

# ***PARENT HANDBOOK***

## ***CARES PROGRAM***

***Our Mother of Consolation Parish School  
Chestnut Hill, PA***

**Dear Parent,**

**This handbook contains information considered important to your child's safety and for the basic operation of the Our Mother of Consolation Parish School CARES Program. May we all work together to make this a happy and worthwhile experience for your child.**

**Sincerely,**

**Ms. Theresa Ponte  
Principal**

*“Large numbers of women have entered the labor force in order to put their talent and education to greater use by also out of sheer economic necessity. More families need two salaries if they are to live in a decently human fashion. Female-headed households often depend heavily on the mothers' income to stay off welfare rolls. Discrimination against women is compounded by the lack of adequate child care services.” (Bishops Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy)*

### **GOAL OF PROGRAM**

**The CARES Program of OMC School provides children with a Catholic environment extending the philosophy of OMC School into the hours after school. The program serves the children of parents who work outside the home. There is a clear academic component, which includes homework time, as well as art, games and activities. The program provides safety, care, supervision and recreation.**

**A director, teachers and/or other caregivers may staff the OMC School CARES Program. The entire program is under the administration of the school principal. The staff members work together to help each child grow in maturity and self-respect, as well as to maintain an atmosphere where respect of others is encouraged.**

### **AGREEMENT**

OMC School agrees to provide the CARES Program for a student, and in return, the parents agree to pay a fee to support the rules of the program. Fees are the sole support of the school's CARES Program. OMC School does not subsidize it.

### **CHANGE IN ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER OR EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Parents are expected to inform the director or designated staff member when there are changes in addresses or phone numbers/emergency numbers. If there is any change in the names of those authorized to pick up the child, this information should be made known to the director.

### **CHILD BEHAVIOR**

Since the CARES Program is an extension of OMC School, the same basic philosophy underlies each program. As members of a caring Catholic community, the children will be expected to respect the staff, each other, and the materials and environment provided. Parents must agree to cooperate in insuring that their children behave appropriately.

If a child violates the guidelines or rules set by the director/staff member, the child will be spoken to. If the behavior is repeated, the parent will be informed and, if necessary, a conference with the parent and director will be set up. Should there continue to be a problem, another conference will be arranged with the principal or director. At that time, the child may be given a final opportunity to improve or may be asked to leave the program.

### **EVALUATION**

Parents may be asked, or wish to take part in, an evaluation of the program during the year. This is done so that the CARES Program can continue to serve the needs of the school community in the best way possible.

### **FEE AND PICK-UP TIME**

An area of parental responsibility is in the matters of **prompt fee payment** and **prompt pick-up time** in the afternoon. The method and time of fee payment, as well as the pick-up time, is determined by the CARES Program in OMC School. Regular and prompt payment will assure the continuation of personnel and the provision of supplies and snacks.

Checks should be made out to **Our Mother of Consolation Parish School - CARES** and not simply to the school. If payments are mailed, they should be sent to the School address and marked to the attention of the CARES Program Director.

If a parent fails to meet the CARES Program fee payment due at the time assigned, and does not make adequate arrangements with the director, a reminder will be sent. A late fee will be assessed for all returned checks. The fees charged are the sole support of the CARES Program, and to continue to serve the children in an adequate and fair way, it is necessary that all payments be prompt and complete.

The program ends at 6:00 PM. It is common courtesy to the staff to respect the time of closure. Parents who have difficulty with the pick-up time should make arrangements with others listed as authorized pick-up individuals.

If a parent is late, a staff member will stay with the child until the parent arrives. A late fee of *\$1.00 per minute late* will be charged if the director ascertains that a late pick-up or a history of late pick-ups occurs without justifiable cause.

Parents enter school by the designated door to pickup children. They are asked to check the play areas if they arrive early. Official attendance records are kept for the CARES Program. Signature and accurate times must be recorded when the child is picked up.

## **SAFETY**

Scheduled safety drills are included to the CARES Program. Children will practice exiting by the nearest designated exits.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The CARES Program follows the policy of OMC School with regard to communicable diseases. Parents or their designates will be notified if a child becomes ill during the hours of the program. All minor injuries will be recorded in the Accident Log. Parents will be notified at the time of pick-up. When serious injuries occur, procedures will be followed as they appear on the Medical Emergency Form. Parents are expected to sign this form at the time of registration.

Copies of all necessary medical information, medicine, etc. are made available to the Director of the CARES Program. As is the policy of OMC School, only prescription medication will be dispensed. If a child is taking medication during the school day, the same written permission slip will suffice. **Reminder:** The written note must include amount of dosage and the date. Medication must be in its original container marked with the child's name.

Parents are responsible for supplying their child(ren) with snacks during CARES hours. **In compliance with the OMC School Nut-Free policy, all snacks provided must too be nut-free.** Parents should send in written notification of any food allergies.

If something serious should occur and the building is evacuated (fire, etc.), children will be taken to a designated place. Parents will be contacted as to the site chosen. Along with the Fire Drill, a Crisis Plan is in place for unexpected emergencies. These plans are in place for OMC School and for the CARES Program.

## **HOMEWORK**

Each day, a homework period is scheduled for all students. It is the child's responsibility to know what homework has been assigned. It is the responsibility of parents to check homework assignments at home. The older students may have more work than can be completed during the homework period. Staff members will initial each assignment as it is completed.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

It is requested that children NOT bring toys or games from home without permission. Staff is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken toys or games. CARES follows the OMC School policy concerning NO electronic devices, with the exception of cell phones for students in grades 3-8. *A copy of the OMC Cell Phone Registration must be on file.*

## **STAFF**

The staff of the CARES Program is responsible for the children enrolled in the program. In addition to the children, the CARES staff is responsible for the facilities and materials used while in the program. As members of a caring community, the children enrolled in the program are expected to respect the staff, each other, the materials, and environment provided.

If a child violates the standards set by the Program Director, the child will be spoken to. If the inappropriate behavior persists, the parent will be notified, and if necessary, a conference with the parent will be scheduled. Parents will be appraised of the situation and all incidents will be documented.

## **SUPERVISION**

**Only adults (CARES Staff and aides) supervise children.**

**A child will be released only to a parent or individual who has been authorized in writing by a parent to pick up the child. Exceptions will not be made unless the parent sends in written permission with the child when he/she comes to school in the morning. Phone calls during the day requesting that a child be directed to go someplace after the CARES Program will not be honored unless it is documented that the caller is a parent. In any case, the child will not be released from the CARES Program without an authorized signature.**

**When children arrive at the CARES Program, a designated staff member will check them in. At the time of pick-up from the program, the parent/authorized person will be asked to sign a form noting name and time of pick-up. Again, it is reiterated that children will be released only to an authorized person.**

**CARES PROGRAM**

*Our Mother of Consolation Parish School*

**HANDBOOK RESPONSE FORM**

*Dear Parent,*

*After reading the Parent Handbook, please return this form to the CARES Program Director.*

*I have read the CARES Program Handbook and have discussed pertinent sections with my child (children). We agree to abide by the policies stated in the Guidelines.*

*Parent/Guardian* \_\_\_\_\_ *(signature)*

*Child:* \_\_\_\_\_ *(signature)*

*Child:* \_\_\_\_\_ *(signature)*

*Child:* \_\_\_\_\_ *(signature)*

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Received by:* \_\_\_\_\_

