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Handbook Disclaimer & Transition Year and School Growth

This handbook is a working document and may be revised or updated by the administration as needed.

Handbook Disclaimer

This handbook is intended to provide general guidance regarding Villa Marie School policies, procedures, expectations, and operations for students and families.

Villa Marie School reserves the right to revise, modify, interpret, or discontinue policies, procedures, schedules, programs, or expectations at any time as needed.

Enrollment and participation at Villa Marie School are subject to diocesan policies, applicable state and federal laws, student needs, available staffing, school resources, and administrative discretion.

2026-2027 Transition Year and Growth

The 2026-2027 school year represents an important season of transition, renewal, and growth for Villa Marie School for Exceptional Children.

Villa Marie remains deeply committed to maintaining its family atmosphere, Catholic identity, individualized supports, and mission-centered culture while strengthening educational systems, family communication, compliance practices, and future programming.

- Strengthening special education documentation and progress monitoring systems
- Re-establishing updated district IEPs and multidisciplinary evaluations when appropriate
- Expanding collaboration with public school districts, ESUs, therapists, and educational partners
- Building sustainable operational systems for future growth
- Increasing inclusion opportunities and community partnerships
- Supporting students through individualized, relationship-centered educational practices

As part of Villa Marie's 2026–2027 transition and growth year, the school is placing strong emphasis on partnership, compliance, and collaboration with families, resident public school districts, ESUs, therapists, and educational partners. Villa Marie is prioritizing updated district IEPs and multidisciplinary evaluations for students so that educational goals, accommodations, services, supports, and future opportunities are clearly documented and appropriately supported.

Villa Marie students are: Known. Loved. Included. Empowered.

Message for the 2026-2027 School Year & Mission

Villa Marie enters the 2026-2027 school year by celebrating the profound dignity God has lovingly bestowed upon each person. It is Villa Marie's mission to recognize this sacred dignity and empower every student to live confidently and joyfully in the fullness of their God-given worth.

At Villa Marie, we believe every child is created in Imago Dei - the image and likeness of our living God. We recognize that every learner is unique; therefore, we embrace flexible learning styles, individualized supports, sensory-friendly environments, movement-based learning opportunities, and relationship-centered instruction to help students thrive academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

"I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Villa Marie Mission

The mission of Villa Marie School for Exceptional Children is to form the students spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically 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 educational services.

Daily Creed: Known. Loved. Included. Empowered.

Philosophy of Diocese of Lincoln Catholic Schools / 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 School helps form students in Christ by teaching doctrine, celebrating Liturgy, participating in Mass and prayer, building community in Christ, and fostering Christ-like service. Villa Marie partners with parents and guardians in their role as the primary educators of the whole child.

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 form students in the practices of prayer, morals, and service to others as brothers and sisters in Christ.
3. To redirect problematic behaviors with dignity and right reason, and to teach students effective skills for managing their own behaviors. This may be done through reteaching the expected skill, role modeling with the student, positive behavior supports, and/or the use of behavior contracts when appropriate.
4. To impart knowledge and skills that develop understanding and cultivate appreciation for basic academic subjects at the level of each student. Field trips and community experiences may be used to reinforce learned subject matter and create hands-on learning opportunities.
5. To develop life skills, social skills, functional skills, self-care skills, and job-readiness skills so that each student may grow in independence, confidence, and personal responsibility while reaching their fullest potential.
6. To promote character development, personal integrity, self-accountability, and self-advocacy.

Student Placement Change Policy

Villa Marie School reserves the right to release a student from enrollment when the best interests of the school, the student, or the school community warrant this action.

The first 30 days of enrollment for a new student may be considered a probationary period to determine whether Villa Marie is an appropriate placement for the student and whether the student's needs can be safely and effectively supported within the school program.

Non-Discrimination Policy

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

Villa Marie School is a Catholic school and operates in accordance with the mission, teachings, and policies of the Catholic Diocese of Lincoln.

Admission Guidelines, Permanent Records, School Forms, & Tuition

Admission Guidelines

1. **Chronological Age:** The minimum chronological age for placement is generally 6 years old. Villa Marie serves students through age 18, depending on the student's educational needs, program appropriateness, and available placement.
2. **Student Needs and Educational Programming:** Villa Marie School serves students with mild to moderate intellectual and developmental disabilities and related learning needs. Students must have an Individualized Education Program, multidisciplinary evaluation, or other educational documentation demonstrating eligibility and need for specialized educational support.
3. **Educational and Psychological Records:** A psychological evaluation, multidisciplinary team evaluation, IEP, or other appropriate educational documentation must be submitted prior to placement.
4. **Medical Information:** A medical history and required health information must be submitted prior to placement. Families are responsible for providing updated medical forms, emergency contact information, medication forms, allergy information, and other health-related documentation as needed.
5. **Student Readiness and Support Needs:** Students should have personal care, eating, dressing, toileting, behavioral, communication, and safety needs that can be reasonably supported within Villa Marie's staffing, program, and facilities. Admission may be postponed or denied if the school determines that a student's needs cannot be safely or appropriately supported within the current program.
6. **Placement Review:** Admission and continued enrollment are based on the student's needs, the appropriateness of the placement, available staffing, safety considerations, the ability of the school to support the student's educational and medical needs, and the best interests of the student and school community.
7. **Immunization and Health Requirements:** Families are responsible for providing required immunization records or valid exemption documentation in accordance with Nebraska law, Diocese of Lincoln policy, and Villa Marie School procedures. Additional information regarding immunizations is included in the Health and Safety section of this handbook.

Student Records

Villa Marie maintains student records in a confidential manner. Student records may include:

- Enrollment and family information
- Birth certificate or proof of age
- Baptismal Certificate, if applicable

- Medical and emergency contact information
- Immunization records or exemption documentation
- Current IEP, MDT, evaluations, progress reports, and educational records
- Medication authorizations and health plans, when applicable
- Field trip, media, technology, transportation, and other annual permission forms
- Tuition agreement and before/after school care registration, when applicable

Required Annual Forms

Families are responsible for completing and returning required annual forms by the deadline communicated by the school. Students may not be permitted to begin school until required forms are completed and returned.

Media, Photos & Video Permission

Villa Marie may take photos or videos during school activities, classroom programming, Mass, field trips, Special Olympics, community outings, school events, and celebrations.

Parents/guardians will be asked to complete an annual media permission form. Villa Marie will follow the permissions on file when using student photos or videos for school communication, newsletters, marketing materials, social media, website updates, publications, or other school-related purposes.

Parents/guardians should contact the school office if they have questions about media permissions or need to update their child's permission status during the school year.

Parent Partnership & Communication

Villa Marie recognizes parents and guardians as the primary educators of their children. A strong partnership between home and school is essential to helping each student grow academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally, and functionally.

- Communicate student needs, changes, concerns, successes, and important family updates with the school.
- Notify the school promptly of changes in medical information, medication, behavior needs, emergency contacts, transportation, or custody-related matters.
- Treat school personnel, students, families, volunteers, and visitors with dignity and respect.
- Use approved school communication channels for school-related matters.
- Support school policies, routines, and expectations in a spirit of collaboration.

Approved Communication Methods

School-related communication should occur through the school office, school email, school phone, approved school communication platforms, or scheduled meetings. Staff members should not use personal phones, personal text messaging, personal email, or personal social media for school-related communication.

