



MATER DEI
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Seek Jesus in Others

2023-2024



**Mater Dei
Matters**

2023-2024

FAITH

EXCELLENCE

SERVICE

COMMUNITY

Note: This document is intended as a quick reference guide of helpful information and should not be considered a replacement for the detailed School Handbook or the school website, www.materdeicatholic.com. Information in this document is subject to change throughout the school year.

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Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year at Mater Dei!

MATER DEI CATHOLIC SCHOOL
inspires children to develop values of
FAITH, EXCELLENCE, SERVICE, AND COMMUNITY.

We recognize the unique nature of each child and strive to educate
students to be independent, innovative, and creative learners.
In a community filled with spirit and support, we nurture students to become
faithful Catholic leaders.

September 2023

Dear Mater Dei Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! “Mater Dei Matters” provides information about the most frequently asked questions regarding all that “matters” at Mater Dei Catholic. The school Handbook provides detailed Mater Dei Policies and Procedures. “Mater Dei Matters” is for easy access to day-to-day information.

Thank you for your commitment to Mater Dei Catholic. We are honored to care for your beautiful children. May our time together be filled with God’s blessings, and may God love and protect all who enter the halls of Mater Dei Catholic School.

Most sincerely,

Miss Diane E. McCaughan
President

Miss Elizabeth A. Waltrich
Principal

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS?

School Website

The official school website is www.materdeicatholic.com, a valuable resource for school information. Please bookmark this site and refer to it often, as new information is added and updated regularly. The *Parents* page contains links to uniform codes, required paperwork, etc. The *Calendar* page displays all the school events by month. The *Faculty and Staff* page lists all teachers with their email addresses and webpage link.

Communications

Two important methods of communicating with families during the year are email and texts. Each family automatically signs up for email and text messages using the email address and cell phone numbers provided at registration. **It is imperative to keep your contact information up-to-date.** If you have not received any Mater Dei Catholic School emails or are experiencing difficulties, please follow these steps:

- Add info@materdeicatholic.com to your contact list.
- Check your **Spam, Junk, or Deleted** email folders for Mater Dei information.
- Check your computer settings for filters as well.
- If you still have problems after taking these steps, please contact us at the email address above to let us know, and we will work on resolving the issue. A final interim step you can try – ask a friend to forward the email to you as their email address is in your safe sender list.

Clear Contact Paper

Cover workbooks and classroom folders in clear contact for students from Pre-K to Grade 8. The Con-Tact name brand tends to be the easiest to work with when covering a workbook. Try to pick it up before the school year starts because it sells out quickly. Wal-Mart, ACE Hardware, and other home improvement stores sell Con-Tact.

Classroom Assignments

Teachers will send a postcard to all students to welcome them to their classrooms. We will mail the postcard/s to your home by **August 30, 2023**.



Bus Information

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, your tax dollars provide transportation for students in non-public schools. The various public school districts provide bus transportation to Mater Dei Catholic School, each providing transportation following the criteria they use for their districts. Your district will contact you with information regarding your child's bus stop and pick-up/drop-off schedule. All questions about busing should be directed to that district. Below are the Early Dismissal Days each school district will provide for the 2022-2023 school year. Parents are responsible for transporting their children if your school district does not provide half-day transportation on a specific day.

Early Dismissals for 2023-2024 School Year

Central Bucks School District: Provides (5) Early Dismissals (11/17/23; 11/22/23; 2/16/24; 6/7/24 & 6/13/24)

Colonial School District: Provides (5) Early Dismissals (11/17/23; 11/22/23; 2/16/24; 6/7/24 & 6/13/24)

Norristown Area School District: Provides (5) Early Dismissals (11/17/23; 11/22/23; 2/16/24; 6/7/24 & 6/13/24)

North Penn School District: Provides (4) Early Dismissals (11/17/23; 11/22/23; 2/16/24; & 6/7/24)

Pennridge School District: Provides (2) Early Dismissal (11/17/23; 11/22/23)

Souderton Area School District: Provides (2) Early Dismissals (11/17/23; 11/22/23)

Upper Dublin School District: Provides (5) Early Dismissals (11/17/23; 11/22/23; 2/16/24; 6/7/24 & 6/13/24)

School District Transportation Information

First Student Transportation (NP)

3435 Trewigtown Road
Colmar, PA 18915
215-997-7982

Souderton Area School District

760 Lower Road
Souderton, PA 18964
215-723-6061

Pennridge School District

1506 North 5th Street
Perkasie, PA 18944
215-453-2725

Colonial School District

230 Flourtown Road
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462
610-834-1670

North Penn School District

401 East Hancock Street
Lansdale, PA 19446
215-853-1139

Norristown Area School District

Transportation Office
610-630-5022

Central Bucks School District

320 W. Swamp Road
Doylestown, PA 18901
267-893-4001

Upper Dublin School District

1580 Ft. Washington Avenue
Maple Glen, PA 19002
215-646-7778



Summer Reading Lists

The summer reading requirements and activities for Grades K through 8 are available on the school website. Please have your child read the required book(s) by the first day of school.

