basis which might affect the child's performance and/or behavior in school.

MONEY

Money is collected from students **ONLY** before classes in the morning at the time the absentees are checked. Money should be placed in a sealed envelope with the child's name, grade and purpose of the funds written on the envelope. The school is not responsible for money a child carries on his/her person.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Because of bus service the Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences at Divine Mercy will be held on the same days as they are scheduled at the Wayne Trace School.

All parents are expected to meet with their children's teachers during these days. Every effort will be made to schedule conferences at a mutually convenient time. These days are important for communication between home and school.

If at any time a problem arises concerning school requirements or classroom management, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher involved with the situation.

Informal parent-teacher conferences may be held at any time during the school year at the request of the parent/guardian or teacher.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

PTA is the organization of all parents working with the teachers and the school in general to provide various services and activities for the good of the school. Among the most important of these are:

1. Organizing fund raising for the benefit of the school.
2. Organizing the Mardi Gras - a pre-Lenten celebration for the benefit of a charity.
3. Providing school supplies for teachers, and field trips for the students.

Our PTA is as strong as its membership. By becoming a member of the PTA community you have the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between school and home. Officers of President, Vice President (President Elect), Secretary, and Treasurer are elected in the spring for the following school year.

PHONE PRIVILEGES

Students need permission from their classroom teacher in order to use the telephone in the office. Students will not be called to the telephone during class time except in the case of an emergency. Telephone messages will be delivered to students when they are received. If cell phones are brought to school by students, the cell phones may not be removed from backpacks and should be kept off during the school day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The children have regular physical education classes as part of their school curriculum following the Diocesan Course of Study for Physical Education. The children must wear tennis shoes whenever they play on the gym floor. If tennis shoes are worn for regular foot wear children need not change shoes for gym class.

PROMOTION OR RETENTION

The Ohio Revised Code 3313.609 gives to the superintendent the right to assign pupils to levels. Because the Catholic Schools are a network and not a system, this assignment is to be done by the principal. Therefore, the teacher has a great responsibility to work with the principal and parents in making this decision. Parents will be notified and consulted in a reasonable time prior to the decision to retain a child.

RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Divine Mercy Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

RECESS

Weather permitting; the children have outside recess at various times throughout the day. Children who are well enough to be in school need the fresh air and exercise they receive at recess for good study habits and classroom attitudes. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately in coats, hats, gloves etc. as needed. Parents are asked to send written notification if, for some reason, their child is not to participate in outdoor recesses.

RELIGION

Children of all faiths are accepted at Divine Mercy Catholic School. If a parent of a child who is not of the Catholic faith has any questions regarding the religious instruction of the children, they are encouraged to speak with the classroom teacher or the principal.

At least four formal religion classes are conducted each week with attendance and participation in the Mass taking place on the fifth day, special feast days and/or special occasions. All children attend Mass as a school body. Only students of the Catholic faith who have made the Sacrament of First Communion are allowed to receive Holy Communion.

Classes may take turns in preparing the liturgies.

The total living out of religion is experienced in the environment of a Christian community - at home, in the parish, and at school. Religious teaching is not limited to the formal class period but, whenever possible in the entire curriculum especially in the interaction of students among themselves and with the staff. We assume that parents who send their children to the Catholic school have as their top reason for doing so that the children can be taught in a Christian atmosphere. It is hoped that the children experience these same Christian values in their homes.

Children attending our school who are of the Catholic faith will have sacramental preparation for Reconciliation and First Communion. These involve parent participation as well as instruction by the classroom teachers. Parents should be familiar with parish and diocesan policies (these are explained at the parish parent sessions) and be conscientious in working with their children prior to the reception of each sacrament. Announcements for parent meetings for each sacrament are sent home through the school newsletter and in the Sunday bulletin.

Children of the Catholic faith in Grade 2 are expected to prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Penance and children of the Catholic faith in Grades 3-6 have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Penance during the school year.

SAFE SCHOOL ORDINANCE

Safe School Ordinance (Section 17-8-110) refers to assault and battery upon a teacher, school employee, student or other person, disrupting a class or school activity. "Whoever unlawfully assaults, strikes, threatens or menaces a teacher, instructor, professor, person in charge of a class of students, or any employee of any school, college or university, while in the performance of his/her duties, or whoever disrupts, disturbs, or interferes with any activity conducted in a school, college or university building, or upon the campus or grounds thereof, or in any public place, or whoever improperly and unlawfully assaults, strikes, threatens, menaces, follows pursues, or lays hands upon a student or other person in a school, college

or university building, or upon the grounds of campus thereof, or upon the way to or from any school, college or university or on the way to or from any school, college or university sponsored activity, shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.”

