

Grace Christian Academy Lower School Guidelines

Mission Statement:

The mission of Grace Christian Academy is to assist Christian families in the teaching of their children by providing them an experiential education that is distinctively Christian, biblically saturated, Christ glorifying, academically excellent and service and mission oriented. We exist to help parents cultivate the legacy of Christ's hope in each student and to prepare them to spread that hope along every avenue God provides.

Distinctives:

Grace Christian Academy is committed to.....

- Using the Word of God as the roadmap for everyday decisions. (I Timothy 3:16-17)
- Practicing Stewardship in all areas of school life. (Colossians 3:17)
- Serving others not only in our community but also throughout the country and world. (Mark 10:45)
- Striving to be Christ-centered in every situation by displaying the fruit of the spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Partnering with Christian families by providing an educational environment that is consistent with the standards of their church and home. (Deuteronomy 4:9)
- Providing an excellent education that meets all local, state and national standards. (I Peter 2:17)
- Employing excellent faculty and staff that are committed to serving the Lord by providing an excellent educational experience. (Luke 6:40)

ADMISSION POLICY

In admitting students GCA is non-discriminatory on the basis of race, national origin and gender.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A pocket folder is sent home with papers to be signed and returned to the school each week. Lower school teachers may also send information relative to classroom news, activities, homework, or schedules. Please check the GCA website, www.gcalions.com, for current activities, calendars, and updated information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF CLOSING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement winter weather (snow or ice) and/or dangerous traveling conditions, GCA will make announcements as to school closing through local television's Channel 4 Snowbird reports, Facebook, emails, and the website. Parents are advised to listen to broadcasts early in the morning and to listen during the school day if a storm develops.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Student absences from school for all or part of a day fall into two categories excused and unexcused. Generally, most unavoidable absences will be excused. An unavoidable absence is one due to a personal illness, a serious illness in the family, a death in the family, a school sponsored trip, a medical appointment, a court appearance, or an absence due to providential hindrance. Absences for any other reason are avoidable. An avoidable absence can be either excused or unexcused. An avoidable absence will be excused when it meets all of the following criteria:

- The trip is for a family or church-related activity.
- A written parental request is received in the school office **at least one** full school day prior to the absence. GCA **strongly** encourages parents to submit requests as soon as the absence is planned.
- At the time the request is received, the student has **six or fewer** absences (avoidable or unavoidable).
- The absence is not to be during standardized testing.
- The total year-to-date absences plus the planned absences are not to exceed **twelve** when requesting a trip absence.

An avoidable absence that **does not meet all** of the above criteria will be unexcused. All in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions and trancies are unexcused absences. Whether an absence is excused or unexcused, the student is expected to make up missed work in a timely manner. Work not made up in a timely manner may receive a reduced score or a zero. However, tests missed during truancy will be recorded as a zero. For each unexcused absence from a subject, one (1) point will be deducted from the nine-week academic grade. For each in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension or truancy, two (2) points will be deducted. The maximum points deducted for any one incident will not exceed ten (10). Though we understand and appreciate the value of family vacations and mission trips, we strongly recommend that such trip not be taken during school. Research indicates that if a student misses 7 days a year, his academic work suffers. There is also an impact on the community of learners as well as the teacher. However, if extenuating circumstances do not allow you to plan such trips when school is not in session, you should receive prior written administrative approval as early as possible. The above policy should be considered before making such plans.

Too many absences will require a parent conference. Ten absences are the maximum allowable for handwritten excuse notes. After 10 absences, each time your child is absent will require a medical excuse note. If a student exceeds ten absences, a parent conference is required to discuss strategies to eliminate further problems. Exceptions may be granted by the Headmaster when documentation is provided for prolonged or chronic illnesses or extenuating circumstances.

2. Procedure for early dismissal (for appointments, etc.)

A. Parent sends a note stating the reason for early dismissal and the date and time the student is to be dismissed. If possible, this note is to be sent to the teacher at least 24 hours prior to the appointment.

B. At the early dismissal time, the parent goes to the office to sign the student out. Students are then called to come to the office.

