

MATER DEI ACADEMY

Parent-Student Handbook



3695 Elm Street
Columbus, OH 43213
Office: (614) 231-1984
info@materdeiacademy.org

AMDG

(Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam)

MISSION STATEMENT

Mater Dei Academy is dedicated to the propagation and defense of true Christian ideals and academic excellence for the honor and glory of God, the improvement of the individual, and devotion to our beloved country, under the patronage of Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

A Christ Centered Education in the Catholic Tradition

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I. PHILOSOPHY

The Philosophy of Education at Mater Dei Academy is based on the teachings of the Catholic Church. In the Declaration of Christian Education of Vatican II, Pope Paul VI proclaimed, "A true education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to his ultimate goal, and simultaneously with respect to the good of those societies of which, as a man, he is a member."

According to this document of Vatican II, the school is designed to develop the intellect and the ability to judge rightly: to hand on the cultural legacy; to foster a sense of values; to prepare for an occupation; to promote friendship among pupils of different talents and backgrounds; and to foster cultural, ethnic, and religious life.

The Catholic school however, has several distinctive functions: to create a special atmosphere by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity; to help young people grow as the new creatures of God which they became by Baptism; to promote spiritual as well as the temporal goods of the earthly city; and to prepare students for service in the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Pope Pius XI in his great encyclical, Christian Education of Youth, states: "... since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end . . . since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, Who alone, 'is the Way, the Truth and the Life,' there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian Education."

"These goals cannot be fulfilled unless the teachers subscribe wholeheartedly to them. Bound by charity to one another and to their students, and penetrated by an apostolic spirit, let them give witness to Christ, the unique Teacher, by their lives as well as by their teachings."

"Above all, let them perform their services as partners of the parents. Let them work strenuously to inspire personal initiative on their students' part."

II. SPIRITUAL LIFE

The foundation of Mater Dei Academy is built on a firm formation in the Catholic faith. The school seeks to develop a strong Catholic identity in students, and immerses them in many of the beautiful traditions of the Church including a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary through the daily recitation of the rosary and the wearing of the brown scapular. Prayer permeates each school day and by graduation students know from memory all of the prayers in the Mater Dei Academy Prayer Book.

A. Religious Program

Students are trained in spiritual areas including:

1. Attendance and participation in one Religion class per day is required of all students, during which the tenets, doctrines, dogmas, bible history and history of the Roman Catholic Church are to be taught.
2. All students are encouraged to support the Missions under the Magesterium of the Holy Catholic Church
3. Visiting priests and other speakers lecture to enhance our students' knowledge of the Church and our Catholic Faith.

B. School Devotions

1. School opening exercises
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Patriotic song
4. Daily Rosary
5. Angelus / Regina Coeli
6. Grace before and after meals
7. Dismissal prayers
8. First Friday Mass
9. Monthly Mass and confession at school
10. Advent devotions
11. Lenten Stations of the Cross
12. May Procession and May Crowning

III. ACADEMICS

A. Evaluation and Intervention Services

1. Mater Dei Academy does not have the resources to provide evaluation and intervention services. Referrals will be made to the student's district of residence.
2. All referrals will be made by the principal to the student's parents, at the recommendation of the teacher.
3. Mater Dei Academy does not have the facilities for students with serious disabilities.
4. Parents may at anytime request evaluation services from their school district of residence.

B. Friday Folders

1. The use of the Friday Folder ensures that all completed papers and communications are received by the parents.
2. The Friday Folder will contain: the student's weekly work and any communications from the teacher or school office.
3. The folder must be **signed** and **returned** to school on the next day school is in session. **Your signature indicates that you have:**
 - a. Carefully read all materials
 - b. Closely examined your child's work
 - c. Discussed the papers with your child
4. Papers that require a parent's signature should be signed and returned in the Friday Folder.
5. Students who fail to return the Friday Folder on the assigned day may receive a *Notice of Concern*.

C. Grading System

1. Grading Scale

A+	=	98-100	C+	=	81-83
A	=	95-97	C	=	77-80
A-	=	93-94	C-	=	73-76
B+	=	89-92	D	=	70-72
B	=	86-88	F	=	69 and
B-	=	84-86			below

2. Interim Reports

- a. All students receive interim reports 1st quarter.
- b. Only students who are below 73% are required to receive interim reports after first quarter.
- c. Interim reports should be signed and returned to the school.

