

*“A Heart Like His”*



*Villa Marie Home and School  
Parent / Student Handbook*

**2020-2021**

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## **Mission Statement/Philosophy/Goals**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Villa Marie Home and School for Exceptional Children is to form the students spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, in partnership with the parents and in harmony with the specific gifts given by God to each student. In order to fulfill this mission, Villa Marie is committed to integrating the Catholic Faith with the best educational practices for qualifying children in need of special education services.

### **Philosophy of Diocese of Lincoln Catholic School/Villa Marie School**

“The Catholic Diocese of Lincoln has established a school system in order to fulfill, in part, the mandate of Christ to teach the Gospel to the whole world.” (Matthew 28:18-20) Villa Marie “helps to form students in Christ by means of teaching doctrine, celebrating Liturgy (Mass) and prayer, building community with Christ, and fostering Christ-like service, in order to assist parents in their duty as the primary educators of the whole child.” (1.1 school policy handbook -Diocese of Lincoln)

### **Goals**

The goals of Villa Marie School are:

1. To provide a Catholic atmosphere that reflects an environment of support, love, and concern for each student as an image of God.
2. To redirect problematic behaviors with dignity and right reason and to teach students effective skills of managing their own behaviors. This is done by reteaching the effective skill, role modeling with the student, and/or the use of behavior contracts. (Boys Town Skills Program)
3. To form students in the practice of prayer, morals and religious values and to foster the practice of service to one another and to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.
4. To impart knowledge and skills that develop understanding and cultivate appreciation for the basic academic subjects at the level of each special needs child. To use field trips as means to reinforce learned subject matter and create hands-on-experiences.
5. To develop survival skills, social skills, functional skills, self care skills, and job training skills so that they may become independent, self supporting individuals to each child’s fullest potential.
6. To promote character development, personal integrity, responsibility and self-advocacy.

## Student Placement Change Policy

Villa Marie School for Exceptional Children always and without exception reserves the right to release a particular child from the school when the best interests of the school or the child warrants this action. The first month of enrollment is a probation time to show the compatibility between the school and child.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Villa Marie Home and School admits students of any race, color, religion, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school.

## Admission Guidelines/Permanent Records/School Forms/Tuition

### Admission Guidelines

1. Chronological Age: The minimal C.A. for placement is 6 years, 0 months; the usual maximal age is 18 years, 11 months. Children become eligible for placement at the age 6 or at any time during the current year providing they are judged ready for placement and there is an opening. No student older than 16 years old will be accepted as a new student.
2. Intellectual Capacity: Ordinarily, the range for admission to Villa Marie School is mild-moderate handicapping conditions. Students must be on an Individual Education Plan and do not require a one-on-one para. Villa Marie School is only licensed to offer instruction through grade 8. Students enrolled cannot earn any high school credit toward graduation or obtaining a high school diploma.
3. A psychological evaluation of a child relative to intellectual and social potential must be made prior to the placement.
4. A medical history must be submitted prior to placement, with proper medical information sheets returned with application.
5. Children must have adequate personal habits relative to eating, dressing and toileting. In this matter, there must obviously be some leeway allowed because of the relative maturity of a mentally handicapped child at the chronological age of 6. However, where these personal habits are not satisfactory because of a lack of home training, such a child's admission to Villa Marie may be postponed until such time as evidence is given of more satisfactory training in this matter.
6. Children return home over the weekend, for holiday vacations and during the summer.

7. All vaccinations must be received at least 3 weeks prior to the opening of the school year. If required vaccinations have not been taken, then the school will expect a doctor's appointment as an interim for attendance.