Important communication regarding student behavior, health, attendance, transportation, academic progress, or family concerns should be shared with administration when appropriate.

Tuition & Fee Policy

Villa Marie School works closely with families regarding tuition and fees. The tuition paid by families represents only a portion of the actual per-pupil cost of education. For the 2026-2027 school year, the estimated per-pupil cost is approximately \$75,000.

Families must contact Msgr. John Perkinton to discuss their tuition agreement and then complete and return the Tuition and Fee Agreement by the school deadline. For the 2026-2027 school year, the agreement is due no later than Friday, July 17, 2026.

Tuition agreements may be returned by scanning and emailing them to the school office, dropping them off in person, or mailing them to Villa Marie School, 7205 N 112th, Waverly, NE 68462.

Payment Options

Monthly statements will be sent by email. Families may select from the payment options provided on the tuition agreement, including:

- Full payment: one payment
- Semi-annual payments: two payments, due September 5 and January 5
- Bi-monthly payments: four payments, due September 5, November 5, January 5, and March 5
- Monthly payments: nine payments, due September 5 through May 5

Families should communicate promptly with administration if circumstances affect their ability to meet tuition or fee obligations.

Before & After School Care

Villa Marie offers before and after school care when staffing allows. Families who plan to use before or after school care should complete the registration form in advance so appropriate staffing can be arranged.

- **Morning care:** \$5 per day, 7:00-8:15 a.m. Breakfast is included.
- **After-school care:** \$10 per day, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
- **Both morning and after-school care:** \$15 per day.
- **Billing:** Charges are based on use and billed monthly.

Late Pickup

After-school care ends at 5:00 p.m. A late pickup fee of \$2 for every 20 minutes, or portion thereof, after 5:00 p.m. will be charged to the family account. Repeated late pickups may result in loss of after-school care privileges.

Before and after school care availability is dependent on staffing and student needs. Villa Marie may adjust availability when needed.

Daily Schedule, Arrival, Dismissal, & Attendance

Daily Schedule

Villa Marie's daily schedule may be adjusted based on student needs, Mass schedule, special programming, weather, staffing, or school events. A typical school day may include:

- 7:00-8:15 a.m. - Morning care/breakfast, when registered
- 8:15-8:30 a.m. - Arrival, morning meeting, announcements, and school readiness
- 8:30 a.m. - School day begins
- Daily Mass - generally 9:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m., depending on priest availability and school schedule
- Morning academic instruction
- Lunch and recess
- Religion, life skills, specials, intervention, inclusion support, clubs, or enrichment activities
- 3:15-3:30 p.m. - Snack, prayer, and dismissal
- 3:30-5:00 p.m. - After-school care, when registered

Arrival and Dismissal

Students should arrive before 8:15 a.m., and preferably by 8:00 a.m., so they are ready for the school day and able to participate in morning activities when scheduled.

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. Students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. may be marked tardy unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Students should be picked up at the regular dismissal time unless they are registered for after-school care or participating in an approved school activity.

Villa Marie offers after-school care until 5:00 p.m. for registered students. Students who are not registered for after-school care should be picked up promptly at dismissal.

We understand that occasional delays can occur. If a parent/guardian will be late for pickup, they should notify the school office or school cell phone as soon as possible.

After-school care ends at 5:00 p.m. A late pickup fee of \$2 for every 20 minutes, or portion thereof, after 5:00 p.m. will be charged to the family account. Repeated late pickups may result in loss of after-school care privileges.

Villa Marie may have an early dismissal once a month so teachers can have additional planning and professional collaboration time. On early dismissal days, students must be picked up by the announced pickup time unless other arrangements have been approved by administration.

Attendance

Regular attendance is important to student learning, routine, progress, and participation in school life. Parents/guardians should notify the school office when a student will be absent, tardy, or leaving early for an appointment. Please email villamarieinfo@cdolinc.net or call the school office as soon as possible.

Students who are ill, experiencing contagious symptoms, or unable to safely participate in the school day should remain home. Villa Marie may ask that a student be picked up if the student becomes ill during the school day or is unable to safely participate.

If a student's outdoor play, physical education, or school participation needs to be restricted for medical reasons, the school may request written guidance from a physician or medical provider.

Absence Policy

When a student is absent due to illness or another reason, the parent/guardian must notify the school office on the day of the absence, preferably between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

Upon returning to school after an absence, the student should bring a note briefly explaining the reason for the absence. The note should be dated and signed by the parent/guardian and turned in to the school office. Absence notes may also be submitted by email to the school office or principal.

Students who are absent due to fever should remain home until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Students who have a doctor, dental, therapy, or other appointment during the school day must have parent/guardian permission to leave school. Parents/guardians should notify the school office in writing or by email regarding the reason for the absence, appointment time, and expected return time when applicable.

If a teacher, staff member, or administrator has a concern about a student's absence, tardiness, or pattern of attendance, the parent/guardian may be contacted.

If a student's participation in outdoor play, recess, physical education, or other physical activity needs to be restricted, documentation from a physician, physician assistant, or appropriate medical provider may be required. The documentation should include the specific restriction and the length of time the restriction is needed.

If a student is excessively absent, parents/guardians may be asked to meet with the teacher and/or administration to discuss attendance concerns and develop a plan to support the student's consistent participation in school.

Weather / School Cancellation

Villa Marie School will notify families of school cancellations, late starts, early dismissals, or schedule changes through the school's approved communication system.

When severe weather occurs, Villa Marie will communicate with families as soon as reasonably possible regarding any school cancellation, late start, early dismissal, or change in school schedule.

Because weather and road conditions may vary by location, parents/guardians should use their best judgment regarding travel safety. If a family determines that travel is unsafe, they should notify the school office.

In the event of severe weather during the school day, Villa Marie will follow school safety procedures and will communicate with families regarding dismissal or pickup instructions as needed.

Religious Formation

Catholic Identity, Mass & Sacraments

The Catholic faith is central to life at Villa Marie. Students participate in prayer, daily Mass, religious instruction, service, and school traditions that reflect the dignity of each person as a child of God.

Daily Mass

All students attend daily Mass at Villa Marie. Students are supported in participating according to their abilities. Quiet supports, such as approved Mass booklets or non-distracting fidgets, may be permitted when needed and approved by staff.

Sacraments

Confession opportunities are offered during the school year. Parents/guardians of Catholic students who wish for their child to receive First Communion, First Confession, or Confirmation should contact the principal so appropriate instruction and arrangements can be discussed. Similar arrangements may be made for non-Catholic students or families seeking Baptism or entrance into the Catholic Church.

IEPs, Curriculum, & Student Support

Villa Marie provides individualized educational programming designed to support academic, communication, social, emotional, behavioral, transition, and life skill development.

District IEP Partnership & Student Services

During the 2026–2027 school year, Villa Marie School is prioritizing renewed partnership with each student's resident public school district to help ensure students have updated district IEPs, multidisciplinary evaluations, and appropriate educational documentation in place.

Villa Marie believes that strong collaboration between families, Villa Marie staff, public school districts, ESUs, therapists, and other educational partners helps support each student's growth, access to services, and long-term opportunities. Updated district IEPs and evaluations can help clarify student needs, guide appropriate goals and accommodations, support access to available services, and strengthen planning for future educational, vocational, transition, and community opportunities.

