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MISSION STATEMENT

*Inspiring Catholic Faith and Principles
While Encouraging Academic Excellence*

PHILOSOPHY

We, the faculty of Visitation of Our Lady School, as Catholic educators, in conjunction with the parents who are the primary educators of their child(ren), work together to integrate the teachings of Catholicism, Christian values and academic excellence within the school setting and aim for the total development of each unique child. Thus, the students are enabled to become fully integrated Christian persons who recognize Christ in others and themselves and contribute uniquely to their community. We believe that through our educational apostolate, our students are empowered to receive and understand the message of Christ, share it in service, in community, and celebrate its embodiment through worship.

We attempt to create an atmosphere of positive awareness in the areas of:

1. Spiritual Development - Emphasizing living in accord with the teachings of Christ and His Church.
2. Moral Development - Guiding the students in decision-making, through a deep understanding of right and wrong as taught in Holy Scripture and the tradition of the Catholic Church.
3. Emotional Development - Aiding the development of positive self-concept and acceptance of one another as individuals.
4. Intellectual development - Attempting to challenge each child to reach his/her academic potential - recognizing the unique abilities of each child.

5. Social Development - Encouraging positive interaction with one another in order to become a contributing member of society.
6. Physical Development - Encouraging respect for the human body.

In order to implement the philosophy of V.O.L. School, we propose the following objectives:

1. Spiritual Development
 - a) Be examples of Christian living to one another
 - b) Begin and end each day with prayer
 - c) Provide instruction in religious truth and values
 - d) Take part in meaningful liturgical celebrations
 - e) Encourage parents to attend student Masses and paraliturgical services
 - f) Organize activities for the student body which will help build a community of faith
2. Moral Development
 - a) Give opportunities for decision making by presenting the alternatives, and stressing personal responsibility in deciding between right and wrong
 - b) Establish an atmosphere in the classroom for openness and trust
3. Emotional Development
 - a) Be aware of the need for positive reinforcement in all relationships
 - b) Foster a level of awareness of the dignity of each person
4. Intellectual Development
 - a) Provide varied learning experiences according to the needs of the individual child
 - b) Emphasize academic achievement
5. Social Development
 - a) Provide services for the immediate and larger community
 - b) Open doors to community involvement in our school

- c) Encourage respect for the rights and property of others
 - d) Foster an appreciation of cultural diversity
6. Physical Development
 - a) Emphasize personal hygiene and nutrition
 - b) Stress physical fitness
 - c) Foster chastity using guided Christian principles

CURRICULUM

Visitation of Our Lady is a Louisiana State approved and SACS accredited Catholic school that offers a strong basic curriculum. Emphasis is placed on individual needs and learning styles in an environment that stresses Christian values. Students are challenged to develop a firm foundation in lifetime skills. In addition, we also offer:

- A half-day or full-day Pre-Kindergarten 3 year old program for children who are three by September 30th.
- A half-day or full-day Pre-Kindergarten 4 year old program for children who are four by September 30th.
- A Middle Grades Program in grades 5, 6, 7, & 8 that addresses the needs of early adolescents. This program includes, exploratory courses, interdisciplinary teaming, honors classes and extra curricular activities.
- A Language Arts Lab that provides instruction to students with special needs if they meet the criteria for admission.
- Weekly Masses for all students in Pre K-4 through 8th grade.
- A computer lab which students attend weekly for reinforcement and an additional state of the art lab that allows students to become active participants in research and learning. All classrooms in 1st – 8th grades and the library have access to the Internet.
- **Smart Boards in all classrooms.**

- A hands on approach to science through experimentation in an equipped science lab.
- Title I Remedial Reading/Math program to help qualifying students.
- Updated textbooks.
- Participation in the Archdiocesan Band Program is provided.
- The use of a school wide discipline program which stresses positive affirmation for appropriate behavior.
- The services of a guidance counselor are available.
- Web Site at <http://www.vol.org>.
- Daily homework assignments can be verified by phone or web site.
- Before and after care services are provided in the morning from 7:00~7:30 a.m. and in the afternoon from 3:00~6:00 p.m. The costs of these services are established at the beginning of each school year.
- Gymnasium with basketball and volleyball courts and full stage.

ADMISSIONS

Visitation of Our Lady School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all of the 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 the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies and other school administered programs.

REGISTRATION

Registration is held on a yearly basis.

All students registering do so with the understanding that they must take part in all aspects of the curriculum. New students are accepted on a nine-week probationary period. New students transferring from

other schools may or may not be accepted if they have a sibling currently enrolled at Visitation.

If a parent deliberately withholds information about a student concerning behavior or learning problems, that student will be asked to withdraw from school, and the registration fee will not be refunded.

MASS / CONFESSION OBLIGATION

We ask that you pledge to do your best to:

- attend Catholic Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation with your child if your child is Catholic
- attend Church Services with your child on Sunday if your child is not Catholic
- have your child go to Confession at least once a year if your child is Catholic
- encourage your child to see a priest for a blessing if your child is not Catholic
- make an effort to attend the Children's Mass which is celebrated each Sunday at VOL at noon. Students are encouraged to become lectors or choir members.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

For the safety and protection of the children we ask that you strictly adhere to these policies.

School Hours

Monday ~ Friday	8:15 a.m. ~ 3:00 p.m.
Early Dismissal Days	8:15 a.m. ~ 1:30 p.m.
Half day Pre-K (3 & 4 year olds)	8:15 a.m. ~ 11:30 a.m.

Arrival

Upon arriving at school, students should report to their assigned area. Regular school supervision begins at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving between 7:00 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. must report to morning care at the parents' expense. No supervision will be provided before 7:00 a.m.