SAFETY

To build good safety habits, cooperation by all is needed and required. Students are directed to walk on sidewalks, walk to the bus, cross the streets after looking both ways, and never to go with strangers. Pushing and shoving will not be permitted at school.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council meets bi-monthly unless otherwise stated. The School Council serves as an advisory body to the pastor and principal. The appointed members along with the pastor and principal as ex-officio members comprise the council. Individual terms vary according member and school circumstances, or council needs.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken early in the school year. The fall pictures are what are used in the school’s yearbook. Therefore, each student has his/her picture taken. A prepaid package may be purchased, but there is no obligation. Picture retakes will be made when there is a photographer's error.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

A list of school supplies that are needed for each grade is issued in late May or early June. These lists can be found on the school website.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

In the interest of teaching personal neatness and good order to their students, certified staff members may legally check lockers, book bags, desks and books.

For the safety and protection of all students within their care and custody, certified staff members have the privilege to search for and seize weapons or other dangerous or illegal objects; if they have any reasonable suspicion to believe that such are in the possession of the pupil, especially where the

pupil has no reasonable expectation of privacy; e.g. lockers, desks, coats, books and book bags brought onto the school premises by a student are subject to search.

SPECIALISTS

Reading: Granted under Chapter 1, Divine Mercy Catholic School has a qualified reading specialist who tests and teaches children who have been identified as in need of preventive reading aid.

Remedial: Services are also available in math and reading.

Speech: Through Auxiliary Services money from the State of Ohio and some Federal funds, Divine Mercy Catholic School has the services of a qualified speech therapist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist.

Psychologist: The services of the county school psychologist are readily available for the students of Divine Mercy Catholic School. Parental consent in writing is required before any testing can be done.

STUDENT RECORDS & FILES

On file in the school office will be a cumulative record for each student enrolled in the school. This record contains yearly educational data. This file is sent to the child's receiving school of transfer only upon written request of the receiving school.

All standardized test scores are recorded. Reports of all special services received will also be included in this file (i.e. speech therapy, psychological testing, counseling, etc.). These files are locked and are only available to certified members of the staff, and any parents/guardians of students requesting to see or have copies of these records. This request must be made in writing and the request is to be filed.

On file also is a permanent report card which is kept indefinitely by the school.

A health folder is maintained separate from the child's academic records. The folder contains all health information and accurate records of all immunizations required by law. The health record is also forwarded to the receiving school upon transfer and request of records.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

Suspension must be used only after consultation with the principal, parents and teacher. In employing suspension, the principal should determine

whether "In school" or "Out of school" suspension is warranted. (See Appendix A for School Code of Conduct)

TRANSFERS

When a place of residence is changed, please send the new address and phone number to the teacher and office. The parish office should also be notified. When transferring to another school, parents must complete a request form which allows us to release academic and health records to the receiving school.

TRANSPORTATION

A law on children's safety requires that the office and the classroom teacher be notified in writing, of any changes in transportation arrangements.

Bus Riders:

Divine Mercy students are transported by the buses of Wayne Trace Local School, Antwerp Local School (as they go on to Vantage) and Paulding Exempted Village School. At all times the children must obey the rules and regulations established by the school system and the bus driver. Our utmost concern is for the safety of each child. Parents/guardians will be notified of their child's failure to comply with bus rules by means of a Bus Violation Report. (See Appendix D - Bus Regulations)

Car Riders:

We ask that parents wait at the corner of the school gymnasium to pick up their students. A teacher positioned at the front school doors will look for the student's driver before allowing them to leave. Students should stay on the sidewalk and close to the school gymnasium south wall when walking out to their vehicle. Please be aware of vehicles pulling through the school parking lot.

Walkers/Bike Riders:

Students walking or riding bikes to and from school must obey all traffic rules. Parents will be notified if their child loiters.

TRUANCY

Truancy is declared when a student is absent from school without school authorization and parental consent. Leaving the school during the school

day, without the approval of the principal, will be treated as truancy. A pattern of truancy will be reported to the County Attendance Officer.

TUITION

Divine Mercy's Parish is deeply committed to providing Paulding County with a Catholic School. In order to do this a good share of the funding comes from Divine Mercy Catholic Parish. The balance is paid for with a tuition charge to the parents of the students and school and parish fund raising activities. The tuition and book fees are determined annually by the parish Finance Committee in consultation with the School Advisory Council. The above fees are used to obtain consumable textbooks and workbooks, teaching supplies, audio-visual equipment and repair, library books and supplies, art supplies, all office supplies and other administrative costs.

Divine Mercy uses FACTS Tuition Management for tuition payments. More information about enrolling in FACTS or receiving tuition assistance can be found by visiting the school website (www.divinemercycatholicsschool.WebStarts.com). For additional questions, please contact the principal or parish finance manager.

It is the desire of our Divine Mercy Parish that no child will be turned away due to financial difficulties. If assistance is needed, please contact the principal. Should unexpected financial difficulties occur during the year, please notify the principal or the finance manager.

UNSATISFACTORY REPORTS

Teachers will notify parents by phone or in writing if a student is doing unsatisfactory work. This contact will also be made if a student has dropped significantly in a given subject. Reports of this nature will be made at anytime during the grading period, but especially at mid-term report time.

