



# Parent & Student Handbook

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Grace Academy partners with families of the High Country to provide a distinctively classical Christian education with a Biblical worldview, in order to equip students for a lifetime of learning, service, and leadership to the glory of God.

## CORE VALUES

**CHRISTIAN** is the foundation of our core values. Proverbs 9:10 tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and so at our core, we seek to point our students to God through Jesus Christ. At Grace Academy, Christian education is directed by these three ideas:

### Biblical Worldview

There is no such thing as a neutral education. It is more than the mere transmission of facts; it involves the communication of life principles and values and, therefore, requires a spiritual context. Christianity is not a subject, but rather a lens that provides perspective for every subject. The truth of God and His word is fundamental to Christian education and permeates every aspect of our goals and objectives, our teaching materials, and our curriculum. God is acknowledged in each classroom as the source of all that is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy.

### Christlike Modeling

On a daily basis, students are surrounded by caring adults who see our students as human beings on the path of being made more and more like Jesus, not just as minds waiting to be filled with information. Christlike modeling is a key component of our calling to develop powerful and positive disciples. All of our faculty and staff are committed believers who are active in their local churches and they are committed to praying for children and modeling a life of discipleship. This results in students knowing that they are loved and motivates them to live exemplary lives.

### Statement of Faith

Grace Academy is truly a God-ordained, Christ-centered, Spirit-led family! We are a non-denominational school with families from over 30 local churches represented in our student body. This results in a focus on the essentials of Christianity as expressed in our Statement of Faith.

**CLASSICAL** expresses our educational philosophy. We believe our job is to teach students how to learn not just what to learn. This results in individuals who are skilled, self-directed, life-long learners. At Grace Academy, the art of learning is mastered through classical education as students are taught to:

### Eagerly Gather Information

From day one, we want students to know that the world is their classroom. Our goal is to teach them to always be listening and observing. Yes, they will learn by sitting in a classroom, and reading great books, and memorizing math facts. But they will also learn by playing at recess, exploring in the woods behind their house, and staring up at the stars at night. Psalm 19:1 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork". As much as possible, we want to instill a love of learning into our students.

### Critically Discern Excellence

Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8, "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." It's not enough to blindly take in information. A critical tool in classical education is to teach students how to take what they observe (their knowledge base) and evaluate it to discern what is excellent. To determine what is good and evil. Or sometimes, even harder, to determine what is good, better, or best. The more students develop critical thinking skills, the more we can trust them in life to appropriately apply truth in whatever circumstances they find themselves.

### Lovingly Proclaim Truth

As students grow and develop, it's exciting to see them read a book or watch a debate on television and apply critical thinking skills. To see them sift through information, measure it against God's Word, and to see excellence rise to the top. The end goal now of classical education is to teach students to

effectively communicate. Armed with truth in their minds and a passion in their hearts, students learn to use truth to shape the world around them for God's glory keeping in mind that if the delivery is not respectable, compassionate, and filled with love, they will lose their power of influence and their opportunity to change the world for Christ. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal." (I Corinthians 13:1)

**COLLABORATIVE** describes the way we educate and sustain success. Transformational results occur when we partner with parents in our mission. At Grace Academy, parents collaborate with our faculty and staff in three distinct ways:

#### In Education

We read in the Old Testament that educating children is primarily a function of the home (Deuteronomy 6:4-9); therefore, we see it as our job not to replace parents but to be a resource and partner with parents in their responsibility to educate their children. Parents take the lead in directing learning in the home. Grace Academy gladly walks alongside parents and provides the academic curriculum and tools necessary to teach children the art of learning. Success is only achieved when parents enforce and expound upon these principles outside the classroom.

#### In Service

Our professional faculty lead the charge in disseminating the tools for learning at school. But not all learning takes place in the classroom. School clubs, field trips, and special events all greatly enhance and broaden a child's education. It takes a dedicated team of actively involved parents to make these opportunities a reality. In a world where we are all busy with many responsibilities, taking the time to volunteer, teaches our children what it means to be a servant leader and to collaborate with others towards a common goal.

#### In Vision

As parents who live and work in the High Country, our hope is that you will spread the benefits of a Christian, classical, collaborative education throughout the community. Educate, refer, recruit. Most of our current families are here because someone took the time to talk to them about Grace Academy. Our future and our success are greatly enhanced when parents champion our vision.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God, the final authority for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in right living (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1: 20-21).

We believe in one God, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each being a distinct person and with a distinct function, but all of one essence and all possessing the same nature, perfections and attributes (John 4:24; Romans 8:14-15; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Genesis 1:31).

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, fully man and fully God, only begotten Son of the Father. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary and lived a sinless life. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, buried and rose physically from the dead. He ascended to the right hand of the Father and will come again in power and glory (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:8-25; Colossians 1:15; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-9).

We believe that mankind was created by a direct act of God in His image, not from a previously existing life, that all men sinned in Adam (the historical father of the entire human race) and thus incurred both physical and spiritual death; and that all men have inherited a sinful nature (Genesis 1:1-3; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 1 and 5; Romans 3:23).

We believe that salvation of the lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, is absolutely essential and that this salvation is received through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord not as a result of good works (Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture.

We believe that the Holy Spirit carries out this work in our lives, empowering us to grow in the loving union with our Heavenly Father and to walk in obedience to do His will. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a personal being who convicts the world of sin and who regenerates, indwells, empowers, guides, and bestows spiritual gifts on believers and who seals them eternally for God (John 6:37; John 16; Romans 8; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30).