### **Permanent Records include:**

- ✓ Cumulative Folder– Student's personal information
- ✓ Medical Records (Immunizations Record, height/weight)
- ✓ Copy of Birth Certificate with state seal
- ✓ Educational Records, including the current IEP
- ✓ Psychological Tests
- ✓ MDT's (Multi-Disciplinary Team) reports

### **School Forms**

- Statement of Application
- Application for Enrollment
- Guardianship/Care Giver in case of parent(s) death (Loco Parentis)
- Permission Forms for field trips/publication of student photo
- Medical Release for Villa Marie staff to administer medication/Med List
- Medical Emergency Form
- Dietary Information
- Authorization Release Form for records (from previous school)
- Computer/Internet Use Policy/Agreement
- Spending Money
- iPad Acceptable Use Policy
- Permission to call 911 and Transport

### **Tuition**

The director of Villa Marie School visits with the parent(s)/or guardian(s) as to what their financial obligations will be while their child attends our school. Each family is asked to fill out and sign a Parent Tuition Agreement each year, and will receive monthly tuition statements. Unless other arrangements are made, tuition is due by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month starting in September.

### *Daily Schedule/Attendance Policy/Lardy and Absence Policy*

#### **Daily Schedule ~ Home and School**

- Rising time for boarders: 7:00 a.m. (Day students may arrive at this time, if necessary for parents schedule)
- Running Club: 8:00 a.m.

- School starts: 8:30 a.m.
- Holy Mass: usually 9:00 or 11:15
- Lunch/ Noon Recess/ Jobs/ 12:00-1:20 p.m.
- School ends: 3:30 p.m.
- Ready for bed: 8:00 p.m.
- Lights out: 8:30 p.m.
- Confessions are offered *once a month*.

Parents wanting their child (Catholic) to receive the sacraments (Holy Communion, First Confession or Confirmation) need to inform the principal. Arrangements will be made, after instruction has taken place. Sr. Loretta is available to work with individual students for Sacramental Preparation. Similar arrangements will be made for non-Catholic students desiring Baptism and/or Entrance into the Catholic Church.

### **Attendance Policy**

It is important to a student's success in school that attendance be regular and punctual. Therefore, regular attendance is required to obtain maximum results in learning and is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Regular attendance is required by State Law. (NE Rev. Stat., 79-201) In compliance with the State Department of Education Rules and Regulations regarding length of a school day and year, Villa Marie will offer at least 1,032 instructional hours. **During the COVID-19 Pandemic, we ask that you please keep your child home if he or she exhibits any COVID or flu-like symptoms.**

### **Tardy Policy**

Students are counted tardy if they have not arrived at school by 8:30 a.m. Car problems, road problems due to inclement weather, or any other emergencies are understood and will be taken into consideration. A note explaining the reason for the tardiness needs to be handed in at the school office.

### **Absence Policy**

When your child is absent due to illness, the parent must notify the school office the day the child is absent, preferably between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Students returning to school after an absence are required to bring a note briefly explaining the reason for the absence; it should be dated and signed by the parent/guardian. The note is to be handed in at the school office.

*The Department of Health and Human Services recommends that students absent due to fever remain out of school 24 hours after their fever has gone. **Please see the Lincoln Catholic Schools K-8 Model Return to School Plan (As refined and adopted by Villa Marie Home and School) for further guidelines regarding quarantine regulations and the return to school of students exposed to or testing positive for COVID-19.***

Students who have a doctor and/or dental appointment, or those leaving school grounds for any other reason, must have a written note from the parents. This note must include the reason for the absence; it should be dated and signed by the parent/guardian. This note should be handed in at the school office. If the teacher and/or principal have a concern about an absence, the parent/guardian will be notified. (Email notes of absence can also be sent to the principal's email address ([sr.jeanette-rerucha@cdolinc.net](mailto:sr.jeanette-rerucha@cdolinc.net))).

If a student's outdoor play or P.E. involvement needs to be restricted, a physician or physician assistant must prescribe the conditions and length of the restriction.

If a child is excessively absent (not due to COVID-19), the parents, teacher and principal may have a conference.

### *Weather/School Cancellation*

Student families will be notified by an Automated Message System (School Messenger) of a school cancellation. If LPS is not in session for severe weather, day students are not required to come to school. However, Villa Marie will still be in session if the boarding students and teaching staff are already at school.

### *IEP Objectives/Subject Areas/Job Skills/Transition Class/ Library & Guidance*

The Villa Marie School staff generates objectives for IEP's, transition curriculum and general school curriculum in conjunction with the expertise of Special Education directors and teachers, Speech and Occupational Therapists and other consultants from the Waverly School District, local and state based programs and services for Special Needs students, the Diocesan School Curriculum, parents and guardians, on-going in-services and workshops.

