

Grace Christian Academy Handbook

2020 - 2021 School Year



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1. Introduction

This Handbook contains policies and procedures governing the operation of Grace Christian Academy (GCA) and associated fees, tuition, and requirements. Since no booklet of this length can cover all the complexities of a total school program, we welcome your questions.

We also invite you to become informed about Grace Christian Academy by visiting the school or the school's website at www.GraceChristianAcademy.org. We are enthusiastic about sharing the school's goals and programs with you. We feel our school is more effective if concerned people – especially parents of scholars – are informed about their school. Parents are encouraged to offer suggestions to the faculty or, if appropriate, directly to the Board of Christian Education.

These policies, procedures, and benefits as described in the Grace Christian Academy Handbook do not constitute a contract or implied contract with scholars or personnel. Grace Christian Academy Administration and/or the Board of Christian Education reserve the right to interpret, revise, amend or withdraw them at its discretion.

2. About Grace Christian Academy

2.1. Mission and Accreditation

Grace Christian Academy exists to nurture its scholars and reach out to our community with a Bible-based Christian education. We provide each child with a superior education while developing the best skills for each individual to live a productive life.

Grace Christian Academy is accredited by WELSSA (Wisconsin Evangelical Synod School Accreditation), ACTS (Association of Christian Teachers and Schools), and NCPSA (National Council for Private School Accreditation), and is recognized as a fully accredited private school in the Commonwealth of Virginia by the VCPE (Virginia Council for Private Education) as authorized by the Virginia Board of Education.

2.2. Vision

Our vision is to be the vanguard of Christian kindergarten through grade 8 (K4-8) education in Northern Virginia.

2.2.1. Objectives

- Educate and train the next generation of Christian leaders by preaching the Gospel and providing academic instruction that meets or exceeds that offered by comparable local schools
 - Develop and monitor metrics and tools that allow us to assess student performance at Grace relative to peer schools
 - Maintain accreditation as a Christian school
 - Retain high-quality faculty that pursue continuing education and monitor best practices in K4-8 education
- Offer students individualized instruction and attention, personalizing their education such that each scholar is empowered to nurture his or her God-given talents
- Provide and vigilantly maintain a safe and nurturing environment in up-to-date facilities
- Promote Grace Christian Academy within both the school's church home and the broader community
- Strive for full enrollment (99 students) annually

- Maintain the financial health of Grace Christian Academy through appropriate attention to tuition rates, financial aid, and fundraising while also responsibly managing expenditures

2.2.2. Educational Goals

It is our primary goal to provide the children with a Christian education that will prepare them for their life in heaven while preparing them in all the secular subjects needed to become productive Christian citizens in this world. Grace Christian Academy assists parents in carrying out God's command to bring up their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord" (*NIV*, Ephesians. 6:4).

To help us attain this goal, we have established the following objectives for the educational program at Grace Christian Academy:

1. Teach the children the Word of God
2. Teach the children the Lutheran doctrine
3. Integrate the Word of God into all subjects
4. Teach the children how to allow God's Word to permeate their lives in such a way that it is evident in their everyday Christian living
5. Teach the children that the most important aspect of their life is their relationship with God
6. Teach the children practical ways to show their faith; for example: evangelism, prayer, and worship
7. Teach the children that the only way to strengthen their faith is through the use of God's Word; for example: daily Bible Study; personal, family, and school devotions; Sunday School; and church attendance
8. Extend and support the Christian values begun in the home
9. Teach all subjects appropriate to a program of education for kindergarten through grade 8 (K4-8)
10. Maintain an accredited standard level of academic instruction

2.2.3. Philosophy

We believe that Christian education promotes the welfare of the entire person. Through education in secular subjects, formal religious training, and the influence of Christian teachers our scholars will be prepared for daily living in the world. As an aspect of Christian education, the particular strength of Grace Christian Academy is that it provides daily strengthening of the Christian values that have already started in the Christian home. Grace Christian Academy helps to train a child to be a lifetime follower of Jesus Christ. Throughout the day, the Word of God is applied as the basis and guide for all learning and living. It is the aim of our school to take all of a child's needs into account - body, soul, and mind. The objectives of our school may be summed up with these words: "To know Christ, here in time and hereafter in eternity." As St. Paul wrote to Timothy: "[From] infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (*NIV*, 2 Timothy 3:15).

2.2.4. Affiliation

Grace Christian Academy is operated as the Christian school of Grace Lutheran Church and Iglesia Luterana Gracia y Paz, Falls Church, Virginia. Its operations are directly under the supervision and direction of the Board of Christian Education of the Grace Lutheran Church congregation.

Grace Christian Academy is one of 294 elementary schools within the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). These schools have a total enrollment of approximately 24,300 children.

2.2.5. Faculty and Staff

Grace Christian Academy has five (5) full-time teachers. All graduated from either Martin Luther College or Wisconsin Lutheran College, both accredited four-year colleges. All of our teachers have a degree in education and are certified or working toward certification by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Teachers are required to obtain a Virginia Teaching License and are encouraged to obtain a Master's Degree in Education.

Grace Christian Academy teachers are assisted by full-time and part-time teacher aides.

2.2.6. Scriptural Foundation

Grace Christian Academy is founded on these eternal truths as revealed in the Bible:

1. There is only one true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. God created all things perfect and created mankind as the crown of that creation.
3. Mankind's fall into sin has corrupted the entire human race, making all people subject to damnation.
4. God through His grace, love, and mercy sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, to save all people from damnation. He did this through his perfect life and his death on the cross.
5. The Holy Spirit is responsible for bringing hearers of the Word of God to faith in Jesus as their personal Savior.
6. As a believer in Jesus as one's Savior, a Christian will strive to show his/her love to God by using his/her gifts and talents to help spread the Word of God and be of service to others.

2.3. Curriculum

Grace Christian Academy curriculum includes Bible Study, Catechism instruction, memory work, mathematics, reading, science, language, spelling, writing, penmanship, music, art, phonics, social studies, physical education, and information technology.

Grace Christian Academy faculty help children to see all of their life in relation to God, the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, and his Kingdom -- here and now and in eternity. Secular subjects are taught in light of God's word, which is our guide for all of daily living, in and out of the classroom.

2.4. Relation to Public Education

Grace Christian Academy provides positive Christian instruction and training, which the public schools are not expected to and cannot legally provide to their students. Grace Christian Academy attempts to align its curriculum with the public schools at each grade level to allow for easy transfer to or from public schools.

3. Admission Policy

3.1. Nondiscrimination Policy

Grace Christian Academy admits scholars of any race, color, disability, or national / ethnic origin, accords them all the rights and privileges, and provides access to programs and activities generally available to scholars of the school. Grace Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national / ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered programs.

Furthermore, GCA does not discriminate on the basis of religion, and will admit scholars of any religion. However, being a Christian school means that we will teach and practice the Christian faith, as understood by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

3.2. Entrance Requirements

1. Children must be four (4) years old on or before September 30th of the current school year to be eligible for kindergarten
2. When you enroll your child in Grace Christian Academy, you agree that:
 - a. You will meet with the school administrator and attend the Parent Information Meeting which introduces you to Grace Christian Academy, its focus on the family, and its religious curriculum
 - b. You and your child will adhere to the Grace Christian Academy Covenant
 - c. Your child will be instructed in the teachings of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
 - d. Your child will attend Bible Study and Catechism classes which are part of the curriculum and will participate in devotions and prayers
 - e. Your child will participate in school activities, church services, and programs throughout the school year
 - f. Your child will be given placement tests by a member of the staff to determine his / her best grade level for each subject (e.g., math, reading, and so on)

3.3. Scholars with Exceptional Needs

Grace Christian Academy recognizes that not all scholars learn the same way. Some are exceptionally gifted: therefore, the teachers offer alternate methods of determining if the scholar has mastered the content. Grace Christian Academy also provides scholars with the opportunity to explore other advanced areas of interest.

Some scholars also have exceptional challenges, and the school has begun to build up alternative resources to help the scholars learn. Grace Christian Academy will also make the necessary accommodations to meet the needs of the scholars. If you feel your child has a need beyond that which can be met in the classroom setting, please speak with your child's teacher and the school administrator. When applicable, Grace Christian Academy works with your neighborhood public school to begin the process or continue the implementation of a scholar's IEP (Individual Education Plan). Speak with the school administrator if you have questions about either process.

3.4. Enrollment Procedures

In order to complete the enrollment process and secure your seat for the new school year, the requirements below must be met. Once all requirements are fully met, your enrollment is complete.

- Present proof of age and up to date immunization records to the school
- If the scholar is transferring to Grace Christian Academy from another school:
 - Present the child's last report card from the previous school attended
 - Fill out a request for transfer of scholar records from the previous school attended to Grace Christian Academy
- Copies of any court issued custody agreements must be submitted
- Online enrollment through TADS to begin the process: <http://mytads.com/a/graceva>
- \$100.00/per new child registration fee with the completed online enrollment application
- **July 31** - 10% of the agreed upon school year tuition must be paid to Grace Christian Academy (by check or cash to Miss Penny in the front office). This 10% deposit will be credited to your final tuition payment and is nonrefundable
- **By first day of new school year** – A tuition agreement/ payment plan must be completed. Agreement required for all families (as outlined in the GCA Handbook):
 - Set up is online – you will be notified by TADS via email and will be given a secure password to get started
 - TADS will provide the payment options available for selection
 - Select the payment installment plan for your family to create the agreement for the school year

If special circumstances arise which prevent an item from being completed at the proper time, the school administrator must give consent for the scholar to attend classes.

3.5. Court issued Custody Agreements

A copy of the documentation from any court issued custody agreements must be submitted during the enrollment / re-enrollment process. Grace Christian Academy will follow the parameters outlined in this document as it pertains to parent communication, scholar pick up, and any other additional school related items.

3.6. School Finances and Annual Tuition and Fees

The current approximate yearly cost for Grace Christian Academy to educate a scholar at our school exceeds \$10,000. Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church significantly subsidizes the cost of education at Grace Christian Academy. To cover some of the school's educational expenses, the Voters' Assembly of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church establishes the amount of tuition and fees to be collected annually. The Board of Christian Education publishes these amounts well in advance of a new school year.

All tuition and school fees from the previous school year must be paid in full, before the start of the new school year, in order for your child to attend.

3.6.1. Tuition and Fee Collection

Grace Christian Academy requires 10% of the agreed upon tuition to be paid directly to the school by July 31. This 10% deposit will be credited to your final tuition payment and is non-refundable.