Stationery and Supply Lists

Stationery and supply lists for Grades PK to 8 are available on the school website. Please label all supplies with your child's name and send in the items with your child on their first day of school, or you are welcome to bring your child's supplies to the Open House on **Wednesday, September 6, 2023.**

First Days of School

The schedule for the first week of school is as follows:

- **Wednesday, August 30 – Faculty and Staff In-Service Day**
- **Tuesday, September 5 – Faculty and Staff In-Service Day**
- **Wednesday, September 6 - Open House for Pre-K through Grade 8 (Parents and students are welcome to visit the classroom, meet the teacher, and bring classroom supplies.)**
 - **9:00 AM to 10:30 AM**
 - **1:00 PM to 2:30 PM**
- **Wednesday, September 6 - Back to School Night for Pre-K 3, Pre-K 4, and Kindergarten**
 - **6:30 PM in the gym. There will be two sessions for parents with multiple children in these grades. (Parents only)**
- **Thursday, September 7 – First Full Day of School for Kindergarten through Grade 8**
- **Friday, September 8 – Full Day of School for PreK through Grade 8**
Mass 11:00 AM Grades 1 – 8 Parents and Friends of Mater are welcome.

CARES – Before and After School Care Program

A before and after school program is available and **will begin Monday, September 11, 2023.** Please refer to the school website under the *Parents* tab, *CARES Program* for application, fee schedule, and CARES Handbook.

- **Hours of Operation: 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM**
- **Early Dismissal Days: CARES operates in the morning only. There is no after school session due to faculty In-Service and planning.**

Beginning of Year Paperwork

The following two forms are available on the website under *Beginning of Year Documents* and can be accessed under the *Parents* tab, then *Handbook/Forms*.

The Family Emergency Form is due August 30, 2023.

- **Family Emergency Form - The form must be completed using your computer/tablet. Once you click on the *Submit* button, a copy of your completed form will automatically be emailed to the school office, the nurse's office, and to you.**

The Handbook and Authorization Forms Agreements are due Monday, September 11, 2023.

- **Handbook and Authorization Forms/Agreements** – Section VIII of the handbook contains the following forms/authorizations. Please review the agreements with your child(ren), and after careful review, complete the form on the website and click the *Submit* button. Again, a copy of your completed form will automatically be emailed to the school office and to you.
 - Responsible Use Policy for Technology
 - G-Suite for Education Use Agreement
 - Student Pledge for iPad and Chromebook Use for 1:1 Initiative
 - Student Pledge for iPad Use in School (Carts) (All other grades)
 - Publicity Refusal Form – the form should be completed and submitted **ONLY** if you **DO NOT** want your child interviewed or your child's photo used in any public forum.
 - Student Release, Waiver of Liability, and Indemnity
 - Memorandum of Understanding
 - Archdiocese of Philadelphia Wavier

FACTS Tuition Management

Parents and/or guardians will be required to arrange payment for the total tuition and fees charged for the current school year through FACTS Tuition Management. Each family's preferred manner of payment must be submitted at the time of student registration. Re-enrolling families will have the opportunity to change their payment plan each school year. Through this plan, the family authorizes the bank to transfer the tuition payment from a checking or savings account, pay by mail, phone, or online using a check or debit/credit card (which has a 2.95% convenience fee set by FACTS Tuition Management).

Birthday Book Club

Mater Dei Catholic School began a tradition in 2016 for our students to celebrate their birthdays and special occasions through the "Birthday Book Club"! We invite families to donate a book to the school library to celebrate their child's birthday. Each book will have a sticker with your child's name on it, and it will delight children for years to come! Look for the **Birthday Book Club** link at the bottom of each teacher's webpage!



WHAT SHOULD MY CHILD WEAR?

Uniforms Code for 2023-2024 School Year (Grades K – 8)

FlynnO'Hara is the uniform supplier. You may order them online, by phone, or by visiting the store. The closest store is:

FlynnO'Hara
Springhouse Plaza
901 North Bethlehem Pike
Springhouse, PA 19477 (215)-793-9436
www.flynnohara.com

If you wish, you may buy any uniform items that do not have the Mater Dei logo (i.e., pants, shorts, socks, tights, shoes, etc.) from another store as long as they are the same color and style FlynnO'Hara.

Personal appearance is important. The students at Mater Dei Catholic School and their parents share in this responsibility. Mater Dei Catholic School's dress code is established, so students take pride in themselves and their school. It helps to instill discipline and teaches respect and safety. Mater Dei Catholic School's dress code is defined as follows:

PreKindergarten Students (New for 2023-2024)

- **Fall/Summer:** Light blue t-shirt with the Mater Dei logo. Navy blue shorts or skorts for the girls.
White or black socks covering the ankle with sneakers.
- **Winter:** Light blue t-shirts with logo with a navy blue sweat shirt with logo. Navy blue sweatpants or leggings for girls.
(Sweatshirts and T-Shirts are purchased at Mater Dei Catholic School. Parents are welcome to purchase navy blue shorts, sweatpants, skorts, or leggings wherever you shop.)