#### **Subject areas:**

Religion, Math, Language Arts (consisting of Reading, Writing, Phonics, and Spelling), Science/Health, Social Studies, Art, Music, Life Skills, Computers and P.E.

#### **Job and Vocational Skills:**

Cooking class and meal preparation, Sewing Class, vacuuming, collecting and emptying trash, laundry – folding and putting away, setting the table, cleaning mirrors and sinks, taking care of cats, raking, flower garden watering, etc., recycling, cleaning classrooms, sweeping, mopping, doing dishes – washing, spraying, drying, putting away, etc.

## **Transition Class (16-18 year old students)**

In preparation for transitioning to the next level, students may have some vocational experiences in the community. Villa Marie School is partnering with Vocational Rehab to help students transition to the work force.

## **Library:**

Villa Marie School maintains an extensive library for the use of the students throughout the school day as well as after school. Students receive a library orientation course at the beginning of the school year, and are encouraged to check out books from the library for research and reading enjoyment. Books are cataloged according to the Dewey Decimal System. There are special sections for religious books and Easy Readers. Villa Marie School also subscribes to World Book Online.

## **Guidance:**

Villa Marie students receive spiritual, social and emotional support and guidance from teachers, support staff, the Marian Sisters, and the many priests who say Mass at the school. Students are encouraged to turn to them for guidance and support when needed.

Licensed mental health practitioners, psychologists, and other therapists visit Villa Marie on a regular basis to meet with individual students, as well as to consult with staff members. Parent meetings are held on the third Friday of each month with Dr. Natalie Brei from Catholic Social Services and Jennifer Schrage from Bright Futures Counseling and Autism Treatment Center to address various topics.

Villa Marie has begun using the standardized, norm-referenced assessment used in the other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lincoln to assess student academic performance in at least one grade level each from grades 4-6 and 7-9. We work with each child's resident public school district to help determine the types of accommodations or modifications in assessments that may be appropriate for them on the basis of their disabilities.

## **Special Olympics**

Villa Marie students have the option to participate in Special Olympics. Currently we are involved in basketball (3-on-3 team and individual skills), track and field, and bowling. Matt Jilek is our volunteer basketball coach. Mrs. Doris Dermann and Mrs. Deb Faith are our track and field coaches, and Mrs. Doris Dermann is our bowling coach. Special Olympics offers a great opportunity to enhance the students' physical strength and growth, team participation and social skills...and it is fun!

Parents are asked to share costs in events in which you would like your child to participate.

A physical exam is needed in order for your child to participate in this program. The Special Olympics physical exam forms are available in the school office.

No children below grade 6 will participate in athletic competition on teams competing between schools. However, most of the teams we play in competition are not affiliated with

a school. If any other school sponsored team is participating, we will only use students in grades 6 and above in those contests.

## Field Trips

Field trips should contribute to the student's educational, cultural and social growth.

The following skills are also reinforced/taught:

- social skills in the public arena
- bus/van safety skills
- shopping skills
- restaurant skills
- locating and reading safety signs
- locating and reading street signs
- using directional skills (reading maps, etc.)

Field trips are also a privilege to be earned. Teachers may prohibit students from participating in a particular field trip if homework is not completed or their behavior warrants such action.

A field trip permission form is signed by the parents at the beginning of each school year. All of our school transportation vehicles have seatbelts and all passengers are required to use them.

## Breakfast/Hot Lunch Program

Villa Marie School provides a federally funded hot lunch program (breakfast and lunch). Free and reduced price lunches are available through federal funding. All families are notified of terms of eligibility for free or reduced lunch cost. Applications are sent in the summer mailing, usually around August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is extending flexibilities to allow free meals to continue to be available to all children throughout the entire 2020-2021 school year. This unprecedented move is part of USDA's unwavering commitment to ensuring all children across America have access to nutritious food as the nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**Since the supper meal is not part of the federally funded program, all boarding students will pay \$2.50 per supper.** The supper cost for boarders will be due at the beginning of each month and credited the next month if there is an absence.

