

Old St. Mary's Middle School Handbook 2020-2021



**Old St. Mary's School
1474 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL
Main Office: 312-386-1560**

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WELCOME TO OSM MIDDLE SCHOOL

A Message to Parents

The goal of our middle school is to support parents as the prime educators of their children. We seek to help our students become respectful and responsible young men and women.

This supplemental handbook is provided to all families that have students in middle school at Old St. Mary's School. It includes additional policies, our program is designed to meet the needs of middle school students and the information provided is specific to this age group. Read this handbook and keep it as an available reference.

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school principal will keep the families informed of all changes as soon as practical. By signing the acknowledgement form, you and your child agree to be aware and comply with the school policy as stated in the handbook.

We are grateful for your support, understanding and cooperation in all middle school matters.

Mrs. Kathryn Ayers - 7th Grade Homeroom / 7th & 8th Grade ELA/6th SEL
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Mrs. MaryCarol Berchman – 8th Grade Homeroom /6th and 8th Grade ELA/7th SEL
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Ms. Elizabeth Duff - 6th Grade ELA/8th ELA
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Ms. Elizabeth Rudakas - 6th Grade Homeroom/7th ELA and 6th Social Studies
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Mrs. Kacey Russell - 6th Grade Math and Science
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Lead through Faith, Grow in Knowledge, Serve with Love

School Philosophy

Old St. Mary's Catholic School is dedicated to educating the children of its growing parish by:

- Providing a solid foundation in Catholic faith, prayer and service while complementing the role of the family in nurturing a strong sense of dignity and self worth in each child.
- Developing an appreciation of every child and their connection to others by fostering a sense of concern and a commitment to service.
- Collaborating with a community of teachers, clergy, parents and parishioners who are dedicated to providing children with a Catholic education and developing them to their full potential – spiritually, ethically, intellectually, socially and physically in a caring, nurturing environment.
- Encouraging habits that build strong minds in healthy bodies and that nurture secure and poised individuals who will be ready to meet the challenges of the present and future.

The OSM Knights Middle School Code of Honor

Prepared: bring all necessary materials for all classes

Prompt: be in your seat and ready to learn at the start of every class

Productive: complete all assignments by the assigned due date

Polite: demonstrate respect for all and adhere to the code of conduct in your handbook

Proud: demonstrate pride in your work and Old St. Mary's School

SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE. YOU ARE THE ROLE MODELS OF OUR SCHOOL.

Students Responsibilities

• Start Time

- Please refer to the drop-off and pick-up times and procedures as communicated by the school
- In order to ensure on-time arrival, students should arrive in school by 7:45AM
- Students must be in their classrooms, prepared and ready to learn by 8:00AM.
- Students who are tardy will be marked in Powerschool and are subject to the school tardy policy.

• Materials

- Students will have access to their lockers upon arrival at school, before lunch, and at the end of the day.

- Any school issued textbooks/novels need to be returned in a reasonable state in a condition that reflects normal wear and tear. If textbooks are damaged or lost, students will be responsible to pay for a replacement.
- Students must keep an independent reading book at home and another book at school

- **Homework**

- Homework is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons and to supplement and enrich class work. Homework is not busy work. Assignments should be completed thoroughly.
- Printed assignments need to be printed ahead of time, prior to 8am.
- Late assignments may result in a loss of academic credit at the discretion of the individual teacher.

- **Absence Policy**

- If a student is too ill to come to school, we want them to spend their time recovering, not attending eLearning or doing homework. A student will have one day to complete assignments for every day missed.
- Students are strongly encouraged to schedule shadow days when OSM has a day off and the shadow high school is in session.
- For planned vacations, teachers will not provide assignments in advance. The student is responsible to make up their work upon return.

Student Conduct

- **Classroom Conduct**

- Respect yourself, your teachers and your classmates
- Pay attention and participate
- Follow directions the FIRST time they are given
- Promote a positive learning environment
- Take responsibility for your actions

- **Hallway Conduct**

- Students of the same cohort (homeroom) are expected to maintain 3-6 feet between each other due to COVID safety measures. Students from other cohorts must be at least 6 feet from one another.
- Disruptive or loud talking will result in a demerit.
- When students travel throughout the school, students will be silent at all times.

- **Church Conduct**

- Students should enter and exit the church reverently.

- **Outside Conduct**

- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and refrain from aggressive or physical behavior.
- Follow all physical distancing and hygiene procedures (see Covid section at the bottom).

General Guidelines and Procedures

- **Snacks**

- Snacks are optional. Students will have the opportunity to have a morning snack each day. The snack is to be placed at their seat at the beginning of the day, **not in their lunch bag**.
- Snacks should be a snack/breakfast bar only. No fruit, yogurt, food in bags, or finger food (these foods would be appropriate for lunch only). This is a working snack, not a break. If there are any dietary restrictions, please contact the homeroom teacher.

- **Backpack / Lunch Bag Policy**

- Small backpacks may be used this school year.
- If necessary, students may bring a small personal bag or purse.
- Lunch boxes are kept in their lockers and only taken out at lunch time.