Tardiness

Tardiness is quite inconvenient to the students and teachers. Please make every effort to see that your child arrives on time for school. Any student arriving at school after 8:15 a.m. must report to the office before going to their homeroom. Excessive tardiness will result in disciplinary action to be determined by the principal. If a student is tardy or checks out early from school, he/she is not eligible for perfect attendance. Excessive tardies will be reported to the Jefferson Parish Truancy Division.

Dismissal

Any student leaving school before the regular dismissal time must be checked out by a parent/guardian through the office. Please do not go directly to the classroom to get children early. Students cannot be checked out after 2:40 p.m. on a regular dismissal day or after 1:20 p.m. on an early dismissal day. Please make doctor and/or dental appointments after school hours or on school holidays.

Teacher's duty ends at 3:20 p.m. For your child's safety and protection, he/she will be sent to after care for supervision at the parent's expense if not picked up before 3:20 p.m.

Legal Limitations on Releasing Students

In the case of separated or divorced parents, it is the custodial parent's obligation to submit to the principal any document that would limit or prohibit the other parent's rights to have the child or the child's records (academic, financial, or behavioral) released to him/her. The school administration and teachers will not be involved in custody battles between parents. We strive to work with all parents/guardians for the benefit of the child. Stepparents, grandparents, and other extended family members also do not have a legal right to student records and information unless otherwise indicated by court documentation.

HEALTH / MEDICATION

Health Records

Students' health records must be up-to-date. If a student does not have health records up-to-date or has neglected to turn them in, he/she will be sent home. This is a state requirement. He/she may not attend school until immunizations are received.

Emergency Cards

All students must have an emergency card on file in the office. In case of an emergency, we require that you list the name and phone number of a relative/friend we can contact if you are unable to be reached at home and/or work. Please notify the school of any address or phone number changes that may occur during the school year. For safety reasons, we ask that you list the name of individuals who are able to sign your child out of school before the regular dismissal time. A written note or phone call is necessary if someone other than the names listed on the emergency card will be checking your child out of school early.

On the back of the emergency card, it is also necessary to list any allergies or medical problems your child may have and any medication that your child takes on an ongoing basis.

Request to Administer Medication

Students should never have any type of prescription or over the counter medication in their possession. This is for your child's safety.

Prescription medication will be administered to your child under the following conditions:

An Archdiocesan medical consent form which can be downloaded from the school's website must be filled out and returned only if/when your child takes prescription medication while at school. This form must be properly filled out before any school personnel will administer medication and requires a doctor's signature, prescribed dosage, and the time to administer. Send only what is required in a container marked with your child's name and the name of the medication. Whenever a prescription for long-term medication changes, a new form must be filled out.

Contagious Disease

Contact the school if your child has contracted a contagious disease. Students absent with contagious diseases must present a note from the doctor upon returning to school stating the reason for their absence.

Lice

Please remember that lice is also contagious and not necessarily a result of poor hygiene. There is no need to feel uncomfortable about reporting head lice. This will assist us in stopping its spread.

If a child is at school and lice is suspected the following steps will be taken:

- ◆ The student will be sent to the office.
- ◆ If lice are detected, the parents will be notified so arrangements can be made to check the child out of school. A student will not be allowed to return to class once lice have been detected.
- ◆ Students may return to school 24 hours after treatment has been applied and no nits remain.
- ◆ Upon returning to school, a parent must bring the child to the office to be checked before going to class. Only if the child's hair/scalp is free of lice and nits will he/she be allowed back into school.
- ◆ Proper cleaning of the entire household (combs, brushes, pillows, carpet, upholstery, linens, hats, etc.) is also necessary to stop the spread of lice.
- ◆ The school will send out notification to parents as well as spray the classroom once there has been a confirmed case of lice.

ATTENDANCE

Absentee Policy

When a student in K-8 is absent, a parent/guardian must call the school office at 347-3377 before 9:30 a.m. For absences, Pre K-3 parents should call 347-0159 and Pre K-4 parents call 348-2161. If a student will be out for a longer period of time (three or more days), just let the office know the first time you phone. Always give the

child's name, homeroom and number of days he/she will be absent. The school's homework line (347-3377 after 4:00 p.m.) and the web site's homework link (www.vol.org) can be accessed daily to verify homework assignments.

The number of days a student is allowed to be absent per school year is seventeen (17). Please be aware that frequent absences hinder academic progress, and should the number of absences exceed seventeen (17) days the child may be retained. Reasons for absences should be limited to illness, health conditions, and/or family emergencies. **Makeup work and/or tests will only be rescheduled with proper documentation of absence, which must be provided upon returning to school.** To assist in your child's academic progress, please schedule doctor's appointments and/or family vacations around early dismissal days and school holidays.

TECHNOLOGY

The library, two computer labs, and all 1st – 8th grade classrooms have computers with educational programs and Internet capabilities. All students are allowed to use the computers once the Visitation Acceptable Use Policy has been read and the appropriate contract has been signed by the parent and student. This policy outlines specific rules and regulations for computer and Internet use. The contracts are kept on file in the school office and are valid as the student advances in grade level.

The school website (www.vol.org) is intended to be a means of communication for the parents. Please access our website to view updated information about school events, calendars, cafeteria menus, teacher websites, and homework assignments. School wide notices are sent via email to parents who register for our email service. To electronically register for this service, visit our website, select mailing list and provide your email address.

SPECIAL NEEDS / ACCOMMODATIONS

Although we have a Language Arts Lab for students with special needs in the area of Language Arts, we are not 1508 compliant. We cannot accept students with a special education classification.

It is at the sole discretion of the principal to determine the nature and extent of adjustments within the classroom for students with special needs. When adjustments are made in the classroom, the grades earned may or may not be on par with those earned by students who receive traditional grades. The principal also reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw if a more appropriate learning environment is needed.