VALUABLES

Students are prohibited from keeping money or other valuables in the classroom. Divine Mercy School will not be responsible for the loss of valuables brought to school in violation of this rule.

WEAPONS POLICY

Divine Mercy Catholic School prohibits students from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Divine Mercy Catholic School for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the school including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the school, or a school-sponsored event.

The term "weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.

Policy exceptions include:

- A. Items pre-approved by the building principal as part of a class or individual presentation under adult supervision, if used for the purpose and in the manner approved (working firearms and any ammunition will never be approved as part of a presentation);
- B. Theatrical props used in appropriate settings

Students shall report any information concerning weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the principal. Failure to report such information may subject the student to disciplinary action.

This policy shall be implemented through the Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code, and through administrative guidelines.

The Superintendent/Pastor is authorized to establish instructional programs on the weapons and the requirement that students immediately report knowledge of weapons and threats of violence by students and/or staff to the building principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

The Superintendent/Pastor will refer any student who violates this policy to the student's parents or guardians and to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

WEATHER DELAYS/CLOSINGS

Should there be a change in bus schedules or school time any day during the year, the following is the policy: Divine Mercy Catholic School falls under the Wayne Trace Local School District announcements. Each family in our school is enrolled in the "Honeywell Instant Alert" system. Gone are

the days of waiting for the radio stations and TV stations to air information. Parents now know within seconds after a decision has been made regarding a delay or cancellation. At the start of each school year information will be sent home on how to set up your account to best serve your family.

Appendix A School Code of Conduct

Divine Mercy Catholic School aims at building virtuous character into all of our students, and reducing poor character. In other words, we are striving to help students imitate the life of Jesus Christ.

Consequently, in light of this goal, the use of foul or vulgar language and any inappropriate actions such as: fighting, kicking, punching or yelling at each other will not be permitted or tolerated; which means that the following steps will be taken to help the student overcome the use of such inappropriate words and actions.

1. For the first offense a notification will be sent home informing the parents of the use of such words or actions.
2. A second offense will mean that a notification will be sent informing the parents of the offense and of the punishment that follows, namely serving a one day "in-school" suspension. This means that the student must be at school but will do all assigned work alone away from his/her fellow classmates.
3. Should a third offense occur and there has been a real effort shown to control the problem, there will be a second "in-school" suspension.
4. However, if there should be any further infraction of this ruling within the same quarter of school, it would mean that the student will serve an "out of school" suspension under adult supervision.
5. If serious violations of discipline standards continue the parents may be asked to withdraw the child from school.

Appendix B Student Dress Code

Students, staff, and school building volunteers must take pride in their personal appearance, dress in a modest manner that will not present health and safety problems, and not cause any type of school disruption. The appearance of our students, staff, and building volunteers is a direct reflection upon the quality of our school. Upon the recommendation of the School Advisory Council, all students, staff, and building volunteers are required to dress appropriately for the classroom, church, and all school-related functions with styles that are examples of living in Christ.

The school administration reserves the right to make the final judgement concerning appropriateness of student, staff, and volunteer attire.

Guidelines for appropriate dress include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Clothing must be neat, clean, well-fitted, free from holes, and in keeping with Christian modesty
2. Dresses, skirts, pants, athletic pants, and jeans are acceptable
3. Skirts, dresses, and shorts cannot be less than two inches above the knee
4. Leggings or similar style bottoms such as leggings or yoga pants are acceptable only if worn under a dress, skirt, or long shirt/sweater.
 - At no time should any portion of the buttocks or undergarments be exposed when student sits, stands, raises his/her hand, or participates in activities.
5. Shorts are permissible during the first and fourth academic quarters of school, but parents must check the daily forecast.
6. Long-sleeved, short-sleeved, and cap-sleeved shirts and dresses are acceptable.
 - Sleeveless shirts are not acceptable for either girls or boys.
 - Exposed shoulders, backs, cleavage, or midriffs are not acceptable.
 - Appropriate undergarments are to be worn at all times.
7. Sweaters, sweat shirts, and t-shirts.
 - Pictures or wording that violates our Christian message are not acceptable (skulls, vulgar or suggestive language or messages, inappropriate humor, etc.)
8. Shoes must be appropriate for weather conditions and various activities.
9. Students must wear dress clothes for all Masses.
 - Non-dress shorts, athletic pants, t-shirts with graphics/writing, and sweatshirts are not dress clothes and cannot be worn for Mass.
10. Hair must be well groomed, clean, kept out of the eyes, and of natural color only.
11. Accessories that may be detrimental or distracting to the learning environment, or are a potential safety issue are not permitted.
12. Hoods, hats, and bandanas are not to be worn during school hours.
13. Divine Mercy Catholic School is an Elementary School and there is no need for make-up at this stage in our children's lives.

Note: Exceptions to the dress code may be made by administration prior to school spirit activities or specific celebrations.