Villa Marie staff will work with families and district partners to support the IEP and MDT process, share relevant educational information, participate in meetings when appropriate, and help implement student goals and accommodations within Villa Marie's program.

Parents and guardians remain important members of the IEP team and are encouraged to participate actively in meetings, share concerns and goals, and maintain communication with both Villa Marie and their resident school district.

This partnership does not change Villa Marie's commitment to providing a faith-centered, individualized, supportive Catholic school environment. Rather, it strengthens our ability to serve students well by ensuring that educational documentation, services, supports, and transition planning are current, collaborative, and aligned with each student's needs.

Academic and Functional Instruction

Instruction may include religion, reading, writing, communication, math, science, social studies, life skills, transition skills, social-emotional learning, art, music, technology, physical education, and vocational or functional learning opportunities. Instruction is guided by each student's strengths, needs, goals, accommodations, and developmental readiness.

Therapy and Support Services

Therapists, counselors, outside providers, and district or ESU personnel may collaborate with Villa Marie when appropriate. Parents should coordinate outside therapy visits or service needs with administration.

Subject Areas, Life Skills, Transition Opportunities, Library, & Guidance

Subject Areas

Villa Marie School provides individualized instruction and support in the following subject areas:

- Religion
- Math
- Language Arts, including Reading, Writing, and Spelling
- Literature Groups
- Science
- Social Studies
- Art
- Music
- Computers
- Keys to Success
- Interoception
- Physical Education / Health

Instruction is adapted to meet the learning needs, abilities, goals, and accommodations of each student.

Job and Vocational Skills

Villa Marie School emphasizes functional life skills, responsibility, independence, and job-readiness skills throughout the school day.

Students may participate in cooking class, meal preparation, sewing class, and daily job responsibilities such as:

- Vacuuming
- Collecting and emptying trash
- Laundry, including folding and putting items away
- Helping clean up after lunch
- Cleaning bathroom mirrors and sinks
- Collecting recycling
- Cleaning classrooms
- Sweeping
- Washing, spraying, drying, and putting away dishes
- Wiping tables

- Raking
- Working in the garden
- Organizing materials and school spaces
- Other age-appropriate classroom, school, and life skills tasks

These activities help students practice responsibility, independence, teamwork, following directions, problem-solving, and pride in contributing to the school community.

Transition Opportunities for Students Ages 14–18

Villa Marie School provides transition-focused instruction and opportunities for students ages 14 and older as they prepare for their next stage of learning, work, community participation, and adult life.

Transition instruction may include vocational exploration, job-readiness skills, independent living skills, community-based learning, self-advocacy, social skills, and functional academic skills.

Villa Marie School partners with Vocational Rehabilitation and other community partners when appropriate to help students prepare for future employment, service opportunities, and adult life. Vocational Rehabilitation representatives may meet with transition-age students and staff to support planning and skill development.

When students reach age 18 or complete their Villa Marie program, they may receive a Certificate of Completion from Villa Marie School.

Library

Villa Marie School maintains a school library for student use during the school day and approved after-school programming.

Students may receive library orientation at the beginning of the school year and are encouraged to use books for research, learning, and reading enjoyment. Books are cataloged and organized topically for ease of student navigation. Villa Marie School also subscribes to World Book Online.

Students who would like to check out books should ask an adult for assistance. When finished with a book, it should be returned to the designated tote so that it can be checked in and re-shelved.

Library books are not to be taken home unless special permission is given by school staff.

Guidance and Student Support

Villa Marie students receive spiritual, social, emotional, behavioral, and academic support from teachers, support staff, administration, priests who celebrate Mass at the school, and other members of the Villa Marie community.

Students are encouraged to seek guidance and support from trusted adults when needed.

A licensed mental health practitioner is on site at Villa Marie to meet with individual students and consult with staff members. Other therapists may also visit Villa Marie on a regular basis to meet with students who receive outside therapeutic services.

Villa Marie School may use standardized, norm-referenced assessments used in other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lincoln to assess student academic performance when appropriate. Villa Marie also

works with each student's resident public school district to help determine appropriate assessment accommodations or modifications based on the student's disability, IEP, educational documentation, and individual needs.

Special Olympics and Unified Activities

Special Olympics

Villa Marie students age 8 and older may have the opportunity to participate in Special Olympics programming, depending on student interest, eligibility, available events, coaching support, transportation, supervision, and family permission.

Special Olympics provides students with meaningful opportunities to grow physically, socially, emotionally, and personally. Participation helps students build strength, coordination, endurance, confidence, teamwork, sportsmanship, responsibility, communication skills, and friendships. Most importantly, it gives students the opportunity to experience the joy of being part of a team and being celebrated for their abilities.

Villa Marie currently participates in traditional Special Olympics opportunities such as:

- Basketball
- Track and field
- Bowling

Villa Marie is also working to expand student opportunities through unified and inclusive activities, including:

- Unified basketball
- Unified track and field
- Unified cheer
- Traditional bowling
- Additional Special Olympics or inclusive activities as opportunities become available

Unified activities provide opportunities for students with and without disabilities to participate together as teammates, peer partners, encouragers, and friends. These opportunities support inclusion, belonging, school spirit, leadership, and meaningful relationships.

Practices and Participation

Practice schedules may vary from year to year depending on available coaches, event schedules, student participation, transportation, and facility availability.

Traditional bowling has typically taken place during the first semester until students have completed the required number of games. Basketball practices may take place during the fall and winter months. Track and field practices typically take place in the spring. Unified opportunities may be scheduled based on event availability, student interest, and staffing support.

Parents/guardians will receive information regarding practice schedules, event dates, transportation expectations, supervision, uniforms, costs, and permission forms before each activity begins.

Participation in Special Olympics and unified activities is a privilege and requires students to follow school expectations, team rules, safety procedures, and respectful behavior guidelines.

Coaches and Volunteers

Villa Marie is grateful for the many coaches, volunteers, staff members, families, and community partners who help make Special Olympics and unified activities possible.

Coaching assignments may change from year to year based on volunteer availability and school needs. Coaches, staff members, and volunteers work together to support student safety, skill development, encouragement, inclusion, and positive participation.

All volunteers working directly with students must meet Villa Marie School and Diocese of Lincoln volunteer requirements, including background checks and Safe Environment training when applicable.

Registration, Consent, and Physical Requirements

Students who are new to Special Olympics must complete required registration and consent forms before participating.

A physical exam is also required for Special Olympics participation. Special Olympics physical exam forms are available through the school office and must be kept current according to Special Olympics requirements, generally every three years.

Parents/guardians are responsible for completing and returning all required forms by the stated deadlines. Students may not participate in practices or competitions until required documentation has been completed and approved.

Costs and Family Responsibilities

Parents/guardians may be asked to share costs for events, activities, uniforms, transportation, meals, or other participation-related expenses when applicable.

Villa Marie will communicate any anticipated costs to families before participation whenever possible. Families who have concerns about participation costs are encouraged to contact administration.

Student Eligibility and Safety

Student participation may depend on age, Special Olympics eligibility requirements, required forms, health and safety needs, behavioral readiness, supervision needs, transportation availability, and the type of event.

Villa Marie School will make reasonable efforts to support student participation while also prioritizing safety, appropriate supervision, student dignity, and the overall needs of the school program.