All Students in Grades 1-8

Hair Regulations for all students in Pre-K through Grade 8

- Hair should be neat, clean, and trim.
- Boys' hair needs to be in a traditional cut, kept to the top of the neck and above the collar off the ears, and from mid-forehead to above the eyebrows. Fad or extreme hairstyles, including ponytails and buns, are not permitted.
- Girls' hair must be off their faces. A simple bow or headband is acceptable.
- All hair should be a natural color.
(Please note: Hair regulations for all students will be strictly enforced.)

Shoes and Belts:

Solid-color brown or navy blue rubber-soled shoes with backs must be worn. Oxfords, loafers, Docksidors (no sneakers or sneaker-type shoes, chunky or high heel shoes, dress boots, hiking boots, canvas shoes, clogs, or cros). Sperry brand Top-Sider (solid-color brown or navy) shoes are acceptable. All shoes must have a flat heel. Boots over the ankle are not acceptable.

Accessories:

No make-up, nail polish, or unnatural nails are acceptable. One ring may be worn on each hand. Girls may wear only one pair of small post earrings (NO hoops). Boys may not wear earrings to school. Students are permitted to wear a thin necklace with a Christian religious symbol. Watches may be worn, but only ALERT bracelets and necklaces are allowed.

Special Notes about Proper Uniform Attire and Supplies

- All blouses and shirts must be tucked in – not rolled or folded. (*Not gym shirt*)
- Only opaque navy blue tights are acceptable.
- Only plain white undershirts may be worn under a boy's/girl's shirt.
- Uniform length cannot exceed 1 inch above the knee.
- Knee socks must be pulled up to the knee.
- Shoes must be appropriately laced and tied.
- Head coverings are not permitted to be worn with the uniform.
- Toys, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, wheelies, electronic devices (other than cell phones – see policy below), iPods, iPads, and Air Pods must not be brought to school.

Kindergarten and Gym Uniforms

- **Fall / Summer:** Grey t-shirt with logo. Navy nylon shorts (no logo). White or black socks must cover the ankle.
- **Winter:** Grey t-shirt with logo. Navy sweatpants (no logo). Navy nylon sweatpants are optional for girls (no logo). Grey crewneck sweatshirt with school name in large letters. White or black socks must cover the ankles. (*Grey hooded sweatshirt is no longer an option*)
- **Shoes:** Sneakers (no lights)

Girls in Grades 1 – 4

- **Fall / Summer:** Navy, White, and Khaki Glen Plaid Jumper, short sleeve white blouse with Peter Pan collar - or - Khaki skort/short with a navy short or long sleeve polo with logo. White socks that cover ankles.
- **Winter:** Navy, White, and Khaki Glen Plaid Jumper - or - Khaki slacks, short sleeve white blouse with Peter Pan collar. Navy three-quarter zip sweater or navy cardigan with logo. Navy tights or navy knee socks.
- **Shoes & Belt:** Solid-color Navy or Brown dress shoes with a non-skid sole. Brown belt with Khaki shorts or slacks.

Girls in Grades 5 – 8

- **Fall / Summer:** Navy, White, and Khaki Glen Plaid Kilt or Khaki skort/short with a navy short or long sleeve polo with logo. White socks that cover ankles.
- **Winter:** Navy, White, and Khaki Glen Plaid Kilt – or – Khaki slacks with a white oxford blouse and navy three-quarter zip sweater or vest with logo. Navy tights or navy knee socks.
- **Shoes & Belt:** Solid-color Navy or Brown dress shoes with a non-skid sole. Brown belt with Khaki shorts or slacks.

Boys in Grades 1 – 8

- **Fall / Summer:** Khaki pants or shorts. Navy short or long sleeve polo with logo. White socks that cover the ankle.
- **Winter:** Khaki pants. White oxford (long or short sleeve). NO polo shirts with winter uniform.

Navy three-quarter zip sweater or vest with logo. School tie. Khaki or white socks that cover the ankle.

- **Shoes & Belt:** Solid-color Brown dress shoe with a non-skid sole. Brown belt.

Dress Down Days

Students may wear jeans, sweatpants, a polo shirt, a blouse, or a T-shirt on Dress Down Days. Hats are never permitted during school hours. In hot weather, a pair of shorts that cover the thigh may be worn. No article of clothing may be worn if it is torn or cut off. It may not bear any offensive language or image as determined by the faculty and administration of the school. All attire for such days must be modest (no bare midriffs or tank tops).

Uniform Exchange

The Home and School will sponsor a uniform exchange when inventory becomes available throughout the year. Please note these dates will be communicated in our weekly Monday morning newsletter.



WHAT ABOUT THE SCHOOL DAY?