Appendix C Basketball Regulations

I. Who Can Play

- A. Any student enrolled in grades 4, 5, 6 at Divine Mercy Catholic School. Depending on numbers, 3rd graders may be asked to play.
- B. Students must have a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian, and a valid sports physical.
- C. Any student who wants to play after the season begins must get approval from the principal and coaches.

II. Student Eligibility

- A. After the completion of a nine week grading period, students will be given two weeks to accumulate passing grades.
- B. At the end of the two weeks, if a student carries an "F" in any subject, the Principal will notify the parents, student, and coach. Then, the student will be placed on a one week ineligibility period.
- C. Grades will be checked on Friday afternoons, and the one week ineligibility period will begin on Mondays.
- D. A student may not play or practice for the one week of ineligibility. Students should be at home working to bring up failing grades, not at games and practices.

III. Rules for Basketball Players

- A. In school, violations of the Code of Conduct may effect eligibility to play in games or practices.
- B. If a student is sick/absent from school on a game day, they are not eligible to play/practice that day.
- C. When school is canceled games/practices are also cancelled for that day.
- D. Show respect to your coach, referees, team members and members of the opposing team.
- E. Team members must be seated and watching their game.
- F. No team member may go to the concession stand during the game unless they get special permission from his/her coach.
- G. Everyone is to stay off the stage during the game.
- H. If a student is absent from school on a game day, they are not eligible to play/practice that day.

Appendix D Bus Regulations

The following regulations pertain to school bus conduct and are intended to ensure the safety and welfare of the students, the bus driver and other drivers on the road and to ensure the safety and proper maintenance of school buses.

Students will abide by the following rules:

- Stay off the road, even when you see the bus coming.
- Stand back until the bus stops completely and the door opens before you move to get on.
- Be careful in approaching bus stops. Walk facing oncoming traffic. Be sure the road is clear both ways before crossing roads and highways.
- Use handrail and take the steps one at a time as you get on.
- Be on time and waiting for at the bus stop for your bus. Bus drivers are not required to wait on students who are not punctual.
- Sit down right away and put down your books, etc., before the bus starts. Sit in your assigned seats. Bus drivers have the right to assign students to a seat and to expect reasonable conduct (similar to classroom conduct) from them.
- Act the way you would in class - no loud talking, fooling around throwing things, provoking or disturbing others. Reach your assigned seat without disturbing or crowding other students and always remain seated while the bus is moving.
- Never stick your head, arms, hands or anything out the window. Don't open any windows without the driver's permission.
- Obey the driver promptly and respectfully or run the risk of losing bus riding privileges.
- Save snacks and homework for later. Keep the bus clean and sanitary. No chewing gum, candy, soft drinks, etc. are permitted.
- No unnecessary noise, loud talking and laughing which might divert the attention of the bus driver.
- Stay seated until the bus stops and the doors open. Let people closest to the front get off first. If you stop is next, move to an open seat at the front of the bus.
- Be courteous to fellow students and to your bus driver.
- Take all your belongings and remember to leave the bus as clean as you found it. Treat bus seats and equipment as you would a valuable piece of home furniture. Report all damages to bus seats, intentional or otherwise to the bus driver.
- Get off quickly and quietly, without pushing or running. Remain seated until the bus stops to unload and wait for the signal from the bus driver before crossing the road in front of the bus.

- **NEVER CROSS IN FRONT OF THE BUS UNTIL THE DRIVER SIGNALS FOR YOU TO DO SO.**
- Other regulations will be established by the driver.

Emergencies - wait for the driver to give instructions.

All students are to ride on their assigned bus. Students are asked to ride assigned buses so that overcrowding does not become a problem.

Riding school buses is a privilege and a convenience; it is not a right. The Board authorizes the superintendent and other administrative personnel to suspend, if necessary, a student's bus riding privileges. Inappropriate language and/or conduct will be sufficient reason for refusing transportation service to any student.

Whenever it becomes necessary to refuse transportation for a student, the school authorities shall notify the parents in writing or by phone of such refusal with a full explanation. Until such time as the school authorities have received assurance from the parents of future good conduct on the part of the student, the student shall not be permitted ride the bus. Should a student board a bus from which he/she has been suspended, the bus driver shall report such incidents to the principal upon his/her arrival at the school site.

Students waiting for a late bus are not permitted to leave school grounds except by bus.

Once students depart their assigned stops, they are expected to report directly to their home. District responsibility ends when the student is delivered to the regular bus stop after the close of the school day.

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF TOLEDO
BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY AND PLAN FOR SCHOOLS

Introduction

The Diocese of Toledo and the Catholic Schools Office believe that all of our Catholic schools must be aware that their purpose is rooted in the mission of the Church and the message of Jesus Christ.

It is essential that a safe, positive and productive educational environment be established where students can achieve the highest academic standards, where no student shall be subjected to bullying, intimidation or harassment.

Pastors, principals, faculty, counselors, school nurses, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and any other school support staff, are to expect that all students behave appropriately and treat others with civility and respect.

Bullying, harassment or intimidation will not to be tolerated in any of the Diocese of Toledo Catholic Schools.