No food from outside the school (e.g. fast food) should be brought in by a student for breakfast or lunch without the permission of the principal. Parents may bring a meal to eat with their child, with permission, or may bring a meal for everyone. Day students may bring lunch from home.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

## Villa Marie School Wellness Policy

### Goals

1. Encourage healthy eating
2. Develop healthy meals
3. Encourage students to try new foods and seasonings
4. Encourage physical fitness

### Policy

#### --Nutritional Education

- **Breakfast**
  - All Students are eligible to participate in Federal Hot Lunch Program
  - Milk is required at this time
- **Lunch**
  - All Students are eligible to participate in Federal Hot Lunch Program
  - Milk is required at this time

- **Cooking class—Advanced and Basic:**  
**Skills to work on through the year to assist the students in learning preparation of healthy meals**
  - Reading through a regular recipe
  - Learning cooking vocabulary
  - Identifying kitchen items
  - Identifying ingredients
  - Read and use measurements in fractions
  - Use proper sanitation
  - Cooperate
  - Be responsible for cleaning and putting things away
  - Be safe
  
- **Science/Health Class**
  - Learning the food plate
  - Food sampling projects
  - Proper nutrition

\*Some students upon enrolling have sensory issues and dietary dislikes. Villa Marie staff will try to encourage and educate the students to try different foods. We do not force students to eat every part of the meal.

\*All students at Villa Marie have access to full menu and are in no way less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Sec. of Agriculture. All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by the USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond the USDA standards.

#### --Physical Activity

- **Physical education**
  - Running, jumping, jump rope, catching, swinging, kicking, dancing, etc.
  - Various sports (kickball, softball, soccer, basketball, track and field, etc.)
- **Running Club**
- **Recess**
  - Running, swinging, basketball, biking

#### --Other School-based activities designed to promote wellness

- **Special Olympics**
  - Practice for sports
    - Bowling every other week
    - Basketball practice
    - Track and field
- **Field Trips**
  - Walking (walking trail just down the road usually 1-2 miles)
  - Running
- **Record keeping:** personal goal setting to increase coordination, stamina, balance, etc.

- **Physical and Occupational type activities** for children with poor small-muscle coordination
  - Zipping, buttoning, threading, pinching clothes pins, snapping, coloring, tracing, handwriting, typing, paper punching, stapling booklets, folding, cutting, pasting, etc.
- **Growing vegetables and other plants**
  - Villa Marie Garden
- **Daily chores** (This is a boarding school so we have the following chores)
  - Sweeping and putting dust in the pan
  - Vacuuming
  - Mopping
  - Loading recyclables
  - Crushing milk jugs, juice cans, and pop cans
  - Taking care of the trash (putting a twisty tie on, lifting dumpster lid)
  - Dishes
  - Folding laundry
  - Cleaning room/making bed
  - Raking leaves
  - Scooping snow
- **Volunteer work**
  - Helping with various activities with State Special Olympics
  - Roadside cleanup ( about 3-4 mile stretch both sides of the road)
  - Prepare and Serve at Matt Talbot Kitchen
  - Setting up for parties at the school (moving chairs and heavy tables)
- **There are no pop or candy machines in the school.**
- **Plan for Implementation**
  - At the end of each school year teachers and staff will review the Wellness Policy item by item to determine if changes need to be made. They will also review if some area of the policy has been neglected.

### *Birthday Celebrations/Gift Giving/After-School Functions*

Birthdays are a special time to highlight the unique gift and blessing of each student. It has been a birthday tradition that each student is able to pick special birthday cupcakes, have a day off from their job, pick and watch an approved movie (G or PG) with snacks after supper. All students are able to participate in these festivities. If your child is a day student and they wish to stay for the evening birthday party, they may do so. The evening activities will be finished by 8:00 p.m. This time includes all other after-school functions unless told otherwise.