No student may participate in a Special Olympics or unified event unless all required school, parent/guardian, medical, and Special Olympics documentation has been completed.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the Villa Marie educational experience. Villa Marie students may participate in field trips and community-based learning opportunities throughout the school year to support their educational, cultural, social, vocational, spiritual, and life-skills growth.

Field trips help students practice real-world skills in meaningful settings outside the classroom. These experiences allow students to apply what they are learning at school while building confidence, independence, communication skills, and appropriate behavior in the community.

Field trips may reinforce and teach skills such as:

- Social skills in public settings
- Bus, van, and transportation safety
- Shopping skills
- Restaurant and ordering skills
- Money skills and budgeting
- Communication with community members
- Waiting, turn-taking, and following directions
- Locating and reading safety signs
- Locating and reading street signs
- Using directional skills, maps, or visual supports
- Practicing appropriate behavior in public places
- Building independence and confidence
- Experiencing cultural, recreational, service, and educational opportunities

Field trips are considered a privilege and are also part of Villa Marie's broader educational programming. Students are expected to follow school expectations, staff directions, safety rules, and respectful behavior guidelines while participating.

The principal, in consultation with teachers and staff, may determine that a student should not participate in a particular field trip if there are significant concerns regarding incomplete schoolwork, unsafe behavior, elopement risk, aggression, refusal to follow directions, medical needs, transportation concerns, or other safety-related issues. When possible, staff will work with the student and family to help the student prepare for future participation.

Parents/guardians sign a field trip permission form at the beginning of each school year. Some field trips may require additional permission, special instructions, fees, lunch arrangements, medical information, or transportation details.

Villa Marie uses school-approved transportation for field trips. All school transportation vehicles are equipped with seatbelts, and all passengers are required to wear them. Students are expected to remain seated, follow staff directions, use appropriate voices, and demonstrate safe behavior while riding in school vehicles.

Villa Marie may also use approved buses or vehicles from partner schools or organizations when available for longer trips or special events. Only approved drivers who meet school, diocesan, and transportation requirements may drive students for school field trips.

Families will be notified of field trip details when appropriate, including destination, date, approximate times, transportation plans, lunch needs, cost if applicable, and any special clothing or supplies needed.

Because Villa Marie students have a variety of educational, behavioral, medical, mobility, communication, sensory, and supervision needs, staff will make reasonable efforts to plan field trips that are safe, meaningful, and accessible for students. Final participation decisions will be made by administration based on student safety, staffing, transportation, and the needs of the group.

Breakfast, Lunch, Free/Reduced Meals and Wellness Policy

Breakfast and Hot Lunch Program

Villa Marie School participates in the National School Lunch Program and provides breakfast and lunch for students during the school day.

Breakfast is provided at no cost to students. The lunch price for the 2026–2027 school year is \$3.75 per lunch. Reduced-price lunch is \$0.40 for eligible students.

Free and reduced-price meal benefits are available for families who qualify through federal guidelines. Families are provided information and application forms at the beginning of the school year and when they enroll. One application should be completed per household.

Students who qualified for free or reduced-price meals at the end of the previous school year may remain in that eligibility category for the first 30 operating days of the new school year. Families must submit a new application each school year in order to avoid an interruption in meal benefits.

Applications may be submitted at any time during the school year if household income or family circumstances change. Families may qualify based on household income, participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR, foster care status, or other qualifying circumstances such as homelessness, migrant status, or runaway status.

Villa Marie School takes steps to protect the privacy of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals, as well as the status of family meal accounts. No child is turned away from receiving meals at school.

Monthly account balances or meal statements may be sent to families as needed.

No food from outside the school, including fast food, should be brought in for breakfast or lunch without permission from administration. Parents/guardians may bring a meal to eat with their child with permission, or may bring food for a class or school celebration when approved by administration. Students may bring lunch from home when needed.

Gum chewing is not allowed unless it is included as part of a student's IEP, sensory plan, or approved support plan.

Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications

Families who wish to apply for free or reduced-price meals should complete the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Family Application and return it to Villa Marie School.

Families should make sure the application is complete before returning it. Incomplete applications may delay approval. The school may verify information provided on the application as required by federal program rules.

Families do not need to complete a separate application for each child. One application may be used for all students in the household.

Questions about meal applications, eligibility, or meal accounts should be directed to the school office.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information, such as Braille, large print, audiotape, or American Sign Language, should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600, or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which may be obtained online, from any USDA office, by calling 866-632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in enough detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation.

The completed form or letter may be submitted to USDA by mail, fax, or email.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Villa Marie School Wellness Policy

Villa Marie School is dedicated to promoting, encouraging, and educating students and staff on being healthy physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Villa Marie supports this mission by encouraging healthy eating, physical fitness, and positive lifestyle habits.

Villa Marie recognizes that students may have sensory needs, dietary preferences, allergies, medical needs, feeding needs, or food-related challenges. Staff members will accommodate student needs as appropriate while encouraging students to try new foods and learn the importance of balanced nutrition. Students are encouraged, but not forced, to eat every part of a meal.

Professional Standards

All school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff will meet or exceed applicable hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements under USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals. School nutrition personnel will refer to Nebraska Department of Education Nutrition Services guidance for training and program expectations.

Villa Marie School assures compliance with USDA nutrition standards for reimbursable school meals.

Wellness Goals

Villa Marie School's wellness goals are to:

1. Encourage healthy eating.
2. Develop healthy meals.
3. Encourage students to try new foods and seasonings.
4. Encourage physical fitness and teach the value of healthy living.

The Wellness Committee or designee may establish additional goals as needed to support student wellness and school programming.

Nutrition Education

Villa Marie School works to provide nutrition education that supports student health, independence, and life skills.

Nutrition education may include:

- Learning about balanced meals and food groups
- Learning about fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains, and dairy
- Reading nutrition labels
- Trying new foods and seasonings
- Practicing appropriate table manners
- Learning cooking vocabulary
- Identifying kitchen tools and ingredients
- Following recipes
- Using measurements and fractions
- Practicing sanitation and handwashing
- Practicing kitchen safety
- Cleaning up after cooking or meals

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks

Villa Marie provides breakfast and lunch during the school day.

Breakfast includes fruit, milk, and water. Lunch includes fruits and vegetables, milk, and water. Healthy snacks may also be incorporated into the school day when appropriate.

Students are encouraged to try foods from each food group and to make healthy choices.

Cooking Class and Life Skills

Cooking class and meal preparation are important parts of Villa Marie's functional life skills programming. Students may learn how to prepare simple meals, follow recipes, measure ingredients, use kitchen tools safely, cooperate with classmates, and clean up after cooking.

These activities support independence, responsibility, math skills, reading skills, sequencing, safety awareness, and confidence.

Physical Activity

Villa Marie School promotes physical activity as an important part of student wellness.

Students participate in physical education and movement-based activities as part of the school program. Physical education and health concepts may also be integrated into other subject areas when appropriate.

Physical activity may include:

- Running
- Jumping
- Dancing

- Catching and throwing
- Kicking
- Jump rope
- Basketball
- Soccer
- Track and field
- Tennis
- Kickball
- Other recreational games and movement activities

Students also have opportunities for recess and active play. When weather allows, students may go outside. During inclement weather, indoor movement opportunities may be provided.