School Hours

- The school day begins at **8:30 AM**.
- The students are welcome to arrive at school from **8:00 AM to 8:30 AM**.
- The school day ends at **3:30 PM** (Due to the number of students, dismissal will be staggered as outlined on pages 7 and 8.)
- Half-Day Pre-K and Half-Day Kindergarten begin at **8:30 AM and end at 12:00 Noon**.
- Early dismissals are **11:30 AM**. Please note the following dates are scheduled for early dismissal:
 - Friday, November 17, 2023
 - Wednesday, November 22, 2023
 - Friday, February 16, 2024
 - Friday, June 7, 2024
 - Thursday, June 13, 2024

Specials

All students in grades K through 8 will have the following specials weekly: **Art, Technology, Physical Education, STREAM Lab (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Art, Math), Music, and Spanish.**

Safety Drills

The school will hold unannounced fire, emergency shelter-in-place, and lockdown drills throughout the year. The Emergency Plan is on file in the school office. In the event Mater Dei Catholic School would need to evacuate, the children would walk to Lansdale Catholic to gather until parents arrive to pick up the students. The bus companies organize safety drills.

Cell Phones and Smart Watches

If your child carries a cell phone for safety purposes, it must be kept in a student backpack and turned OFF during school hours. Students may not use a personal cell phone during school hours. Students are not permitted to bring toys and personal electronics to school, including Apple watches and Smart Watches. This policy is designed to keep students safe and protect the learning environment.



IS THERE A SPECIFIC TRAFFIC FLOW I SHOULD FOLLOW?

School Arrival/Departure Procedures

Supervision of students formally begins at **8:00 AM**. For safety reasons, no child is permitted in the building before **8:00 AM** without special permission. All car riders are dropped off in the Church parking lot, and the crossing guard will see that the children cross Lansdale Avenue safely. Each morning, faculty and staff members will greet the students in the Church parking lot and Door C11 (bus door). All school doors will be closed at **8:30 AM**. Students who are late must report to the Main Entrance, and a parent is required to sign in the student.

PLEASE NOTE: For the safety of all students, no student may be dropped off in the schoolyard, back teacher parking lot, or Third Street. Any parent who does not adhere to this safety precaution will need to meet school administration.

Arrival Procedures for PreK3 and PreK4

Pre-K 3 students and their siblings may be dropped off in the front of the school beginning at 8:00 AM. Cars will enter the property off Lansdale Avenue and proceed to the Main Door of School. Faculty and staff will escort the children to the classrooms.

Pre K 4 students will enter the property off Third Street. Parents will drive the schoolyard to the ramp door C8 off the gym. Faculty and staff will escort the children to the classrooms.

Dismissal Procedures for PreK3 and PreK

Pre K3 and Pre K4 will follow the same procedure for dismissal as outlined in the arrival procedure.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures for Kindergarten through Grade 8

All car riders in Kindergarten through Grade 8 are **dropped off** and **picked up** in the Church parking lot. The crossing guard will see that the children cross Lansdale Avenue safely. Faculty and staff members will supervise the students in the Church parking lot and Door C11 (bus door). Students who are late must report to the Main Entrance, and a parent is required to sign in the student.

School **buses pick up** and **drop off students** on Third Street. All bus rider students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 will enter the building at C11 (Bus door) off the schoolyard. Faculty members are assigned to supervise arrival and dismissal procedures as students enter and leave the building.

Dismissal Times

- Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 dismissal - 3:00 PM (Follow AM procedure at dismissal.)
- K-8 car riders Church parking lot/walkers' dismissal - 3:15 PM (Parents should park and

meet the children next to the Parish Center.)

- K-8 bus riders' dismissal - 3:20 PM
- To ensure the safety of all students, siblings in Grades K through 8 of Pre K students will be dismissed with Pre K. Families are encouraged to pick up a Pre K 3 student in the front of school and Pre K 4 students in the schoolyard.

Walkers

At dismissal, walkers are escorted by a teacher to Lansdale Avenue, Main Street, and Third Street, where they are crossed by a designated crossing guard.

Bike Riders

Fifth to eighth-grade students are permitted to ride bikes to school. Bike locks are required. Students must follow state and local bicycle laws, including the wearing of an appropriately sized helmet. A teacher escorts bike riders to the designated crossing guard at dismissal.

Car Riders

Only Pre K 3 students and their siblings may be picked up and dropped off in their designated areas on the school's campus. It is imperative for your child's safety that all other car riders must always be **dropped off and picked up in the church parking lot.**

At dismissal, car riders are escorted by a teacher to the church parking lot. The teacher and the students will line up along the fence opposite the parish center to wait for parents.

Any adult picking up a student must leave the car and proceed to the line-up area to pick up their children. There is to be no parking in the fire zones or reserved areas.

Dismissal Procedure for Special Occasions and Early Dismissal Days

If you are joining us for special programs or a special occasion, children will not be permitted to leave school before the conclusion of the school day. Parents are welcome to write a note to have their child dismissed in the car rider line, and they will meet you in the Church parking lot. Please know that this policy is in effect for the safety of the children.