HOMEWORK

If you want your child's assignments for the day(s) he/she will be out of school, you can access the homework line (347-3377) and the web site's homework link (www.vol.org) to receive or verify homework assignments. If you need to request books, please call the office by 9:30 a.m. Books can be picked up in the office before 4:00 p.m.

Homework is a vital part of learning. All students are required to spend a certain length of time in daily study. Written homework is only one segment of learning. Homework (written and study) is given to reinforce what was taught. Having complete or incomplete homework will affect your child's grades. As a guide to the parents, we offer the following time schedule:

Grades 1-3	45-60 minutes (more or less according to the ability of the child)
Grades 4-6	60-90 minutes (more or less according to the ability of the child)

Grades 7-8 90-120 minutes (more or less according to the ability of the child)

Reading for enjoyment should be part of studying each night. This will improve the reading skills, as well as broaden the educational background of the student. Please encourage daily reading at all levels.

GRADING SYSTEM / PROMOTIONAL POLICIES

Grading Scale

Grades are based on quizzes, tests, exams (7th & 8th grades only), class participation, class work, and homework. The numerical grading scale used is:

100-94	A	Outstanding Achievement
93-86	B	Above-Average Achievement
85-78	C	Average
77-70	D	Below-Average
69	U	Unsatisfactory

End of the Year Averages

The four quarter grades will be averaged according to quality points: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and U=0. At least three quality points are needed to pass. **Any student failing the last quarter may fail the subject for the year.**

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be distributed mid-way between report cards each quarterly marking period. It will be noted on the monthly

calendar when these reports will be given out. Progress reports are a necessary communication to parents. Please sign and return them to school. These reports are sent as a warning to some students or as praise and encouragement to others. All students receive progress reports each quarterly marking period. Sometimes a child is doing well at progress report time and then drops drastically in his/her average.

Report Cards

Report cards are distributed each quarter during the school year.

Honor Roll

A scholastic and conduct "A" and "B" honor roll are computed each quarterly marking period.

Students who earn A's in all graded areas (conduct and academic) on their quarterly report card will be placed on the "Principal's List".

If a student has a "C," "D," or "U," he/she is **not** eligible for the "A" honor roll. The student's grades must average 3.5 or higher on a four-point scale to be placed on the "A" honor roll.

If a student has more than one "C," a "D," or a "U," he/she is **not** eligible for the "B" honor roll. The student is placed on the "B" honor roll if their grades average between 2.5 and 3.49 on a four-point scale.

Summer School

Summer school is required for any students whose final average in any major subject area is a U. In primary grades, Religion, Math and Reading/Language Arts are considered major subjects. In grades 4-8, Religion, Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies and English are considered major subjects. Anytime a student is required to attend summer school, he/she is conditionally promoted and placed

on academic probation. If a student fails Language Arts in the primary grades (1-3), he/she will be retained. If a student fails more than two major subjects, in grades 4-8, he/she will be retained, with the principal's approval. If a student is recommended for summer school, attendance is optional. If your child is having trouble in any subject area, feel free to discuss with the teacher steps that might be taken to avoid summer school or retention.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication between parents and teachers is extremely important and necessary. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the school year to discuss your child's progress. At any time during the year, if you have questions or concerns about your child, please call the office and leave a message for your child's teacher. Under no circumstances should a parent go directly to a classroom during the school day to discuss a concern with the teacher. This includes morning homeroom and dismissal times. Teachers are on duty and cannot discuss concerns or answer questions at this time. They can phone you later that evening. If satisfaction is not received after speaking or meeting with a teacher, parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the principal. It is recommended the teacher is contacted first and an attempt is made to resolve any concerns.

Parents are encouraged to stop in at any time to see the principal with comments or concerns. There are times, however, when meetings, previous appointments, or other scheduled commitments would necessitate a wait. To avoid any inconvenience, you may consider calling to schedule an appointment. Just call and leave your name and phone number. The principal will return your call as soon as possible.

FOOD SERVICES

The Visitation of Our Lady cafeteria staff provides nutritious, well-balanced meals daily. Breakfast is served every morning from 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. for students in K - 8th grade. Menus are posted in the cafeteria, outside the office in the main building hallway, and on the school web site.

The prices for lunch and breakfast are set at the beginning of each school year. Money is paid monthly and is due on the first Monday of the month. Students must have a positive balance at all times. A negative balance is not allowed. Please check your monthly calendar for the exact date.

Checks are accepted August through April. A \$30.00 service charge will be assessed for any returned check. Credit card payments are accepted online. During the month of May lunch payments must be made in cash. No checks will be accepted in May. Extras (ice cream, water, fries, etc.) are available to 3rd - 8th. Please notify the cafeteria manager if you want your child's lunch account blocked from purchasing extra food. The cafeteria manager can be reached at 347-2278. No student is allowed to go without lunch because he/she does not like what is being served. If a student cannot drink milk, he/she must bring an annual doctor's note and juice will be provided.

On very special occasions, a parent may come to eat lunch with their child. We feel this is a time for children to learn social skills by eating and conversing with their peers. We ask that parents' lunch visits be infrequent and prearranged with the office, cafeteria manager, and the child's teacher.

Sack lunches that are brought from home should provide the child with a well-balanced meal. Students may bring only fruit juices, milk and/or water. No canned, carbonated drinks of any type are

allowed. Foods from fast food establishments cannot be brought into the cafeteria for consumption. All non-nutritious snacks should be eaten at recess.

TRANSPORTATION

Jefferson Parish Public School System provides transportation to those students in grades K-8th who live within Visitation Parish boundaries and live more than one mile away from school. Parents and students using Jefferson Parish transportation must follow all procedures and policies set forth by the Jefferson Parish School System.