Special Olympics, Field Trips, and Community Wellness Opportunities

Villa Marie supports wellness through Special Olympics, field trips, community outings, recreation, and other school-based activities.

Special Olympics opportunities may include basketball, track and field, bowling, unified activities, and other activities as available.

Field trips may also support wellness by encouraging walking, active participation, exposure to new foods, restaurant skills, community access, and real-world life skills.

Wellness Team and Policy Review

Villa Marie School will maintain or work within a wellness team to develop, implement, monitor, review, and revise school nutrition and physical activity policies as needed.

The wellness team may include school administrators, teachers, food service staff, parents, students, health professionals, advisory board members, and community members.

The wellness policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as needed to support compliance, student wellness, and school programming.

Birthday Celebrations, Gift Giving & School Events

Birthdays are a special opportunity to celebrate the unique gift of each student. Birthday celebrations or special treats should be coordinated with the school in advance so allergy, dietary, and student needs can be considered.

Student gift giving at school is not encouraged unless all students in the group are included. Families are asked to help guide students in kindness, inclusion, and sensitivity to others.

School events, parties, and celebrations should reflect Catholic values, student dignity, inclusion, safety, and respect for individual student needs.

Dress Code & Uniform Policy

Villa Marie students are expected to dress modestly, neatly, and appropriately for a Catholic school environment. Clothing should not interfere with student learning, safety, dignity, or participation.

Shirts

- Polo shirt in gray, white, navy, or light blue, either long or short sleeved, with no logo. Polos may be purchased anywhere.
- Villa Marie t-shirt, either long or short sleeved.
- Any plain blue shirt, long or short sleeved. Shirts must not be sleeveless, tight, or low-cut and must be long enough to cover the midriff.

Pants

- Navy blue or tan pants. Elastic waist pants are permitted. Pants may be purchased anywhere. If a belt is needed, the student will be asked to put one on.
- No leggings or tight-fitting pants may be worn except under skirts. Solid color leggings only. No baggy clothing or pants riding on the hips.

Shorts, Skorts, Skirts, and Jumpers

- 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.
- Girls may wear navy blue or tan capris, but nothing skin tight.
- Girls may wear navy blue, Villa Marie plaid, or tan skirts, skorts, and jumpers. Shorts or solid color leggings must be worn under skirts. Solid color leggings must be worn under skirts from October through March. Skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be down to the knee or longer.
- Shorts and capris may be worn in August, September, April, and May.

Shoes, Jackets, Sweaters, and Hats

- Tennis shoes and socks are required for P.E.
- Sandals may only be worn in August, September, April, and May. No flip flops.
- Villa Marie jackets and sweatshirts or any blue, black, or gray jacket, fleece jacket, sweatshirt, or sweater may be worn in winter as part of the school uniform. Jackets and sweatshirts worn inside may not have hoods.
- Hats may not be worn inside the school.
- Villa Marie may keep some apparel on hand that meets the uniform policy. These items may be available to students free of charge on a first-come, first-served basis.

Health, Safety, Discipline, & Emergency Procedures

Health and Safety Policies

Villa Marie School is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and responsive environment for students with a wide range of educational, medical, behavioral, communication, sensory, and physical support needs. Parents/guardians are expected to provide current medical information, emergency

contact information, medication forms, health updates, and any other documentation necessary to help Villa Marie safely support their child during the school day and school activities.

Prescription and Nonprescription Medications

If a student needs to receive medication during the school day, including prescription or nonprescription medication, the parent/guardian must complete and sign the required school medication form.

Medication forms are included in the summer mailing and are also available through the school office.

All medications must be provided in the prescription bottle or original container. Medication will not be administered if it is not in the original container.

Nonprescription medications must include written parent/guardian permission with the following information:

- Student name
- Name of medication
- Dose to be given
- Time medication should be given
- How often the medication should be given
- Specific dates the medication should be administered
- Reason for medication, when appropriate
- Parent/guardian signature

All medications must be turned in to the school office. Students should not carry, share, or self-administer medication unless specifically authorized through an approved medical plan.

Medication records will be maintained according to school procedures. Only authorized and appropriately trained staff members may administer medication or delegated medical supports.

Emergency Medical Care

In the event of a medical emergency, Villa Marie staff will prioritize student safety and seek appropriate medical assistance.

Depending on the situation, staff may:

- Provide basic first aid
- Contact parents/guardians
- Contact emergency contacts
- Call 911
- Follow the student's emergency action plan or health plan
- Complete incident documentation as required

A consent form is sent home as part of the school paperwork giving Villa Marie staff permission to call 911 or seek emergency medical care in the event of a medical emergency.

Staff will not delay emergency medical care while attempting to contact parents first if immediate medical attention is needed.

Health Records

Villa Marie School maintains health information and emergency records for each student. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping all health records current.

Health records may include:

- Emergency contact information
- Immunization records or exemption documentation
- Medication authorization forms
- Allergy information
- Seizure plans or emergency action plans
- Feeding or dietary information
- Mobility or transfer information
- Medical restrictions
- Physician instructions when applicable
- Other health information needed to safely support the student

Parents/guardians must notify the school promptly of any significant changes in a student's medical condition, medications, allergies, restrictions, diagnoses, emergency contacts, or healthcare needs.

Health screenings such as vision, hearing, height, and weight may be conducted during the school year as required or recommended.

Physical and Dental Requirements

Families are responsible for completing required medical and dental documentation as applicable.

Students in seventh grade or around age 13 may be required to have a medical examination by a physician or qualified medical provider. Dental examinations may also be required or recommended according to state or school expectations.

Families will be notified when specific medical, dental, or health documentation is required.

Immunization Records and Exemptions

Villa Marie School follows the Immunization Policy of the Diocese of Lincoln and applicable Nebraska law regarding immunizations required for school attendance.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing written proof of required student immunizations or submitting a valid medical or religious exemption as permitted by law. Immunization records and exemption documentation are maintained by the school office as confidential student records.

Required immunization-related forms may include:

- Documentation of Varicella/Chickenpox Disease
- Medical Exemption From Vaccination Required for School Attendance in Nebraska
- Affidavit – Refusal of Immunization of Student for Religious Reasons
- Diocese of Lincoln faith-based medical decision-making resource when applicable

Families with questions about immunization documentation or exemptions should contact the school office or administration.

Students with immunization exemptions may be excluded from school during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease in accordance with diocesan guidance, applicable public health guidance, and school procedures.

Illness and Communicable Conditions

Parents/guardians should keep students home when they are ill or experiencing symptoms that may be contagious or prevent them from safely participating in the school day.

Students should remain home if they have:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Persistent uncontrolled cough
- Symptoms of contagious illness
- Communicable skin conditions
- Pink eye or other contagious eye conditions
- Other symptoms that may put the student or others at risk

Students who are absent due to fever should remain home until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, parents/guardians or emergency contacts may be called to pick up the student.

Lice Policy

Head lice can occur in any household or school setting. If a student is suspected of having lice, the school may examine the student or request that the parent/guardian pick up the student for treatment.

If lice or nits are found, the student may be sent home. Parents/guardians will be given information regarding treatment and return-to-school expectations.

Upon returning to school, the student may be checked by the principal or another qualified staff member. A student may return to class when the school determines that return-to-school expectations have been met.

The school will take reasonable precautions to help prevent the spread of lice and will notify families as appropriate.