A. Bullying by Definition:

Bullying, harassment or intimidation means any of the following: Any intentional written, verbal, electronic (cyber-bullying), physical act, or any other similar behavior that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once which:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property
2. Places another student in reasonable fear of harm or of damage to property
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for another student
4. Infringes on the rights of another student at school
5. Disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school or classroom and alters the conditions of another student's education
6. Is a form of "retaliation" meaning any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports any misconduct, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses or has reliable information about bullying
7. Is considered electronic bullying (cyber-bullying) meaning bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, or data of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by:
 - a) Wire, radio, electromagnetics, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications
 - b) The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying
 - c) The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying

B. Bullying is Prohibited:

1. On school grounds owned, leased or used by a school or on property immediately adjacent to school grounds
2. At a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related
3. At any school-sponsored or related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds

4. At a school bus stop, on a school bus or any other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school
5. Through the use of technology or electronic device owned, leased or used by a school
6. Through the use of technology or an electronic device not owned, leased or used by a school if the act or acts in question:
 - A. Create a hostile environment at school for the target
 - B. Infringe on the rights of the target at school
 - C. Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school
 - D. Prevention and Intervention Plan:

On or before, the Principal, in consultation with teachers, staff, administrators, parents, community representatives, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as Ohio and federal laws, shall be responsible for overseeing the development and establishment of a prevention and intervention anti-bullying plan for their respective building.

The plan shall include the following:

1. Clear procedures for reporting prohibited incidents for students, faculty, counselors, school nurses, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and all other school support staff.
2. A provision that reports of bullying, harassment, intimidation may be made anonymously provided so that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
3. A requirement that school personnel report prohibited incidents of which they are aware to the school principal or other administrator designated by the principal.
4. In cases where the aggressor or target are not students at this school, information shall be disclosed to the Principal or appropriate administrator of the public, private or charter school in which the student is enrolled.
5. A requirement that the custodial parent(s) or guardian(s) of any student involved in a
6. prohibited incident be notified.
7. A procedure for documenting reported incidents, responses to incidents including steps taken to investigate reported incidents.
8. A strategy for protecting a victim or other person from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and from retaliation following a report, including a means by which a person may report an incident anonymously.
9. A strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for aggressors, targets and family members of students as needed.
10. A disciplinary procedure for any student guilty of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, that infringes on any student's rights and expressly providing for the possibility of suspension of a student found responsible for harassment, intimidation, or bullying.
11. A range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying or retaliation provided that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.
12. A statement and a disciplinary procedure prohibiting students from deliberately making false reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and for any student responsible for deliberately making a false report.
13. Provisions for informing parents and guardians about the anti-bullying prevention and intervention plan of the school and shall include how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school and the dynamics of any and all forms of bullying.
14. A strategy for introducing the plan to all students/families.
15. A strategy to ensure a parent or legal guardian signs off confirming that the plan was read.

D. Plan Review and Updates:

The plan shall be reviewed and updated preferably every year, but at least every two years and the principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the anti-bullying prevention and implementation plan within the school.

E. Training:

Annual training on the plan shall be provided for staff, students, parents, faculty, counselors, school nurses,

custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and all other school support staff.

Such anti-bullying training may include, but not be limited to:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target and witnesses to the bullying
- Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment
- Information on cyber-bullying emphasizing Internet safety

F. Publication and Notice:

The plan shall be posted on the school's website and included in student and employee handbooks.

G. Reporting:

A member of the staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or to the staff member designated in the plan as responsible for receiving such reports.

H. Minimum Required Actions:

If the principal or his/her designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he/she shall:

- Take appropriate disciplinary action as stated in the plan
- Notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor and target and inform them of the disciplinary action and action to be taken to prevent any further acts

If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or his/her designee informed of such incident shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he/she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

I. Policy Questions and / or Concerns:

If any staff member has questions concerning this policy, he or she is encouraged to contact the Catholic Schools Office at 419.244.6711.

ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

FOR THE COMPUTER NETWORK OF

Divine Mercy Catholic School

Divine Mercy Catholic School is pleased to make available to students access to interconnected computer systems within the District and to the Internet, the world-wide network that provides various means of accessing significant educational materials and opportunities.

In order for the School District to be able to continue to make its computer network and Internet access available, all students must take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of this access. Students must understand that one student's misuse of the network and Internet access may jeopardize the ability of all students to enjoy such access. While the School's teachers and other Staff will make reasonable efforts to supervise student use of network and Internet access, they must have student cooperation in exercising and promoting responsible use of this access.

Below is the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy ("Policy") of the School District and the Data Acquisition Site that provides Internet access to the School District. Upon reviewing, signing, and returning this Policy as the students have been directed, each student will be given the opportunity to enjoy Internet access at School and is agreeing to follow the Policy. If a student is under 18 years of age, he or she must have his or her parents or guardians read and sign the Policy. The School District cannot provide access to any student who, if 18 or older, fails to sign and submit the Policy to the School as directed or, if under 18, does not return the Policy as directed with the signatures of the student and his/her parents or guardians.