Bus riders are expected to be courteous to other passengers and to the bus driver. Students should be safety-conscious and must conduct themselves in a manner that will minimize hazards. Students should remain seated at all times and refrain from throwing objects out of the windows. According to Jefferson Parish policy, cell phones and school bags with wheels are not allowed on the school bus. A student who becomes a discipline problem on the bus may be deprived of the privilege of riding the bus.

If a student is riding a different bus home for a day, he/she must bring a note written by the parent/guardian for the principal's approval. Bus drivers will not allow a student to ride unless this permission has been cleared ahead of time and then only if they have space.

If a student walks or rides a bike to and/or from school or an after school event, an annual acknowledgement letter must be kept on file in the office.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Please adhere to the dismissal procedures which are posted throughout the school campus and displayed on the school website. Be courteous to other drivers and staff members on duty in the parking lots. Also be cautious of other children being dropped off and walking in the parking lot. Everyone's safety is of utmost importance.

General Procedures for students and parents:

- If you need to check out your child early, please do so by 2:40 p.m. or 1:20 p.m. on early dismissal days. Students checking out early are not eligible for perfect attendance and the check out is reported on the child's report card.
- Parents should not go to the classrooms during dismissal. All teachers are on duty and cannot converse with you at this time.
- The circular drive in front of the main building is reserved for buses. Please do not park here to pick up your child.
- Everyone's safety is of utmost importance, please be cautious and courteous in the parking lots.
- **When you pick your child up each day, please do not park and get out of your car. This creates a traffic flow problem when you try to get into the car pool line.**
- Students should always walk to their designated area.
- Students not picked up by 3:20 p.m. will be sent to after care.
- The office must have written permission on file if you allow your child to walk or ride a bicycle home after school. **This must be submitted yearly.**

Car Pool/Car Riders

- Students who ride home in cars are dismissed at approximately 3:00 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. on early dismissal days. Please display a

sign on your dashboard with the name(s) of the child(ren) you are picking up. Students are brought to the dismissal areas as a group and picked up using a car pool process. Please refer to the dismissal diagram that was mailed home. Additional copies are available on the school's website. Picking up students from the wrong side of the campus will only add to confusion at dismissal.

- **Pre K-3 and Pre K-4 students with no other siblings** at V.O.L. are dismissed at 2:40 p.m. and 1:10 p.m. on early dismissal days. The purpose for this early dismissal time is to help eliminate traffic problems in the parking lot. A car pool process will be utilized. Please enter the gate on Barataria Blvd. **behind** the new building. Proceed along the side of the new building and around to the circular drive. Students will be loaded into cars outside the main gym entrance. Parents cannot park and meet their child.
- **Pre K-3 and Pre-K 4 students with older siblings at V.O.L.** are dismissed with the main school at 3:00 p.m. from the Barataria lot and will use the car pool procedure. Your child will be escorted to the car pool pickup area on the side of the library as you arrive. Please refer to the "K-8 Dismissal Procedures" sheet and diagram.
- **K and 1st grade** students are dismissed at 3:00 from the Barataria lot (by the library). Students will be escorted by teachers and assistants to the Barataria parking lot for pick up. You should not go to your child's classroom. Duty teachers will assist getting your child into the car. You do not need to park and get out to meet your child. Use the car pool line. Also please pull up as close as possible to the car in front of you in the car pool line. This will allow more cars to get into the lot.
- **2nd through 8th grade** students are dismissed from the Ames parking lot (by the café). Teachers will escort children to this

dismissal area. There are 2 car pool pick up lines. 4th -8th parents should use the car pool line nearest Ames Blvd., and 2nd-3rd grade parents should use the car pool line that goes under the church covered entrance.

- To avoid confusion for families with children in multiple grade levels, students in 2nd ~ 8th grade with a younger sibling in Pre K-3 through 1st will be dismissed from the Barataria parking lot at 3:00.

Buses

- Buses usually arrive between 3:00 p.m. and 3:20 p.m.
- Students need a written note from a parent that is approved by the office to ride a different bus in the afternoon.

BEHAVIOR

As stated in our school philosophy, students are instructed in Christian principles and values. We encourage sharing with and caring for each other.

Our school wide discipline plan promotes respect and cooperation that is conducive to meeting the academic needs of each student. Students who choose not to follow policies and regulations are subject to disciplinary action. Any disciplinary action taken against a student is strictly confidential. Student privacy acts prohibit the school from discussing disciplinary consequences with anyone except a child's parent or guardian.

School Rules

- Respect yourself, others, and Visitation of Our Lady School
- Have a positive attitude
- Be prepared for class

- Be an active learner
- Abide by the rules and regulations in the student handbook

Each grade level has additional rules of acceptable behavior appropriate to their age. Teachers use a discipline program that stresses rewards and positive affirmation for students who exhibit acceptable behavior.

Discipline Policy

Students who do not abide by the rules and regulations stated in the handbook will receive a demerit for their infraction. This demerit acts as a warning for the unwarranted behavior. After 3 demerits the student will receive an after school detention. Parents will receive written notification if their child earns a detention. Students who receive 9 demerits (resulting in 3 detentions) will then have a scheduled conference with their parents, teacher(s), and an administrator. Continued disciplinary behaviors will result in a referral to the **principal**. The parent will be notified and the student may be subject to disciplinary probation.

Detentions will be held after school until 4:30 p.m. for students in grades 1-8. Students who are given a detention must make arrangements to stay on their assigned day. **Please do not call and ask for special consideration (excuses not accepted)**. A student should be encouraged to act in such a way as to not jeopardize any family function or after school activity by receiving a detention.