Student gift giving is **not** encouraged during the times the students are here at Villa Marie School, unless everyone receives a gift. This includes birthday, Christmas, Easter and the like. Everyone likes to receive a gift, but for example, when someone goes on a trip and only brings something back for only one or two students, the others feel left out. We appreciate your help in guiding your child with this school rule.

## Dress Code/Boarding Students Supply List

Remembering that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and are a gift from our Creator, we carry a dignity about us in our bodies, as well as in our souls. Therefore, modesty in dress comes as a natural response in how we are to dress and carry ourselves as children of God.

Clothing should not interfere with the learning of other students. If a student's dress/grooming is in question, the principal will make a decision. If necessary, the student will be asked to make the necessary changes. If the infraction happens again, the parent/guardian will be contacted.

### Dress Code Policy

#### General rules:

- Clothing that is offensive, immoral, or otherwise inappropriate in a Catholic School environment is not acceptable at any time.
- No tight-fitting or see-through clothing.
- If a belt is needed, the student will be asked to put one on.
- No piercings (nose, tongue, eyebrow).
- No tattoos.
- Natural hair color, but minor highlighting with "normal color" is fine.
- Neatly groomed.
- Clothing neat and clean.
- No torn or faded clothing.
- Coat or jacket - whichever season we are in. If it is the winter season, a hat and gloves are needed.
- An extra set of clothes is nice to have on hand, just in case of accidents or illness.

#### Girls

- ❖ All blouses have sleeves.
- ❖ All necklines on dresses and blouses are not to be low cut and/or revealing. Lengths on dresses are to be down to the knee or longer.
- ❖ All shorts are to be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee when sitting. Capri's are a good choice, if shorts aren't available.
- ❖ All shirts and blouses are to cover midriffs, even when arms are raised.
- ❖ Some jewelry is fine, but not to excess. However, NO loop earrings. If the jewelry becomes a distraction during school, the student will be asked to remove it.
- ❖ No make-up.

#### Boys

- All shirts have sleeves.
- All shorts are to be at least knee length.
- No baggie clothes or pants riding on hips.
- Hair must be cut above the collar and boys must be clean shaven.

### **Uniform Shirts:**

1. Polo shirt in white or any shade of blue, either long or short sleeved. May not have any logo. These may be purchased anywhere—we will not require any particular brand of polo.

**OR**

2. Villa Marie t-shirt purchased from Tag Ink, either long or short sleeved.

**OR**

3. Any plain blue shirt, long or short sleeved. Must not be sleeveless, tight, or low-cut and must be long enough to cover the midriff.

### **Uniform Pants:**

1. Black, blue, or tan pants. They may have an elastic waist. These may be purchased anywhere—we will not require any particular brand of pants. If a belt is needed, the student will be asked to put one on.

**OR**

2. Black or blue sweat pants that do not look like athletic pants. They may not be gathered at the bottom.
3. No leggings or tight-fitting pants may be worn. No baggy clothes or pants riding on the hips.

### **Uniform Shorts, Skorts, Skirts, Jumpers:**

1. Black, blue or tan walking shorts. For boys, all shorts are to be knee length. For girls, all shorts are to be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee when sitting.
2. Girls may also wear black, blue, or tan capris but nothing skin tight.
3. Girls may wear black, blue, plaid or tan skirts, skorts, and jumpers. Shorts must be worn under skirts. Lengths on skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be down to the knee or longer. If skirts are worn from October – March, they must be worn with solid color leggings or tights.
4. Shorts and capris can be worn in August, September, April, and May.

### **Shoes:**

1. Tennis shoes and socks are required for P.E. every day.
2. Sandals are fine, but no flip-flops.

### **Jackets & Sweaters**

Villa Marie jackets and sweatshirts purchased from Tag Ink or any blue or gray jacket, fleece jacket, sweatshirt or sweater may be worn in the winter time as part of the school uniform. Jackets and sweatshirts worn inside may not have hoods.

### **Hats**

Hats may not be worn inside the school.

We will have a **“dress-down” day** once a month in which the clothing standard would not need to be followed. Students could wear appropriate t-shirts or other non-standard but modest and appropriate clothing for those days, such jeans or sweatpants, but no leggings or tight-fitting pants, short shorts, tank tops, baggy clothes or pants riding on the hips. Boarders are not required to wear the uniform after school, but must adhere to the “dress-down” day clothing standard.