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation (Revelation 20, 21; 1 Corinthians 15).

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 2).

We believe that it is the responsibility and privilege of every Christian to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and to seek to make growing disciples (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Scripture outlines and confirms God's perfect plan in creating humans as distinctly male and distinctly female, an immutable binary gender distinction identified at birth in accordance with an individual's biological sex and DNA sequencing (Genesis 1:27, 2:18, 21-24, 5:2; Mark 10:6-8; 1 Corinthians 14:33). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a

single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman as biologically conceived at birth ((1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that any form of sexual immorality is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Grace Academy as a Christian ministry providing a Biblical role model, it is imperative that all Grace Academy students, their families, staff, faculty and volunteers agree to and abide by this statement of faith (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including prenatal babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).

Note: Our Statement of Faith is not exhaustive of all of our beliefs. The Bible, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with absolute authority regarding the proper conduct of humanity and is the unchanging foundation for all belief and behavior. The Grace Academy Board of Directors holds final interpretive authority on biblical meaning and application with regard to faith, doctrine, policy, practice, and discipline.

## POSITION STATEMENTS

**Reverence of God's Name:** We believe reverence should be shown in all areas of instruction, proper respect, and consideration of God's character to ensure that God's name, character, and truth are honored and respected. References to the name or attributes of God must be consistent with biblical principles and should not be silly or trite.

**Gender and Sexuality:** We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

**Marriage:** We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ's relationship with His rescue mission (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, harassment, cohabitation, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, child abuse, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

**Self-Identification, Homosexual, Bisexual, Transgender, and Other:** We believe homosexual, bisexual, transgender, adultery, fornication, LGBTQ+, and other action, speech, and behavior outside of God's design to be sin; therefore, declaring acceptance of, condoning the practice of, or stating support for such is not acceptable from Grace Academy students and staff.

**Sanctity of Human Life:** We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139.)

**Essential Truth:** We believe the foundational truths found in the Grace Academy Statement of Faith and the principles outlined in the Grace Academy Position Statements form the essential tenets of our school. These statements are sincerely-held positions of our School. Within these tenets, we seek to promote "unity in essentials," beyond these tenets, "liberty in non-essentials," and "in all things charity" (Christian love toward others).

## **SINCERELY-HELD RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

Grace Academy holds the sincere religious belief that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as either male or female, and that these two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's sex at conception is a rejection of the image of God within that person (Ps. 139:13).

Grace Academy recognizes there may be instances where members of the School community experience disparity between their sex and their feelings about their sex. This disparity can motivate them to make declarative affirmations or behave in ways contrary to God's Word and His plan for their lives. Grace Academy encourages members of the School community who are struggling with their sexual identity to seek help from their pastor and other trained professionals who might best assist them in clarifying and defining their sexual identity in accordance with God's Word. The School administrators will also meet with the individual and/or parents/guardians to discuss adherence to this policy.

Grace Academy will at all times interact with members of the School community according to their biological sex. A member of the School community who wishes to express a gender other than his or her sex is understood to be rejecting the truth and the image of God within that person (Ps. 139:13). Biblical Christianity requires the body of Christ to compassionately dwell in the truth and assist those we love in doing the same (Eph. 4:15).

A member of the School community who openly and unrepentantly rejects their sex or declares themselves to be of a LGBTQ+ persuasion, either in or out of school, is rejecting the image of God within that person – behavior that dishonors the Holy Trinity and the Word of God. Such actions, speech, or behavior constitutes a person's failure to adhere to their commitment to abide by the behavioral standards established by Grace Academy, which is cause for terminating their privilege of membership in the School community.

To preserve the function and integrity of Grace Academy and to provide a biblical role model to members of the School community and the community-at-large, it is imperative that all members of the School community agree to and abide by this policy.

## ADMISSIONS

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

High Country Christian Education Ministries DBA Grace Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs.

### **Admission Requirements**

Grace Academy is a Christian school; therefore, we require that at least one parent be a professing Christian and be actively involved in a local church. During the enrollment process, both parents will be asked to sign a statement that they have read and agree with the Mission Statement, Statement of Faith, Position Statements, and Sincerely-Held Religious Beliefs. Kindergarten applicants must be 5 years old by August 31 of the enrollment year.

#### Pastor Recommendation

Grace Academy requires a Pastor Recommendation for all new families. This may be a Senior Pastor, Youth Pastor, Executive Pastor or another member of the pastoral staff who can speak to your family's commitment to a local church. On the application, you will be asked to provide the name and email address for your pastor. As a courtesy and to ensure that your application is not held up, please contact your pastor before applying and let them know that they will be contacted via email by Grace Academy. Applications are not considered complete until all recommendations have been received by our Admissions Office.

#### Teacher Recommendation & School Records

Except for homeschool students and students applying to kindergarten, Grace Academy requires a Teacher Recommendation and Academic Records for all students. On the application, you will be asked to provide a teacher's name and email address. As a courtesy and to ensure that your application is not held up, please contact your child's teacher before applying and let them know that they will be contacted via email by Grace Academy. In addition, Grace Academy will request school records from your child's current school. Applications are not considered complete until all recommendations and school records have been received by our Admissions Office.

#### Homeschool Students

While not required to have a Teacher Recommendation, homeschool students applying to Grace Academy will be required on the application to submit a list of curriculum by subject, current year grades (or other assessment), and standardized test scores.