Parents are responsible for their child's actions whether intentional or accidental. The school cannot be expected to pay for damages to the facility or another individual due to your child's actions. Please encourage your child to act responsibly.

August 8, 2011

Suspensions

A student may receive a SUSPENSION for any of the following:

- Violence, verbal or written threats of violence
- Bullying
- Fighting-two or more students involved in an exchange or attempted exchange of blows
- Profane or obscene language, writings, gestures, drawings or actions
- Unchristian comments about classmates or teachers
- Theft-taking property without permission of owner
- Deliberate disobedience
- Disrespect to the staff
- Dishonesty (cheating)
- Marring of school property
- Unauthorized leaving of school grounds
- Repeated detentions or as a result of a referral
- Other serious violation of school rules

A first SUSPENSION will be held in school. Additional SUSPENSIONS may be served either in or out of school at the principal's discretion. A conference with the principal will then be mandatory. A serious offense after that may result in EXPULSION.

Expulsions

Smoking, carrying of cigarettes or tobacco, possession of alcohol or drugs, carrying knives or other weapons on school grounds, attempting to harm a staff member physically, serious assault on another student, constant bullying, a verbal or written threat of violence, etc. may be grounds for EXPULSION without any prior suspensions.

Prejudices against any race from parents or students will not be tolerated and may also be grounds for expulsion.

Unacceptable behavior of the parent(s) will not be tolerated. Abusive language, threats, and/or insults to a teacher, an administrator, or other students are not compatible with our Christian philosophy. Such action may result in EXPULSION of the student. We are here to work together. We encourage parents to try and work out any problems with the teacher before going to the principal.

To make an appeal concerning a decision made by the school administration in regards to a suspension or expulsion of a student, parents may appear before the pastor/school board.

Search and Seizure

For health and safety reasons, the school reserves the right during the school day, at all school sponsored activities (such as field trips, extra curricular activities, etc.), during, before and after school or while the student or his/her possessions are on campus, to carry out reasonable search and seizure by school officials of any student or their possessions for materials or objects which are in violation of school policy.

Child Abuse

In accordance with Louisiana Law 14:403, any persons or agencies who are responsible for the care of children, such as physicians, nurses, principals, teachers, and social workers who suspect that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare is or has been abused are required to report such cases to the proper authorities.

FIELD TRIPS

Educational field trips are scheduled in conjunction with the curriculum. All trips are optional and are offered at an additional cost to the parents. Students are permitted to attend the field trip only if parents complete, sign, and return the field trip permission form. Supervision in an academic setting will be provided for students opting not to participate.

The teachers often have meaningful activities planned after a field trip, so the school discourages checking your child out early on these days. Any early checkout is recorded on the child’s report card.

The number of chaperones chosen varies upon the age of children and nature of the trip being taken. To avoid confusion, we request that you not attend a field trip if you are not chosen as a chaperone.

Students who consistently choose not to cooperate with school policies may need to have parental supervision on field trips. Parents will be notified in advance so they can make arrangements to attend. If parental supervision cannot be provided, the student will be required to remain at school in a supervised academic setting.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra curricular activities vary from year to year depending on teacher moderators. At the present time V.O.L. offers:

Club	Grade Level	Requirements
HALO Club	5 - 8	None
Drama	3 - 8	Audition
Student Council	5 - 8	Peer Election

Altar Servers	4 - 8	Recommendation
Cheerleading	5 - 8	Tryouts
Band	4 - 8	Fee
Choir	3 - 8	None
Athletics	5 - 8	Varies
Math Club	6 - 8	Strong Math Skills
Quiz Bowl	5 - 8	None

Most clubs hold meetings at recess or after school hours. Students should make arrangements ahead of time for transportation.

Visitation hosts several athletic home games during the school year. V.O.L. requires that the following rules are adhered to:

- Any student leaving our campus and returning later to attend a game must have a parent or guardian attend the game as his/her chaperone.
- Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds at any time during school hours or when remaining after school for extra-curricular activities as a participant or as a spectator.
- Transportation arrangements need to be made prior to game day. Junior games begin at 3:30 p.m. and end at approximately 4:30 p.m. Senior games begin immediately following junior games. Occasionally senior games end after the 6 p.m. after care closing time. Please be mindful of this when picking up your child.
- Students should remain in the area where the game is being played. For safety purposes, students should not congregate around the bathrooms or classroom facilities.
- Team members as well as parents and spectators must exhibit qualities of good sportsmanship at all times. School rules and consequences apply even at after school games.

- Students in aftercare will have the option to attend home games if they are in 5th – 8th grades. Younger students (K – 4th grades) can only attend games if accompanied by their parents.
- Team members are not penalized for early check outs for away games. If siblings are checked out early to attend an away game, they must be checked out in the office. The check out is recorded on the child’s report card and cumulative record.

BEFORE / AFTER CARE

Any family using after care services must fill out an after care registration form and pay an annual registration fee. Registration forms and guidelines are posted on the school’s website.

Services are provided regularly each morning from 7:00~7:30 a.m. and from 3:00~6:00 p.m. each afternoon. All school policies and rules apply during these times. A homework room is available during the after care hours for students to do their homework assignments. A teacher is available to assist students if help is needed.

Do not drop off your child before 7:00 a.m. The school will not be responsible for any students dropped off before 7:00 a.m. Students who are absent are not allowed to use before and after care services for the dates of absence.

Before and after care fees are set at the beginning of each school year and should be paid on a weekly basis. Payments not made on a weekly basis will incur late charges. If payments are not made on a regular basis, before and or after care services will be denied.

Parents must come into the after care room and check their child out each day. Call (400-7465) to notify the staff if someone other than a parent will be picking up your child. Also please be mindful of our 6:00 p.m. closing time. We would appreciate your cooperation in picking up your child on time. You will be denied use of the after care services if you are not punctual in picking up your child. Additionally, a fee of \$1.00 for each minute after 6:00 p.m. will be charged.