Listed below are the provisions of your agreement regarding computer network and Internet use. If you have any questions about these provisions, you should contact the person that your School has designated as the one to whom you can direct your questions. If any user violates this Policy, the student's access will be denied, if not already provided, or withdrawn and he or she may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

I. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

By signing this Policy, you are agreeing not only to follow the rules in this Policy, but are

- agreeing to report any misuse of the network to the person designated by the School for such reporting. Misuse means any violations of this Policy or any other use that is not included in the Policy, but has the effect of harming another or his or her property.

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy

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II. TERM OF THE PERMITTED USE

A student who submits to the School, as directed, a properly signed Policy and follows the Policy to which she or he has agreed will have computer network and Internet access during the course of the school year only. Students will be asked to sign a new Policy each year during which they are students in the School District before they are given an access account.

III. ACCEPTABLE USES

- A. Educational Purposes Only. The School District is providing access to its computer networks and the Internet for *only* educational purposes. If you have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational, you may consult with the person(s) designated by the School to help you decide if a use is appropriate.

B. Unacceptable Uses of Network.

Among the uses that are considered unacceptable and which constitute a violation of this Policy are the following:

1. uses that violate the law or encourage others to violate the law. Don't transmit offensive or harassing messages; offer for sale or use any substance the possession or use of which is prohibited by the School District's Student Discipline Policy; view, transmit or download pornographic materials or materials that encourage others to violate the law; intrude into the networks or computers of others; and download or transmit confidential, trade secret information, or copyrighted materials. Even if materials on the networks are not marked with the copyright symbol, you should assume that all materials are protected unless there is explicit permission on the materials to use them.
2. uses that cause harm to others or damage to their property. For example, don't engage in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); employ another's password or some other user identifier that misleads message recipients into believing that someone other than you is communicating or otherwise using his/her access to the network or the Internet; upload a worm, virus, "trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participate in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
3. uses that jeopardize the security of student access and of the computer network or other • networks on the Internet. For example, don't disclose or share your password with others; don't impersonate another user.
4. uses that are commercial transactions. Students and other users may not sell or buy anything over the Internet. You should not give others private information about you or others, including credit card numbers and social security numbers.

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy

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C. Netiquette. All users must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include the following:

1. Be polite. Use appropriate language. No swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or threatening language.
2. Avoid language and uses which may be offensive to other users. Don't use access to make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material which is based upon slurs or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.
3. Don't assume that a sender of e-mail is giving his or her permission for you to forward or redistribute the message to third parties or to give his/her e-mail address to third parties. This should only be done with permission or when you know that the individual would have no objection.
4. Be considerate when sending attachments with e-mail (where this is permitted). Be sure that the file is not too large to be accommodated by the recipient's system and is in a format which the recipient can open.

IV. INTERNET SAFETY

- A. General Warning; Individual Responsibility of Parents and Users. All users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the electronic network may include the potential for access to materials inappropriate for school-aged pupils. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the computer network and Internet and stay away from these sites. Parents of minors are the best guide to materials to shun. If a student finds that other users are visiting offensive or harmful sites, he or she should report such use to the person designated by the School.
- B. Personal Safety. Be safe. In using the computer network and Internet, do not reveal personal information such as your home address or telephone number. Do not use your real last name or any other information which might allow a person to locate you without first obtaining the permission of a supervising teacher. Do not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone you "meet" on the computer network or Internet without your parent's permission (if you are under 18). Regardless of your age, you should never agree to meet a person you have only communicated with on the Internet in a secluded place or in a private setting.
- C. "Hacking" and Other Illegal Activities. It is a violation of this Policy to use the School's computer network or the Internet to gain unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or to attempt to gain such unauthorized access. Any use which violates state or federal law relating to copyright, trade secrets, the distribution of obscene or pornographic materials, or which violates any other applicable law or municipal ordinance, is strictly prohibited.

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D. Confidentiality of Student Information. Personally identifiable information concerning students may not be disclosed or used in any way on the Internet without the permission of a parent or guardian or, if the student is 18 or over, the permission of the student himself/herself. Users should never give out private or confidential information about themselves or others on the Internet, particularly credit card numbers and Social Security numbers. A supervising teacher or administrator may authorize the release of directory information, as defined by Ohio law, for internal administrative purposes or approved educational projects and activities.

E. Active Restriction Measures. The School, either by itself or in combination with the Data Acquisition Site providing Internet access, will utilize filtering software or other technologies to prevent students from accessing visual depictions that are (1) obscene, (2) child pornography, or (3) harmful to minors. The School will also monitor the online activities of students, through direct observation and/or technological means, to ensure that students are not accessing such depictions or any other material which is inappropriate for minors.

Internet filtering software or other technology-based protection systems may be disabled by a supervising teacher or school administrator, as necessary, for purposes of bona fide research or other educational projects being conducted by students age 17 and older.