#### Application

Parents apply online via our website. A non-refundable online fee is required for each application. Once the application is complete, and we have received all the necessary documentation, we will reach out to you to schedule a student assessment and later a parent/student interview. Both are held on-site at Grace Academy. Our Administration will determine final acceptance and grade level placement of students. Parents will be notified in writing of the decision regarding acceptance.

## TUITION & FEES

### Tuition and Extended Learning

Annual tuition covers the full classical curriculum, which is Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday for K-8th and Monday-Thursday for 9th and above. Parents may elect to add Extended Learning (Wednesday and/or Friday) to the Classical Curriculum Annual Tuition. Parents may choose any combination of Extended Learning days.

### Tuition Discounts

Grace Academy offers the following sibling discounts:

- 2nd child receives 5%
- 3rd child receives 10%
- 4th child receives 15%

The discount is applied to the tuition of the younger sibling(s). A discount of 2% is given to families who choose to pay their tuition in full at the time of enrollment.

### Tuition Agreements

During the enrollment process, you will be asked to set up an online account with FACTS, our tuition management company. After an account is created, you will choose a payment plan and enter either your bank account or credit card information so that automatic payments may be received by FACTS for tuition.

### Tuition Payment Schedule

Monthly Tuition Agreements: The total cost of tuition (including extended learning) and the cost of consumables is divided into 10 payments. Payments are billed monthly beginning in May and ending in February. If a student enrolls after May 1, the account balance will be divided between the remaining months.

Biannual Tuition Agreements: The total cost of tuition (including extended learning) and the cost of consumables is divided into 2 payments. Payments are billed in May and October.

Pay-in-Full Tuition Agreements: The total cost of tuition (including extended learning) and consumables is due in May. Pay-in-Full Tuition Agreements receive a 2% discount on tuition and extended learning (not on the consumable fee). Families may always choose the pay-in-full option, but the 2% discount is NOT available to families who enroll after June 1 or to students who receive financial aid, including the NC Opportunity Scholarship.

### Consumable Fee

All students are charged a consumable fee along with their tuition. The consumable fee goes towards the purchase of books, worksheets, testing materials, etc. that are a onetime use for students and must be purchased every school year. **No discounts (including sibling or pay-in-full are applied to the consumable fee).**

All payments must be paid online through FACTS.

### Withdrawals/Financial Commitment

When you enroll at Grace Academy, you are enrolling for a full academic year and are making a financial commitment to pay tuition for the full year. After June 1, if you decide to withdraw your child from Grace Academy, you will be relieved of one half of your total annual tuition obligation if written notice is received by Grace Academy on or before October 1. Any balance due may be paid all at once when your student is withdrawn, or it may be paid monthly in accordance with our monthly payment plan. Any tuition amounts

above ½ of the total annual amount already paid at the time of notice of withdrawal will be refunded to you.

The full amount of rewarded funds from the NC Opportunity Scholarship only applies to students who remain enrolled at Grace Academy for the full academic year. Per NC law, if a student who has received the NC Opportunity Scholarship withdraws prior to the start of school or midyear, the scholarship funds must be returned either in part or in whole and the tuition balance must be paid by the family. Grace Academy's Withdrawal/Financial Commitment policy supersedes the NC Opportunity Scholarship withdrawal policy.

### **Fees**

Consumable books and workbooks, field trips, and other classroom supplies are not included in the cost of tuition. Below is an example of some additional fees students will incur during the school year. All prices listed are approximate and per student.

- Books & Supplies: \$275
- Grades K-2 Fields Trips: \$50
- Grades 3-5 Field Trips: \$100
- Grades 6-9 Field Trips: \$300

### **Tuition Assistance — External Opportunity**

Families are encouraged to visit the [North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority](#) website to see if they meet the eligibility requirements for the NC Opportunity Scholarship Program. This program provides tuition assistance for awarded students who enroll in a participating nonpublic school.

Because the scholarship money is awarded independent of the nonpublic school you choose, students do not have to apply to or be enrolled in Grace Academy prior to applying for the scholarship. For this reason, parents are encouraged to apply for the scholarship early before the Priority Window closes.

### **Tuition Assistance — Internal Opportunity**

Tuition Assistance is available from Grace Academy to current families who demonstrate a financial need to continue their child's education at the school. Current families desiring to enroll a new student may also be granted consideration for the additional sibling. If a family meets the eligibility requirements for the NC Opportunity Scholarship, they must first apply to that program before applying for internal tuition assistance.

Awards are made toward the full Classical Curriculum Tuition, but not Extended Learning. You may be enrolled in Extended Learning, but that part of your tuition is not available to be considered for financial assistance. No full-tuition awards are made.

Funding is not presently available for new students; first-time enrolling families must be prepared to cover the full cost.

Returning faculty members with first-time enrolling children are eligible to apply for tuition assistance in accordance with the guidelines and process explained below.

Applications for tuition assistance are evaluated by an outside agency, FAST (Financial Aid for School Tuition) by Independent School Management (ISM), and kept in the strictest of confidence. Applications must be received by January 30.

## ACADEMICS

### Student/Parent Resources

Grace Academy provides a number of resources to parents and their students to assist them on their academic journey.