SCHOOL UNIFORM / DRESS CODE

The purpose of a uniform is to keep our students uniformly dressed and looking their best. Uniforms should always be clean and not tattered or torn in any manner. **PLEASE DO NOT PURCHASE CLOTHING OR ANY ITEM THAT DEVIATES FROM OUR POLICY.** As parents, it is your responsibility to see that the uniform regulations are followed by your child(ren).

Inka's S'coolwear is the only uniform company officially contracted to sell Visitation uniforms. The store is located at 1617 Hickory Ave. Through out the school year and during the summer months there are several road sales scheduled here at school for your convenience. If you have any questions or concerns, the store numbers are 739-9866 or 1-800-780-8751. Additionally, the web site is www.inkascoolwear.com.

If a student must be out of uniform for some reason, a written note should be sent explaining the circumstances. A note is valid for 3 consecutive days. If a note is not sent, your child is subject to disciplinary action or may be required to call home for an appropriate uniform.

GIRLS:

1. A plaid V.O.L. uniform jumper (Pre-K – 4th)/skirt (5th – 8th) or uniform walking shorts (Pre-K - 2nd) is required and must be purchased from Inka's S'coolwear. Only students in Pre K through 2nd grade are allowed to wear the uniform walking shorts. The shorts or skirts must not be more than 2" above the knee. Please be mindful of this policy if you hem your daughter's skirt or shorts. We do not intend to waste our time measuring lengths. Students not in compliance will be sent home. We expect modesty from all students.
2. White blouses (long or short sleeve; plain or Oxford style) are required and must be purchased from Inka's S'coolwear. Blouses with Peter Pan collars are worn with jumpers (Pre K through 4th grade), blouses with sport collars are worn in 5th through 8th grade. Only solid white garments may be worn under the blouse. **Blouses must be neatly tucked in at all times.**
3. Solid white, gray or maroon socks or knee-high socks must be worn. If you choose to wear ankle/sport socks, they must be the VOL sport socks purchased at Inka's. In the winter, **solid** gray, black, white, maroon, or flesh colored tights, ankle length leggings, or leg warmers may be worn. Solid black or gray warm-up pants are also acceptable.
4. Black and white saddle oxford shoes are required for girls in Pre-K – 4th grades. Maroon penny loafers are required for all Middle Grade (5th – 8th) girls.
5. The only outerwear that is acceptable in the classroom is listed below. These items can only be purchased at Inka's S'coolwear.

Pre K – 4th:

- a. Maroon V.O.L. windbreaker
- b. Gray or maroon cardigan or pullover sweater
- c. Gray crew neck or hooded V.O.L. sweatshirt

- d. Maroon, hooded V.O.L. jacket

Middle Grades 5th - 8th:

- a. Maroon V.O.L. windbreaker
 - b. Gray or maroon cardigan or pullover sweater
 - c. Maroon or gray (crew neck or hooded) V.O.L. sweatshirt
 - d. Maroon, hooded V.O.L. jacket
 - e. Athletic jacket
6. Make-up is NOT to be worn at school. Girls may wear small earrings restricted to the lobes. For safety reasons, dangling earrings are not allowed. Only clear nail polish is acceptable. **Hair must be well groomed, and may not be worn in any fad/extreme style. We reserve the right to judge if a hairstyle is fad/extreme.**

BOYS:

- 1. Pleated or flat front gray uniform pants or walking shorts are required and must be purchased from Inka's S'coolwear. Only students in Pre K through 2nd grade are allowed to wear the uniform walking shorts. The walking shorts should not be more than 2" above the knee. Please be mindful of this policy if you hem your son's shorts or cut his long pants. We do not intend to waste our time measuring lengths. Only shorts of walking length will be allowed. Students not in compliance will be sent home. Pants/shorts must be worn properly to fit on the waist. We expect modesty from all students.
- 2. Black, gray web or stretch belts must be worn at all times.
- 3. Maroon V.O.L. uniform shirts are required and must be purchased from Inka's S'coolwear. **All shirts must be tucked neatly inside pants at all times.** Only plain white

or gray t-shirts or turtlenecks may be worn under the uniform shirt.

- 4. Solid white or gray crew or over the ankle socks must be worn. If you choose to wear ankle/sport socks, they must be the VOL sport socks purchased at Inka's.
- 5. Solid black LOW-CUT tie shoes are required. No obvious stripes or decorations on shoes will be allowed. This allows a wide choice for your selection. Please do not ask for special privileges. Pre-K students are strongly encouraged to have shoes with Velcro closures.
- 6. The only outerwear that is acceptable in the classroom is listed below. These items can only be purchased from Inka's S'coolwear.

Pre K - 4th:

- a. Maroon V.O.L. windbreaker
- b. Gray or maroon cardigan or pullover sweater
- c. Gray crew neck or hooded V.O.L. sweatshirt
- d. Maroon, hooded V.O.L. jacket

Middle Grades 5th- 8th:

- a. Maroon V.O.L. windbreaker
 - b. Gray or maroon cardigan or pullover sweater
 - c. Maroon or gray (**crew neck or hooded**) V.O.L. sweatshirt
 - d. Maroon, hooded V.O.L. jacket
 - e. Athletic jacket
- 7. **Hair must be well groomed, and may not be worn in any fad/extreme style. We reserve the right to judge if a hairstyle is fad/extreme.** Hair should be out of the eyes and should not touch the top part of the shirt collar.
 - 8. Earrings may not be worn at school or at any school-sponsored event.