Grace Christian Academy will use TADS (Tuition Aid Data Services), a tuition management company, to collect the balance amount for tuition and fees. TADS will offer three options and set up must be completed no later than one (1) week prior to the start of the school year:

- Payment in full
- Payment in two installments due in September and January*
- Payment in nine installments due each month, from September – May*

* A One Time TADS processing fee of \$45.00 will be added to the nine installment and two installment payment plans.

NOTE: All families are required to have an account using TADS because TADS will also collect and manage any other fees incurred throughout the school year such as After Care services.

Families entering Grace after the school year has already started must enroll with TADS within one (1) week of the scholar's first day of attendance.

3.6.2. Grace Christian Academy Financial Payment Policy

Thank you for meeting your financial commitment to your child's (children's) Christian education at Grace Christian Academy (GCA). In the event that a tuition or Aftercare fee payment is not received on time according to your family's tuition and Aftercare agreements, the following steps will be followed:

- If TADS is not in possession of your tuition payment by 12:00 midnight of day 5 of your agreed upon due date, a late fee of \$35 will be applied to your account.
- If you are 30 days late on payment of your child's (children's) tuition, your child (children) will not be able to attend GCA (or Aftercare) until you are current on your child's (children's) tuition payment.
- If you are 30 days late on payment of your child's (children's) Aftercare fees, your child (children) will not be able to attend Aftercare until you are current on your child's (children's) Aftercare payment.
- If you are 45 days late on payment of your child's (children's) Aftercare fees, your child (children) will not be able to attend GCA until you are current on your child's (children's) Aftercare payment.
- Financial obligations incurred by students during the academic year (for example, extracurricular participation, field trips, textbooks, etc.) may be added to the tuition agreement.
- You are responsible for paying all late and non-sufficient funds fees.
- Academic or school records will not be released until all tuition and fees are paid.

Tuition, Aftercare, and other fees must be fully paid by 30 days after the last day of the school year. If those fees are not paid by that date, a child (children) will not be allowed to start the next academic year at GCA until all fees are paid.

PLEASE NOTE: All payments must be sent directly to TADS by logging into your TADS account, or over the phone by calling 800-477-8237. You can make a payment using a bank account (routing and account number) or a credit card (MasterCard, Discover, or American Express). Grace Christian Academy will not accept payments “in house.”

A TADS parent helpline is available from 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

3.6.3. Books Issued / Provided by Grace Christian Academy

Each 3rd - 8th grade scholar will be issued a Bible (New International Version), catechism-7th/8th grade only (Luther’s Catechism), and hymnal (Christian Worship hymnal) to use in religion class. If these books are lost, misplaced, or damaged, replacements must be purchased from Grace Christian Academy.

Scholars will be expected to pay for the loss of or excessive damage to all textbooks, leisure reading books, and other school property.

3.6.4. School Supplies

A specific list of school supplies needed for each grade is provided by the teacher before the start of each school year and is posted on the Grace Christian Academy website:

(www.GraceChristianAcademy.org).

3.6.5. Report Card Held Until Tuition and/or Fees Paid In Full

The final report card will be withheld until all school-related fees and fines are paid in full.

Exceptions must be approved by the Board of Christian Education.

3.7. Financial Hardship

The Board of Christian Education will consider a payment plan or scholarship grant on a case-by-case basis when financial hardships are brought to the attention of the Board of Christian Education.

If you will be seeking financial assistance from Grace Christian Academy in order to pay for your child’s tuition, you will need to follow the procedures through TADS, as outlined below:

1. Go to **mytads.com** and click on the “Financial Aid” section to begin the application process. You will need to provide TADS with the required documentation (your most recent federal taxes, W-2’s, and recent pay stubs from all jobs that you currently hold). *Note: you will be responsible for the TADS application fee.*
2. Please come to the office at school where you will be given a Financial Aid Assessment Form to complete. This additional form does not go to TADS, it will be reviewed by the Board of Christian Education so they may further evaluate your request.
3. In order for returning students to be considered for Financial Aid, all applications should be submitted **no later than June 1**.

If you do not return the above requested information by the deadline of *June 1, your child may be in jeopardy of not receiving financial assistance. Since TADS is the tool we use to manage financial aid applications and requests, **it is imperative that you complete the above steps** in order to provide us with the privilege of awarding you with financial assistance.

After the information has been processed by TADS, the Board of Christian Education will be provided with the assessment results and you will be notified of the award status by email and/or letter.

*If you enroll after June 1, financial assistance may still be made available to you. Please follow the steps listed above.

No child will be denied a Christian education because of financial hardship.

3.8. Probationary Period

Grace Christian Academy retains the right to review a new scholar's enrollment during the first 90 days of attendance. As needed, the school administrator will contact parents to discuss the new scholar's acclimation to Grace Christian Academy.

4. Health Policy

4.1. *Illness Onset During School Hours*

If a child becomes sick during school hours, a parent will be called to pick up the child within one (1) hour. The school is not equipped to provide treatment for a sick child.

4.2. *Illness Onset at Home*

Children with symptoms of illness should not be sent to school. Parents must call the school administrator to notify Grace Christian Academy that the scholar is absent due to illness.

4.2.1. **Fever**

If a scholar has a 100 degree or higher temperature, they are not allowed to attend school. We recommend that the scholar's temperature stay under 100 degrees without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

4.2.2. **Vomiting**

If a scholar vomits, we recommend that they must both stop vomiting and return to their full appetite for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

4.3. *Medical History, Immunizations, and Required Physicals*

All scholars entering Grace Christian Academy must have evidence of necessary inoculations. Medical histories and immunization records will be kept up-to-date in each scholar's permanent file. The Department of Public Health has listings of all required immunizations for entrance into school.

Scholars entering grade 6 need to have a booster dose of the Tdap vaccine if at least five years have passed since they last received a DTP, DTap, DT, or Td vaccine. We will need a copy of the vaccination form.

4.4. *First Aid for Minor Injuries / Emergency Room As Needed*

Each classroom contains a first aid kit. First aid will be administered by Grace Christian Academy faculty and/or staff for minor injuries which may occur on school property. First aid kits will also be taken on all field trips.

If an injury is of a more serious nature, the scholar will be taken to the emergency room of a local hospital or clinic and the parents will be notified immediately.

4.5. Medications

The provision and management of non-prescription and prescription medications requires parental consent and specific guidance. If a scholar is in possession of medication without meeting the requirements defined below, Grace Christian Academy faculty and staff will send the scholar to the school administrator, who will determine the next course of action. Unless otherwise specified in the parents' note, the school will maintain custody of all non-prescription and prescription medication and a faculty or staff member will distribute as needed to the scholar.

4.5.1. Authorization for Distribution of Non-Prescription Medications

During the enrollment process each year, parents will be asked for authorization to administer any non-prescription medications that the child is allowed to take that the school has in stock (for example, Children's Tylenol).

A faculty or staff member will call, email, or text parents for permission to give these non-prescription medications to the scholar.

4.5.2. Non-Prescription Medications

If your child must bring non-prescription medicine to school, the following requirements must be met:

1. A note signed and dated by a parent must accompany the medicine. The note must include:
 - The child's name
 - Dosage amount
 - Specific dosage times (for example: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.)
 - Any instructions (for example: with food)
2. Medication must be sent in original container or packaging

4.5.3. Prescription Medications

If your child must bring prescription medicine to school, the following requirements must be met:

1. A note signed and dated by a parent must accompany the medicine. The note must include:
 - The child's name
 - Dosage amount
 - Specific dosage times (for example: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.)
 - Any instructions (for example: with food)
2. Medication must be sent in original container or packaging
3. The name and type of medication must be clearly identified on the container or packaging
4. The container or packaging must have a prescription label with the following information:
 - The child's name
 - The drug identity
 - Dosage instructions
 - Prescribing doctor's name
 - Any prescription notes or instructions
5. The prescription must be current
6. No more than one (1) week of medication may be sent at one time with the scholar

5. Safety Policy

5.1. Online Publication of School-Related Photos

Please carefully consider others' privacy when publishing school-related photos online (e.g., to a social networking site). Grace Lutheran Church and Grace Christian Academy grounds are private property; as such, please make sure you have permission from everyone in a photo before making it generally available. Please contact the school administrator with any questions, including requests for parents' names and contact information for approval for photo publication / posting online.

5.2. Building Security: Church Entrance and School Entrance Doors

5.2.1. Church Entrance (Glass Doors)

The Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church main entrance (glass doors) will remain locked at all times other than church and school events, including Sunday morning worship, Bible studies, Grace Christian Academy Parent Information Night, and other scheduled events.

If a scholar or parent arrives after 8:00 a.m. on a school day and wishes to gain access to the facility, they must be "buzzed in" at the church entrance. (Please press the white button on the call box, and a faculty or staff member will answer the door.) Visitors will sign in at the school office when they arrive and sign out when they depart.

Parents and guardians picking up children from Power Hour or Aftercare must be "buzzed in" at the church entrance. (Please press the white button on the call box, and a faculty or staff member will answer the door.)

5.2.2. School Entrance (Near Flagpole)

The Grace Christian Academy entrance (near flagpole) will be unlocked between 7:00 am and 7:55 am each day that classes are in session. After 7:55 a.m., the school entrance is locked; please use the church entrance to gain access to the school building.

5.3. Parking During Morning Drop-off and School Hours

5.3.1. Parking during Morning Drop-off

Parents who need to park and enter the school must park on the west side of the parking lot near the playground. Escort the child(ren) to the school entrance near the flagpole. Please be watchful and careful of vehicles as the child(ren) cross the parking lot.

5.3.2. Parking during School Hours

Please park on the east side of the parking lot during school hours; orange caution cones divide the lot. The west side of the parking lot near the playground is reserved for the children's play area.

5.4. Dropping Off and Picking Up Scholars

Please drive slowly in the driveway and through the parking lot and watch for scholars crossing the parking lot.

5.4.1. Morning Drop-off

Parents are to drive through the parking lot to the school entrance near the flagpole, drop the child(ren) off at the school entrance, and continue around the parking lot to exit onto Annandale Road (counterclockwise in the parking lot).

5.4.2. Afternoon Dismissal Pickup

Parents are to drive through the parking lot to the school entrance near the flagpole, forming two (2) rows of cars. Parents will wait in their vehicles for their child(ren).

Children being picked up will remain in the school building with faculty until their parents arrive. A faculty member will be outside with a two-way radio and will call the child(ren) outside when their parents are close to the front of the line.

Children attending Power Hour will go directly to the Fellowship room at 3:30 p.m. and will wait for the Power Hour teacher.