#### Family Portal

The Grace Academy Family Portal is a private and secure parents' portal that allows parents to see academic information specific to their children. The following information can be viewed in the Family Portal:

- Attendance
- Grades
- Report Cards
- Lesson Plans
- School Calendar
- School Announcements
- Staff and School Directory
- Family Account Balances with Online Payment
- Faculty and Staff Email Addresses

At enrollment, each family will create their Family Portal account that allows them to access all of the above information from their computer or mobile device.

#### Resource Notebook

Resource Notebooks (RNs) are binders provided by Grace Academy for some that contain necessary supplemental materials for students. These are kept at home at all times. Since some RNs may contain answer keys or tests, they should be stored in a place away from student access. Not all grades are issued Resource Notebooks.

#### Student Binders (K-5)

The Student Binder is brought back and forth between home and school each day by students. In addition to other items, the Student Binder houses completed work by the students, returned graded work by the teacher, and work still in progress.

#### Lesson Plans

Lesson plans are found on the Family Portal. Teachers post assignments the weekend prior on Saturday by 5pm. Before sending their child to school on Monday mornings, parents are **required** to print their student's lesson plans for grades K-8 and place them in the front of the child's Student Binder (unless otherwise directed by the teacher). In the case of a school schedule change or cancellation due to inclement weather, teachers will adjust the assignments and post an updated page by 10am that day or email parents directly with the updates. When this happens, parents must reprint the up-dated lesson plans.

#### Class Information Sheet/Syllabus

Students will receive a class information sheet or syllabus (depending on the grade) at the beginning of the school year. Classroom expectations, grading information, and other class requirements can be found on this document.

### School Classroom

Professional teachers present lessons in the school classroom on instruction days. Grace Academy teachers choose each piece of curriculum according to classical and Christian distinctives that take students through each subject at an appropriate pace over the course of the academic year. On the school classroom days,

students benefit from the rigor of a disciplined environment, a range of instruction methods, and social learning opportunities.

### **Home Classroom**

On the remaining days of the week, parents co-teach, guiding their children to complete lesson plans and assignments prepared by the classroom teacher. Parents oversee the completion of these assignments that reinforce and extend lessons. This arrangement gives parents more time to enjoy and train their children, with freedom from choosing and planning curriculum.

### **Extended Learning Classroom**

For families who need or desire assistance from professional educators to complete the home classroom assignments, Grace Academy offers an extended learning classroom option on Wednesday and Friday for K-8 and Friday only for 9<sup>th</sup> and above. Parents may choose any number or combination of days in K-8. In the extended learning classroom, instructors oversee the same lesson plans that a parent would in the home classroom. It is expected that parents remain involved in their child's schoolwork and to keep in mind that memory work and some writing assignments will still need to be completed at home (See Appendix H).

### **Grading**

Grace Academy's academic calendar is made up of four quarters. Parents will be informed of their child's progress and proficiency at the midpoint and end of every quarter. Teachers will offer parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first three quarters. Conferences are required for any student who is failing or in danger of failing. Teachers will schedule other times as necessary or at a parent's request.

#### Grading Scale for Grades K-2

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Rubric</b>
E	Excellent	Masters Standards
S	Satisfactory	Meets Standards
N	Needs Improvement	Approaches Standards
U	Unsatisfactory	Does Not Meet Standards

#### Grading Scale for 3-8

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Numeric Grade</b>	<b>Rubric</b>
A	90-100	Masters Standards
B	80-89	Meets Standards
C	70-79	Approaches Standards
D/F	69 and below	Does Not Meet Standards

## Grading Scale for 9-10

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Numeric Grade</b>	<b>GPA</b>	<b>GPA - Honors Classes</b>
A	100-94	4.0	5.0
A-	93-90	3.67	4.67
B+	89-87	3.33	4.33
B	86-84	3.0	4.0
B-	83-80	2.67	3.67
C+	79-77	2.33	3.33
C	76-74	2.0	3.0
C-	73-70	1.67	2.67
D/F	69 and below	0.00	0.00

For all grades, P = Pass and F = Failed for Pass/Fail Classes such as Art, Music, and PE

### Memory Assessment

At the end of each quarter, students will be given an oral test on assigned memory work. There will be an assessment via an oral recitation by students, either individually or in small groups, using an objective assessment rubric. Teachers will figure and record the grade that will count as a test in the subject area that correlates with the memory content. Students will be well prepared for this assessment beforehand by the Teachers.

### Quarterly Grade

Grades for each of the four academic quarters will be figured and recorded by teachers on Report Cards and made available on the Family Portal approximately one week following the end of each quarter.

### End-of-year Final Grade

A final, cumulative grade for the year in each subject will be figured by averaging the four quarterly grades and will be recorded by teachers on the Report Cards.

## **Homework**

There are few questions as to the relevance of homework in an academic setting. It is a necessity. Utilizing methods of repetition in and out of school can reinforce new concepts best. Homework will not be assigned over a holiday since we wish to encourage quality family time. Below are the primary reasons or causes for homework:

- Students often need some amount of extra practice in specific, new concepts, skills, or facts. In certain subjects there is not enough time in a school day to do as much practice as may be necessary for understanding.

- Studying for tests, memorization work, reviewing notes, reading of literature, projects and research are all examples of work done outside of class.
- Grace Academy recognizes that parental involvement is critical to a child's education. Homework can be used as an opportunity for parents to actively assist their child in his studies.
- Students are expected to make beneficial use of their time at school for learning. Homework may also be assigned to students who did not use the time wisely in class.