A record of the concern may be kept in the school office.

Safety and Dismissal

Villa Marie School may only dismiss a student to a legal parent/guardian or to another adult who has been authorized by the parent/guardian.

If a student is to be picked up by someone other than a legal parent/guardian, the school must receive written permission, email permission, or direct communication from the parent/guardian. The school may request identification from any person picking up a student.

Parents/guardians should notify the school in writing if there is anyone who should not have contact with or pick up their child. Legal documentation may be required when custody, protection orders, or restricted contact situations are involved.

Photos or identifying information may be helpful for staff in situations involving restricted contact or safety concerns.

Visitors, Volunteers, and Building Safety

Villa Marie School is committed to maintaining a safe and secure school environment.

The school building will remain locked during the school day. Visitors should ring the doorbell and wait for an authorized staff member to allow entry.

Students are not permitted to open exterior doors for visitors.

Visitors and volunteers are expected to check in according to school procedures. Villa Marie may require identification, visitor sign-in, and administrative approval before visitors or volunteers enter student areas.

Security cameras may be used in designated areas of the school property to support student safety, building security, and supervision.

All volunteers over the age of 18 who work with students, observe classes, assist with school activities, or volunteer in the school building must meet Diocese of Lincoln and Villa Marie requirements. This may include background checks and Safe Environment training before volunteering.

Discipline and Behavioral Support

Discipline at Villa Marie School is intended to be positive, corrective, respectful, and rooted in student growth. Our goal is to help students learn responsibility, self-control, respect for others, healthy boundaries, problem-solving, and appropriate behavior in a safe and supportive Catholic school environment.

Villa Marie recognizes that students may have unique developmental, communication, sensory, emotional, behavioral, and disability-related needs. Staff members work to respond to behavior with dignity, consistency, patience, and appropriate support.

Students are expected to show respect for God, staff members, other students, themselves, school property, and the broader school community.

Positive Behavior Support

Villa Marie emphasizes positive reinforcement, relationship-building, clear expectations, and skill development. Staff members may use strategies such as:

- Reteaching expected behaviors

- Visual supports
- Verbal reminders
- Modeling and role-playing
- Breaks or calming strategies
- Positive reinforcement
- Behavior contracts
- Restorative conversations
- Parent/guardian communication
- Individualized behavior supports when needed

Students may receive consequences for inappropriate behavior. Consequences are intended to help students learn safer, kinder, and more appropriate choices.

Consequences may depend on the severity of the behavior, the student's age, developmental level, disability-related needs, safety concerns, and the circumstances of the situation.

Possible consequences or supports may include:

- Verbal reminder or redirection
- Loss of a privilege
- Break or cool-down time
- Reflection activity
- Walking laps or movement break when appropriate
- Completing an extra responsibility or job
- Making repair for harm caused
- Restorative or relationship-building activity
- Temporary removal from an activity for safety
- Parent/guardian communication
- Behavior contract or individualized support plan
- Administrative review

No student will ever be deprived of a meal as a disciplinary consequence.

Behavior Contracts and Individualized Plans

If a behavior is recurring and efforts to redirect it have not been successful, the student may be placed on a behavior contract or individualized support plan.

These plans may be developed by teachers, administration, the counselor, support staff, and parents/guardians. When appropriate, outside providers or district team members may also be consulted.

Behavior plans are intended to help students understand expectations, practice replacement skills, earn positive reinforcement, and experience success.

Serious or Unsafe Behavior

Villa Marie takes serious or unsafe behavior seriously, especially when behavior affects the safety, dignity, or well-being of another student or staff member.

Serious concerns may include:

- Physical aggression
- Threats of harm
- Unsafe behavior
- Elopement or leaving a supervised area
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Destruction of property
- Repeated refusal to follow safety directions
- Behavior that significantly disrupts the school environment

Parents/guardians will be contacted when significant behavior concerns occur. Administration may determine appropriate next steps, which may include a meeting, behavior plan, temporary removal from an activity, suspension, or possible dismissal from enrollment when necessary.

Restraint and Safety Intervention

In rare situations, a student may need physical intervention or restraint for the safety of the student or others.

Restraint should only be used as a last resort when there is immediate danger of harm and only by trained staff members, in accordance with school policy, staff training, and applicable safety guidelines.

If restraint or a significant safety intervention occurs, parents/guardians will be notified and documentation will be completed according to school procedures.

Playground and Recess Expectations

Villa Marie wants recess and playground time to be safe, enjoyable, inclusive, and welcoming for all students. Students are expected to follow staff directions and use playground equipment safely.

Students are expected to:

- Take turns and include others.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.
- Stay within designated playground boundaries.
- Remain where staff members can see them.
- Use kind and respectful language.
- Go down slides feet first.
- Use slides safely and one at a time unless using the double slide appropriately.
- Sit properly on swings.
- Swing forward and backward only.
- Stop the swing before getting off.
- Stay a safe distance away from moving swings.
- Sit appropriately on benches or sidewalks.
- Avoid sticks, rocks, or unsafe objects.
- Ask permission before going to special areas such as the butterfly garden or Mary grotto.
- Follow staff directions promptly.

Only adults may adjust basketball hoops, open large garage doors, or operate facility equipment.

If a student is unable to follow playground or recess expectations, staff may provide reminders, redirection, temporary removal from an activity, or loss of playground privileges for safety reasons.

Consequences are intended to help students learn responsibility, safety, and respect while maintaining a positive environment for everyone.

Bike Safety

- Students must wear helmets when riding bikes, scooters, or similar equipment.
- Students must ride in a safe, controlled manner and remain within approved riding areas.
- If a car, bus, van, or other vehicle enters the property, students must stop riding and move safely to the side until the vehicle passes.
- Unsafe riding may result in loss of bike privileges.

Child Abuse Reporting, Safety Drills, & Emergency Procedures

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Villa Marie School is committed to protecting the safety and dignity of all students. All adults including staff, parents, and volunteers are responsible for following safe reporting procedures regarding child safety concerns.

Under Nebraska law, school staff members are mandatory reporters. When any school staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect or observes a situation that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, the staff member is required to report the concern to the proper civil authorities.

Abuse or neglect may include knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to:

- Being placed in a situation that may endanger the child's life, physical health, or mental health
- Being tortured, cruelly confined, or cruelly punished
- Being deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care
- Being left unattended in a motor vehicle when the child is six years old or younger
- Being sexually abused

Villa Marie staff members will follow Nebraska law, Diocese of Lincoln Safe Environment expectations, and school procedures regarding suspected abuse or neglect.

To report allegations of abuse involving any person affiliated with the Diocese of Lincoln, staff members should first contact local law enforcement or the Nebraska Child Abuse Hotline.

After contacting civil authorities, concerns may also be reported to:

Diocese of Lincoln Safe Environment Coordinator

Jeff Hohlen

402-314-2899

Jeff-hohlen@lincolndiocese.org

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted throughout the school year as required. Students are taught how to exit the building quickly, quietly, safely, and in an orderly manner.

During fire drills, students are expected to:

- Follow staff directions immediately
- Stay with their assigned group
- Walk quietly and safely
- Exit using the designated route
- Line up in the assigned location
- Remain with staff until attendance is checked and further directions are given

Staff members will account for students to ensure that all students have exited safely.