3. Report Cards

- a. Sent home quarterly.
- b. Both parents are requested to sign and return by the due date.
- c. Mater Dei Academy reserves the right to retain the grade card of any student whose family has not paid fees or fines levied by the school.

4. Honor Roll

- a. Students in grades 5 - 8 with a grade of at least "89" or higher in each subject.
- b. No more than one check mark in study habits, personal growth, or social growth.
- c. No detentions in the current quarter.

5. Merit Roll

- a. Students in grades 5 - 8 with a grade of "84" to "88" in each subject.
- b. No more than one check mark in study habits, personal growth, or social growth.

D. Handwriting

1. Students are expected to use neat, legible handwriting on every assignment or may be asked to rewrite it.
2. Students in grades 4 - 8 are expected to write all assignments in cursive.
3. Blue or black pen is to be used in 4 - 8 grade
4. Pencil may be used at the discretion of the teacher.

E. Homework

1. Homework is a necessary part of school. Suggested guidelines are:
 - Grades 1 and 2: 20 minutes each day
 - Grades 3 and 4: 45 minutes each day
 - Grades 5 and 6: 60 minutes each day
 - Grades 7 and 8: 90 minutes each day

(Should your child's study time go beyond this on a continual basis, it is recommended that you discuss the situation with the teacher.)

2. For students in grades 7 - 8 points are deducted from the grade for each day that work is late.
3. A *Notice of Concern* will be given to students who are habitually late with homework.
4. Long-term projects are part of the school curriculum.

F. Library

1. Reference materials may not be taken home under any circumstances.
2. Students will be fined for late or lost books. A student will not be permitted to check-out additional library materials

until all previously borrowed books have been returned or purchased, and all late fees paid.

3. Parents are responsible for the replacement cost of lost books or books damaged beyond repair while checked out by their child.

G. Reading

1. In addition to their regular assignments, students are expected to read a variety of materials. Grades 4 - 8 should read at least one book a month.
2. Book reports are part of the curriculum.

H. Research Projects

1. Research papers may be assigned by teachers throughout the year.
2. Students in grades 5 - 8 are required to complete a science research project each year.
3. The students may be required to complete a written paper and presentation board; other requirements such as note cards and outlines may be assigned.

I. Testing – Achievement

1. Standardized tests are given to all students.
2. Incoming students may be required to take entrance exams before being admitted.

IV. SCHOOL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance

A. Absences and Illnesses

1. If a student is going to be absent, please notify the school office before 8:45 a.m. giving the reason for the absence.
2. Students may not be in school for 24 hours after vomiting and must be fever free for 24 hours to return to school.
3. A note, signed by a parent or guardian, which includes the reason and the date of absence must be presented to the teacher when the student returns unless an email has already been sent to the office.
4. Parents of students with 7 absences in a school quarter, or exceeding 15 days total in a school year, must meet with the teacher and principal to determine grade placement for the following year.
5. Students at school but absent from the classroom for over two hours due to illness, will incur a half day's absence.

B. Appointments

1. Appointments during the school day should be avoided whenever possible.
2. Prior notification to the office via email is encouraged. Students must bring a note from home listing the date, time, and nature of the appointment if an email has not already been sent.
3. All missed school work must be made up.
4. Students missing more than two hours of school will be incur a half day's absence.
5. Parents must sign the log book to sign the student out indicating reason, date and time.

C. Dismissal

1. Dismissal is at 3:00 p.m.
2. Parents should enter the parking lot on the Elm Street side and exit through the Collingwood exit around the church office entrance.
3. For everyone's safety, smaller cars should park closer to the building and larger vehicles should park farther away. This allows the children to be more easily seen as they walk to their cars.
4. Students will be dismissed when there are no cars moving.
5. Students are to go directly to the vehicle in which they will ride. They must stay in the vehicle.
6. Students may not return to the building after they have been dismissed unless a parent accompanies them.
7. Students, and all children, may not play in the parking lot after school hours.
8. Students will be dismissed **only** to their own vehicle.