Children attending Aftercare will go directly to the Aftercare room at 3:30 p.m. Any scholars not picked up by 3:50 p.m. will be sent to Aftercare and parents will be charged an hourly Aftercare fee starting at the time of dismissal.

5.4.3. Power Hour Pickup

Parents picking up children from Power Hour at 4:30 p.m. must be “buzzed in” at the church entrance (glass doors). Please press the white button on the call box, and a faculty or staff member will answer the door.

Any scholars not picked up by 4:30 p.m. will be sent to Aftercare and parents will be charged an hourly Aftercare fee starting at the time of Power Hour dismissal.

5.4.4. Aftercare Pickup by 6:00 p.m.

Parents picking up children from Aftercare between 3:50 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. must be “buzzed in” at the church entrance (glass doors). Please press the white button on the call box, and a faculty or staff member will answer the door.

5.4.5. After Hours Pickup

For information about after hours pickup, please see *Aftercare Program for Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 8* on page 32.

5.5. Playground Personal Use – 20 Minutes after Dismissal

The playground is off-limits for personal use until twenty (20) minutes after dismissal: 12:50 p.m. on half days and 3:50 p.m. on full days. After this time, those wishing to use the playground are welcome to do so at their own risk. Parents must supervise their children; the Aftercare Coordinator will be supervising only the children in Aftercare. The Grace Christian Academy playground rules must be followed by everyone using the playground until 6:00 pm during days when school is in session.

5.6. Weather-Related Closings

Parents are advised to watch TV or listen to the radio for school closings and delayed openings due to inclement weather. Grace Christian Academy may follow Fairfax County Public Schools' decision. If Fairfax County Public Schools close during the day, Grace Christian Academy will remain open and in session until all the scholars are picked up. Should Grace Christian Academy choose to delay or close, parents will be notified via the Grace Christian Academy website, Facebook, Twitter, email, mass text (using Remind), WTOP.com, and news channels 4, 5, and 9.

Parental discretion should be exercised as to the road conditions and safety of travel. If you feel driving conditions are not safe, please use your judgment as to whether you send your child to school or keep them home. If you feel that conditions are getting worse through the day, please use your judgment in whether to pick up your child early.

5.7. Monthly Fire Drills

Fire drills are practiced monthly. There will be two (2) fire drills in the first two (2) weeks of school and one (1) each month for the rest of the school year.

5.8. Chemical / Biological Emergency Management Plan

In response to concerns about threats to our national and regional security, Grace Christian Academy has developed an Emergency Management Plan to address the possibility of the release of chemical and biological agents.

5.8.1. Shelter in Place

If directed by local emergency management officials, Grace Christian Academy will activate "Shelter in Place" procedures. Scholars and staff will be instructed to stay or come inside, the ventilation system will be turned off, all doors and windows will be closed and secured, and scholars and staff will stay in the inner part of the building away from outside air. During a "Shelter in Place" situation, no one will be allowed to enter or exit the building; parents cannot come to pick up their children.

5.8.2. All Clear / Return to Classrooms

Local emergency management personnel will provide direction to Grace Christian Academy as to when to cease the "Shelter in Place" precautions.

5.9. Tornado Emergency Plan

Fairfax County is occasionally under a tornado watch or warning, and Grace Christian Academy has developed a Tornado Emergency Plan to address tornado warning and tornado watch scenarios.

A tornado watch is set by the National Weather Service if there is the possibility of a tornado forming. A tornado warning is set when a tornado has been sighted or detected on radar.

5.9.1. Tornado Watch

If Fairfax County is under a tornado watch, the school administrator and faculty of Grace Christian Academy will closely monitor National Weather Service reports. Parents may pick up their children during a tornado watch.

5.9.2. Tornado Warning Shelter Locations by Grade Level

If Fairfax County is under a tornado warning, faculty and staff will escort the children of Grace Christian Academy from their classrooms to the following rooms based on grade level (see Table 5-1). Parents may not pick up their children until the tornado warning has expired.

Table 5-1: Tornado Emergency Plan – Shelter Locations by Grade Level

| Grades | Location |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Grades K4 and K5 | Little Lambs Room |
| Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 | Kitchen |
| Grades 1 and 2 | Principal's Office |
| Grades 3, 4, | Berean Room (Church Library) |

5.9.3. Tornado Drills

Tornado drills will take place in September, March, and April.

5.9.4. All Clear / Return to Classrooms

The school administrator will determine when it is safe to return to the classrooms.

If a tornado struck the school, the school administrator and/or local emergency response personnel will determine whether the school needs to be evacuated after the tornado.

6. Child Abuse Prevention Policy

6.1. Introduction

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church / Iglesia Luterana Gracia y Paz / Grace Christian Academy are committed to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth. Grace also is committed to protecting the reputations of our called workers, church leaders, and other volunteers who work with children.

To those ends, Grace adopts this Child Abuse Prevention & Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Policy.

6.2. Scope of the Child Abuse Prevention & Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Policy

This Policy applies to all men, women, and young adults (called “covered individuals”) who supervise, oversee, or chaperone (“supervise,” for short) children in Grace Christian Academy classes or Grace church-sponsored programs, events, or activities (called “Grace programs”).

The Supervision Procedures and Behavioral Guidelines required by this Policy (together, called the “Policy”) apply whenever and wherever a covered individual is supervising children and could reasonably be perceived to be acting on behalf of Grace. Thus, the Policy applies not only to activities occurring at Grace, but also to some activities occurring elsewhere, like at homes, restaurants, public spaces, cars, and buses. We understand the line between the times when this Policy applies and doesn’t, and the line between places where this Policy applies and doesn’t, are not clear lines, and we encourage anyone with questions to ask a pastor or the Board of Elders for clarification about a specific situation. Generally, we expect that this Policy will apply:

- To pastors, the vicar, and the staff minister: At all times and places
- To the school principal, teachers, and other school employees: Anytime and anyplace the individual is with children who attend Grace Christian Academy (except when the individual is with his or her own children)
- To Grace Christian Academy volunteers, Sunday School teachers, and volunteers for Summer Bible Camp, Christian Soldiers, TORCH, Branches of the Vine, and other youth-focused events: Only during the activity he or she is participating in.

6.3. Screening and Training

Only individuals who have been associated with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod for at least 6 months will be able to serve as primary teachers or leaders for Grace programs where children will be present. Other individuals are allowed only to assist.

Only individuals who have not been convicted of (1) a felony, misdemeanor, or other offense against a minor child or (2) a felony, misdemeanor, or other offense of a sexual nature, may supervise children in Grace programs. Individuals who have been charged, but not convicted, of such a felony, misdemeanor, or offense may supervise children in Grace programs only after notifying a pastor or principal of the charge and only if the pastor or principal approves the individual to supervise. Any covered individual who becomes charged with such a felony, misdemeanor, or other offense must immediately notify a pastor or principal of the charge and may be suspended from supervising children.

Adults who were victims of any form of child abuse should disclose and discuss it with a pastor or principal before supervising children in Grace programs.

Any individual aged 18 or older who supervises children must provide the following:

- Consent to a criminal-record background check, by signing the Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Verification.
- Truthful answers to the questions contained in Grace's Covenant Participation Statement.
- Participation in training regarding child-abuse prevention.

6.4. Supervision Procedures

Whenever and wherever this Policy applies to him or her, a covered individual must comply with the following Supervision Procedures:

- Two adults must be present at all times during a Grace program with minor children. (We call this the Rule of Two Adults.) Two adults are present (1) if they are in the same room together, or (2) if one adult is in the room, the door to the room remains open, and another adult is nearby within the building.
 - NOTE: For purposes of the Rule of Two Adults, in addition to the covered individual, *any* other adult counts, and need not be a covered individual. For example, meeting in a public place where other adults are present satisfies the Rule of Two Adults.
- If the children participating in a Grace program are duly enrolled in Grace Christian Academy or are 4 years old or older, two adults do not need to be present at all times, so long as there are at least 2 children present with the 1 adult who is present. (We call this the Rule of Three.)
- Vehicles and Transportation: When this Policy applies, covered individuals must not transport someone else's child anywhere without the advance, written consent of the child's parent or guardian. Consent should be provided in writing or email. In emergencies or unforeseen circumstances, a parent or guardian may provide advance, written consent by text message; if so, the covered individual must obtain the parent's or guardian's written or emailed confirmation of that consent within 24 hours. Written or emailed consents will be kept on file in the Church office.

6.5. Behavioral Guidelines

When this Policy applies, covered individuals shall not:

- Drink alcohol, smoke or use tobacco, take illegal drugs, or provide a minor child with anything the law prohibits providing to minors.
- Touch a minor child inappropriately and shall stop any minor child who tries to initiate inappropriate touching.
- Physically discipline a minor child.
- Physically, verbally, mentally, emotionally, or sexually abuse a minor child.

In addition, covered individuals generally should not:

- Engage in one-on-one pastoral care or counseling of a minor child in a closed room. A room with an open door or with windows is preferred.
- Lock doors when minor children are present inside.

6.7. Violations of This Policy

Anyone, whether covered by this Policy or not, shall immediately report suspected violations of the Supervision Procedures and Behavioral Guidelines in this Policy

to a pastor or the principal.

- If it is determined that a violation of the Supervision Procedures or Behavioral Guidelines was accidental, unintentional, or otherwise beyond the violator's control, the violator will be given a warning.
- If it is determined that a violation of the Supervision Procedures or Behavioral Guidelines was serious, willful, or repeated, the violator may be temporarily or permanently removed from supervising children.
- If a violation of the Supervision Procedures or Behavioral Guidelines also involves child abuse or other harm to minors, the Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Policy shall apply

6.8. Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Policy

No child should be abused, sexually, verbally, physically, or otherwise.

A covered individual who suspects any child has been abused—whether by another covered individual or by anyone else—shall immediately report the suspected abuse to a pastor or the principal. Individuals who are not covered by this Policy may report suspected abuse as well.

If the subject of a report is a called worker, staff member, employee, or volunteer for Grace, all pastors, the principal, and the chairman of the congregation will be notified of the report within 24 hours of the report (except a pastor, principal, or chairman will not be notified if he is the subject of the report). The chairman of the Board of Christian Education may be notified, as well, but only if the report involves Grace Christian Academy.

Whether or not the subject of the report is a called worker, staff member, employee, or volunteer, all reports will be taken seriously and investigated reasonably and discreetly. If, after an investigation, the report appears to have merit and is serious,

- the subject of the report shall be immediately suspended (with pay, if applicable) from supervising children in Grace programs. The suspension will continue until the subject is cleared, resigns, or is terminated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily.
- Police and other authorities will be notified as required by law.
- Grace's insurance carrier and lawyers will be notified.
- Officials of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the North-Atlantic District, and the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools will be notified.
- The child's parents will be notified, if they do not already know.
- No public statements will be made without the Church Council's approval.

