Our Lady of Mercy School

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Burnaby, B.C., Canada
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Dear Parents,

Unfortunately, we have recently become aware of several situations where parents—either through phone calls, conversations, text messages or social media platforms—contacted other parents about incidents that did not directly involve them or their own children.

While we know these actions often come from a place of concern or wanting to help, reaching out about matters that are not connected to one's own child can create unintended problems. When information is shared secondhand or without full context, it can lead to misunderstandings, unnecessary worry, and sometimes even conflict between families.

This type of involvement can also make it harder for the school to address situations properly. When multiple adults step in, it can dilute accurate information, escalate emotions, and make it more challenging for staff to support the students involved.

Most importantly, discussing incidents that involve other people's children can affect those children's reputations and emotional well-being. We encourage everyone to consider how they would feel if others were talking about their child in a similar way. Our goal is always to protect every student's dignity and ensure that concerns are handled respectfully and confidentially.

Simply put, it is harmful when parents become involved in situations that don't pertain to them and their child, or share information about incidents with others, (whether they are involved or not). Staff has seen the negative impact such actions have had on OLM's class and school climate-especially as information now travels faster and more easily via virtual communication. Just as concerning, these types of actions have served to disrupt the supportive environment we are trying to build in our wider community of families.

Some of the challenges that can result include:

Reputation Concerns:
Online behaviour can sometimes reflect not just on the parent but on the family as a whole. Children can occasionally feel uncomfortable or singled out because of what others see or assume from social media activity.

The way we speak about children—whether in person or through texts and messages—can have a real impact on their reputation and how others see them. It may help to pause and think: If someone were talking about your child in the same way, would that feel okay to you?

Just as we want others to be respectful and careful with their words about our own children, we can model that same care when we talk about someone else's. A little empathy goes a long way in protecting every child's dignity and helping our school community stay supportive and respectful.

Relationship Strain:
Offering opinions or getting involved in matters that others consider private can sometimes cause misunderstandings or tension within friendships, neighbourhoods, or the school community.

Reduced Trust:
When boundaries are crossed—online or in person—others may become hesitant to share information, or collaborate, simply because they're unsure how it will be handled.

Modeling for Children:
Children learn a lot from how adults interact with others. Showing thoughtful communication, kindness, and respect online helps teach them how to navigate their own social and digital worlds.

For these reasons, we kindly ask that parents allow the school to manage incidents directly and communicate only about matters involving their own child. This helps us maintain a calm, supportive environment where issues are resolved fairly and appropriately.

Please Read and Review the following Attachments:

Appendix A: Using WhatsApp and All Social Media Platforms Positively
Appendix B: OLM's Parent Code of Conduct
Appendix C: Parent Statement of Commitment Philosophy