D. Make-Up Work

1. Students who are absent from school for any reason are expected to make up missed work.
2. Parents are expected to obtain the missed assignment.
3. The student is given the same number of days to make up the work as they were absent. If a student is absent one day, one day is given for the make-up work to be completed. For a two day absence, two days are given for the work, etc.
4. Students who are absent on the day a long-term assignment is due, are still required to turn it in on time.

E. Morning Arrival

1. Arrival time is between 7:50 a.m. - 8:10 a.m.
2. Students arriving after 8:10 a.m. during teacher prayer time, need to wait with parents until a teacher is available to let them into the school.
3. Students should go directly to the Common Room and immediately put backpacks and coats away.
4. Opening prayer and pledge begin immediately following the 8:15 a.m. bell.

F. Tardiness

1. Any student arriving after 8:15 a.m. is considered tardy.
2. Parents must sign-in students on the attendance sheet with the teacher on duty, or in the office if no teacher is on duty.
3. All tardies shall be recorded on the report card.

G. Vacations

1. Vacations during the school year are discouraged because of the rapid progress of instruction. It is extremely difficult for students to catch up after a prolonged absence.
2. Parents and students must realize that it is impossible to duplicate instruction time. The child is responsible for obtaining notes from other students upon their return to school.

Dress Code

All items **must** be marked with the student's name or initials: sneakers, sweatshirts, sweaters, coats, hats, gloves, scarves, etc.

A. Boys

1. *Hair*: Must be plain and simple, clean and neat, well groomed and of natural color. Hair may not extend over the eyebrows or below the earlobes, and may not reach the collar of the shirt in the back. Hair length over all may not be more than two inches long.
2. *Trousers*: Navy blue dress pants or corduroy slacks. No jeans or cargo pants. A black or brown belt must be worn at all times, with pants or shorts fitted at the natural waistline. Shorts may be worn during the months of September and May.
3. *Shirt*: Light blue oxford, long or short sleeved, with a button down collar. Top button must be buttoned. The shirt must be tucked in so that the belt is visible. Undergarments other than a plain white t-shirt may not show through the uniform. Lettering, pictures, or graphics on the undershirt are prohibited. The sleeves of the undershirt must not extend beyond the uniform sleeves.
4. *Sweater*: Students may wear a navy blue vest, cardigan, or pullover. No hoods on sweaters.
5. *Sweatshirt*: School logo apparel only. May be ordered and purchased through the office.
6. *Tie*: Navy blue. The tie may not be worn loosely at the neck. If the tie is forgotten, a new tie may be purchased in the office, or otherwise a Mater Dei Academy tie needs to be signed out and returned at the end of the day.

7. *Shoes:* Black, blue, brown or tan standard dress shoes, solid in color, no more than five eyelets on each side. Heels and soles should be no higher than one inch. Shoes need to stay on the feet and be functional. No athletic shoes or boots are permitted.
8. Tennis shoes or sneakers are recommended for gym class.
9. *Socks:* Crew socks, white or dark blue.
No low cut or no-show athletic socks.

B. Girls

1. *Hair:* Must be plain and simple, clean and neat, well groomed and of natural color. Hair must be pulled back and out of the face. Hair fads of any kind will not be tolerated.
2. *Jumper:* Hem on jumper should be below the knee. During the winter months, girls may wear slacks or leg warmers under their skirts while on the playground. Girls are encouraged to wear long Bermuda shorts under their uniforms.

Uniform Style #55; Plaid Knife – Pleat Jumper.

3. Uniforms need to be cleaned and maintained.
4. *Blouse:* White regulation with round collar (Peter Pan), long or short sleeve. Blouses must be plain, with no lace, ruffles, pleats, or bows. No Oxford button down collar shirts. Top button must be buttoned. Undergarments must be plain white. Lettering, pictures, or graphics on the undershirt are prohibited. The sleeves of the undershirt may not extend beyond the uniform sleeves.

5. *Sweater*: Students may wear a navy blue vest, cardigan, or pullover. No hoods on sweaters.
6. *Sweatshirt*: School logo apparel only. May be ordered and purchased through the office.
7. *Shoes*: Black, brown, blue or tan dress shoes, solid in color, however, Saddle shoes are permitted. Shoes must tie, buckle, or Velcro closed. **No slip-ons**. Shoes must stay on feet and not slip off. Heels and soles may not be higher than one inch. No athletic shoes, clogs, slides, or hiking shoes permitted.
8. Tennis shoes or sneakers are recommended for gym class.
9. *Socks*: Plain navy knee socks, navy or white anklets. Navy tights may be worn in cold weather.
No low cut or no-show athletic socks.
10. Lipstick, artificial nails, nail polish, and other makeup are not allowed. Girls may wear only one post earring (no larger than the earlobe) per ear. No plastic bracelets allowed.