3. Policy regarding dismissal of sick student

A. Parent or emergency friend is contacted by the branch office.

B. Parent signs the student out in the office.

4. Policy regarding tardiness

A. Students should be seated in the classroom and ready to begin work at the assigned time for class to start.

B. Students who are tardy must report to the office with their parent and be signed in. A handwritten excuse note is required for all excusable tardies. If a handwritten note is not received, then the tardy remains unexcused.

BRINGING AND PICKING UP CHILDREN

The school cannot assume responsibility for students who arrive prior to 7:30 a.m. or later than 3:00 p.m. Parents' cooperation is necessary in this matter for the safety of the students and for the care of the school facilities. Your child will be admitted into After School Care if you do not pick them up in the car rider line by 3:00 p.m. The fee is \$6.00 and you will be invoiced on a monthly basis. The [After School Care registration form](#) is mandatory and is located [HERE](#).

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying may be verbal, physical, or psychological. Any action which makes a child feel uncomfortable, insecure, or threatened, may be defined as bullying. The school disapproves of bullying in all its forms and considers it a most serious offense. Students know that bullying is completely unacceptable and that they must inform the teacher if it happens to them. All members of the school staff are required to report incidents of suspected bullying to the teacher and principal.

CONSEQUENCES

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the teacher.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded.
- Parents will be informed.
- Appropriate consequences will be given to those involved.

CAMPUS VISITORS

Any visitor to the campus is to report directly to the school office. Lower school students may not invite friends or family to spend the day at school. All visitors, including parents, must check in through the office before entering other parts of the building. All visitors are required to wear a visitor's badge. Please sign in and out in the office.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, ETC.

When a student's address or telephone number changes, it is imperative that the change is reported to the Office as soon as possible. E-mail us at information@gcalions.com or by using our [contact](#) information.

CLASSROOM COURTESIES

1. Upon entering the classroom students should take their seats promptly and quietly.
2. Speaking out or expressing disapproval when another has the floor is both rude and unfair. There is never an excuse for disrespect.
3. Students should bring proper materials and supplies to class: books, notebook, homework, paper, pen, pencil, etc.
4. Class will be dismissed by teacher. Students should not be discourteous by getting up before they are dismissed.
5. Students should knock before entering a class that is in session. Wait to be recognized before making a request.
6. Windows, lights, heat, air conditioning, and shades are to be adjusted by the teacher, not by the

students.

7. Christian conduct is expected of all GCA students.

CONCERN FOR PROPERTY

God has provided our school property, facilities and equipment. Students should consider our school a blessing from Him and should do all in their power to keep the buildings in good order and attractive. Any student known to deface or destroy school property will be assessed the full cost of repair or replacement and will be subject to disciplinary action.

CONDUCT POLICIES

Since our school bears the name of Christ, a high standard of conduct is expected of staff and students alike. Our conduct should be consistent with our basic concept of life, and since we profess to love God above all and our neighbor as ourselves, we should reflect that love in all of our actions, as well as in our attitudes toward each other. Conduct grades will be marked as S, N, or U.

CONFERENCES

Conference Days will be scheduled during the fall and spring of each school year. Teachers hold conferences with parents on this day, and students do not attend classes. Parents may request and schedule a conference with a teacher any time during the school year by calling the office. Unscheduled 'drop-in' conferences are discouraged. Teachers may also contact parents for additional conferences if warranted.

DEVOTIONS AND CHAPEL

All students begin each school day with devotions in their classrooms. This may include the reading of Scripture, prayer, and the singing of a hymn or contemporary Christian song. Once a week students in grades K through 5 worship together in a chapel service. Parents are invited to attend the weekly services. Students are encouraged to make these worship times meaningful and relevant spiritual experiences. "So that with one heart and mouth you may glorify God." (Romans 15:6)

