



## School Charter

Wayside is an apostolic educational movement in the Roman Catholic diocese of Peterborough. Through the operation of an independent elementary and secondary school, wayside collaborates with families in the formation of children by providing a classical approach to the liberal arts.

### 1 Overview

#### 1.1 The Purpose of the Charter

This Charter describes Wayside, why it exists, the roles of its members and how it functions. The Charter gives the Board, its committees, staff and the entire community an explicit means to ensure the endurance of Wayside's core commitments and to evaluate new ideas. The Charter enables patrons, staff, volunteers and families to understand fully and to embrace the philosophy and culture of Wayside.

#### 1.2 Sources of Authority

##### *The Diocese of Peterborough*

As an apostolic movement, Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic School (OLWCS) operates with the permission and support of the Bishop of Peterborough.

##### *Domestic Church: Families*

The gift of parenthood, with its attendant grace, authority and responsibility, is from our Sovereign Lord. Wayside acknowledges that parents are the primary educators of their children and supports the vocation of parenthood.

##### *Secular*

OLWCS is incorporated as a school and a charitable organization under various legislative instruments and is governed by a volunteer board.



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## 1.3 History

In 1994, six families met in the basement of Our Lady of the Assumption Church in the hamlet of Assumption, Ontario to form a home school cooperative. In 1995, this apostolic initiative spurred the founding of a school with permission from the local Bishop. The school incorporated as Wayside Academy Inc. and obtained charitable status.

By 2001, Wayside had a full-time principal and adopted the classical, liberal arts model of education. In 2006, OLVCS purchased a building and property north of Peterborough, Ontario. It subsequently committed to the hiring of full-time staff for high school, developed a kindergarten program, and now provides a superior offering from kindergarten to grade twelve. In 2019, OLVCS's high school became part of the Chesterton Schools Network to become Chesterton Academy of Our Lady of the Wayside.

Within this historical framework the various school and community roles developed. Some of the ways in which these roles complement each other are particular to Wayside and its unique history.

## 2 A Distinctive Approach

### 2.1 Introduction

The heart of the school is that it is authentically Catholic. It exists to tend souls and resists the tendency to become solely an academic institution. The life of the school has three fundamental aspects:

- the spiritual, the communal and the academic.

Without the spiritual, there is no fullness of life. Without the communal, prayer and study become narrow and selfish. Without academics, spiritual and communal life are left rudderless. The three sustain each other in a delicate and vital balance. By consciously developing each dimension, Wayside achieves its purpose.

Wayside strives to strengthen the coherence of children's experience in three key settings: their home, their school and their parish.



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## 2.2 Spiritual

OLWCS operates under the patronage of Our Lady of the Wayside. It nourishes the child's spirituality by focusing first upon the knowledge of God which leads to the love of God. It is not possible to come close to God without self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness. For this reason, disciplined practice of the virtues — faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude — is essential to the child's spiritual life.

At the center of the school is the Chapel where the most Holy Eucharist is reserved. In this environment, the child learns about God and His love for us from catechism, class discussion, the example of others who imitate Jesus, private and communal prayer, the sacraments, Sacred Scripture, and especially adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Prayer punctuates the rhythm of school life, teaching each child that his loving Creator is always present and that all good activities can be pathways to Him.

## 2.3 Communal

The practice of virtue creates true community. To have faith is to see Christ in every person. To have hope is to desire the salvation of all. To love is to serve others. Therefore, Wayside's community must constantly practice the virtues. All relationships must be viewed in the light of faith, hope, and love.

The family is the first school of virtue. Because Wayside is small, it preserves a familial character. An intentional part of the fabric and life of Wayside is that students of all ages interact with one another, and that teachers and staff eagerly join in play and other activities outside the classroom. The staff and older students serve as role models to the younger students, and the needs of the younger students promote charity and a cheerful character in the older ones.

Every community has two facets: the life or culture that exists within the community and its relationship with society at large. Wayside seeks not only to foster a 'culture of life' among its own families, but also actively build that culture in the greater community. Students learn about the social teachings of the Church in the classroom, and then are encouraged to live them individually, within their families, parishes and in society. The active service of Wayside families in the community instills in student's attentiveness to the needs of others, a zeal for evangelization, and an appreciation for and willingness to cooperate with people, businesses and other organizations in the community.