Miscellaneous

A. Birthday Celebrations

1. Discuss birthday treats with the teacher **prior** to bringing them to school. Consideration needs to be given to students who have allergies.
2. Treats are for the child's particular class **only** .
3. Birthday treats are to be brought before school begins.
4. If treats must be brought after school is in session, they are to be taken directly to the office.
5. Treats will be shared during the snack or at the end of the day, whichever best fits the teacher's schedule.
6. Keep treats simple, for example, cookies or donuts which tend to be less messy. Cupcakes are very messy.
7. Birthday party invitations handed out at school need to be given to all students in the class, otherwise use email or mail.

B. Communications

1. The primary means of communicating your child's progress, on a regular basis is the Friday Folder. See page 3.
2. Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - a. Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are required in the Fall.
 - b. The purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity to discuss the child's education and spiritual progress
 - c. If necessary, an additional conference may be scheduled in the Spring through the school office.
2. Written notices are usually sent home at the end of the week or just prior to an upcoming event. These are sent home with the eldest child and/or via email.

3. Parents are encouraged to communicate on a regular basis with teachers and vice versa through:
 - a. email correspondence
 - b. written communications
 - c. telephone conversation
 - d. face-to-face scheduled meetings made through the school office.
4. Unscheduled meetings disrupt preparation and instruction. Parents may not spontaneously meet with a teacher or the principal before or during school hours.
5. If a parent wants to meet with a teacher, the request can be made in the school office and the teacher will contact the parent. If there is a concern which cannot be settled to the satisfaction of either or both parties, then the parent should contact the principal.

C. General Communications

All correspondence intended for families must be approved by the school office before distribution.

D. Email List

1. Use the school distribution list for school business only.
2. No one may use the MDA school list to send emails without first emailing the principal and getting approval.
3. Send a copy of the email to the principal for review and after receiving confirmation, the email may be sent.

E. Disruptive Adult Behavior

Adults are expected to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of a disciple of Jesus Christ. Charity should be observed in behavior and written communications with the school. Harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. Adults who disrupt the operation of the school or behave in a threatening manner, including yelling, toward any student or staff member will be asked to leave the school property immediately. Repeated disruptive behavior of an adult could result in dismissal of the family from the school.

F. Emergency Card Information

1. An emergency form for each student must be completed each year by parents and will remain on file in the office.
2. Parents are responsible for notifying the office immediately if there are any changes to this information.

G. Emergency Closing

1. If a decision is made to close the school for that day, Channel 10 will be notified. The information will be on their website under “school emergency closing” at www.10tv.com/content/sections/weather/closings.html. You can also find it at www.ONNtv.com and at www.dispatch.com. Mater Dei Academy will be listed by name.
2. Parents will also be notified via email.
3. We do not necessarily follow Columbus City Schools or Columbus Catholic Schools.
4. Early Emergency Dismissal is handled on a case by case basis.

H. Emergency and Safety Procedures

1. Fire drills are conducted once a month.
2. Tornado drills are conducted in March, April, and May.
3. Lock-down drills are conducted once per year.

I. Field Trips

1. Teachers are responsible for planning and implementing field trips for their students. Two field trips per class are permitted during the school year.
2. Must be approved by the principal and school board.
3. Are designed to enhance the education of the students by providing related experience with the concepts being studied in class.
4. Teachers must have at least one parent volunteer accompanying the class on any field trip.
5. Teachers must make arrangements for adequate transportation.
6. The teacher or principal may prevent a student from attending a field trip because of discipline problems.
7. All adults accompanying a class on a field trip must complete the volunteer requirements.

J. Lost and Found

All student items such as book bags, water bottles, and lunch bags **must** be clearly marked with the student's name. This will permit the return of these items when they are misplaced.