Guidelines for Assigning Homework: Grace Academy's classical Christian curriculum is challenging in its content and often accelerated in its pacing. Teachers plan assignments for their students to accomplish curricular goals as intentionally and efficiently as possible. Assignments are weighted and considered carefully to make sure they accomplish clear curricular goals and do so with a reasonable requirement of time and effort beyond the time spent in class.

### **Late Work Policy**

Parents should be familiar with each grade's late work policy found on the student's information sheet or syllabus.

Teachers are allowed to make allowance and adjustment to deadlines for illness or emergencies, or other viable reasons. Students are still encouraged to complete the work and turn it in, even if it is late and they do not receive a grade, so that they can master subject concepts and learn punctuality.

Teachers are not obliged to provide assignments or materials earlier than the weekend prior to class, nor are they obliged to extend deadlines if there has not been a request and explanation from the parent to do so.

If a child is sick, the teacher will work with the parent, at the parent's initiation, to adjust their deadlines accordingly after their return to school and before they begin to be penalized, with the teacher having the authority to extend the deadlines based on the length of illness.

At the end of a quarter, it is up to the teacher's discretion how to handle work that is still outstanding for excusable reasons (illness or emergency).

### **Academic Probation**

Grace Academy is committed to the successful academic progress of all students in all subject areas. Any student on academic probation is immediately ineligible to participate in Grace Academy's extra-curricular activities.

#### Lower School Students

- Students in grades K-6 who have unsatisfactory or failing work in any two subjects or skills areas for one nine-week grading period shall be placed on academic probation for the ensuing grading period.
- Supportive helps, possibly including private tutoring or labs at an extra charge, will be recommended to the parents and strongly encouraged.
- The student on probation is then required to pass all subjects and skills areas during the probationary period.
- Failure to do so will necessitate reevaluation of the suitability of the child's placement at Grace Academy; the Administration and Grace Academy Board will determine the action to be taken, with expulsion as an option.
- The child, if allowed to continue at Grace Academy for the current academic year, will remain on academic probation for the ensuing nine-week grading period.

- Any student on academic probation is immediately ineligible to participate in Grace Academy's extra-curricular activities.

### Upper School Students

- In order to remain in good academic standing, students in grades 7 and up are required to maintain a 74 or higher and must successfully pass all subject areas. Exceptions may be made for students who have a grade average of less than 74 but who have not failed any courses during the quarter in session.
- If a student's academic (non-elective) letter grade average is less than 74, or if the student has failed more than one class, that student will be placed on academic probation for the following quarter.
- A parent/student/teacher conference will be arranged at this time, during which a written plan of action will be agreed upon and signed by the parent and student.
- Supportive helps, possibly including private tutoring or labs at an extra charge, will be recommended and strongly encouraged.
- If, at the end of the next nine-week grading period, the student's non-elective GPA has not risen to at least a 75, and if that student has not passed all subject areas, the Administration and/or Board will reevaluate the student's placement at Grace Academy.
- The student, if allowed to continue at Grace Academy for the current academic year, will remain on academic probation for the ensuing nine-week grading period.
- Any student on academic probation is immediately ineligible to participate in Grace Academy's extra-curricular activities.

### **Academic Integrity**

In the arena of academic integrity, the Biblical injunction is both in the positive... "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving" (Colossians 3:23-24). And the negative... "You shall not steal" (Exodus 20:15).

### Cheating is defined as:

- Copying someone else's homework answers. Students may occasionally be given permission to "work together" either in school or outside the classroom. Even then, students should only help each other, not simply give/receive answers. If there is any doubt about the appropriateness of working together, the teacher should be consulted in advance to determine the policy.
- Having another student's homework, test, quiz, or workbook without permission from the teacher of that subject.
- Altering or filling in answers during the grading process to make an item correct. This is cheating whether it is done on his/her own paper or by the grader.
- Obtaining test or quiz questions and/or answers in advance through unauthorized means. The person who provides access to these is also guilty of cheating.
- Giving answers during a quiz or test, either orally or by intentionally allowing another student to copy them.
- Receiving answers during a quiz or test in any way, e.g., orally, copying from another student, or looking at any source containing answers. Looking on another student's paper or at any other source of information during a testing time is considered cheating whether the student changes answers or not.
- Completing your homework using a Solutions Manual, Answer Key, or other answer material provided to parents.
- Using ChatGPT or other AI tools for any correspondences, assignments, papers, or any other academic work assigned by teachers to students.

### Consequences of cheating:

- Even if the student is not “caught,” there is loss of fellowship with God and loss of respect for one’s self (personal dignity).
- If a student is caught cheating, there is a loss of trust and reputation. Parents will be contacted and asked to support the action of the school. Consequences include an automatic grade of “0”, student apology to Teacher (verbal) and to Head of School (written), and, possibly, suspension or expulsion.

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Presenting work that, based on a student’s previous work, is clearly not the result of the student’s labor or copying from a source, without reference to that source, to imply that the material is the work of the student or using ChatGPT or other AI tools.

Consequences of plagiarism:

- Plagiarized content found in a student paper or project will result in a zero for the paper or the project. This includes plagiarism from written or electronic sources. At a minimum, additional consequences will be applied if the plagiarism was intentional. The Teacher, Administration, and/or Board will determine the exact penalty for plagiarism. Penalties could include suspension and/or expulsion.

In all cases above, we pray for the end result to be both repentance by student and life-lesson learned, as well as forgiveness and restoration with the Lord and all involved.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### **Family Portal**

Updates and announcements that pertain to the entire student body will be posted on the Home page of the Family Portal. Parents should make it a habit of checking this page once a day.