- **Dress Code - Uniform Days**

- **Parental Role:** While the faculty and staff have the responsibility to review and respond to student appearance, the school expects the parents to monitor the appearance of their children before the child enters the building. We suggest the following standard at home: If it is questionable whether an item of clothing would be acceptable, then students should not wear it to school.
- Shoes: Shoes must be dark colored (solid brown, black or navy blue).
- Socks: Blue, brown or white socks are required and must be visible. No-show socks are not acceptable.
- Leggings / Tights: Must be solid white or solid navy blue. If students wear leggings they must wear visible socks.
- Snow boots: If students wear snow boots to school, they must change into school shoes before entering the classroom.
- Gym Uniform: On assigned gym days, all students must wear the official gym pants/shorts and t-shirt through either Big Kahuna or Dennis Uniform.

- Sweaters / Sweatshirts: Big Kahuna or Dennis uniform sweatshirts and OSM spirit wear purchased through OSM Merchandise can be worn all year long.
- Students are required to wear a belt with pants and shorts.
- Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- Church Attire: Boys are required to wear a tie with a button up oxford shirt to mass; not a polo shirt. Church attire is required for the whole day.
- All aforementioned dress code policies are up to the discretion of the teachers and administration.
- Please make sure you refer to the OSM handbook for more details about uniforms and uniform infractions.
- Dress code infractions will result in a demerit.
- Look your best, feel your best, do your best.

- **Dress Code - Non-Uniform Days**

- For all out of uniform days, students are expected to dress in neat, clean, modest, and appropriately fitting clothing.
- If leggings are worn, a modest, long shirt or dress (2 inches above the knee) must be worn.

- **Grading Scale**

- A...100-90
- B...89-80
- C...79-70
- D...69-60
- U...59 and below
- Extra credit projects are not offered in middle school.

- **Academic Integrity**

- Each student is expected to complete and present their own work. **Collaboration on certain projects is only allowed when permission is given.** Any and all work submitted individually (i.e. with one student's name on it), ***must*** be that student's own work in his or her own words.
- Assignments or projects assigned as individual work may not be shared
- Cheating and plagiarism are serious infractions. *Any cheating and/or plagiarism will result in loss of credit and/or an additional assignment, along with other possible disciplinary action.* This is up to the discretion of the teacher and administration.

- **Service Hours**

- All middle school students are required to complete service hours, modified for Covid considerations. Students will be informed during the school year of the requirements and the many available opportunities. The completion of the required service hours is part of the religion grade.

- **OSM Ambassadors**

- Interested middle school students may apply to be an OSM Ambassador. Ambassadors are students who are chosen to represent our school and help with school related activities such as school tours, performances, assistance with social justice activities and many other exciting opportunities.
- Ambassadors should possess the following qualities: enthusiasm, leadership, responsibility, dependability, maturity, initiative, dedication, punctuality and confidence in public speaking.
- Service as an ambassador is over and above the requirements for middle school service hours.
- Any student may apply to be an ambassador. Interested students should email our Enrollment Director Ms. Palacios: npalacios@osmschool.com

- **Cell Phones**

- Students will place their cell phones and/or smart watch in their locker each morning.
- CELL PHONES MAY NOT BE USED DURING THE SCHOOL DAY OR IN EXTENDED DAY.
- A violation of the above will result in the phone being confiscated. Parents will be notified and the phone will be given to the school office. ONLY the parent / guardian may retrieve the cell phone.

- **Technology and Chromebooks**

- Users of Old St. Mary's services are expected to adhere to a high standard of ethical use supporting our mission, philosophy and goals.
- Technology services may not be used to access, download, store and/or distribute any material which is defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, threatening or sexually explicit.
- 6th grade students and parents will be required to attend a technology meeting and sign a separate technology agreement that contains more details. This will be discussed at the beginning of the year.
- Please contact the front desk if you need to communicate with your child. *Please do not email them during school.*

- **Knights Honor Code**

- The Honor Code is a system that will help the middle school students be prepared, prompt, polite, productive and proud.
- Teachers will record infractions.
- After 3 infractions of the honor code, an email notice to parents is sent home and a ZOOM meeting with parent(s), student and teacher will take place.
- A fourth demerit results in a meeting with the student, parent(s) and the Assistant Principal.
- A fifth demerit results in a meeting with the student, parent(s) and the Principal.
- Any further demerits will result in the student moving to eLearning until further notice.
- Please note: at the Administration's discretion, the Administration reserves the right to move a student to eLearning due to an accumulation of infractions or pattern of behavior.

- **Covid-Specific Procedures**

- Masks must be worn at all times, with the exception of lunch and snack.
- Maintain physical distance at all times.
- Sanitize hands upon entering or leaving a classroom
- Discipline will result for any student who intentionally coughs, sneezes, or removes their mask to breathe on another student in a harmful manner.

- **E-Learning**

- Zoom protocol
 - Log onto Zoom meetings 3 minutes prior to the start of a Zoom session.
 - Have all class materials ready for the start of class.
 - While the full dress code will not be enforced, Students are expected to be in attire similar to the handbook's out of uniform dress code. Student's face must be visible on the screen--sit in a well-lit area, at a table or work area. Student cameras must be on, but an appropriate background may be substituted if desired.
 - Behave respectfully during distance learning, as if in the classroom.
- Check Google Classroom for all assignments and announcements
- Submit all work thoroughly, carefully completed and on time

Our middle school represents Old St. Mary's School philosophy and mission statement. We ask that you support us in our endeavors to maintain a safe and effective learning environment. We look forward to a positive and productive school year.

Sincerely,

OSM Administration and Middle School Team