WHAT ABOUT SNACKS AND LUNCHTIME?

Snacks and Soft Pretzels Sale

All children will have a morning snack. We ask parents to pack a snack and provide a water bottle for their children. Water bottle filling stations will be available to students. Soft pretzels will be available during the 2023-2024 school year. Cost: \$1.00

Lunch Times

Full-Day Pre-School & Kindergarten: 12:00 Noon to 1:00 PM

Grades 1 through 4: 12:00 Noon to 12:40 PM

Grades 5 through 8: 1:00 PM to 1:40 PM

Lunch Program and Volunteers

The children will bring their lunch to school in vinyl, cloth, or plastic lunch bag/box. Please be sure to include a drink for lunch.

Parents are responsible for providing a morning snack, a lunch, and a beverage. Soft pretzels will be available to purchase for \$1.00 (using cash). Filling stations will be available for students using reusable water bottles.

Hot lunch will be catered by Chef Chipper at AAA Catering on most school days. Pre-order surveys will be sent to parents each month with a menu. This process will help us to order the lunches but lunches will only be charged to your FACTS Tuition Account when your student receives a lunch. The lunches will cost \$4.50 and will include a beverage. Monthly Lunch menus will be available on the school website and in the FACTS Family Portal.

Many thanks to our volunteers who have offered to help during the lunch/recess hour this upcoming school year. We still need additional volunteers during lunch/recess this school year. If you have any interest, please do not hesitate to reach out to Amy at lunchprogram@materdeicatholic.com

The lunch volunteers will be assigned to a classroom. In addition, we are asking everyone to arrive for their designated shift 10 minutes beforehand to check-in. You will receive a badge and walkie-talkie. All lunch volunteers will enter and exit for their shift through the gym ramp doors, and Amy Mongelluzzo will be there to greet you.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the lunch moderators at lunchprogram@materdeicatholic.com.

Currently, Mater Dei cannot sponsor any Special Food Days and will reevaluate the need throughout the school year.



WHAT ARE OTHER ESSENTIAL THINGS TO KNOW ONCE SCHOOL STARTS?

Back to School Nights

All Back to School Nights will be held in person for the 2023-2024 school year for grades Pre K through Grade 8.

Pre-K and Kindergarten: Wednesday, September 6

There will be two sessions to accommodate parents who have multiple children. The schedule is as follows:

Session 1: 6:30 PM -6:50 PM

Session 2: 7:00 PM – 7:20 PM

Grade 1 through 8: Tuesday, September 12

There will be three sessions to accommodate parents who have multiple children. The schedule is as follows:

Session 1: 6:30 PM – 6:50 PM

- All parents of students in Grade 7 and 8 should attend session 1 in the gym.

Session 2: 7:00 PM – 7:20 PM

Session 3: 7:30 PM – 7:50 PM

Homeroom Parent Selection Process

The Home and School Board will send a request for homeroom parents in September. The Homeroom Parent Coordinator, a Home and School Board member, will receive all requests. Please note:

- To encourage as many volunteers as possible, a parent will not be the homeroom parent for more than one homeroom in the same school year.
- When there are more than two volunteers for a homeroom, the selection will be by drawing.
- Ideally, one parent will not be selected as their child's homeroom parent two years in a row.

Homeroom Parent Policy

Mater Dei Catholic School's Homeroom Parent Policy requests a \$5.00 fee per child. The fee will be collected in October by all homeroom parents. The homeroom parents will use this fee to pay for all classroom activities and any type of celebration. Periodically, parents are asked to donate food, beverages, or paper product items if their child's homeroom teacher decides to have additional classroom celebrations during the school year (not listed on the school-wide calendar). Teachers will communicate with the homeroom parents as each holiday approaches, and Homeroom parents will share the information with all parents in the class.

- During Advent, the homeroom parents will send a letter requesting monetary donations for a Christmas gift for the teacher.

- At the end of the school year, the Home & School Association will collect monetary donations for an End of the Year Teacher Appreciation gift.

School Notification Systems

***One Call Now* Notification System**

One Call Now is the parent notification system currently used by Mater Dei Catholic School. The school administration uses *One Call Now* system to notify parents of school cancellations, early dismissals, and late openings. The *One Call Now* system may also alert families of other important information related to Mater Dei Catholic School. Registration information for the notification system will be provided to all families.

Weather Delay or Closings

Mater Dei Catholic School follows the North Penn School District decision regarding late openings or school closings due to inclement weather conditions.

The CARES Program will not operate if the school is closed. In the event of a two (2) hour delayed opening, the CARES Program will begin at 8:00 AM. PLEASE NOTE: If North Penn School District calls a three (3) hour delayed opening, Mater Dei Catholic School will operate on the same schedule. If North Penn School District issues a virtual snow day, the Mater Dei administration will communicate whether the students will have a virtual instructional day or a traditional snow day with no online instruction.