### **Grace Weekly Announcements**

Grace Weekly Announcements are posted each weekend and appear at the top of student lesson plans. Parents should review these each weekend for updates and reminders about the week ahead.

### **Knights in the Know Facebook Page**

This private Facebook group is separate from our public Facebook page. This is a page where Grace Academy students and their families can connect and keep updated on the latest news and events at Grace Academy. It's also a place for families to share community activities and events that may be beneficial to the student body. The page is also used for the buying/selling/trading of books, materials, and school clothing.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of information about your student (academic, behavioral, or financial) is of the utmost importance, as is the confidentiality of information between teachers and parents or administration about students and families. As a Christian school, we respect this principle of confidentiality. Please contact the Administration if you have questions about any situation.

### **Grievance Policy**

These guidelines are to be followed whenever there is a dispute or grievance concerning any aspect of Grace Academy's operations or between any two parties connected in a direct way to the school. This includes students, parents, faculty, staff, volunteers, Administration and the Board of Directors.

#### Definitions

- **Dispute:** Any disagreement that results in broken fellowship or trust between the parties, or that disrupts the lines of authority in the school, or which (in the judgment of either disputant) threatens the successful implementation of Grace Academy's objectives and goals.
- **Grievance:** Any concern about any decision made by one in authority, where the concern is large enough to appeal the decision beyond that authority to the next level.

#### General

- It is understood that if any disputes arise which are not covered by this policy, the Board or Administration will decide what procedures to follow based on a process of reasoning from those procedures established by this policy.
- It is also understood that, especially during the attempted resolution of concerns, the principles of Matthew 18 will be followed.

#### Students and/or parents to Faculty/Staff

- All concerns about the classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents, or if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. If the student presents the concern, a respectful demeanor is required at all times.
- If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may bring the concern to the Head of School. If the student brings the concern, he must have permission from his parents to do so.
- If there is still no resolution, the parents or student may request a hearing by the Board. Requests must be made in writing and submitted to the Head of School for delivery to the Board.

### Parents to Administration

- If parents have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of the classrooms), they should bring their concerns to the Head of School.
- If the situation is not resolved, they should present their concerns in writing to the Board. The concern will be passed to the Board through the Head of School. The Head of School must pass on all such concerns.

### Volunteers to Faculty/Staff/Administration

- If any volunteer has a concern about the volunteer work, he/she will present that concern to the staff member responsible for the volunteer's oversight (Teacher, Head of School, Board, etc.).
- If the problem is not resolved, then the concern should be presented in writing to the Head of School or Board (if the Head of School was the one consulted in Step 1 above), followed by a meeting with the Head of School to discuss the concern.
- If the situation is not resolved, the volunteer should present the concerns to the Board in writing. The concern will be passed to the Board through the Head of School. The Head of School must pass on all such concerns.

### Staff to Administration

- All concerns about the standards of the school must first be presented to the Head of School. A respectful demeanor is required at all times.
- If the problem is not resolved, the staff member may appeal the decision in writing to the Board, followed by a meeting to discuss the matter. The request will be passed to the Board through the Head of School. The Head of School must pass on all such requests.

## DISCIPLINE

### Philosophy

Our discipline philosophy is rooted in our Biblical/theological rationale which emerges into a culture of respect. Students whose behavior becomes offensive to such culture generally is defined in two categories: minor and major.

### Biblical/Theological Rationale

The word “discipline” and “disciple” both come from the same Latin word, “discipulus”, meaning pupil. At Grace Academy, the Board, Administration, and Teachers will serve as a complement to the home in discipling children to live God-honoring lives, and, as one would expect, discipline will be an important aspect of that discipling process.

All of Webster’s definitions of discipline apply in the school’s philosophy, such as “training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character” and “to train or develop by instruction and exercise especially in self-control.” We believe that it is possible, right, and essential to a productive academic setting to clearly define and teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior, as well as, what is right and what is wrong according to the principles of living found in the Scriptures.

Our discipline philosophy is founded upon the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 22 when He summed up the Ten Commandments with these two greatest commandments: (1) “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind”, and (2) “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”. We believe that this love of which Jesus spoke calls us as a school to teach children how first, to better honor and value God, and second, to better honor and value God’s creation of other people and things.

From this foundational establishment by Jesus comes our two fundamental concepts of discipline. The first is that we should seek to establish a meaningful relationship with God. The second is that we should love and value other people just as we value ourselves and that we should value God’s creation. The overall goal in applying these two fundamental discipline concepts is to teach children how to know for themselves what is right and wrong, and how to govern themselves (self-control) in a way that honors God. We want to avoid a lengthy list of “Does this honor God?” and “Does this honor God’s creation?” We believe that the end result will be young people who can make Godly choices for themselves and live lives honoring to the Lord.

The two fundamental discipline concepts may be more fully explained as follows:

We should seek to establish a meaningful relationship with God. This concept includes an understanding of what He taught in the Bible about Himself and how we should relate to Him. Our relationship with God is, after all, the cornerstone of and reason for a believer’s personal discipline. The entire curriculum at Grace Academy, from Bible to Art, strives to reveal our God of holiness, righteousness, and grace in ways that endear the children to their heavenly Father so that they may accept His correction, just as children who love and respect their earthly father accept his correction. We realize that the Lord is the highest and final authority over our children, and that He has given parents the responsibility of raising their children in a God-honoring way. As a school, we see the administration and teachers as being a third level (below the Lord and parents) of authority and guidance in a child’s life.