DISCIPLINE

The ultimate to be desired in discipline is self-discipline that is centered in a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of one's entire life. Obviously, not all students have reached this level of discipline in their lives and need certain reminders to guide them at times. Positive reinforcement is used as an encouragement for following instructions, good conduct, and kindness to others. Discipline includes many factors: penalties, a search for the reason for misbehavior, remedial actions to remove the cause for misbehavior, and repentance on the part of the student. Punishment is not meant to be enjoyable, but it should be consistent and fair. Attempts will be made to have the penalty 'fit the offense'. It is expected that parents will support the proper use of discipline within the school. A discipline sheet will be sent home when parental help with and/or notification of a problem is needed. The teacher will share with the parents any unusual circumstances when parental knowledge or help is desirable. Penalties may include detention hall, time out, or a written assignment. The first step in the handling of a discipline problem usually involves the student and the teacher. It is hoped that any discipline problem will be resolved at this level. If it becomes necessary, the parents and/or Principal may become involved.

DRESS CODE

The parents' and students' cooperation in the matter of dress for all students and hair length for boys is an important factor in the overall training in Christian conduct at GCA. GCA needs the wholehearted

support of every parent and student in order to do an adequate job spiritually, academically, and socially. Current information about uniforms and dress code may be obtained in the office. Please label all garments and belongings.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Periodic fire drills, tornado, and earthquake drills will be conducted. Teachers and students are instructed as to proper procedures. Your child's safety is important to us. Security measures are in place to protect your child.

GRADING PROCEDURES

The school year at GCA consists of two semesters made up of four nine week quarters. Grades are issued by report cards at the end of each grading period. The following scale will be carried out for graded subjects from first grade through fifth grade:

A 90-100

B 80-89

C 70-79

D 65-69

Progress in the ungraded subjects in the Lower School will be marked:

E- Excellent G- Good S- Satisfactory N- Needs Improvement U- Unsatisfactory

GUIDELINES FOR CLASS PARTIES AND FIELD TRIPS

Parents and adult sponsors involved in the planning of and the participation in recreational, social, and educational activities should properly chaperone the students at all times and assume the responsibility of seeing that the students conduct themselves as Christians. A permission slip must be completed and signed by parents prior to each outing.

GUIDELINES FOR INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The guidelines for interpersonal relationships followed by the GCA family (teachers, students, staff and parents) are set forth by our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:15-17.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are given to reinforce skills taught. Homework should be completed neatly and returned on time. Failure to do so may result in lower grades or detention. Lower school students are not assigned homework on Wednesdays, except for math, so that families may attend church worship services. Nightly reading is expected at all grade levels in addition to assigned homework. Written assignments should be completed neatly and returned on time.

MAKE-UP/MISSED WORK

1. If a student misses one day of school due to illness, he can 'catch up' upon his return to school. He is responsible for his make-up work.
2. If a student misses two or more days due to illness, a parent or other designated person may come for the work after 2:45 PM on the second day of absence.

MEDICATION

Should your child need to take medication during school hours, please stop by the office and complete a medical information form. The medicine should be sent to the office in the original prescription bottle.

Students are not allowed to keep medicine in the classroom. No general medication (Tylenol, etc.) is given.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES FOR LOWER SCHOOL

1. Halls and restrooms are no talking areas. Running is not allowed in the building.
2. Chewing gum is not permitted in school or on field trips.
3. No tobacco products may be brought to or used at school.
4. Knives, weapons of any sort, and books, magazines, records or tapes that are deemed inappropriate are not to be brought to school.

POLICY LIMITS

Our discipline guidelines apply to students while they are on campus, on GCA operated school vehicles or at recognized school functions. While behavior at other times or places is an individual and parental responsibility (and not the school's), behavior that reflects negatively on the school cannot be ignored. Therefore, behavioral offenses which occur outside the limits established in the discipline policy will be considered as to the severity and the impact on the school's reputation.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Students may be suspended from GCA by the Principal of the Lower School for activities that warrant such action. The length of the suspension will depend on the individual circumstances after a conference with parents.

TELEPHONE

1. Students will not be called to the telephone at school except in case of an emergency.
2. Parents are requested not to call in a message for a student unless it is urgent.
3. Students may not use the office telephone for personal calls.