Upon completion of the investigation, and as necessary during the investigation, a pastor and, as appropriate, the principal, chairman of the congregation, and/or chairman of the Board of Christian Education will meet with the subject of the report to explain the results of the investigation. Separately, a pastor and, as appropriate, the principal, chairman of the congregation, and/or chairman of the Board of Christian Education also will meet with the alleged victim (along with his or her parents or guardians) to notify them of the results of the investigation.

A subject will be terminated if a report of serious child abuse is proved true.

Any time a report is proved false, Grace will make significant efforts to restore the subject's reputation within the church and school communities.

7. Attendance Policy

The Grace Christian Academy Attendance Policy promotes good school attendance, as there is a direct relationship between good attendance and academic achievement.

7.1. School Term Requirements and School Calendar

The State of Virginia defines the academic year as at least 180 days of school or a minimum of 990 hours of classroom instruction for grades 1 through 8.

The school year customarily begins before Labor Day and ends the Friday following Memorial Day.

The Grace Christian Academy calendar is published and sent to scholars' families before each school year and is available on the school website: GraceChristianAcademy.org. Parents will be notified if the school calendar will be adjusted to make up days lost to inclement weather.

7.2. School Attendance Law

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Compulsory Attendance Law (Code of Virginia §22.1-258) requires all children between the ages of five (5) and eighteen (18) to be enrolled in school and attend on a daily basis.

Any scholar that accrues unexcused absences totaling five (5) scheduled school days within a school year may be referred to the Board of Christian Education for review and further action. When the Board of Christian Education receives an attendance referral, the Board will schedule a meeting with the scholar, parents, and faculty / staff to develop a plan to resolve the scholar's attendance issue.

For more information about unexcused / unplanned absences, see *Absences* on page 30.

7.3. School Hours

Table 7-1: School Hours – Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 8

| Grade(s) | Session | Hours | Pickup By | Power Hour | Aftercare Hours |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Grades K4 to 8 | Full Day | 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. | 3:50 p.m. | 3:30 to 4:30pm | 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. |
| Grades K4 to 8 | Half Day | 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. | 12:50 p.m. | – | 12:30 to 6:00 p.m. |
| Grades K4 to 8 | Last Day of School | 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. | 12:50 p.m. | – | 12:30 to 6:00 p.m. |

7.3.1. Arrival: Scholar in Classroom Before 8:00 a.m. Bell

Children are expected to be in their assigned classroom prior to the 8:00 a.m. bell. For more information, see:

- *Tardy Arrival Policy* on page 29
- *Absences* on page 30
- *GCA and Family Covenant* on page 61

7.3.2. Scholars Remain on School Grounds

Children may not leave the school grounds during school hours without written permission from their parents. This includes field trips: parents must provide a signed Field Trip Release Form to the school for the scholar(s) to participate in any activities off school grounds.

7.3.3. Dismissal: Pickup Deadline and Aftercare Policy

If scholars are not attending Power Hour or After Care the expectation is that they will be picked up during the 3:30 p.m. – 3:50 p.m. dismissal.

Any scholar who has not been picked up within 20 minutes after dismissal will be sent to Aftercare and parents will be charged for the time spent in Aftercare, starting at the time school was dismissed (e.g., starting at 3:30 p.m.). For more information, see *Aftercare Program for Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 8* on page 32.

7.4. Tardy Arrival Policy

A scholar will be considered tardy under the following conditions:

- The scholar arrives after the beginning of the school day (i.e., after 8:00 a.m.)
- The scholar is not in their classroom when the 8:00 a.m. bell rings
- The scholar arrives by 9:00 a.m. (within one hour of the beginning of the school day)

Scholars arriving more than one (1) hour after the start of the school day may incur an absence; for more information, see *Absences* on page 30.

7.4.1. Parent Communication of Tardy

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school if your scholar is going to be tardy. This can be accomplished by calling the main office, emailing the Office Manager, or emailing/texting the classroom teacher.

7.4.2. Unexcused Tardy

If you do not communicate this information with the school, it will count as an unexcused tardy. After the 3rd unexcused tardy of the quarter, an email from the Office Manager or school administrator will be sent in order to make you aware of the situation. This email will also serve as a way for you to communicate back to the school how you intend to resolve the issue. Should you default on the proposed solution further punitive action may be taken. Examples of punitive action are: loss of scholar recess, exclusion from school activities, fines to the parents.

7.4.3. Excused Tardy

After the 6th excused tardy of the quarter, an email from the Office Manager or school administrator will be sent in order to make you aware of the situation. This email will also serve as a way for you to communicate back to the school how you intend to resolve the issue. Should you default on the proposed solution further punitive action may be taken. Examples of punitive action are: loss of scholar recess, exclusion from school activities, fines to the parents.

7.5. Absences

In every case of absence, the parent should provide a verbal or written explanation to the school as to why the scholar is absent.

NOTE: For information about missed assignments, see *Scholar Expectations Policy* on page 33.

7.5.1. Medical Appointments during School Hours (Excused)

Grace Christian Academy recommends the scholar's medical, dental, and/or other clinical appointments be scheduled before or after school hours. Any appointment occurring during school hours will result in a half-day absence. A statement from the doctor or therapist must verify an appointment scheduled during school hours.

7.5.2. Unplanned Absences (Excused)

Illness, injury, or a death in the family are recognized as legitimate reasons for absence from school.

- If a scholar is absent for three (3) or more days due to illness, a letter from the scholar's physician must be provided to the school administrator stating the nature and expected duration of the scholar's illness and absence from school. The letter must be received within two (2) days of the scholar's return to school.
- If a scholar is ill for more than a week, written doctor's permission is needed to return to school.
- If a scholar's parent(s) or transportation provider is ill, please contact Grace Christian Academy to discuss alternative transportation for the duration of the adult's illness.
- Should a death in the family occur, the parents and the scholar's teacher will discuss the planned duration of the scholar's absence. If appropriate, the teacher may provide work assignments for the scholar to take with them to ensure they stay on schedule with the planned curriculum.

7.5.3. Planned Absences (Unexcused)

Planned personal absences are considered unexcused and must be verified by the parent and approved by the school administrator prior to the absence. A Family Trip Form, available in the school office and on the website (Parent Resources) must be completed and returned to the school administrator no fewer than two (2) weeks (i.e., 14 calendar days) prior to the first day of the scholar's planned absence. Planned absences longer than ten (10) days may result in a referral to the Board of Christian Education for review and potential further action.

7.5.4. Unplanned Absences (Unexcused)

Unplanned absences that are unexcused include but are not limited to the following: family and/or scholar vacations; childcare situations; non-school related activities; oversleeping; alarm did not go off; missing a ride; ride was late; car trouble; traffic; weather conditions; working on homework / project; studying for a test; parent / guardian's fault; leaving campus without permission.

7.5.5. Excessive Absenteeism: More than Twenty Days Absent in School Year

If the scholar is absent more than twenty (20) days in a school year, the parents, teacher, school administrator, and one (1) Board of Education representative will meet to discuss whether to retain the scholar in the same grade level for the following school year.

7.6. Power Hour – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. (Full Days Only)

Power Hour is a one-hour quiet, distraction-free, supervised classroom for children to focus on their homework assignments. The environment is not one-on-one tutoring; self-guided study is expected.

Table 7-2: Power Hour – 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Full Days Only)

| Child(ren) | Attendance | Description |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Enrolled in Aftercare | Complimentary | Children who are participating in Aftercare will be included in Power Hour unless their parent(s) specify in writing that their child(ren) do not have to attend. |
| Delinquent in assignment | Mandatory | Children who are delinquent in their assignments are required to attend Power Hour if an assignment is not fully completed within 24 hours of its deadline / due date. Parents are contacted the day of the delinquent assignment. |
| Additional study time | Optional | Children interested in additional quiet study time may attend. |

FAQ:

Who is in charge of Power Hour?

Each teacher has one day a week to be in charge of Power Hour. This will take place in one of the classrooms.

Is Power Hour optional?

For children who complete their homework on time, it is optional.

For children with a late assignment overdue for more than 24 hours, it is mandatory. Should a child have a late assignment, parents will be contacted that day regarding the late assignment(s). The child has until 8:00 a.m. the next school day (24 hours) to complete it. If it is not finished within 24 hours (8:00 a.m. the next day), the child will be expected to stay in Power Hour that day.

For children who are in Aftercare, it is mandatory if there is homework to be completed. A parental signature must be given for a child to opt out of Power Hour during Aftercare. Once homework is complete, Aftercare children will be sent back for play and organized games.

What if my child is unable to stay for Power Hour on the assigned day?

Please communicate with the school before the end of the school day (3:30 p.m.) to excuse your child from Power Hour that day.

What if my child finishes before the hour is complete?

If they are in mandatory Power Hour for late work, they will stay there reading, working on a long-term project, or working ahead on an assignment. If a non-mandatory child communicates they have no homework, they may be excused from Power Hour.

What if I am unable to pick up my child at 4:30 p.m.?

All children left at 4:30 p.m. will be sent to Aftercare. Aftercare fees will then apply.

7.7. Aftercare Program for Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 8

After school care (Aftercare) is available for all Grace Christian Academy families. There is a fee for this service. For hours, see *School Hours* on page 28.

7.7.1. Fees and Provision of Aftercare Program

The fee amount is set by the Board of Christian Education and approved by the Voters Assembly of Grace Lutheran Church. Any family having outstanding Aftercare fees for more than thirty (30) days may be barred from continued participation in the Aftercare Program. For fee information, see *Aftercare Hourly Rate* on page 59.

Upon review by the Board of Christian Education, the Aftercare Program may be discontinued at any time. Aftercare is a self-supporting program.

7.7.2. Pickup after Deadline (After 12:50 p.m. / 3:50 p.m.)

Children who are not picked up within 20 minutes of dismissal are sent to Aftercare; see Dismissal: Pickup Deadline and Aftercare Policy on page 28.

Parent(s) are charged an hourly Aftercare rate starting at the dismissal time (e.g., from 12:30 p.m. / 3:30 p.m.). For more information about Aftercare fees, see *Aftercare Hourly Rate* on page 59.

7.7.3. After Hours Pickup (After 6:00 p.m.)

Children should be picked up by 6:00 p.m. Parents who are going to be late must contact the Aftercare Coordinator as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements. Keep in mind the Aftercare Coordinator may have obligations after 6:00 pm and may not be able to accommodate late pickup.