The term "harmful to minors" is defined by the Communications Act of 1934 (47 USC Section 254 [h] [7]), as meaning any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that

- taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

V. PRIVACY

Network and Internet access is provided as a tool for your education. The School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

VI. FAILURE TO FOLLOW POLICY

The user's use of the computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right. A user who violates this Policy, shall at a minimum, have his or her access to the computer network and Internet terminated, which the School District may refuse to reinstate for the remainder of the student's enrollment in the School District. A user violates this Policy by his or her own action or by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates this Policy if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the computer

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy

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network and Internet, including any user whose access has been denied or terminated. The School District may also take other **disciplinary** action in such circumstances.

VII. WARRANTIES/INDEMNIFICATION

The School District makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this Policy. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages or costs (including attorney's fees) of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) arising out of the user's use of its computer networks or the Internet under this Policy. By signing this Policy, users are taking full responsibility for his or her use, and the user who is 18 or older or, in the case of a user under 18, the parent(s) or guardian(s) are agreeing to indemnify and hold the School, the School District, the Data Acquisition Site that provides the computer and Internet access opportunity to the School District and all of their administrators, teachers, and staff harmless from any and all loss, costs, claims or damages resulting from the user's access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services by the user. The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardian(s) agree to cooperate with the School in the event of the School's initiating an investigation of a user's use of his or her access to its computer network and the Internet, whether that use is on a School computer or on another computer outside the School District's network.

VIII. UPDATES

Users, and if appropriate, the user's parents/guardians, may be asked from time to time to provide new or additional registration and account information or to sign a new Policy, for example, to reflect developments in the law or technology. Such information must be provided by the user (or his/her parents or guardian) or such new Policy must be signed if the user wishes to continue to receive service. If after you have provided your account information, some or all of the information changes, you must notify the person designated by the School to receive such information.

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy

STUDENT'S AGREEMENT

Every student, regardless of age, must read and sign below:

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the terms of the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy of **Divine Mercy Catholic School**. Should I commit any violation or in any way misuse my access to the School District's computer network and the Internet, I understand and agree that my access privilege may be revoked and School disciplinary action may be taken against me.

Student Name (PRINT CLEARLY)

Phone Number

Student Signature

Date

Address

User (place an "X" in the correct blank): I am 18 or older _____ I am under 18 _____

If I am signing this Agreement when I am under 18, I understand that when I turn 18 this Agreement will continue to be in full force and effect, and I will continue to abide by the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy.

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S AGREEMENT

Student's name *To be read and signed by parents or guardians of students who are under 18:*

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read, understand and agree that my child or ward shall comply with the terms of **Divine Mercy Catholic School's** Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy for the student's access to the school's computer network and the Internet. I understand that access is being provided to the students for educational purposes only. However, I also understand that it is impossible for the School to restrict access to all offensive and controversial materials and understand my child's or ward's responsibility for abiding by the Policy. I am therefore signing this Agreement and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the School, the School District and the Data Acquisition Site that provides the opportunity to the School District for computer network and Internet access against all claims, damages, losses and costs, of whatever kind, that may result from my child's or ward's use of his or her access to such networks or his or her violation of the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision of my child's or ward's use of his or her access account if and when such access is not in the School setting. I hereby give permission for my child or ward to use the building-approved account to access the School District's computer network and the Internet.

Parent/Guardian Name(s) (PRINT CLEARLY)

Phone Number

Parent/Guarian Signature(s)

Date

Address

Legal References: Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (H.R. 4577, P.L. 106-554)
Communications Act of 1934, as amended (47 U.S.C. 254[h],[l]) Elementary
and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.,
Part F)

Policy Statement on Gender-Related Matters

The Catholic Church has always believed that her first mission given her by Christ Jesus is the salvation of souls. The Church must be true to her own identity and mission. Thus, the teachings of the Catholic Church must permeate all aspects of her activities. As a result, the Catholic community has a responsibility to be a witness to truth, charity, and justice based on the Gospel; and must always strive to be respectful of persons and understanding of the struggles present within and among the people of God. It would be inconsistent with the Church's mission to teach, promote, or encourage anything that is contrary to the teachings she has received from God and which the Magisterium has clearly and consistently articulated. For this reason, the Church cannot, and may not, sponsor, endorse, facilitate, or host such organizations, events or activities that would promote such views, in any form or format whatsoever.

With specific regard to the human person, the Catholic Church has always and everywhere affirmed her belief that each and every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. As such, every person deserves respect, dignity, and freedom from discrimination. By remaining true to what Christ has taught concerning the human person, the Church encourages individuals to accept their own bodies and gender as they were created¹, and seeks to help all people to recognize that the current attempts in modern culture to redefine gender and social institutions, as well as alter the nature and purpose of human beings, are misguided and not in accord with the truth. Therefore, it would be morally unacceptable for the Catholic Church, including the Diocese of Toledo, its parishes, schools, or ecclesiastical organizations to provide accommodations based on anything which in itself is contradictory or antithetical to the teachings of Christ and his Church, including notions of gender and sexuality that are contrary to Catholic teachings. For a fuller catechetical treatment of this topic, see Catechesis Regarding Human Dignity and Gender-Related Matters in the Appendix.