Half-day Pre-K and Kindergarten students will **not** have school if there is a two or three-hour delay.

Visitors During School Hours

Anyone visiting or volunteering at the school during the day must enter through the door at the Main Office, which is monitored by a security system. Out of respect for the learning process, teachers or students may not be disturbed during the day unless an urgent reason is cleared with the administration or Main Office personnel. Volunteers are most welcome and needed in our school. All visitors/volunteers must report to the Main Office, provide their driver's license to be scanned, and obtain a visitor's badge before proceeding to their destination. (See Raptor System info below.) Volunteers must adhere to the Pennsylvania State Mandated Clearance requirements and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Raptor Visitor Management System

All volunteers, school visitors, and parents signing a child out during the school day will be required to present a valid driver's license upon entering the school. The license is scanned to provide a quick background check on the person. The person's name and date of birth are entered into a database, which allows the school administration to manage and track visitors to the school. Additional features include the ability to perform an on-site check from the national sex offender database, create visitor badges, track custody agreements, and flag anyone who isn't allowed on school property.

CAN I GET INVOLVED AND VOLUNTEER?

Volunteers

Volunteers are vital to the community life of Mater Dei Catholic School. Adult volunteers are welcome to work with the school as aides in the library, classroom, lunch monitors, and as members of the Home and School Association.

- All copies of PA Clearances must be submitted to the school office **before** the beginning of the school year (see next section, Child Protective Services Law).
- Volunteers interested in helping at any Home & School Association sponsored events or other school events should read the weekly emails for event coordinators' contact information and links to the SignUp Genius on our website.
- Coordinators of these activities will contact volunteers as the need arises.
- Volunteers must enter the building through the Main Entrance and have their license scanned and a badge printed.
- Parents are asked not to visit the classroom during the school day to avoid interrupting the learning process.

Child Protective Services Law (Updates for 2015 PA Clearances)

Pennsylvania has strengthened the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL). As of July 1, 2015, the following requirements must be strictly followed. Please note that as of July 1, 2015, according to Pennsylvania Child Protective Service Law, no person is permitted to volunteer in any capacity, including lunch duty, parties, field trips, etc., unless these clearances are on file in the school office.



PA State-Mandated Clearances for Volunteers
(Anyone volunteering in the building when the children are present)

Procedure and Requirements

All clearances must be submitted PRIOR to volunteer service.

Volunteers who have lived in PA **continuously** for ten years or more:

1. **Pennsylvania State Police Clearance** – <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
2. **Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance** – <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>
3. Certificate of Completion of the **Safe Environment/Protecting God's Children Course**
 - a. YOU MUST ATTEND A CLASS – Register online for a class at a convenient time and location for you at <https://learning.childyouthprotection.org/login/index.php>
 - b. If you attended a class prior to 2007, there is additional paperwork in the school office that refers to the technology clearance and needs to be signed.
4. Certificate of Completion of the **Safe Environment/Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse Course**
 - a. Training is online at <https://learning.childyouthprotection.org/login/index.php>
 - b. After completing the training, answer all questions and print the certificate.
5. **Disclosure Statement** (included in the PDF file available below for download) – Two-page document for you to read and sign. Return signed statement to the school office.

All potential volunteers who have lived in PA for less than ten years and all paid employees must satisfy the five criteria listed above AND need a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint clearance.

You can refer to the following website for a full explanation of what is required of all volunteers:
<https://childyouthprotection.org/index.php/staff-volunteers/checks-and-clearances>

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Judith A. Caviston in the school office:
jcaviston@materdeicatholic.com or 215.368.0995

******* If you have lived in the state of PA for less than ten years*******

You must have Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint clearance in addition to all of the above clearances.

Health Services

The North Penn School District provides our school with nursing services on Tuesdays. Mater Dei Catholic School employs a school nurse on the other four days of the school week. The school nurse provides first aid and assists the students when they are not feeling well. The nurse checks the heights and weights of the students in all grades. Scoliosis screening is provided for children in the seventh (7th) grade. Vision screening and auditory testing are administered according to state mandates. Physical and dental examinations can be performed by your health care provider or by a professional supplied by North Penn School District. The physical and dental forms to be completed by your health care provider are available for download from the school website. Please refer to the school website under the *Parents* tab, then *Health and Wellness*.

Sick Child Procedures

You may leave a message on the school messaging system before school opens to let the office know your child will not be in school for the day. Children must be free of fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nasal congestion, chills, runny nose, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours before attending school.

Absences

If your child is absent from school, an excuse note must accompany them upon returning to school. For your convenience, blank notes are available on the website to download, print, and use during the school year. Please refer to the school website under the *Parents* tab, then *Handbook/Forms*.