P.E. UNIFORMS:

A uniform for P.E. is not required for students in K - 4th grades. Students in 3rd and 4th grades have the option to purchase a P.E. uniform. If a P.E. uniform is not purchased, the regular school uniform should be worn for P.E.

Middle Grades 5th – 8th:

All students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 are required to wear a P.E. uniform.

1. White V.O.L. T-shirt and maroon shorts with the school emblem which must be purchased from Inka's S'coolwear.
2. Tennis shoes.

Inka's S'coolwear
1617 Hickory Ave.
Harahan, LA 70123
739-9866
1-800-780-8751
www.inkascoolwear.com

FINANCES

Your child's tuition status cannot be changed once fee bills are mailed in March. The Catholic rate of tuition would go into effect the following school year. To change your child's Pre K attendance from ½ day to full day or from full day to ½ day will incur a \$25.00 charge (subject to availability).

If parents decide to finance their tuition by making a loan, parents are responsible for following the payment schedule prepared by the bank, as well as the guidelines listed in this section.

Tuition Loans

The following guidelines will be used to address past due balances on tuition loans. The parish finance board has approved these policies to help ensure monthly payments of all tuition loans. The school's monthly operating budget is dependent upon monthly loan payments made on time. Your cooperation in meeting your financial obligation to the school in a timely manner is expected.

- The school has capability to view all tuition loan account balances online. A review of account balances will be done on a daily basis to ensure that proper payments are being made on time.
- Tuition loan payments are due on the first day each month beginning in **July** and ending in **April**. Payments not made by the 10th of the month are considered delinquent and are assessed a \$15.00 late fee.
- **July** and **August** loan payments must be made in order for a student to begin school in August.
- Students in Pre K-3 and Pre K-4 will not be allowed to attend school if tuition is delinquent. Parents will be notified if a payment is delinquent. In the event that an NSF check is written for a tuition payment, the original past due date will apply.
- If an account becomes 30 days past due, the student(s) will no longer be allowed to take exams/weekly tests. This will result in the student(s) receiving an incomplete on their report card. Once the account is brought fully up to date, tests will be administered.

- Any loan that is 45 days past due will be charged back to the school, and a \$100.00 charge back fee will be assessed. The full loan balance plus the charge back fee to the school in order for the student to continue attending school.
- If a family’s tuition loan is charged back on more than one occasion during their years at Visitation, the family will not be eligible to obtain a loan to pay their tuition and fees. The family must pay their tuition and fees in full using cash.
- All accounts must be current in order for families to re-register for the subsequent school year. The school will in no way be obligated to hold a space for students of families whose accounts are not current. If at any time after registration the family becomes delinquent in paying tuition, the family will be subject to having their registration for the subsequent year dropped.
- The last tuition loan payment must be paid by **April 10th** or the loan is charged back to the school and a \$100.00 charge back fee will be added to the balance. Additionally, your child/ren cannot attend school until all tuition and charge back fees are paid in full.

NSF Checks

A \$30.00 service charge will be assessed for ANY returned check made payable to Visitation of Our Lady (this includes the school, Co-Op, cafeteria, etc.). The amount of the returned check plus the \$30.00 service fee is due in cash immediately upon notification by the office staff. *All business must be on a cash basis until this matter is resolved.*

August 8, 2011

Refund Policy

If a student withdraws from school before the end of the school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school office. If the tuition was being paid through a loan with the bank, the office will cancel the loan.

If a tuition refund is in order, it will be issued as soon as possible. **A \$25 processing fee will be assessed for all loan cancellations/refunds.** Refunds for tuition and fees will be calculated as follows:

<i>Registration Fees</i>	Non-refundable
<i>Non-parish and Multi-Purpose Building Fees</i>	Non-refundable after the first day of the school year
<i>Tuition</i>	Tuition will be refunded based on the amount the family has paid less the amount of tuition used. The amount of tuition used will be determined by multiplying the number of calendar months the family is enrolled in school times 1/10 the amount of the sum of tuition. A partial month will be counted as a full month.

No refunds will be issued after March 31.

Example:

A family pays \$3,200.00 in tuition for one child. The child is enrolled in school through mid October.

1/10 Tuition	\$320.00
Tuition used	3 X \$320.00= \$960.00
(Aug., Sept., & Oct.)	

Refund	\$3,200.00 – 960.00
Processing Fee	- \$25.00
	= \$2,240.00

DEFINITION OF A PARISHIONER

The Long Range Plan for Archdiocesan Elementary Schools calls for parishes to provide financial support for the children of registered, active, supporting parish families who are enrolled in Archdiocesan elementary schools.

To be eligible for financial assistance from your parish for the purpose of school tuition, your family must be:

- **REGISTERED**—any individual or family who filled out a parish census form or some written document declaring membership in a particular parish that has been accepted by the local pastor.
- **ACTIVE**—the individual or family who is regular in attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
- **SUPPORTING**—the individual or family who is a regular financial contributor to the parish in accord with the stewardship program of that particular parish.

Each parish is allowed to define for itself what “registered,” “active,” and “supporting” means. The following definitions have been established to qualify for support from Visitation of Our Lady Parish.

REGISTERED: Parents or legal guardians are considered registered in Visitation of Our Lady Parish if they live within our parish boundaries and are registered in the parish according to Archdiocesan norms. Also, parents residing outside the geographical

boundaries of the parish and who likewise have registered at Visitation according to Archdiocesan norms meet this criterion.

ACTIVE: Parents or legal guardians are considered active in Visitation of Our Lady Parish if they regularly fulfill their Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation by attending Mass at Visitation of Our Lady Church. Additionally, it is expected that they will have participated in at least one parish organization, work activity, or liturgical ministry for the previous year. For example, a parent might be active in the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Co-op Club and yearly fair, or serve as a reader at Mass. Mass attendance will be verified by the record of the weekly use of the parish envelope system. A one-time offering at year’s end will not suffice. Note Well: Simply dropping a child off for Mass with a Sunday envelope, or mailing the envelopes to the parish office is unacceptable to be considered an active member of the parish.