Children who are picked up late more than once without prior approval from the school administrator and/or Aftercare Coordinator will be charged a late pickup fee of \$1.00 for every minute the child has to stay after 6:00 p.m.

7.7.4. Scholar Conduct

Being in the Aftercare Program is a privilege which children can lose if they continuously demonstrate poor behavior. For additional information on expected conduct, see *Conduct and Discipline Policy* on page 48.

7.7.5. Homework

The Aftercare Coordinator is not responsible for tutoring or encouraging children to complete their homework.

If desired, Power Hour provides a quiet work environment and time to do homework. The Power Hour Coordinator will answer any questions the children may have, but they are not responsible for the scholars' homework. For more information, see Power Hour – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. (Full Days Only) on page 31.

8. Scholar Expectations Policy

The children shall strive to show Christian love, kindness, and consideration toward all Grace Christian Academy scholars, faculty, and staff and toward everyone with whom they come in contact in their lives.

Christian children shall always be thankful that God has chosen them to be His own and should strive to show their love for their Savior through God-pleasing conduct. “This is love for God; to obey his commands” (NIV, 1 John 5:3).

8.1. Cooperation Between Home and School

As parents have the primary responsibility for raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and Grace Christian Academy is an aid to Christian parents, cooperation to the fullest extent between the home and our school is vitally important. We welcome discussion with our parents on the educational development of their children to encourage home-school cooperation.

Parents can also help Grace Christian Academy a great deal in its tasks and objectives. Following are just a few examples of ways parents can render service to the school and their children’s Christian education:

- Let the Word of God be the guide in all aspects of your daily living
- Regularly attend church with your children
- Have regular family devotions and table prayers
- Emphasize that education is key to a successful future
- Read with your child for 30 minutes, read to your child for 30 min, or encourage your child to read independently for 30 minutes nightly.
- Ensure your children are regular and prompt in their school attendance
- Show interest in what your child does and encourage them in things he/she can do
- Pray for the school, faculty, and staff
- Encourage respect for teachers
- Refrain from being critical of school policy, procedures, and/or curriculum in the presence of your children
- Always project a positive attitude toward education, particularly Christian education

8.2. Parents’ Homework Responsibilities

Parents are key in making homework a positive experience for their children. Therefore, we ask that parents make homework a top priority at home and provide the scholar with necessary supplies and a quiet homework environment. It is best to set aside time every day for a homework session when you are available to provide praise and support to your children.

A devotion at the start and/or end of each homework session is a great way to start or finish!

8.3. Scholars' Homework Expectations

Homework is vital for each scholar's academic growth and success, as it reinforces what they have learned in class, prepares them for upcoming lessons, teaches responsibility, and helps scholars develop strong study habits. The following are expected of each Grace Christian Academy scholar:

- Scholars will complete each homework assignment to the best of their ability
- Homework assignments are to be neat, legible, and presentation-ready (i.e., not creased or folded); and clearly labeled with the scholar's name
- Homework assignments must be completed by 8:00 a.m. of the morning the assignment is due

8.3.1. Failure to Complete Assignments

Failure to complete homework assignments results in:

- A 50% credit for grades 3 to 6 and a 30% credit for grades 7 and 8 for the homework assignment
- Incomplete is recorded
- If the assignment is not completed within 24 hours of its due date, the scholar will be sent to Power Hour. For more information, see Power Hour – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. (Full Days Only) on page 31.

8.3.2. Making up Assignments Missed due to Absence

If a child is absent from school, they will have an equal amount of time to make-up class assignments. For example, three (3) days absent would allow three (3) days to complete assignments.

8.4. Activity / Field Trip Eligibility Requirements

All of the following must be met for a scholar to participate in special field trips and activities:

- Scholar has a cumulative grade point average of C
- Scholar has no failing grades in the current quarter
- Scholar is current on all assignments

Any scholar who is sick or absent during any part of the school day will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities that day.

The Board of Christian Education will have the final decision if needed.

8.5. Scholars Sing during Worship Services Once a Month

Generally, the children of Grace Christian Academy will sing one Sunday a month in church for the worship service. We encourage all children and their families to be present.

Children will sing during one or more of the Sunday worship services: 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and/or 12:30 p.m. For dates and service(s), please refer to the Grace Christian Academy Calendar.

8.6. Worship Attendance and Worship Services at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

We expect and encourage families to worship the Lord in church regularly. Worship services at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church are as follows:

Table 8-1: Worship Services at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

| Time / Day | Description |
|--|---|
| 8:00 a.m. Sunday | Traditional Service |
| 9:30 a.m. Sunday | Traditional Service |
| 11:00 a.m. Sunday | Contemporary Service |
| 12:30 p.m. Sunday | Spanish Service |
| 7:30 p.m. Monday | Traditional Service |
| 7:00 p.m. Wednesday during Advent and Lent | Advent / Lent Service NOTE: Soup and Sandwich meal starts at 6:15 p.m. |

NOTE Worship attendance is not a requirement for Grace Christian Academy enrollment. For more information, see Nondiscrimination Policy on page 12.

8.7. Growing in God's Word – Bible Study and Sunday School Programs

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church offers a variety of Bible study and Sunday School programs, including the following:

Table 8-2: Bible Study and Sunday School Programs at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

| Time / Day | Description |
|-------------------|---|
| 9:30 a.m. Sunday | God's word for God's People Bible Study Reunion Bible Study Sunday School |
| Weekday evenings | Grace Groups (In-home small group bible Study) |

8.8. Pastoral Support for All Scholars and Families

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church is blessed to have two pastors serving both the church and school. Should you or your family need pastoral support, the pastors' offices are located in the main office or you can find their contact information on the last page of the handbook.

8.9. Stewardship and Use of School Resources and Assets

8.9.1. Books

Scholars are expected to respectfully use the books, textbooks, leisure reading materials, and other school texts. Damaged or excessively worn books may result in replacement costs.

8.9.2. Computer, Network, and Internet Access Privileges and Acceptable Use Policy

Each scholar and their parents must read and sign the Computer / Internet Use Agreement form for the scholar to be allowed access privileges to Grace Christian Academy's computer, network, and the Internet. The form is available from the school administrator; the signed copy is returned to the scholar's teacher or the school administrator.

Scholars are granted the privilege of Chromebook usage and internet access so long as they use electronic communications with honesty, integrity, with respect for the rights of others, and in a God-pleasing way. Scholars must comply with the following Acceptable Use Policy:

1. All use of computers, local networks, and the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the purposes of Grace Christian Academy
2. Use of the school Chromebooks, network, and Internet is a privilege. Inappropriate and/or unlawful use may result in loss of the privilege
3. Scholars will use the proper network etiquette (netiquette) and appropriate language while using electronic communication
4. Local network and Internet accounts are to be used only by the owner of the account for the authorized purpose. Passwords, if applicable, are not to be shared
5. No use of computers, local networks and the Internet shall disrupt use by others. Hardware, software, files or operating systems shall not be destroyed, modified or abused. Absolutely no software may be installed on network computers without permission from the school administrator or network administrator
6. Grace Christian Academy cannot take responsibility for data lost or costs incurred due to equipment/software failure or inappropriate activity by the scholar

Any violation of the policy may cause the scholar's access privileges to be revoked and may result in school disciplinary action and/or legal action. The school administrator will determine whether disciplinary action will be escalated to the Board of Christian Education. Scholars may appeal to the Board of Christian Education for their access privileges to be restored or the suspension of privileges shortened to allow the scholar to complete coursework. Policy violations resulting in loss of privileges are restored each school year. Frequent and/or ongoing violations will result in a meeting with the scholar, their parents, the school administrator, and the Pastor to discuss the scholar's behavior.

8.9.3. Social Networking Prohibition

The Acceptance Use Policy and its disciplinary procedures also apply to social networking. The installation and/or use of social networking software by scholars on school assets (computers, network, and/or Internet connectivity) is strictly prohibited. This includes applications, Internet websites, and tools that may be accessed using school assets. Social networking on cell phones or other personal electronic devices is also prohibited on school grounds during school hours. Examples of social

networking software / tools include but are not limited to the following: Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and LinkedIn.

8.9.4. Lockers

Each scholar is assigned a locker for their use. No locks are allowed to be used on the lockers. Lockers are to be kept clean; any items placed on the locker interior must be removable (i.e., no stickers) and nothing may be put on the outside of the locker. Scholars are not allowed to access another scholar's locker. Scholars are to immediately report any damage to lockers and/or loss from their locker.

Faculty and staff have the right to search the scholars' lockers at any time and will periodically check lockers to ensure cleanliness and compliance with locker guidelines.

8.9.5. School Telephone Use

Teachers will approve the use of the school telephone to contact parents only for emergencies or weather-related closings. Children must get permission from a teacher to use the school phone. Parents are asked to call the school at such times when classes are not in session. Only in cases of emergency will scholars or teachers be called from their classroom to answer the telephone. If you need to leave a message for your child, please leave your message with the Office Manager.

9. Academic Assessment Policy

9.1. Grading Scales

Table 9-1: Conduct and Academic Effort

| Percentage | Grade Letter |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Exceptional | E |
| Good | G |
| Satisfactory | S |
| Unsatisfactory | U |
| Needs Improvement | N |

Table 9-2: Grading Scale

| Percentage | Grade Letter |
|--|-------------------|
| 100% | A+ |
| 93 – 99% | A |
| 90 – 92% | A- |
| 87 – 89% | B+ |
| 83 – 86% | B |
| 80 – 82% | B- |
| 77 – 79% | C+ |
| 73 – 76% | C |
| 70 – 72% | C- |
| 67 – 69% | D+ |
| 64 – 66% | D |
| Below 64% | F |
| 50% for Grades 3-6 30% for Grades 7 and 8 | F Incomplete work |

9.2. Scholar Records and Files

Scholar records and/or files are kept at Grace Christian Academy in a locked file cabinet. Grace Christian Academy follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a school newsletter, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the Federal Relay Service.

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

All Grace Christian Academy fees and tuition must be paid before records are released.

9.3. Report Cards

Parents should keep in mind that the report card is an individual report. It would be an injustice to a child to compare his/her report and work with that of his classmates, or even with that of other members of his/her family. The Lord does not expect all scholars to be “A” students, because He has blessed them all in different ways. Rather, He expects all to work up to their God-given abilities.

Parents are expected to examine the report card and should feel free to discuss any questions concerning the child’s progress with the teacher. It is an injustice to the child as well as to the teacher if complaints are made without discussing them with the individuals involved. The faculty welcomes questions concerning pupil progress in school and is readily available to meet with parents.