We will have **“dress-up” days** for special occasions (such as the Bishop’s visit).

## Boarding Student Supply List

- Toiletries: toothbrush, toothpaste, brush and/or comb, bar soap or body wash, shampoo and conditioner if needed, shaver if needed, deodorant, lotion if needed.
- All articles of clothing should be *marked* with your *child's initials*.
- Students may bring their favorite pillow, blanket, and 2 or 3 favorite toys. If they have photos that they would like to display in their room, a bulletin board is available. The toys should stay in their dorm room.
- Tennis shoes for P.E.
- A laundry basket to put their soiled clothes in or something of your choice.
- Feminine supplies for young ladies.
- Any other things that individuals need, for example: acne items and the like.

Please send jackets or sweaters even in warmer weather. Often the mornings are cool when the children go outside before school.

Towels, wash cloths, sheets, pillow cases, blankets are supplied.

## Health and Safety Policies

### **PRESCRIPTION AND NONPRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS**

If your child is to receive medication, the parent/guardian must fill out a school medication form and sign it. These are sent out in the summer mailing or are available in the school office.

**ALL medications MUST be in the prescription bottle or original container. NO EXCEPTIONS! NO MEDICATION WILL BE GIVEN IF IT IS NOT IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER!**

Nonprescription medications must have a note signed by the parent/guardian, the time the medication is to be given, the dose, how often, and the specific dates this medication is to be given.

All medications are to be turned into the school office. The school first aid station is in the school office.

St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Lincoln is the closest hospital and is therefore the facility we go to for medical emergencies.

## **Health Records**

The school works under the requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services in securing and recording health information. The school maintains cumulative health records and immunizations for each student.

1. Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, (13 years old) need to have a medical examination by a physician.
2. State requirement of a dental examination yearly.
3. Audio screening, vision, height, weight ~ we are presently being serviced at St. John's in Lincoln.
4. ALL immunizations are current.

For an updated Immunization Rules and Regulations for NE Schools go to:  
[www.hh.state.ne/reg/t173htm](http://www.hh.state.ne/reg/t173htm)

## **Lice Policy**

Head lice infestations are found across all socioeconomic classes and backgrounds, even in very clean and tidy homes.

If a student is suspected of having lice, the principal will examine the student. If lice or nits (lice eggs) are found in the child's hair, the child will be sent home. The child must be treated and be free of nits (lice eggs) before returning to school. Parents will be notified of the lice outbreak. The staff of Villa Marie will take the necessary precautions to try to prevent the lice from spreading to other students, especially if the student is a boarder.

Upon returning to school, the principal or other qualified staff member will examine the child for lice/nits. If the principal or staff member determines the child to be free of both, the child will be able to resume his or her regular classes and routine. The child will not be able to return to school until they are found to be nit/egg free. Parents who are called to take their child home will receive an information packet from the principal and will be asked to contact their primary care doctor's office for further information.

A record will be kept in the school office.

## **Safety Policy**

According to Nebraska State Law, we can only dismiss a student to his/her legal parent/guardian. To dismiss your child to another adult requires a written note from the parent/guardian granting us permission to dismiss your child to a designated person(s) or a phone call to the principal. Also if there is anyone that the parents do not wish to have contact with their child at school, this information should be written down and given to the staff so that it can be saved for future reference; pictures for the staff are helpful.

## Visitors/Volunteers and Safety

The school building will be locked at ALL times. Please ring the doorbell and an authorized person will let you in.

Villa Marie is equipped with security cameras at the following locations: front and back of the school, front entrance, and the hallways on both the boys' and girls' sides.

All volunteers are required by the Diocese of Lincoln to have a background check and complete the Safe Environment Training before they work with students, observe classes or do volunteer jobs in our school building.

## Discipline

Discipline should not be merely a negative experience, but a positive one. Students must realize that observing the rules brings true freedom and happiness to themselves and others. They must also realize that we discipline them because we love them and want them to become the best version of themselves—who God created them to be. We try to instill in our students a deep respect for God, staff members, other students, and themselves.