SUPPORTING: Parents or guardians are considered supporting members of Visitation of Our Lady Parish when they contribute a minimum of \$8 weekly using the envelope system in Offertory Giving. This minimum is based upon less than two hours salary per week at minimum wage. Your increased support of the parish is necessary in light of the fact that the church has increased the subsidy to the school for capital improvements.

If a child was baptized Catholic but has not met the sacramental milestones, i.e. Holy Communion in second grade, the family will be given the tuition rate of a non-Catholic student.

If a family with students in Visitation of Our Lady School is judged not to qualify, the parents will be responsible for paying the amount of the voucher to the school themselves. These criteria, according to the above definitions, will determine your eligibility for the 2011-

2012 school year. If you are not currently fulfilling these criteria, you must begin now to fulfill this obligation.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

In the event that it is necessary to close school or end the day's session early, an announcement would be broadcast over WWL radio and/or television. Parents will be notified of an emergency school closure by our SchoolReach messaging system. Parents may also sign up for VOL parish messages via our Twitter account at twitter.com/volparish. All emergency closure information will also be posted on the schools website. The decision to close school is made through Jefferson Parish or the Archdiocese, so we would appreciate you not calling the school office for this information. It is important to keep phone lines free for emergency calls.

OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION

All parents and visitors must sign in and get a visitor's pass in the school office before going to a classroom for any reason.

Students are responsible for the care of their textbooks during the school year. Books that are lost or destroyed in any manner must be replaced at the expense of the parent. Textbooks should never be written in and they must be covered at all times. "Book Sox" covers are not allowed because they damage the bindings of the book.

School bags with wheels are permitted in 3rd through 8th grades. School bags with wheels are not allowed on the school bus and must be carried up/down the stairs by all students that have classes on the second floor.

Parents are urged to mark all their child's books, bags, clothing and supplies with their name and room number. A lost and found area is located under the stairs for any lost items. On the last Friday of each month, unclaimed items will be disposed.

If a student forgets an assignment, a book, and/or a signed test, etc., he/she will not be allowed to call home. Students must learn responsibility and accept the consequences. Parents can help by not catering to their child. Therefore, students may not use the phone to call for forgotten supplies.

No bulletin or any type of communication may be sent out through the school, class or teacher without permission from the office. This is for your protection as well as ours. **Party invitations are not to be distributed at school;** they need to be mailed or phoned.

If copies of school documents or records are necessary (with the exception of school transfers), research and copying costs will be incurred. A minimum of 3 days notice is also required.

If parents wish to do something for the 8th graders, this should be done after the students have graduated. The school has meaningful activities planned for the students.

Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds at any time during school hours. This includes the time before and after school while waiting for the bus, or if remaining after school for meetings, games, detention, tutoring or any other reason. This is for the safety of your child. **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION.**

Students are not to bring electronic games, cell phones, radios, headsets, tape recorders, beepers, and/or newest fad toys (games) etc. to school. Many of these items are expensive and should be kept at

home. The school is not responsible for the loss of these objects or any other toys or games brought for play at recess.

Although the use of cell phones has become a way of life, the use during school, at after care, or on the school bus is prohibited. Students are allowed to use the office phone to communicate necessary information to parents. If a cell phone rings, is in use, or is visible, it will be taken away and turned in to the office. The phone will only be returned to a parent by a member of administration. An automatic detention will also be issued to the student.

Snacks are permitted during recess only. There should be no chewing of food, gum, or other objects during class.

Class Masses are celebrated weekly in church. We invite and encourage as many parents as possible to join in the Eucharistic celebration. You will be notified as to the weekday in which your child's class attends Mass.

Visitation Co-Op Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month. All parents are strongly encouraged to show their support by attending these meetings.

Throughout the year Visitation of Our Lady Parish sponsors events which involve student participation either at church, at school, or in the community. Through participation in these events, students are helping fulfill our school mission to "*Inspire Catholic Faith and Principles While Encouraging Academic Excellence*". At all events we want our students to exemplify our Catholic faith not only in word and action but also in appearance. Visitation students should always look their very best when representing the school and the church. The choice of clothing worn at school or church sponsored activities should always be becoming of a Catholic elementary school student. Please refer to the dress code below as a guide when

choosing your child's attire. Participation in an event/activity will be denied if a student's attire is not in keeping with the dress code.

Boys:

Acceptable Attire:

- Long dress pants
- Collared shirt (button up or pullover)
- Dress shoes with socks
- Hair: traditional cut and well-groomed.

Unacceptable Attire:

- Shorts
- Tee shirt/Tank top
- Jeans of any color
- Tennis shoes
- Flip Flops
- Fad hair styles

Girls:

Acceptable Attire:

- Dress or skirt and blouse
- Dress pants with blouse
- Flat, dress shoes

Unacceptable Attire:

- Strapless or spaghetti strap tops or dresses
- Too tight or low cut dresses or tops
- Dresses or skirts should not be shorter than three inches above the knee
- Shoes with heels, tennis shoes, or flip flops
- Make-Up
- Large, dangling earrings and necklaces
- Tee shirt

The current parent/student handbook (2011-2012 edition) shall be used for all questions and disputes. In developing the policies, regulations and explanations discussed in this handbook, we have tried to be as specific and comprehensive as possible. However, throughout the school year, other unforeseen situations may arise. The principal reserves the right to make judgments if any such incidents occur.

All highlighted sections are additions or revisions from the previous edition of the handbook.