We should love and value other people just as we value ourselves, and we should value God’s Creation. This concept follows naturally from the first in that having a solid relationship with God is essential to establishing good relationships with people. From this fundamental precept, we strive to teach children about self-control in the way they handle themselves, their own bodies, and their interactions with others. This instruction and discipline in the area of relationships will involve such things as how

people should talk to each other, play with each other, include each other, support and encourage each other, handle disagreements, receive correction, express emotions properly, etc.

In the area of valuing God's creation, we desire to teach responsibility for one's own and others' possessions and a Scriptural respect for animals and nature that fulfills God's mandate for man to subdue the earth and have dominion over it.

In conclusion, the central truth that we want our students to learn is that we, as believers, should honor God completely by valuing Him, His creations, and all people and things. This is truly "the greatest commandment", and we desire to teach this principle at every opportunity.

## **Culture of Respect**

### Respect for Adults

- Always address and respond to adults respectfully.
- Obey your teacher the first time you are asked.
- Follow all instructions immediately, properly, and quietly.

### Respect and Care for Others

- Think before you speak and find encouraging things to say to others. Do not make fun of others, speak unkindly, tease or call names, etc.
- Pay attention to those around you. Do not push past adults or other children, overpower or hurt others physically in any way.
- Try to include everyone in activities and conversations, especially those who may feel left out.

### Respect for Facility/Property

- Put all trash in a trash can.
- Use bathrooms properly and keep them neat and clean. Report any bathroom problems to your teacher. Do not leave the classroom without a teacher's permission.

### Respect for Self

- Sit in your chair with all four chair legs on the ground.
- Sit without fidgeting or playing with something on your desk. Keep your hands to yourself and away from your neighbor.
- Be quiet when others are speaking to the class, but especially when your teacher is talking. Raise your hand, and stand when required, to ask or to answer a question.
- Keep personal and school belongings orderly and out of the way of others.
- Do not touch another student's property, school property, or church property without permission. Do not chew gum.
- Stay on task and participate in classroom discussions and activities. Walk slowly and quietly in the hallway.
- During lunchtime...sit in your seat while you eat unless your teacher excuses you from the table. Use polite table manners. Clean up your eating space, dispose of your trash, and check the floor under your table for any needed clean up.

## **Definitions of Behavior Offenses**

### Minor Offenses are:

- Horseplay.
- Talking out of turn.
- Disturbing others.
- Chewing gum.

- Playing with things on desk.
- Meddling with or accidentally damaging property.
- Failure to comply.

Major Offenses are:

- Disrespect – including slander, bullying, or any blatant public disrespect toward any adult, Teacher or another student.
- Dishonesty – including lying, cheating, and stealing (see expanded policy below on Cheating and Plagiarism).
- Rebellion – outright disobedience in response to instructions.
- Fighting – striking in anger with the intention to harm the other student(s).
- Inappropriate language – obscene, vulgar, or profane talk, as well as taking the name of the Lord in vain.
- Inappropriate touching.

### **Discipline Procedures**

In light of the above philosophy, the method of discipline will be determined by the Teacher(s), Administration, and if necessary, the Board, and will be administered in accord with the student's problem and attitudes. All discipline will be based on biblical principles, e.g. restitution, apologies (public and private), swift/purposeful discipline, restoration of fellowship, no lingering attitudes, etc. The vast majority of discipline problems, including minor offensives, will be dealt with immediately at the classroom level. Love and forgiveness, firmness and fairness will be an integral part of the discipline of a student. The school will also seek ways to encourage positive self-discipline characteristics in all students.

In the case of major offensives that occur on school grounds or in connection with a school event or field trip, students will meet directly with Administration (versus the teacher).

- First offense of the day – Student removed from the class to meet with Administration, written documentation placed in student file by Teacher and Administration, and parent is notified by Teacher or Administration.
- Second offense of the day – Parent will be called to pick up child from school and a documented Teacher/parent conference will be held in which the details of the offense are explained and the parents' assistance and support in averting further problems will be sought.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Chronic minor offenses will result in documented Teacher/parent conference, and if persisting, may result in expulsion.
- Restitution will be made by the offending party for any broken property.
- Serious Misconduct: Should a student commit an act with such serious consequences that the Administration deems it necessary, the above-mentioned procedures may be bypassed and a suspension or expulsion imposed immediately by the Board. Examples of such serious misconduct could include: acts endangering the lives of other students or Staff members, gross violence/vandalism to the school property or church facilities, violations of civil law, or any act in clear contradiction of scriptural commands. Additionally, students may be subject to school discipline for serious misconduct, which occurs on school grounds after school hours or while on school sponsored activities conducted off campus.
- Re-admittance: Should the expelled student desire to be readmitted to Grace Academy at a later date, the Board and Administration will decide based on the student's attitude and circumstances at the time of reapplication.

## MEDICAL

### **Student Medical Information and Medications**

A Student Medical Information Form will be completed at the time of enrollment. A copy of this form will be maintained at school and in the Family Portal in the event that a medical issue or emergency would arise. Any prescription medications that must be administered to your child must come with written instructions from the parent or prescribing physician to the Grace Academy office. Students may not keep medication with them. An ibuprofen pain reliever is available to be administered as needed to students whose parents have signed the authorization line on the medical information form. Parents may update their child's medical information at any time on the Family Portal by clicking on School/Web Forms/Family Demographic Form.