Tornado and Severe Weather Drills

Tornado drills are conducted twice during the school year so students know where to go and what to do in case of severe weather.

Students are taught to move calmly and quietly to designated shelter areas and to follow staff directions regarding protective positioning.

If an actual tornado warning or severe weather emergency occurs during pickup time, parents/guardians should shelter in place with the students until it is safe to leave the premises. Students and staff will remain in designated safety areas, and the school will communicate with families when it is safe.

Bus and Van Drills

Bus and van safety drills may be conducted during the school year. These drills teach students how to ride safely and how to exit a vehicle in an emergency.

Students will practice and review:

- Entering and exiting vehicles safely
- Stop, look, and listen protocol
- Wearing seatbelts
- Remaining seated while the vehicle is moving
- Listening to driver and staff directions
- Emergency exit procedures
- Moving to a safe location after exiting the vehicle

Students are expected to follow all transportation safety rules during drills, field trips, and school transportation.

Standard Response Protocol

Villa Marie School follows Standard Response Protocols for school safety situations. Students and staff may practice or review the following actions:

- Hold
- Secure
- Lockdown
- Evacuate
- Shelter

These procedures help students and staff respond calmly and safely during emergencies such as severe weather, intruder concerns, evacuation needs, or other safety situations.

Crisis Response and Reunification

Villa Marie School maintains crisis response procedures for emergency situations.

In the event that students need to evacuate Villa Marie School, families will be notified regarding reunification instructions. The designated reunification location will be St. John's School, 7601 Vine Street, Lincoln, NE 68505, unless families are directed otherwise by school administration or emergency personnel.

During an emergency, parents/guardians should wait for official communication from Villa Marie School and follow the instructions provided. This helps staff maintain student safety, account for all students, and reunite students with families in an orderly manner.

Technology, Cell Phones, Electronic Devices & School Property

Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, and Toys

Cell phones, smart watches, and other personal electronic devices are not needed during the school day. If a parent/guardian believes a student needs to bring a phone or electronic device to school, the device must be turned in to the school office upon arrival unless another arrangement has been approved by administration.

If a student keeps a phone, smart watch, or electronic device without permission, the device may be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian.

If a student needs to call a parent/guardian during the school day, the student may use the school office phone with permission from the principal or designated staff member.

Electronic games, music players, tablets, toys, or other personal items should not be brought to school unless approved by administration or included as part of the student's IEP, sensory plan, behavior plan, or other approved support plan.

All movies, music, games, videos, or media brought from home must be approved by administration before use at school. Villa Marie promotes Catholic values and morals in all forms of media. Inappropriate, distracting, copied, or unapproved media may not be used at school.

Students may use music or electronic supports during the school day only when approved as part of the student's IEP, support plan, or planned regulation strategy. Only approved music or content may be used.

As a general rule, students should not bring toys, trinkets, or personal items from home to use during school time unless permission has been given by administration or the item is part of an approved student support plan.

School Property

Students are expected to use school property, equipment, furniture, technology, books, classroom materials, vehicles, and facilities with care and respect.

Students should notify a staff member if something is broken, damaged, lost, or not working properly.

Villa Marie understands that accidents happen. However, if a student intentionally damages, breaks, destroys, or misuses school property, parents/guardians may be responsible for repair or replacement costs.

Students are expected to show responsibility and gratitude for the materials and resources provided for their education and growth.

Computers, Internet, and iPad Acceptable Use

Technology resources at Villa Marie School are provided to support the educational mission of the school. Computers, iPads, Smart Boards, display boards, projectors, educational programs, internet access, and other devices are to be used for educational purposes and in accordance with school expectations.

Technology use is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to use all technology in a responsible, ethical, safe, respectful, and legal manner.

Students and parents/guardians may be asked to review and sign the school Computer/Internet Policy Agreement and iPad Acceptable Use Agreement before a student is allowed to use school technology.

Internet Safety and Supervision

Villa Marie provides filtered internet access. The school's internet filter may be more restrictive than internet access at home.

Students may only access approved websites, apps, games, programs, videos, or online materials as directed by staff.

Students are expected to:

- Use technology only for approved educational purposes.
- Follow staff directions regarding computer and iPad use.
- Respect the privacy of others.
- Access only their own documents, folders, and assigned materials.
- Ask permission before printing.
- Use school supplies, paper, ink, and equipment responsibly.
- Report technology problems or concerning content to a staff member.
- Handle all devices carefully and respectfully.

Students may not:

- Access inappropriate, offensive, threatening, obscene, profane, or sexually explicit content.
- Send, print, show, upload, download, or distribute inappropriate messages, pictures, videos, or materials.
- Use another person's password, account, files, or device.
- Open, delete, change, or damage another person's files.
- Change school computer or iPad settings without permission.
- Download apps, games, music, videos, or software without permission.
- Attempt to bypass the school internet filter.
- Use messaging services, chat rooms, or social media unless specifically approved for educational purposes.

- Waste supplies or intentionally damage school technology.
- Plagiarize, violate copyright rules, or copy work without proper credit.
- Use school technology for commercial, financial, illegal, or non-school purposes.

iPad Use and Care

Villa Marie may provide iPads for student use during the school year. iPads remain the property of Villa Marie School.

Students are responsible for using iPads carefully and appropriately. iPads should be returned to the teacher or designated storage area when not in use.

Students are expected to:

- Keep iPads in protective cases when carried.
- Insert cords and cables carefully.
- Keep iPads free from writing, stickers, labels, or markings not provided by the school.
- Report damage or problems immediately.
- Use only approved apps and programs.
- Keep sound muted unless staff gives permission.
- Use headphones or earbuds only when approved.
- Store devices properly when finished.

Students may not add apps, delete apps, change backgrounds, store personal photos, download music, alter settings, jailbreak devices, or use another student's assigned device.

If a student intentionally misuses, damages, alters, or destroys an iPad or other technology device, the student and/or parent/guardian may be responsible for repair or replacement costs.

Copyright and Digital Responsibility

Students are expected to respect copyright laws and give proper credit when using pictures, music, videos, graphics, written information, or other materials from books, websites, or digital sources.

Students will be instructed in appropriate internet safety, digital citizenship, and proper citation practices when applicable.

Violation of technology expectations may result in loss of technology privileges, disciplinary action, parent/guardian notification, and possible repair or replacement fees.

Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, & Safe Environment

Drug-Free, Weapon-Free, Gang-Free, and Violence-Free Environment

Villa Marie School is a drug-free, weapon-free, gang-free, and violence-free school.

Students may not possess, use, distribute, display, threaten to use, or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, weapons, look-alike weapons, gang-related materials, or violent behavior at school, on school property, during school transportation, on field trips, or during school-sponsored activities.

Any concern involving drugs, weapons, threats, violence, or unsafe conduct will be addressed by administration in accordance with school policy, diocesan policy, and applicable law. Law enforcement or emergency personnel may be contacted when appropriate.

Harassment and Inappropriate Conduct

Harassment of any kind is not tolerated at Villa Marie School.

Villa Marie is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, faith-filled environment where students, staff, families, volunteers, and visitors are treated with dignity.

Harassment, bullying, intimidation, threats, inappropriate sexual conduct, discrimination, retaliation, or other unsafe behavior should be reported to administration as soon as possible.

Concerns may be reported to the principal, director, school administration, or appropriate diocesan personnel.

