



Thoughts to Consider When Choosing a School for Your Child

Insight from Teachers and Parents for
Potential Students at

Mary of Nazareth Catholic School

General Questions

- **What is the school known for?**

Mary of Nazareth Catholic School is known for its faith-centered, academic instruction in which the Gospel message, worship, and social concerns are integrated into the total learning experience of students, faculty, and parents. As a result, Mary of Nazareth Catholic School educates and harmonizes the various elements of the total person: intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social.

- **What type of child succeeds at this school?**

Both Catholic and non-Catholic students are welcomed into the school community and matriculated into the classes appropriate for their academic level and needs.

- **What is the average class size?**

Average class sizes are between 14-25 students per classroom.

- **From what communities/school districts does the school draw students?**

Students from the City of Pittsburgh, East Allegheny, Elizabeth Forward, Gateway, Hempfield, McKeesport, Norwin, Steel Valley and West Mifflin School Districts are currently attending Mary of Nazareth.

- **How can parents be involved at the school?**

Parents who have clearances can be a part of the school community by becoming homeroom parents, lunchtime monitors, coaches for our sports teams and various school projects. The Parent Teacher Guild (PTG) and Recruitment and Retention Committees are also ways to help further the mission of the school through fundraising and community outreach. Information regarding the required clearances can be found on the Diocese of Pittsburgh website at: <https://diopitt.org/compliance>

Cost of a Private School Education

- **How can I afford this?**

Costs for Mary of Nazareth Catholic School are among the lowest in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, as we strive to make Catholic education affordable for all families. Tuition assistance is available through EITC and OSTC grants for those who qualify. More information can be found on the FACTS Management site at: <https://factsmgt.com/>

- **What does the tuition include?**

Tuition covers costs for classroom education, school books as well as basic materials used for classroom and art projects. Supply lists are posted on the school website by grade to highlight those items needing to be purchased by parents for use by their children during the school year.

- **On top of tuition, what expenses or additional charges can I expect during the year?**

School uniforms are required for grades Kindergarten through 8th Grade. The school offers a Resale Shop for families to purchase gently worn items to help defray the costs of the clothing.

Each family has a fundraising quota that is meant to help defray the costs of tuition. The fundraising year begins in March and runs through the following February. Quarterly, family fundraising updates will be sent home for parents to monitor their progress.

Funds are collected by the PTG at the beginning of the school year to cover homeroom parties for Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day (\$10/student). Additionally, there may be costs associated with grade specific field trips.

Academic Questions

- **How does the school meet individual academic needs?**

The academic curriculum is rigorous by design. Students are expected to perform at their highest level in all subjects. Those students who excel are advanced and those students who struggle will receive remediation.

- **How does the schools' daily schedule support learning?**

There are nine class periods in a day, eight of those are graded subject classes with lunch being the only non-graded class. Time on task during classes is essential to keeping a rigorous curriculum.

- **What happens after school?**

There are extra-curricular activities throughout the school year for students, such as basketball, soccer, cross country, volleyball, academic competitions, Drama Club, and Girl Scouts where students gather after school to participate.

- **How will I know how my child is doing in school?**

Communication between teachers and parents is actively encouraged throughout the school year to ensure the students' needs are being met and that all academic requirements are achieved. All assignments and grades are posted daily onto the Option C website that is managed by the Diocese and used by both teachers and parents as an interactive way to manage student progress.

- **Will my child be subject to state-mandated, high stakes testing?**

Because our school does not receive state funding determined by test scores, our students are not subjected to high-stakes testing. Our students take a standardized test that is used in part to determine teacher effectiveness, student ability, and general knowledge. The standardized test is not taught in advance.

- **When does foreign language instruction begin at the school?**

Spanish is introduced at the pre-school level and continues through Grade 8.

Faith and Formation Questions

- **What classes are students required to take for faith-based education?**

Children participate in regular religion classes during the school week that focus on age-appropriate lessons of the Catholic faith. Students in grades 2 and 8 prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist (grade 2) and Confirmation (grade 8.) Non Catholic students participate in religion classes and learn the material as they would any other subject.

- **What if my child is not Catholic, how are their religious needs supported?**

Depending on the grade, other religious studies may be introduced to the students; however, this is a Catholic faith based school. We accept all students without regard to religious beliefs.

- **If we are not Catholic, but decide that our family may wish to become members of the faith, can you support us?**

Mary of Nazareth Catholic School can work with families and children to engage a local parish who will introduce them to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) for the parents/guardians; this begins the process of converting to the Catholic faith. Children will be supported through their regular religion classes in order to receive the education and understanding needed to receive the Initiation Sacraments. Middle level children may be asked to participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIC).

- **What activities do the children participate in to grow their faith?**

In addition to weekly Mass and participation in Mass Choir or Mass Band, children participate in prayer services, reconciliation services, morning, lunch, and end of day prayers led by students, making cards for the sick, shut-ins, and homebound are among the ways we live out our faith. Other recent activities include, Adopt-a-Family for the Christmas holiday, service projects for local non-profit organizations through fund raising or active involvement in a school-sponsored event.

Athletic Questions

- **Are athletics required at the school?**

All students must participate in a weekly gym class. There are no other requirements for students to participate in any other school sport.

- **In which grades do team sports begin at the school?**

By diocesan design, soccer can begin in grade 1. All other sports begin in grade 3. Grades 3 and 4 are considered Instructional Teams, grades 5 and 6 are considered to be Junior Varsity Teams and grades 7 and 8 are considered to be Varsity Teams.

- **What league does the school participate in and do teams have success?**

On the Elementary level, schools participate in the Diocese of Pittsburgh Elementary League. Success can be determined in many ways, it's not just winning and losing.

Arts Questions

- **Are arts required at the school?**

All students are enrolled in a weekly art class. Also, all students are required to participate in the Christmas and Spring Band and Choral Concerts . There are no other requirements for students to participate in any other school arts-related program.

- **Who can participate in the arts program?**

Mass Choir is open to all students grade 3 and above. Students practice to prepare for the weekly Liturgy celebrated during Friday Mass. There is also a Concert Choir for grades 6 through 8 for celebrations both within the Liturgy of the Mass and for Community events. Beginning in grade 4, students may elect to participate in an adjunct instrumental music class to learn (or perfect their skills) playing a musical instrument. Instrumental music lessons are private paid lessons.

- **In which grades do the performing arts begin at the school?**

Students in grades 3 and above are eligible to audition for a role in the School Musical.

Support Questions

- **What resources does the school have to support children?**

We are fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Among other things, this confirms that we are considerate of the ages, cultures, and varying levels of ability of students when setting levels of expected student learning and performance and ensures students are prepared for a successful transition to the next educational level. To further our mission, the school uses resources from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Diocesan and Faculty support along with other agencies. Having these resources to support all of our students ensures our students' success in their academic and spiritual growth.

- **What learning differences can the school support?**

We are one of the fortunate schools to have the St. Anthony School Program housed within our walls. The St. Anthony Program educates students on the Autism Spectrum, students who have Downs Syndrome, and/or students with Intellectual Disabilities in an inclusive program which focuses on the children's specific learning needs.

Visit Mary of Nazareth Catholic School

The best way for you to explore our school and most importantly, our people, is to schedule a tour. Please contact the school office to schedule a time to meet with us!

Call us at 412-672-2360 or email:
maryofnazarethcs@gmail.com