Medication

No student may carry any prescription or over-the-counter medication to school. If a student needs to take medication during the school day, a parent/ guardian must bring the medication to the nurse's office accompanied by a signed note from the doctor or parent/guardian, with complete instructions for dispensing the medication. The Medication Administration Form is available for download from the school website under the *Parents* tab, then *Health and Wellness*. Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be brought to school in the original container. **Note: Two (2) bottles should be requested from the pharmacy - one for home and one for school. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original container, labeled with the student's name.**

Leaving School During School Hours Appointment or Sickness

Parents/guardians must notify the homeroom teacher and complete the **Transportation and Early Dismissal Form** if the child needs to leave school during school hours. The parent/guardian must report to the office to sign out the child.

Lateness Reporting Procedure

Students arriving between 8:45 AM and 10:30 AM will be marked "late." If arriving after 8:45 AM, a student must report to the office with a written notification of the reason for lateness. A parent/guardian must accompany the child and sign in the child. A late pass will be issued, admitting the student into their homeroom.

Change in Transportation

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will indicate how their child(ren) will arrive and

leave school. If you need to change your child's transportation, we ask you to complete the **Transportation and Early Dismissal Form** on the school website. The office will convey changes in transportation to the appropriate teachers. All changes should be communicated via the Transportation and Early Dismissal Form by 2:00 PM. In case of an emergency, the office personnel will verify any change in transportation made over the phone.

Shelter in Place (Kindergarten through Grade 8)

At the beginning of the school year, parents need to provide the items listed below. These items will be used in case of an emergency.

- 1 plastic shoebox (w/child's name marked on outside of the box)
- 2 bottles of water
- non-perishable snacks
- tissues
- activity book, sharpened pencils, crayons
- a small bottle of hand sanitizer
- small package of wet wipes

Pre K Teachers will prepare the Shelter in Place bags for their classes. Pre K parents do not need to send any supplies to school.

Pictures

Life Touch will take the student photographs in September. All students wear their school uniform. Eighth grade graduation photo will be taken in the Spring of 2024.

Monthly Calendar

The monthly school activity calendar (*Calendar* tab on the home page) is posted on the school website.



ARE THERE HONORS PROGRAMS OFFERED?

Honors Mathematics Program

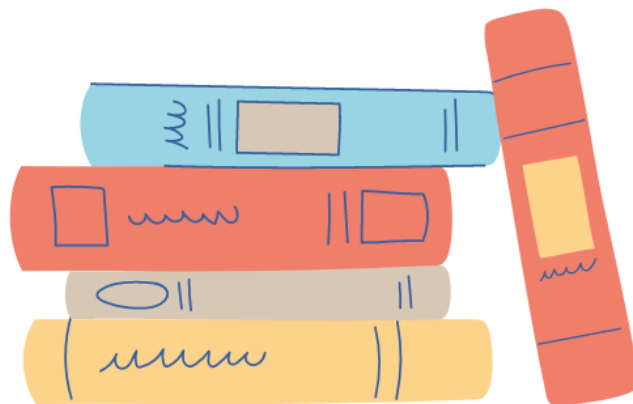
Honors Math is available starting in Grade 4. You will be notified if your child qualifies for Honors Math. Your child's eligibility for Honors Math is based on multiple factors:

- Terra Nova (CSI or Cognitive Skills Index falling in the range of 125)
 - ✓ Mathematics Composite of 90% or above
 - ✓ Reading Composite of 85% or above
- End of-year test grade of 85 or above
- Final grade average of 90 or above
- Teacher recommendation based on classwork

Honors English Language Arts Program

Honors English is available in grades 7 and 8. You will be notified if your child qualifies for Honors English. Your child's eligibility for Honors English is based on multiple factors:

- Terra Nova (CSI or Cognitive Skills Index falling in the range of 125)
 - ✓ Reading and Language Composite of 90 % or above
 - ✓ Mathematics Composite of 85% or above
- Final grade average of 90 or above
- Teacher recommendation based on classwork



ARE ANY SPORTS TEAMS OFFERED?

Catholic Youth Organization CYO

Sports teams are available for Mater Dei Catholic School students through the Mater Dei CYO program, formed in the spring of 2019 by merging the Saint Maria Goretti Parish CYO, Saint Rose of Lima Parish CYO, and Saint Stanislaus Parish CYO organizations. The Mater Dei CYO program belongs to Region 20 of the CYO for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Sports are available for boys and girls in the fall, winter, and spring, depending on the sport. Which sports have teams in any particular season is often dependent on student interest and the availability of coaches, but generally, the sports available include:

Fall

Cheerleading (girls, grades 4-8)
Cross Country (co-ed, grades K-8)
Soccer (co-ed, JV, grades 5-6; Varsity grades 7-8)
Soccer minis (co-ed, grades K-4)
Volleyball (girls, JV, grades 5-6; Varsity grades 7-8)

Winter

Cheerleading (girls, grades 3-8)
Basketball (boys & girls, JV, grades 4-6; Varsity grades 7-8)

Spring

Baseball (boys, JV, grades 5-6; Varsity grades 7-8)
Softball (girls, JV, grades 5-6; Varsity grades 7-8)
Track & Field (co-ed, grades 3-8)



The Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) provides spiritual, athletic, and social activities for the young people of our parishes. All athletes must be registered Catholic school students or participating students in PREP.