Students may receive consequences for inappropriate behavior that aim to redirect the behavior, and the student will receive a warning first. The consequence is determined by the severity of the infraction and well as the ability and age of the student. The following are some options for consequences:

1. Time out
2. Taking away privileges such as recess, free time, computer time, etc.
3. Doing an extra job, such as dishes or any of the jobs assigned during job time.
4. Doing another student's job for them, in addition to their own job, if the infraction was disrespectful toward another student.
5. Taking away a snack, but the student may have something to drink. No student will ever be deprived of a meal.
6. Consequences may be of a positive nature too, such as doing something kind for another person or playing a game with someone they don't usually hang out with.

If a behavior is recurring and efforts to redirect it have not been successful, a student may be put on a behavior contract. Such a contract will be drawn up by the staff member(s) and principal. The student's parents will also be informed and consulted regarding the contract. Contracts will usually be set up so that the student can earn rewards for positive behavior.

## *Child Abuse*

Abuse or neglect shall mean knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to:

- Be placed in a situation that may endanger his/her life or physical or mental health
- Be tortured, cruelly confined, or cruelly punished
- Be deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care
- Be left unattended in a motor vehicle, if a person is six years of age or younger
- Or be sexually abused.

(Neb. Rev. Stat. 28-710)

When any school staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect, or observes a person being subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect, he or she is required by law to report such incidents to the proper law enforcement agency. (Neb. Stat. 28-711)

## *Fire Drills/ Tornado Drills/ Bus and Van Drills*

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are conducted ten times a year. This is required by the state. Students are instructed how to proceed in order to exit the building quickly, in an orderly fashion and in a quiet manner. Once outdoors they are instructed where to stand and to stand in a straight line in order to be counted by the principal and/or teacher to ensure that all students have exited the building. Since this is a boarding school, a practice fire drill is also done while the students are in their bedrooms.

### **Tornado Drills**

Tornado drills are done at the beginning of the school year and in the spring during Severe Weather Week in March. Students are instructed where to go in the school building in cases of severe weather. Again, they are to proceed in an orderly fashion, in a quiet manner, and are instructed on how to position their bodies to protect their heads.

### **Bus and Van Drills**

Bus and van drills are conducted twice a year, once at the beginning of the first semester and once at the beginning of second semester. These drills teach the students how to exit a vehicle through the back door and front side door exits. Exiting through window is also discussed. Once outside the vehicle, the students are instructed where a safe place is to stand to be out of harm's way.

## Cell Phones/Electronic Devices/Toys

Cell phones and electronic devices are **not** needed at school. If you think your child should have a phone or other electronic device, it must be left in the office during the school day, otherwise it will be confiscated and returned to the parents. If your child needs to call you during the school day, they may use the phone in the office with permission from the principal.

Electronic games, CD Players and DVD players that belong to the school can be used with permission and moderation before and after school. All CD's, games, and movies must be checked out with the principal. We promote Catholic values and morals in all forms of media. CD's which have been copied without permission from the owner/creator are not to be brought to school.

There is an exception to using music during the school day if it is needed for a student's planned management (IEP).

As a general rule, students should not bring toys from home to play with during school time unless it is for Show & Tell when they are Student of the Week.

## School Property/Computers & internet Policy and Agreement/Copyright Rules

### School Property

It is the responsibility of each student to use school property with care and respect. Students are to let a staff member know when something gets broken or is broken. If a student is responsible for breaking or damaging something that belongs to the school, a fine will be assessed for the damage/breakage of the item.

### Computers and Internet Policy and Agreement

All our computers, Smart Boards, iPads, Projectors, Headphones, Computer Programs, CD and Internet Based devices are all given to us as a gift through a generous benefactor. Therefore, as our response to this gift we will take good care of them so as to benefit our educational program to the fullest.

Each student is asked to read (or have read to them) and sign our School Computer/Internet Policy and Agreement and the iPad Acceptable Use Policy. They are sent home in the summer mailing to parents/guardians and is to be returned to school before a student may use any computer or iPad in the school building.