9.3.1. Quarterly Report Cards and Gradebook access

Quarterly report cards are issued using the grading scale defined in Table 9-1: Conduct and Academic Effort and Table 9-2: Grading Scale on page 38. Parents with scholars in 1st – 8th grades have online access to the teacher’s gradebook via TADS Educate. The classroom teacher or the school administrator are happy to assist you in navigating the tool. It is in your best interest to review your scholar’s progress on a regular basis.

9.3.2. Quarterly Parent / Teacher Conferences

At the end of each quarter, all parents will be given an opportunity to consult with the teachers concerning the progress of their children. The scheduling will be mutually agreed upon. First and third quarter conferences are mandatory; the other two are optional. As needed, your child’s teacher will communicate by phone, email, or speak to you personally about your child’s progress.

9.4. Testing

9.4.1. Placement Testing

Children applying to Grace Christian Academy will be given placement tests in order to place them in the correct class to allow them to use their God-given talents. Progress or achievement testing in subject areas will be done during the school day in each subject throughout the year.

9.4.2. National Standardized Achievement Testing

In order to evaluate the progress of our scholars on a national level, a standardized achievement test will be given in the fall, winter and spring. Scholars will be given the NWEA MAP test. Results from the tests will be shared with parents at Parent / Teacher conferences.

9.4.3. Learning Evaluation / Testing

Scholars at Grace, who are in need of additional aid, are also eligible for special education through the public school system. The Grace Christian Academy faculty may do some special needs testing, but only on a limited basis. If you feel that your child is in need of this additional aid, please discuss your feelings with the classroom teacher or school administrator who can aid you in writing a referral letter to the local public school. Once the public school receives the referral, the “child study committee” will evaluate whether or not the child ought to go through the special education evaluation. For further information on referrals, evaluation, or eligibility meetings please speak with the school administrator.

10. Dress Code Policy

We expect our scholars to adhere to the principle that their bodies are "...a temple of the Holy Spirit," (NIV, 1 Corinthians 6:19) and as such should be kept clean and healthy. The Board of Christian Education has defined the Grace Christian Academy dress code policy to meet this principle.

Every day at Grace is a work day! As such, we expect professional attire from both our staff and scholars to set the mood and standard that nothing less than high standards and hard work are expected each day. Our number one priority is creating an environment that is conducive to learning. Part of doing this is having a dress code so that scholars do not have to worry about peripheral issues that do not pertain to their success in school.

Grace Christian Academy scholars wear uniforms from Educational Outfitters and FlynnO'Hara (see below). All clothing items should be in reasonably good condition (i.e. no holes, torn knees, permanent stains or faded in color).

Required uniform items are to be worn during the school day and for other school functions, including field trips. Required athletic uniforms must be worn during physical education classes for grades 3 through 8.

10.1. Grooming and Dress Code

10.1.1. General Guidelines – For Girls and Boys

- Clothing should be clean and in good repair
- Hats must not be worn inside the building
- Hair should be well groomed – clean and brushed or combed
- Hair should not cover the eyes
- Hair color must be a natural color
- No body piercing other than girls' earlobes are allowed
- Visible tattoos (fake or real), if deemed a distraction, must be covered at all times
- Polo shirts must have the Grace embroidered logo. Any visible undershirt must be white or the same color as the polo shirt (shirts solid color, no patterns, etc.). No turtleneck undershirts
- Shirts are to be tucked in at all times
- No cosmetics/make up. Only natural color lip balm may be worn

10.1.2. Girls' Grooming

- Girls may have pierced earlobes and must wear stud earrings only. Hoops and dangly earrings are not allowed for safety concerns
- During the winter uniform, girls must wear knee-highs, tights, or leggings when pants are not worn
- No clothing under uniform pants unless approved

10.1.3. Boys' Grooming

- Boys may not have any body piercing
- No clothing under uniform pants unless approved

10.2. “Dress Up” and “Dress Down” Days

There will be occasional “dress-up” or “dress-down” days throughout the school year. Parents and scholars will be notified ahead of time about these days. The clothes for these days should be in good taste. **Jeans with holes are not allowed.** The faculty will determine whether an item is appropriate.

10.3. Uniforms from Educational Outfitters and FlynnO’Hara Uniforms

Uniform tops (polo shirts, oxford button downs, sweaters & sweater vests, fleece zip ups & vests, and athletic sweatshirts) must be embroidered with the Grace logo. All uniform tops, plaid jumpers, plaid skirts, skorts, pants, shorts, and sweatpants are to be purchased from:

Educational Outfitters

Online ordering only:
<http://arlington.educationaloutfitters.com/find-my-school/grace-christian-academy/>
 (703) 216-5066
 Megan Donnelly, Owner/Operator
mdonnelly@educationaloutfitters.com

FlynnO’Hara

Retail store and online ordering available:
 Fair City Mall
 9650-19 Main Street
 Fairfax, VA 22031
 (703) 503-5966
<https://www.flynnohara.com/School-Landing.aspx?scn=VA225>

Additional uniform pieces may be purchased elsewhere as long as they are in compliance with the school uniform policy.

10.4. Uniform Items from Educational Outfitters and FlynnO’Hara

The following uniform items must be purchased from Educational Outfitters or FlynnO’Hara:

- GCA logo polo shirts
- Plaid skirts / plaid jumpers
- Pants (no capris, no cargo pants)
- Shorts (no cargo shorts)
- Skorts
- GCA logo oxford button downs
- Peter Pan blouses - to be worn under uniform jumper, GCA logo sweater / or GCA logo sweater vest only
- GCA logo sweaters & GCA logo sweater vests
- GCA logo fleece half & full zip ups
- GCA logo athletic sweatshirts and GCA logo sweatpants (grades 3-8)
- GCA logo athletic t-shirts (grades 3-8)
- GCA logo athletic shorts (grades 3-8)

10.5. Uniform Items from Other Sources

The following uniform items may be purchased from other sources:

- Socks/Hosiery
- Shoes
- Belt

10.6. Uniform Donations / Uniform Exchange

The school accepts donations of clean uniforms in good condition and makes them available at no cost on a first come, first serve basis. These uniforms can be obtained by contacting the school.

10.7. Dress Code Compliance

Parents are expected to ensure that scholars come to school dressed in compliance with the Uniform Guidelines. As defined in *Conduct and Discipline Policy* on page 48, failure to follow the dress code may result in the following disciplinary responses:

Table 10-1: Dress Code Violation Disciplinary Response Levels

| First Offense | Second Offense | Third Offense | Persistent Offenses |
|--|---|---|---|
| Scholars may be removed from class and not permitted to return until compliance is met | Scholars will not be permitted to class and will wait in the principal's office until compliance is met | Scholars will not be permitted to class and will wait in the principal's office until compliance is met and will receive a lunch/recess detention | Scholar and parents will meet with the school administrator to discuss Uniform Policy |

10.8. Girls' Uniform Policy**Table 10-2: Girls' Uniform Policy**

| Layer | Type | Style | Color | Length | Worn |
|----------------|--|--|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bottoms | Kilt | Front wrap with button tab | Plaid #42 | | |
| | Jumper | Drop waist | Plaid #42 | | |
| | Shorts | Flat front | Khaki or Navy | | Aug. to Nov. 30 March 1 to June |
| | Skort | 3 Pleat front | Khaki or Navy | | |
| | Slacks | Flat front | Khaki or Navy | Not touching the floor | |
| Tops | Polo Shirt | Three (3) button placket polo with <u>Grace embroidered logo</u> | White, Light Blue, or Navy | Long sleeve Short sleeve | Any |
| | Blouse | Peter Pan collar Oxford button down with <u>Grace embroidered logo</u> | White | Long sleeve Short sleeve | |
| | Sweater / Sweater vest | Any Knitted Style with <u>Grace embroidered logo</u> | Navy | n/a | |
| Hosiery | Tights or Leggings | Solid Color- no patterns | White, Navy, or Black | n/a | December 1 through February |
| | Knee-high | Solid Color- no patterns | White, Navy, or Black | Knee-high in winter uniform months | December 1 through February |
| | Socks | Solid Color | White, Navy, or Black | n/a | |
| Shoes | Canvas or Leather Dress Shoes (no mesh & no rubber on top of toes) | Below Ankle | Black, Navy, Gray or Dark Brown(Shoelaces must be the color of the shoes and can only be one single color.) | n/a | |

10.9. Boys' Uniform Policy

Table 10-3: Boys' Uniform Policy

| Layer | Type | Style | Color | Length | Worn |
|----------------|--|---|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Bottoms | Shorts with belt loops | Flat front | Khaki or Navy | | Aug. to Nov. 30 March 1 to June |
| | Slacks with belt loops | Flat front | Khaki or Navy | Not touching the floor | December 1 through February |
| Tops | Polo Shirt | Three (3) button Placket Polo with <u>Grace embroidered logo</u> | White, Light Blue, or Navy | Long sleeve Short sleeve | |
| | Shirt | Oxford Cloth Button Down with <u>Grace embroidered logo</u> | White | Long sleeve Short sleeve | |
| | Sweater / Sweater vest | Any Knitted Style with <u>Grace embroidered logo</u> | Navy | n/a | |
| Hosiery | Socks | Solid Color | White, Navy, or Black | n/a | |
| Shoes | Canvas or Leather Dress Shoes (no mesh & no rubber on top of toes) | Below Ankle | Black, Navy, Gray or Dark Brown (shoelaces must be the color of the shoes and can only be one single color) | n/a | |
| Belt | Dress Belt | | Black or Brown | | When belt is on the teacher supply list |

10.10. Athletic Uniform Policy (Grades 3-8)*Table 10-4: Athletic Uniform Policy*

| Layer | Type | Style | Color | Length | Worn |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bottoms | Shorts | Mesh with <u>Grace logo</u> | Navy | | Aug. to Nov. 30 March 1 to June |
| | Pants | Sweats | Navy | Not touching the floor | December 1 through February |
| Tops | T-shirt | <u>Grace logo</u> | Yellow or Navy | Short sleeve | Aug. to Nov. 30 March 1 to June |
| | T-shirt | <u>Grace logo</u> | Navy | Long sleeve | All year |
| | Sweatshirt | <u>Grace logo</u> | Navy | n/a | December 1 through February |
| Hosiery | Socks | Solid Color | White, Navy, or Black | n/a | At all times |
| Shoes | Athletic Shoes | n/a | n/a | n/a | At all times |

11. Conduct and Discipline Policy

11.1. Reason for the Conduct and Discipline Policy

The Word of God instructs us that “everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way” (*NIV*, 1 Corinthians 14:40). It is essential for the successful operation of Grace Christian Academy that Christian discipline be maintained at all times. Conduct that is disruptive to the learning atmosphere or dangerous for the scholar and/or others will not be tolerated.