K. Lunch Time

1. Students have forty-five minutes for lunch and recess. Students must bring their lunch from home daily.
2. If a student forgets to bring a lunch, the parent will be contacted and expected to deliver it to the school office. The student can pick it up on the way to lunch.
3. Students are not permitted to bring soft drinks.
4. Students are encouraged to bring a healthy mid-morning snack (fruit, veggies, bagels, pretzels, cheese, crackers.)

L. Medications

If a child is required to take any medication during school hours, these procedures will be followed:

1. Any medication will be administered to the students by the school staff only with written permission from the parents, using a signed medical authorization form.
2. Any medication administered at school must be in the original container.
3. Any changes in medication administration will require a new form to be completed.
4. All medication must be kept in the school office. Medicine may not be kept in the classroom.
5. Cough drops will be given to the student by the school staff with written permission from the parents.

M. Supplies

1. Parents are given a supply list and are expected to provide all the items for their students. As the school year progresses, supplies must be replenished as needed.
2. Teachers may request additional supplies for specific class projects.
3. Book Covers
 - a. All textbooks must be covered with heavy paper.
 - b. Contact paper and cloth covers may not be used.
 - c. No glue or tape should be applied directly to the book.
4. Book bags are to be used by all students to carry books and materials to and from school.

N. Tuition Payments

1. Tuition payments are due on the 5th of the month beginning in August. Late payments may incur a late fee.
2. All tuition must be paid in full by May 5th.
3. Families with outstanding tuition will not receive student grade cards and may be refused re-enrollment.

O. Visitors

1. All visitors must record their signature, date, and time in the log book upon entering the school building.
2. Upon leaving school visitors need to sign out by writing the time in the log book.

3. Parents and visitors may not be in the hallways or near the classrooms after the 8:10 a.m. bell and while school is in session.
4. No one may interrupt a class while in session.

P. Volunteers

The help of volunteers is vital. Your skills and talents are needed for working in the library, assisting with lunch and recess, art classes, music classes, and sports activities. We welcome and deeply appreciate parental involvement. Please see additional guidelines for each position.

1. All volunteers need to sign in at the office upon arrival.
2. All volunteers must have a *Protecting God's Children* certificate as well as a background check on file in the school office. The background check is good for five years.
3. Fees for the background checks are the responsibility of the volunteer.
4. Lunch and recess supervision requires the **full attention** of the volunteer on duty, therefore siblings or non-students may not be present.
5. Drivers for field trips must also provide a copy of their driver's license, proof of insurance and sign the Volunteer Driver Form. All non-student children must remain under the direct supervision of their parents.
6. Parents making a presentation in a class as a guest speaker are considered visitors and do not have the same requirements as volunteers.

V. DISCIPLINE

Self-control is the highest form of discipline. To help the students acquire this virtue, the school regulations need to be enforced.

A. Code of Conduct

1. Mater Dei Academy's Code of Conduct is based on the Ten Commandments and the teachings of the Catholic Church. An attitude of Christian discipleship should permeate the academic, behavioral, and spiritual aspects of student life.
2. Education is a serious pursuit and students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with the instructional process.

B. Discipline Policy

One of the goals of the Mater Dei Academy disciplinary policy is to communicate with parents regarding the conduct of their children at school. Parents' signatures are required on the following forms to assist in the communication process between the school and home.

1. Notice of Concern
 - a. If the rules are not followed, as outlined in the parent-student handbook a *Notice of Concern* will be issued.
 - b. The *Notice of Concern* must be signed and returned to the teacher on the following day.
 - c. A student who habitually lacks proper preparation for class will be given a *Notice of Concern*.

2. Discipline Form

- a. Students who continue to misbehave, or commit a serious offense will be issued a *Discipline Form*. All *Discipline Forms* must be signed and returned to the teacher on the following day.
- b. If the situation continues, the teacher, principal and parent(s) shall meet to discuss possible methods for the correction of the student's behavior. A designated period of time shall be established by the parties for the student to demonstrate a sustained improvement and correction of the behavior.
- c. If the student's corrected behavior is not sustained, the Mater Dei Academy Board of Directors will be informed of the matter and a probationary period shall be determined for the student.
- d. Expulsion will be the final result if the student fails to cooperate.
- e. The determination to expel a student is made by the Board of Directors and the principal.

Right to Amend:

The Mater Dei Academy Board of Directors or principal has the right to amend the discipline policy for just cause; parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.