Nebraska Child Abuse Hotline

1-800-652-1999

Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services

402-471-7000

The Diocese of Lincoln Misconduct Hotline

1-844-527-0596

The Diocese of Lincoln Victim Assistance Coordinator

Jeff Hohlen at 402-613-2488

Parent and Guardian Communication with the School

Villa Marie values strong communication and partnership with parents and guardians. Families are encouraged to communicate questions, concerns, updates, and student needs with the school in a timely and respectful manner.

Most school correspondence will be sent by email. Families should check email regularly for school updates, newsletters, forms, event information, schedule changes, and other communication.

Additional communication may include:

- School newsletters and calendars
- Principal letters
- Report cards
- Special Olympics information
- Field trip information
- Tuition or meal account statements
- Before and after-school care information
- Permission forms
- Schoolwork or student materials sent home
- Other notes or updates as needed

Parents/guardians should make sure the school office has current contact information, including email addresses, phone numbers, emergency contacts, authorized pickup persons, and any custody or safety information that may affect communication or dismissal.

Parent Involvement

Parents and guardians are important partners in the Villa Marie community. Families may be invited to participate in school activities, meetings, conferences, fundraising events, student programs, field trips, volunteer opportunities, and IEP or MDT meetings.

Parent involvement opportunities may include:

- Parent meetings
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Annual IEP meetings
- MDT meetings when necessary
- School programs and celebrations
- Fundraising events
- Field trips
- Special Olympics activities
- Volunteer opportunities
- Other conferences or meetings requested by parents, teachers, or administration

Parents/guardians who would like to schedule a conference should contact the school office so a date and time can be arranged.

Parents/guardians who wish to volunteer, attend field trips as helpers, observe classrooms, or assist with school activities are required to complete a background check and Diocese of Lincoln Safe Environment Training before participating.

Protocol for Solving Problems or Concerns

Villa Marie School values respectful communication and partnership with families. When questions, concerns, or problems arise, parents/guardians are encouraged to address the concern directly and respectfully through the appropriate school channels.

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

Step 1: Contact the Teacher or Staff Member

If the concern involves a classroom matter, student support issue, assignment, behavior concern, communication question, or day-to-day issue, the parent/guardians first contact the teacher or appropriate staff member through appropriate school communication channels.

Parents/guardians may request a meeting, phone call, or email response to discuss the concern.

Step 2: Contact the Principal

If the concern is not resolved after speaking with the teacher or staff member, or if the concern involves a broader school issue, the parent/guardian contact the principal.

Principal: Jessica Kessler
Email: jessica-kessler@cdolinc.net
School Phone: 402-786-3625

Step 3: Contact the Chief Administrative Officer

If the concern remains unresolved after speaking with the principal, the parent/guardian may contact the Chief Administrative Officer.

Chief Administrative Officer: Msgr. John Perkinton
Phone: 402-525-6604
Email: fr.john-perkinton@cdolinc.net

Catholic Homeschool Policy: In the Diocese of Lincoln

Introduction

The 2026 Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Lincoln, One Heart in Christ, states that “education is a means to inspire virtue, service, and a thirst to know Jesus. The goal of education, whether it be through CCD, homeschooling, youth ministry, or Catholic schools, is to form lifelong missionary disciples.”

Below are possible pathways in which parish and family may collaborate for the mutual enrichment of both, and for the benefit of children on their journey to the Kingdom. These pathways have been approved by the Diocesan Education Office and have been made available to help with the conversation between family and school.

Collaboration Efforts

The Catholic elementary schools (Pk-5) of the Diocese of Lincoln invite students who are homeschooled to participate in Catholic school education by either enrolling full time or adopting a blended version of homeschool and Catholic school instruction. After a signed agreement (including the four (4) points below) with the parents/guardians, the Catholic school may enroll a student for part-time attendance.

Part-time attendance includes the following:

1. The student is enrolled in a minimum of four (4) daily classes. One of these classes must be Religion/Theology class and/or Mass. The scheduling of these classes, regarding time and teacher, will not be varied for part-time students.
2. Students are expected to wear the school uniform when in attendance.
3. Parents/Guardians must sign the school handbook – agreeing to follow the stated rules/procedures of the school.
4. Tuition: four classes will result in the family paying 50% of the designated tuition; five or more classes will result in the family paying 100% of the designated tuition.

If the part-time arrangement becomes disruptive to the school community and/or mission of the school, the student’s parents/guardians will be notified. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss necessary adjustments or possible dis-enrollment.

The Catholic elementary/middle schools (6-8) of the Diocese of Lincoln invite students who are homeschooled to participate in Catholic school education by either enrolling full time or adopting a blended version of homeschool and Catholic school instruction. After a signed agreement (including the five (5) points below) with the parents/guardians, the Catholic school may enroll a student for part-time attendance.

Part-time attendance includes the following:

1. The student is enrolled in a minimum of four (4) daily classes. One of these classes must be Religion/Theology class and/or Mass. The scheduling of these classes, regarding time and teacher, will not be varied for part-time students.
2. Students are expected to wear the school uniform when in attendance.
3. Eligibility to participate in extracurricular clubs and athletics will follow the NSAA guidelines and/or school guidelines for fulltime students.
4. Parents/Guardians must sign the school handbook – agreeing to follow the stated rules/procedures of the school.
5. Tuition: four classes will result in the family paying 50% of the designated tuition; five or more classes will result in the family paying 100% of the designated tuition.

If the part-time arrangement becomes disruptive to the school community and/or mission of the school, the student's parents/guardians will be notified. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss necessary adjustments or possible dis-enrollment.

The Catholic high schools of the Diocese of Lincoln invite students who are homeschooled to participate in Catholic school education by either enrolling full time or adopting a blended version of homeschool and Catholic school instruction. After a signed agreement (including the eight (8) points below) with the parents/guardians, the Catholic school may enroll a student for part-time attendance.

Part-time attendance includes the following:

1. The student is enrolled in a minimum of one (or more as determined by the school) class(es) per semester.
2. The number of credits earned at the Catholic high school may be applied to the homeschool program, but graduation from the Catholic school will be based on sufficient credits for graduation earned at the Catholic school.
3. The scheduling of these high school classes, regarding time and teacher, will not be varied for part-time students.
4. Eligibility in NSAA programs requires twenty (20) credits or four classes to be eligible. Most of the other extra-curricular programs require the same. Five (5) of these credits must come from a public/parochial school and the other fifteen (15) could come from homeschool instruction.
5. Academic placement of the homeschooled or other part-time student would be at the mutual agreement of the parents/guardians and school administration.
6. The student is expected to participate in spiritual exercises during the school year (retreats, prayer services, etc...).
7. Tuition is determined by the school based on the number of classes in which the student is enrolled.
8. The family and student will abide by the pertinent sections of the school's

Parent/Student Handbook

If the part-time arrangement becomes disruptive to the school community and/or mission of the school, the student's parents/guardians will be notified. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss necessary adjustments or possible dis-enrollment.

Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Villa Marie School Parent & Student Handbook for the 2026-2027 school year.

I understand that the handbook contains important information regarding Villa Marie School's mission, expectations, policies, procedures, student safety, communication, tuition, health requirements, and Catholic identity.

I understand that the handbook may be followed and may be updated or revised by administration as needed.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Administrator Signature: _____

Date: _____