## **Computer/Internet Policy and Agreement**

Villa Marie School has the resources for the students to access the Internet. With this privilege, comes the responsibility of the students, family and school to use the Internet in an appropriate manner. The students will be held accountable for computer and internet usage.

We ask that the students not bring any computer games from home, as we cannot use them on our school computers. The access to the Internet is heavily filtered and may be more restrictive than their home computers. If the student accesses information in any way that is not appropriate, they will lose their computer privileges.

We ask that the students ask a teacher before they print anything off the computer. They are not to waste such supplies as ink cartridges or paper supplied by the school. So, the students will only be allowed to print off one copy of their work.

Students are to respect the privacy of others by accessing only their own documents, which are placed in their folder on the computer.

I agree not to use school computers and its network on the Internet to:

- Send, print or show off bad, dirty, or insulting messages or pictures.
- Damage or change things on the computer, computer system or computer network.
- Violate copyright laws by copying things word for word.
- Not open up and snoop into another person's folder, work or files. It is private.
- Not waste paper, or hurt machines or materials.
- Not mess with software, change control panel settings or add programs/games/download onto our school computers.

Both student and parent/guardian are asked to sign this document and return it to the school office.

The students are instructed about internet safety by a program provided by the Technology Office of the Diocese of Lincoln called iSafe.

## **Copyright Rules**

The students are instructed how to properly cite a picture or information from a website on the internet.

## **Drug Free/Weapon Free/Gang Free/Violence Free Environment**

Villa Marie Home and School is a drug free, weapon free, gang free and violence free school. Any infractions will be dealt with according to our Diocesan School Policy.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual and Other Harassment Policy: Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in any school in the Diocese of Lincoln and will be dealt with according to Church and State Law. The Lincoln Diocese has a Misconduct Hotline (1-844-527-0596) and a Victim Assistance Coordinator (402-613-2488) in place.

## Parents and Guardians Communication with the School

Correspondence items are placed in student mailboxes located by the front door. *Mailboxes are to be checked by parents every Friday.*

- ✓ Monthly newsletter and calendar
- ✓ Report Cards -- Twice a year
- ✓ Special Olympics Updates
- ✓ Other notes as needed.

Usual Times of Parent Involvement:

- Annual Fundraiser - Dance and Raffle/Silent Auction –on a Friday in January (Sign-up sheet at meeting in September) and acquiring a raffle item, and selling raffle tickets
- Christmas Program -- Last school day in the month of December
- Home/School Meeting and Pot-Luck on a Sunday in September
- Yearly IEP meeting for your student when the time of the year approaches as dated on the IEP. Parents will be notified.
- MDT meetings if, and when necessary
- Other conferences when parent, teacher and/or principal deem it necessary. If a conference is needed, please call the school office and a date and time will be set to have the meeting within a day or two.
- Volunteer Jobs (a background check is needed). Check with the school office if interested.
- Parents are welcome to join us for field trips. Please let the principal know if you are interested. A background check is needed for this also.

## Protocol for Solving Problems/Concerns

The administration reserves the right to change policy at any time and for any reason.

Does the problem concern:

**A Teacher** → Make an appointment with the teacher.

If problem did not get solved.

**The Principal** → Make an appointment with the principal  
Sister Jeanette 402- 786-3625 – school or email [sr.jeanette-rerucha@cdolinc.net](mailto:sr.jeanette-rerucha@cdolinc.net)

If problem didn't get solved.

**The Director** → Make an appointment with the director  
Msgr. John Perkinton 402- 473-0611 **This is where the process ends.**

## Handbook Responsibility

This handbook contains essential information about Villa Marie School. It is vital that each student and parent/guardian read this information. If needed, please, read it to your child.

We have read the *Parent and Student Handbook of Villa Marie Home and School 2020-2021* and understand the rules and regulations listed therein.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

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Date

*Please return this form to the school office by November 3, 2020.*

***Thank you and God bless you!***

***Sister Jeanette Rerucha***

*Principal*

*Spiritual Theme for the year...*

***A Heart Like His***