In Catholic parishes, schools and ecclesiastical organizations of the Diocese of Toledo, all activities and ministries are to be rooted in, and consistent with, the principles of Catholic doctrine. Therefore, in every parish, school and institution, all paid employees and unpaid volunteers will:

1. Treat all persons with sensitivity, respect, and compassion.
2. On a case-by-case basis, consider in a compassionate way any specific request sensitive to the physical and psychological needs of a person. The basis of the consideration will be on the following questions:
 - i. What is the specific request of the adult, student and/or parent(s)/guardian?
 - ii. Is the request in keeping with the teaching of the Catholic Church?
 - iii. Is the parish, school or ecclesiastical organization reasonably able to provide for the request?
3. Require that names and pronouns be in accordance with the person's biological sex.
4. Maintain names in records according to the person's biological sex.
5. Confirm that uniforms and gender specific dress, bathrooms, locker rooms, showers, and sponsored activities will all be according to biological sex.
6. Require that participation on athletic teams and extra-curricular activities be according to biological sex.
7. Consult the Office of Marriage and Family Life with extenuating circumstances.

¹ Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia* 56.

The Catholic Church has always and everywhere affirmed her belief that each and every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. As such, every person deserves respect, dignity, and freedom from discrimination. Indeed, there is an inescapable duty to make ourselves the neighbor of all people, no matter who they are¹. Further, the Church is obligated to hand on to every generation all that she has received from Jesus Christ, her divine founder, especially as it relates to our understanding of the human person in these present times.

The witness of Sacred Scripture is clear: God created human beings male and female (Genesis 1:27). From the dawn of creation as depicted in the Book of Genesis to the closing pages of the Apocalypse, Scripture presents the human race as consisting of only two (2) sexes. Both sexes, male and female, are created in the image of God and are equal in dignity and destiny (Genesis 2:21-24). God created Adam and Eve out of love and for love. One's gender is therefore determined by one's biological sex.

The entirety of divinely inspired Scripture affirms the male and female forms of human nature *as reality*. They are not mere cultural phenomena or subjective constructs. Although wounded by the entrance of sin into human experience and its far-reaching effects on our bodily nature, man and woman continue to image God in both their uniqueness and complementarity. Scripture is clear on the necessity of respecting God's order and commands for human beings to experience the fullness of life he intends.

As articulated by Pope Francis, the clear and constant moral teachings of the Catholic Church have always envisioned a connection between our highest human happiness and our willingness to embrace the biological sex given us at birth². Our bodies teach us profound truths about ourselves and our purpose in life. Our bodies signify that we are called to and gifted for relationships that are complementary in nature, open to new life, and destined for eternal happiness and joy. Our bodies are God-given means of deepening our human generosity and communion with both God and each other.

Pope Saint John Paul II affirmed in his teaching known as the *Theology of the Body* that in our given biological complementarity, *as distinctly male and female*, God clearly intended us to live in loving communion with him and with each other. Through mutual self-giving and interdependence, he invites us to share in his own act of creation, as well as his own eternal happiness and joy. Therefore, our God-given maleness and femaleness clearly make visible our calling to love and co-create with God in bringing new life into the world. This is what Pope Saint John Paul II called the "sacramentality of the body." Our bodies are "icons" that reveal the deepest essence of who we are in the moral, spiritual, emotional, and physical dimensions of life.

¹ Gaudium et Spes 27.

² Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia* 285.

Catholic teachings envision biological sex as neither a politically defined nor socially constructed reality. It is an objective reality, a cornerstone of our createdness, and an invitation to enter joyfully and generously into what we believe to be the central mystery of the Christian faith, namely, that God is himself an eternal exchange of love emanating from the love shared between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit³.

The Catholic Church recognizes that there is much confusion regarding human sexuality and gender in today's society. Knowing that this confusion touches the lives of many people very personally, the Catholic Church is committed to walking with each individual on the path towards a more integral understanding of their human dignity and their unique vocation in the Creator's plan for salvation history.

³ Catechism of the Catholic Church 221.

Handbook and School Policies

After reading the policies outlined in the handbook, parents must sign and return the bottom portion of this form to the school office.

Dear Parents,

This is the latest revised copy of our Divine Mercy Catholic School Handbook and Policies. We ask that you read it carefully because it contains the policies and regulations for all students and staff at Divine Mercy Catholic School.

We further ask that you sign and return the bottom portion of this form to the school office. Your signature below assures us that you have read and agree to abide by the policies and regulations set forth in this handbook. **We need at least one signature from a parent or guardian.** Thank you.

Divine Mercy Catholic School Staff

We have read the Divine Mercy Catholic School Handbook and Policies and hereby agree to abide by all the policies and regulations set forth in the handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT CLEARLY)

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT CLEARLY)

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date