This policy identifies:

- The types of misconduct and disobedience that are not acceptable in Grace Christian Academy
- The form of disciplinary action which a scholar can expect when misconduct occurs

11.2. Grievance Procedures for Parents/Guardians

If you have a concern about school policy, academic grades, discipline decisions, or anything else, we ask that you take some time to reflect on it. If you are still concerned after a day or two has passed, please contact the school. We welcome the conversation. We understand that, as parents, you can have very strong feelings about issues concerning your child. We ask only that you try to deal with any issue professionally. We promise to treat you and your concern with respect. We need your support because as you know our school is very demanding, with high expectations for academics and behavior. However, if you and your child work with us, we can all succeed.

If parents/guardians feel that it is necessary, they can follow our “Grievance Procedures for Parents/Guardians.” This applies except for complaints involving sexual harassment or complaints of a criminal nature where the school administrator or other school leader is the subject of the complaint. All parents shall:

- a. First bring their student-related complaints or concerns to the teacher or staff member involved in the incident. The complaint or concern should be brought to the teacher or staff member in writing, must be specific, and where possible, suggest a solution. The teacher or staff member will attempt to respond in writing to all written complaints or concerns within 5 days of the receipt of a written complaint.
- b. Parents or guardians who are dissatisfied with the response of the teacher or staff member may make their complaint known in writing to the school administrator or pastor. A copy of the written complaint and the teacher/staff member response shall be given to the school administrator or pastor. The school administrator or pastor will attempt to respond to the parent or guardian within 7 days of submission of the grievance.
- c. If the parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the response of the school administrator or pastor, they can then submit the complaint to the Board of Christian Education. The school administrator’s response, as well as the teacher’s or staff member’s response, is to be submitted to the Board. Any action taken by the Board of Christian Education must be done so in compliance with all applicable privacy laws and in accordance with Grace Christian Academy policy.

11.3. *Serious Disruptions / Offenses*

Certain offenses are more seriously disruptive and will be met with more serious consequences. Examples include:

- Profanity directed at a scholar or teacher (written or verbal)
- Bullying
- Violation of Computer Use and Internet Agreement
- Fighting, including punching, slapping, kicking, and/or hitting
- Bragging about sexual exploits (real or imagined)
- Defiance of authority
- Vandalism, graffiti, and/or damage to school property
- Stealing or attempting to steal school and/or private property
- Knowingly setting off the fire alarm (false alarm)

Offenses like these will receive:

- The first or second offense may result in detention or suspension
- The third or fourth offense may warrant the attention of the Board of Christian Education and may result in expulsion

11.4. *Cyber Bullying*

Grace Christian Academy will not tolerate cyber-bullying by its scholars. If it occurs, Grace Christian Academy will determine the disciplinary actions and consequences on a case-by-case basis.

11.5. *Zero Tolerance Policy for Severe Offenses*

Some offenses are so serious they warrant “zero tolerance,” meaning the behavior will immediately result in severe consequences. These offenses include but are not limited to violations of criminal law, such as possession of weapons or drug paraphernalia, and engaging in sexual activity.

As appropriate, some offenses will result in the notification of appropriate law enforcement. All severe offenses will be reviewed by the Board of Christian Education and may result in immediate expulsion without recourse.

11.6. Academic Cheating

Fraudulent academic work will not be tolerated. Cheating on tests and/or plagiarizing (i.e., copying the work of an author without proper attribution) will be dealt with as serious offenses. Consequences will be determined in accordance with the age of the scholar and degree of fraud involved. For example, a kindergartener may receive parent contact while a sixth (6th) grader may receive a detention or a suspension. Persistent academic fraud will be cause for expulsion.

11.7. *Disciplinary Response Descriptions*

If a disciplinary response is appropriate and/or necessary, Grace Christian Academy faculty / staff are authorized to take actions described in Table 11-1 to address the scholar's situation and maintain order.

Table 11-1: Disciplinary Response Descriptions

| Disciplinary Response | Description |
|------------------------------|--|
| Reprimand | The scholar is given a verbal and/or written notice of misconduct and a warning of potential consequences if the behavior is repeated. |
| Parent Contact | The scholar's parents are contacted by telephone, by written communication (email to parents; note sent home with scholar or mailed to be signed and returned), and/or in-person discussion concerning their child's behavior. |
| Work Assignments | The scholar is assigned physical and/or academic work. For example, physical work may be cleaning up damage they caused and/or picking up litter and academic work includes written assignments. |
| Activity Restriction | The scholar is denied the privilege of participating in scheduled activities including but not limited to: recess, assemblies, and/or other extracurricular activities. |
| Lunch Hour Detention | The scholar is denied lunch hour privilege; lunch hour classroom suspension. |
| Recess Detention | The scholar is denied recess privileges. |
| Principal's Office | The scholar is sent to the school principal's office. |
| After-School Detention | The scholar's parents are notified of after-school detention. The scholar will be detained after school from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. (one hour detention) within 48 hours of the detention notice. The scholar may receive two (2) one hour detention notices, which would be served on consecutive afternoons. |
| Classroom Suspension | The scholar is assigned to a specific area in their classroom during a class period |
| In-School Suspension | The scholar is assigned to a specific room other than their regular classroom for the duration of the in-school suspension; typically full day. |
| Out-of-School Suspension | The scholar is barred from attending school for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. Parents are responsible for childcare during out-of-school suspension. |
| Board of Christian Education | The matter is referred to the Board of Christian Education for review. The scholar and parents may be required to meet with the Board or take other actions at the discretion and direction of the Board. |
| Recommendation for Expulsion | School administrator recommends to the Board of Christian Education that the scholar be removed from school for the remainder of the school semester or school year. |

11.8. Samples Offenses and Their Disciplinary Response Levels

Table 11-2 is a guideline for consequences used for assessing and responding to various types of misconduct. This list is not complete and is intended to provide examples of the potential types of scholar misconduct that will result in disciplinary action. Grace Christian Academy faculty and staff will exercise discretion in determining consequences for each situation.

Table 11-2: Sample Offenses and Their Disciplinary Response Levels

| Example | First Offense | Second Offense | Third Offense | Persistent Offenses |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Lunch rules violation Health or safety rules violation | Warning | Parent contact and disciplinary assignments, activity restriction, lunch/recess detention, time and/or time in the principal’s office. | May include any consequence listed in second offense column as well as after school detention, classroom suspension, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension. | Parent- teacher- school administrator conference |
| Aftercare misconduct | Parent contact | | | Removal from Aftercare |
| Profanity Intentional scuffling: shoving, grabbing, bumping Playground rules violation Excessive noise or behavior disrupting the educational process | Disciplinary Assignment and Parent contact | | | Parent-teacher- school administrator conference |
| Disrespect for authority | Parent contact and disciplinary assignments, activity restriction, lunch/recess detention, time and/or time in the principal’s office. | | | Parent- teacher- school administrator conference |

| Example | First Offense | Second Offense | Third Offense | Persistent Offenses |
|----------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| Dress code violation | Removal from class until violation remedied | Scholars will not be permitted to class and will wait in the principal’s office until compliance is met | Scholars will not be permitted to class and will wait in the principal’s office until compliance is met and will receive a lunch/recess detention | Board of Christian Education review |
| Cell phone misuse | Cell phone is confiscated | Cell phone is confiscated by teacher or school administrator; parent must pick up phone at School Office. A \$20.00 return fee must be paid in order to retrieve phone. | Cell phone is confiscated by teacher or school administrator; parent must pick up phone at School Office. A \$50.00 return fee for return of the phone or it will be held until the end of the semester. Scholar will not be allowed to bring the cell phone to school the rest of the school year. | Board of Christian Education review |

12. Electronic Devices Policy

Grace Christian Academy and Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church are not responsible for any loss or damage to scholar's cell phones or personal electronic devices. We recommend scholars leave such devices at home on school days. If they do bring electronic device(s) to school, the scholar must comply with the cell phone and personal electronic device policies defined below.

12.1. Scholar Cell Phone Policy

12.1.1. Scholar Cell Phone Policy Statement: Off and In Backpack At All Times

Scholars must power off their cell phones and keep them in their backpack in their locker during the school day and while they are in the school building. This policy extends to the school van, field trips and activities off school grounds, Power Hour, and the Aftercare program.

Parents who are concerned about the physical security of the cell phone in the school locker are encouraged to have your scholar turn the cell phone into the teacher or school administrator where it will be stored in a safe place until the end of the day.

12.1.2. Disciplinary Actions for Violations of Scholar Cell Phone Policy

If a scholar removes their cell phone from their backpack and/or uses their cell phone on school grounds in the school van, and/or during school hours, Power Hour, or Aftercare, the following disciplinary actions will be taken:

Table 12-1: Disciplinary Actions for Violations of Scholar Cell Phone Policy

| Violation # | Disciplinary Action |
|-------------|---|
| 1 | Cell phone is confiscated by teacher or school administrator; parent must pick up phone at School Office. |
| 2 | Cell phone is confiscated by teacher or school administrator; parent must pick up phone at School Office. A-\$20.00 return fee must be paid in order to retrieve phone. |
| 3 | Cell phone is confiscated by teacher or school administrator; parent must pick up phone at School Office. A \$50.00 return fee for return of the phone or it will be held until the end of the semester. Scholar will not be allowed to bring the cell phone to school the rest of the school year. |
| 4 | The scholar is referred to the Board of Christian Education for a discussion with the scholar and parents. |

12.1.3. Use of Grace Christian Academy Phones

If a child must call a parent during the day, only the phones in the classrooms can be used with teacher permission. If there is an emergency the scholar will be allowed to use the phone to contact a parent or a teacher will call the parent to deliver a message.