It is important to note that it is precisely because Wayside is a Catholic apostolate, it is open to all who share in its mission.



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## 2.4 Academic

The academic goal is to enable the student to look at problems logically, express himself persuasively, and act as Christ would. This is achieved by a classical approach to the liberal arts known as the Trivium.

Wayside's adaption of the liberal arts means that in elementary school, students learn language skills, mathematics, natural sciences, catechism, Latin, history and geography, music and art. In high school they continue music, mathematics, Latin and art, move on to the specialized sciences (biology, physics and chemistry), and study the humanities - a rich blend of literature, history and geography, logic, philosophy, and theology.

The Trivium is based on the tried and true stages of learning: grammar, logic, and rhetoric. At the primary, middle and secondary levels, mastering fundamentals (grammar), thinking clearly (logic) and communicating well (rhetoric) permeates every educational endeavour regardless of the discipline or subject.

This provides the child the 'tools of learning', equipping him for success in any field, whether it is family life, work dealing with society and individuals, business, or arts and the humanities.

- Integrated learning means that subjects are not studied in isolation, avoiding premature specialization in order to unveil the full meaning of things learned.
- Spiral learning in the curriculum means what is learned at one stage is re-visited and deepened at another.
- Personal learning puts the student in touch with the talented, expert, learned and artistic in the community.
- Finally, Poetic learning takes place when we cultivate the child's friendship with reality, instead of relying entirely on the virtual and technological to feed him information about what is.

## 2.5 Physical Atmosphere

As Charlotte Mason contends, "atmosphere is one third of education." Wayside therefore aims to create a welcoming physical environment reflecting God's Beauty and His Light – consistent in its use of natural colours and materials, ordered, clean and balanced.



## **3 Organization**

### **3.1 Overview**

Each party within the Wayside community plays a vital role and if any relinquishes their role, or plays it without sufficient commitment and direction, the whole community suffers. Wayside's survival is guaranteed only by the persistent work and heroic efforts of its parents, volunteers, administrators, board members, teachers, staff, patrons and students.

Wayside supports the family vocation through, for example, a sliding scale of tuition fees, a four-day week, and a convenient schedule for families with children in several grade levels. Surviving and thriving is tied closely to volunteerism and an "apostolic financial formula" characterized by sacrifice, frugality, humility and charity.

### **3.2 Board of Directors**

A volunteer Board of Directors governs the school according to its vision, mission and by-laws. The Board is the final authority for the school and acts as one body. It focuses on the strategic and long-term goals of the school. The Board has one employee, the Headmaster.

### **3.3 Headmaster**

The Headmaster is in charge of the operational management of the school, reporting to the Board of Directors. He/she oversees the day-to-day running of the school and ensures the consistency of the curriculum and academic programs.

### **3.4 Administrator**

The Administrator reports directly and provides administrative support to the Headmaster. Duties performed are designed to relieve the Headmaster of office and routine responsibilities by planning, organizing, and participating in the school office administrative operation.

### **3.5 Staff**

Staff and teachers play a crucial role in the education of the children entrusted to their care. Since parents are the primary educators of their children, an open and trusting relationship between staff and parents is of vital importance.

Teachers continually train themselves in Wayside's educational approach, recognizing that their own education is never complete.



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### **3.6 Parents**

As primary educators, parents are responsible for the Christian formation of their children. This is a sacred duty and privilege which none can remove. Parents entrust staff and teachers with their children. Staff communicate regularly with parents regarding their child's education.

Parental support is of vital importance to the school as parents play a number of roles including volunteering, helping with events, serving on committees, etc.

### **3.7 Students**

Wayside students participate joyfully in the spiritual and communal life of the school. They assume ownership for their learning and practice the virtues.

Characteristics that mark a successful Wayside student are leadership skills, good communication and an attitude and habit of humble service.

### **3.7 Volunteers**

The spirit of volunteerism is the lifeblood of Wayside. Wayside needs, solicits and gratefully accepts the contributions of its families and the greater community. Volunteer activities operate within the established organizational structure of Wayside.