For more detailed information on CYO, registration info, and specific contacts in each season, visit the Archdiocese of Philadelphia CYO website or the appropriate CYO website as listed below:

- * Saint Agnes and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parishes Joint CYO <http://olsh-hilltown.com/jointcyo>
- * Mater Dei CYO <http://www.materdeicyo.sportssignup.com/site/>

ARE ANY MUSIC PROGRAMS OFFERED?

Mater Dei Catholic School has a dynamic music program that includes:

Mater Dei Catholic School Choirs

- **The Mater Dei Singers ~ Grades 6 to 8**
- **The Jubilate Choir ~ Grade 3 to 5**
- **The Cantor Choir ~ Grades 4 to 8**

The **Mater Dei Catholic School Choirs** will be forming in September. Practice days/times, permission slips, and additional information will be posted to the website as soon as it becomes available. You will be notified through email.

Mater Dei Catholic School Chime Time Players

- **Beginner Chimes ~ Grades 4 to 6** (students who have no experience and are interested in learning to read music and ring chimes)
- **Chime Time Players ~ Grades 5 to 8** (students have at least one year of chimes/handbell ringing or music reading skills from band/piano lessons)

Mr. Jason Strefeler directs all chime ensembles. Practices for both groups are held in the mornings before school, and both ensembles perform at least twice a year.

Mater Dei Catholic School Musical Troupe

Mater Dei Catholic School is proud to continue our theater club, The Mater Dei Musical Troupe, directed by Jason Strefeler. This after-school experience aims to provide a quality musical opportunity that teaches performance techniques that build self-confidence and real-world skills while having fun. Auditions for this year's show will be open to all students in grades 5-8. We are hoping for a great response to the Mater Dei Musical Troupe! Dates and times will be published in an email and on the monthly activity calendar as they become available.



ARE ANY SPECIAL SERVICES OFFERED?

Academic Resource Centers

The Academic Resource Center is designed to enable students with unique learning needs to participate in Mater Dei Catholic School. Placement in the Academic Resource Center is determined by classroom performance, extensive testing, teacher recommendations, and parents' consultation. The Program is available for students in Grades 1 through 8.

Accommodation Program

Mater Dei Catholic School is committed to providing for the needs of individual students. The Accommodation Program is designed to provide adaptations to the curriculum to maintain high expectations for all students. The administration, faculty, Academic Resource Center teachers, and Intermediate Unit personnel consult with the student's parent to determine the need for classroom accommodations.

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit also provides the following services to Mater Dei Catholic School students:

- Reading Remediation Services
- Speech and Language Services
- Math Remediation Services
- Counseling and Psychological Services



HOW WILL ACADEMIC PROGRESS BE COMMUNICATED?

FACTS Student Information System

FACTS Student Information System is a web-based system that provides parents online access to their student's academic progress. The system will generate progress reports, report cards, and attendance records. The faculty page on the school website lists all classroom teachers and "specials" teachers and links to their web pages and email addresses.

Mater Dei Catholic Website

Parents are encouraged to visit the teachers' websites for homework assignments, classroom activities, etc. Please refer to the school website under the *Faculty and Staff* tab. www.materdeicatholic.com.

Trimester Progress Reports and Report Cards

Trimester Progress Reports are issued to students in Pre-K through Grade 8 three times during the school year. Report cards are issued to students in K – 8 three times during the school year. The report card reflects all formal and informal assessments and is designed to inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's progress each trimester.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent/guardian and teacher communication are vital to a child's progress. Conferences are held for all grades Pre-K through eight (8) students during the first trimester.

Parents/guardians may schedule individual conferences anytime during the school year. Scheduling should be initiated through email or written request. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian to confirm the date and time of the conference. A teacher may request a conference as the need arises. Due to the daily responsibilities of the teacher, unscheduled conferences are not permitted.

Standardized Tests

Mater Dei Catholic School adheres to the Program for standardized testing as determined by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. This year's standardized Terra Nova testing for grades 2 to 7 is scheduled for March 1 - 8, 2024. **Please do not schedule family vacations during testing.**



WHEN DOES MY CHILD RECEIVE THEIR SACRAMENTS?

The students of Mater Catholic School will receive their sacraments in their home parishes. Preparation for all sacraments will be incorporated into Mater Dei Catholic School classroom religion instruction. The following time frame will be followed:

- **First Penance and Reconciliation:** Grade 2
- **First Holy Communion:** Grade 2
- **Confirmation:** Grade 7

*The Director of Religious Education for Saint Maria Goretti, Saint Rose, and Saint Stanislaus is responsible for coordinating Sacramental preparation. Dates for rehearsals and sacraments for each parish will be posted on the individual parishes' website calendars. Links to each parish are located at the bottom of the school website home page under **Resources**.*