12.1.4. Grace Christian Academy Telephone Extensions*Table 12-2: Grace Christian Telephone Extensions*

| Location / Person | Extension |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Church Admin / Tricia Visscher | 10 |
| School Admin / Penny Hoeting | 11 |
| Pastor Kevin Wattles | 12 |
| Development Manager /Julie Crain | 14 |
| Miss Vollmer | 16 |
| Mrs. Menges | 17 |
| Mrs. Satorius | 18 |
| Mr. Redfield | 19 |
| Mr. Rebers | 20 |
| Classroom 6 / Aftercare Room | 21 |
| Vicar | 23 |
| Pastor Tim Satorius | 24 |

12.2. Scholar Personal Electronic Device Policy

If personal electronic devices – games, organizers, music players, and so on – are brought to school, they are treated in the same manner as the *Scholar Cell Phone Policy Statement: Off and In Backpack At All Times* on page 54:

- Scholars must power off their personal electronic and keep them in their backpack in their locker during the school day and while they are in the school building. This policy extends to the school van, field trips and activities off school grounds, Power Hour, and the Aftercare program.
- If a scholar removes their personal electronic device from their backpack and/or uses their cell phone on school grounds, in the school van, and/or during school hours, Power Hour, or Aftercare, it will be confiscated, and a parent can pick it up after school.

13. Miscellaneous

13.1. Lunch

The school does not provide a daily hot lunch program: each child must bring a beverage and a lunch suitable for eating on the school premises. A limited number of microwaves are available for the children to use to warm food; wait time can be long. Grace Christian Academy is unable to provide refrigeration for scholar lunches thus, parents and scholars are responsible for proper care of food brought from home.

About three (3) times a month on Mondays, parents help to organize hot lunch for the scholars. The costs for the year are covered in the scholars' tuition.

On Wednesday's scholars have the option of paying for Subway sandwiches. A Subway Order Form is sent home in advance to order and pay for the sandwiches.

13.2. Money

We discourage the possession of money at school. If money is needed for field trips, lunches, or special activities, it must be turned-in to the teacher upon arrival to school. Checks must be made payable to "Grace Christian Academy" for the exact amount. Please send separate checks for each item / activity. For example, send a check for lunch and a check for a field trip; do not send one check for the combined total of both lunch and field trip.

13.3. Open House Policy

The school is open for your visit any time during the academic year. Advance notice is appreciated so the classroom you would like to visit is in session on school premises (i.e., not on a field trip). Official school open house dates are scheduled January through May; notice is provided via email and other announcements.

13.4. Advertising and Promotion of Organizations Prohibition

Promotion or advertising of ANY organization on school property or by means of school lists (such as solicitations by e-mailing or calling parents of Grace Christian Academy) is prohibited unless prior approval is obtained from the Board of Christian Education. For more information, please contact the school administrator.

14. Scholar Activities

These scholar activities may be rotated on a yearly basis and may not occur every year.

14.1. *Children's Chapel (Monthly)*

A children's chapel service is conducted-usually on the second Friday of each month. The service begins at 8:10 a.m. and parents and younger siblings are welcome and encouraged to attend.

14.2. *Art Fairs (November)*

14.2.1. *Art Fair (November)*

Scholars in kindergarten through fourth grade participate once a year in an Art Fair. This Art Fair is held with the older scholars' Fine Arts Fair. Children are awarded ribbons for first, second, or third place.

14.2.2. *Fine Arts Fair (November)*

Scholars in grades 5-8 participate in this yearly event of forensics, singing, or other musical talent. Their talents are judged and performed for parents and fellow scholars.

14.3. *Academic Night (April)*

Scholars will participate each year in an Academic Night held at Grace.

14.4. *Field Day (May)*

The whole school participates in this day of outdoor races and contests against our area WELS schools. The competition takes place at Largo, MD.

14.5. *School Musical/Play (May)*

In the spring of the school year all scholars participate in a drama play or musical. The whole school may do one together or there could be two performances.

14.6. *Community Resources*

Grace Christian Academy utilizes as many community resources as possible. Some of these resources include: Providence Recreation Center, Roundtree Tennis Courts, Roundtree Park, and Hidden Oaks Nature Center.

14.7. Field Trips

Field trips can be valuable learning experiences and positive diversions from classroom work. Trips to points of educational interest will be undertaken when possible. Based on the curriculum, the faculty decides on the trips to be taken for the year. School-wide field trips are determined by the appropriateness for each class. Class-specific field trips are decided by the respective teacher.

Parent/guardian written consent will be required for each child to participate in activities off school grounds. Adult volunteers may be needed to help with the transportation and the supervision of the children on the field trip. Costs of local field trips are included in the annual activity fee.

Transportation for the field trips varies between bus, cars, van, and/or Metro. School trips are usually taken on a rented bus while class trips often have parents and teachers transport the children.

Field trips may include: The Kennedy Center, the National Zoo, a pumpkin farm, a local nursing home, a trip to another of our District schools for an art fair, local museums, and parks.

14.8. Mission Offerings (Weekly)

The scholars have a weekly opportunity to give an offering for a mission project selected jointly by scholars and faculty. We encourage parents to discuss with their children this part of being good stewards of God's gifts and then determine the child's weekly offering.

14.9. Service Projects

The children of Grace Christian Academy will perform service projects for the community during the school year to show Christian love and service to others. Examples include a coat or food drive or raking leaves.

14.10. Sports and Physical Education

We expect our scholars to adhere to the principle that their bodies are "...a temple of the Holy Spirit" (NIV, 1 Corinthians 6:19) and as such should be kept physically fit. Scholars will be required to participate in Physical Education classes unless a medical excuse is provided.

Scholars of Grace Christian Academy have the opportunity to participate in interscholastic competition with other WELS schools and other private schools. These activities are voluntary and require parental permission. Scholars interested in participating in these activities must meet eligibility requirements found in the *Scholar Expectations Policy* on page 33.

15. Mandatory Fees and Aftercare Rate

15.1. Mandatory Fees per Child

Table 15-1: Mandatory Fees per Child

| Fee for Returning Scholars | Amount | Comments |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Registration returned by 4/30 | \$50 | Mandatory |
| Registration returned by 5/31 | \$100 | Mandatory |
| Registration returned by 7/31 | \$150 | Mandatory |
| Registration returned after 7/31 | \$200 | Mandatory |
| Fee for New Scholars | Amount | Comments |
| Registration | \$100 | Mandatory |

15.2. Aftercare Hourly Rate

Aftercare hourly rates begin after dismissal and apply to all grade levels. Aftercare is charged per hour (or rounded up to the nearest fraction thereof) at the following rate:

- \$7 per hour/per child

16. Acronyms / Abbreviations and Terms

16.1. Acronyms / Abbreviations

Table 16-1: Acronyms / Abbreviations

| Acronym / Abbreviation | Definition |
|------------------------|---|
| GCA | Grace Christian Academy |
| NIV | New International Version (Bible translation used at GCA) |
| WELS | Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod |

16.2. Terms

Table 16-2: Terms

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Aftercare | Adult supervised care given for all school children from 3:30-6:00 p.m. (half days from 12:30-6:00 p.m.). |
| Board of Christian Education (BOCE) | The governing board that oversees school operations. |
| Children's Chapel | Monthly worship service held for all scholars at 8:00 a.m. in the sanctuary of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. Parents are encouraged to attend. |
| Power Hour | One (1) hour supervised quiet study environment; for more information, see <i>Power Hour – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. (Full Days Only)</i> on page 31. |

17. GCA and Family Covenant

Teacher and Administrator Commitment:

I fully commit to Grace in the following ways:

- High Quality Education – I will do everything in my power to ensure the academic success of all my scholars.
- Timeliness – I will arrive to school at or before 7:30 a.m. every day and remain at school until 4:30 p.m.
- Commitment – I will attend Power Hour on designated days.
- Communication – I will be accessible to my scholars 24 hours a day 7 days a week and return phone calls within 24 hours. My phone number is: _____
- Preparation – I will be prepared for the school day by 7:45 a.m.
- Safety – I will create a safe classroom/school environment that ensures supreme academic success.
- Gospel – I will strive to exhibit Christ-like behavior in all that I do and live the Gospel.

Teacher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Scholar Commitment:

I fully commit to Grace in the following ways:

- My Best Effort – I will do everything in my power to ensure my academic success and that of my school family.
- Responsibility – I will arrive at Grace for appropriate morning/evening study halls, and Power Hour.
- Attendance and Timeliness – I will be seated and ready to begin learning by 8:00 a.m. every school day.
- Uniform – I will maintain superior appearance and abide by the school uniform policy.
- Homework – I will remain focused on my academics at all times by completing all homework assignments thoroughly, calling my teachers with homework concerns, participating in all classes, asking questions when I do not understand something, and finding solutions to problems without resorting to excuses.
- Gospel – I will strive to exhibit Christ-like behavior in all that I do and live the Gospel.

Scholar's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Commitment:

I fully commit to Grace in the following ways:

- Timeliness – I will ensure that my child is at school before 8:00 a.m. every school day.
- Responsibility – I will make arrangements for my child to remain at Grace for designated after-school study hall, after-school detention if applicable, and participation in Power Hour. I understand that if my child needs significant academic help, he/she will be required to stay after school and/or come to school during the summer.
- Uniform – I will ensure that my child is in a clean school uniform at the beginning of every school day. I understand that my child will not be allowed to start the day unless he or she is wearing the proper uniform.
- Homework – I will ensure the completion of homework and will provide a quiet place in the home where reading, learning, and homework can effectively take place.
- Commitment – I will enforce a reasonable bedtime to ensure adequate sleep.
- Support – I will support my child's efforts to be a solution finder by enabling my child to contact classmates or teachers regarding homework concerns. I will also carefully read the papers that the school sends home to me. I will not sign anything that my child asks me to sign until I have read it and fully understand what I am signing.
- Attendance – I will notify the school in advance of any necessary absences and make every effort to schedule medical appointments outside of the regular school day.
- College – I will strongly encourage my scholar to set goals beyond high school such as college, vocational school, and/or the military.
- Gospel – I will support the Biblical foundations and Gospel focus of Grace Christian Academy.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

18. Who Do I Contact If...

I have a concern about my student's academic performance?

Your child's teacher or Pastor Wattles

I have a concern about the status of my school account?

TADS (Tuition Aid Data Services) Parent Helpline is available from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday - Friday EST (1-800-477-8237) toll free; or GCA office (Miss Penny)

I may be in need of financial assistance to pay my school account?

Either Pastor Satorius or Pastor Wattles

I have a concern about incidents in the school's Aftercare Program?

The person in charge of Aftercare or Pastor Wattles

I have a concern regarding an incident at recess?

The teacher supervising recess

I have a concern regarding an incident on a field trip?

The teacher supervising the field trip

I have a concern regarding a teacher?

The teacher or Pastor Wattles

I am in need of Pastoral support?

Contact Pastor Wattles or Pastor Satorius

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Grace Christian Academy | 703.534-5517 |
| Grace Lutheran Church | 703.534-1719 |
| Pastor Wattles | 703.839-2489 |
| Pastor Satorius (Spanish) | 703.677-7269 |