### **Sickness at School**

If a child becomes sick at school, he/she will be removed from class by the teacher to sit in the office. Grace Academy will contact the parent to come and pick up the child.

### **Sickness Guidelines:**

Most parents are quick to realize if their children are really sick, but what about those gray areas? Are they coming down with something? Shouldn't the contagious period be over by now? What about mild symptoms? Below is a list of symptoms/conditions and school requirements.

#### Coughing

If your child has a mild, intermittent cough (i.e., can go 15 minutes without a cough), they may be considered safe to attend. If they cough consistently, this may indicate an infection which can be spread on cough droplets and he/she should remain at home for 24 hours or until the cough is better.

#### Runny Nose

Children with continual running (i.e., wiping needed every 10-15 minutes) can be very demanding for the teachers and staff. Use discretion and err on the side of safety.

#### Fever

A child who has had a temperature greater than 100.5 at noon or later should not attend school the following day and should not return until they are fever free for a 24-hour period.

#### Sore Throat

Unless accompanied with other symptoms, such as fever, consider safe. Please do not send a child to school who feels too poorly to participate.

#### Ear Infection

Not considered infectious in itself, but the cold that caused the ear infection may be contagious. Go by the cold symptoms and use discretion.

#### Eye Discharge

If discharge is wiped away, and new discharge returns, there is probably an underlying infection and should be considered contagious. Please do not send a child to school with "pink eye." The child should not attend school until he/she is on an antibiotic for 24 hours.

#### Antibiotic

Child is no longer contagious after 24 hours on antibiotics and fever free.

#### Diarrhea

More than 2 abnormally loose stools in a single day should be considered infectious and the child should not attend school until at least 24 hours after the last episode.

### Vomiting

If a child becomes ill and vomits, he/she should not attend school until at least 24 hours after the last episode.

### Head Lice

Students should stay at home until all live lice and nits (eggs) that are within ½ inch of the scalp have been removed following application of a lice killing product or procedure.

### Flu

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 4 main ways you and your family may keep from getting sick with the flu at school and at home:

- Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. All Grace Academy classrooms will have hand-sanitizer and tissues.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder; not into your hands.
- Stay home if your child is sick for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine). Keeping sick students at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
- Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu when vaccines are available.

### **Food Allergies**

It is the goal of Grace Academy to partner with parents to ensure a safe environment while children are attending school. Grace Academy operates in a shared facility. Many of the classrooms used by Grace Academy are multi-purpose classrooms used by others outside our student body. Grace Academy cannot ensure that these classrooms are kept "peanut free" or "allergy free".

With the understanding that Grace Academy is not a "peanut free" or "allergy free" school, if a student with a food allergy attends Grace Academy, the school will partner with the student's parents to educate teachers, students and other parents. An "allergy aware" table can be arranged for lunch and snack time. This table will be washed by the teacher at the start of the school day and again prior to the allergic student eating. Only students whose parents have agreed to send lunches/snacks without allergens will be permitted to sit at the allergy aware table with the allergic students. The class will be educated on the seriousness of the allergy. Grace Academy will ask parents to make careful and prayerful decisions about sending allergy products to school.

Grace Academy cannot prohibit allergen products or police the lunches of students. Students in the affected child's class will be required to wash hands after eating lunch/snacks.

Grace Academy will require that an Emergency Action Plan be completed by the parents and the health care provider. The plan will include signs and symptoms of a reaction as well and interventions to minimize the reaction. Any required medications, such as an EpiPen or Benadryl will need to be written for by the health care provider and attached to the emergency care plan.

As needed, Grace Academy will educate teachers on the use of the EpiPen during teacher training, prior to the start of the school year. Grace Academy will include a statement of release of liability for the school, its employees, and volunteers in the emergency action plan. The release will require that parents sign and therefore acknowledge that Grace Academy is not an allergy free school and that Grace Academy shall have no liability for death or bodily injury arising from the student being exposed to allergens while attending Grace Academy or from the performance of any of the tasks listed in the Emergency Action Plan.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY**

### **Building Security**

Students will be met at the curb in the carpool line and will also be monitored in the hallways until 8:00am. The front door will be locked at 8:00am for security reasons. Parents of students who arrive after 8:00am are to check their child in at the office before the child goes to class. If a child is to be released from school prior to dismissal, the parent is to sign them out at the office. Students cannot go to the parking lot by themselves.

### **Visitors**

All visitors, including parents and guest speakers, must sign in and out in the school office before entering any classroom.

### **Fire Drill Procedures**

Administration will conduct regular fire drills. Students will be instructed by teachers beforehand about what to do and how to conduct themselves before the first fire drill is conducted.

### **Emergency Lockdown Procedures**

Administration will conduct regular lockdown drills. Students will be instructed by Teachers beforehand about what to do and how to conduct themselves before the first lockdown is conducted. One of the three codes will occur during a lockdown situation:

#### Code Red

An extreme condition where there is a strong possibility of imminent danger. Doors are not to be opened for anyone. Officials who may need access have keys. Everyone is to stay indoors until an "All Clear" is given by the Watauga County Sheriff's Office.

#### Code Yellow

A need for a perimeter lockdown due to a situation whereby police notify the school that there is some kind of dangerous situation off campus but close enough to possibly create danger for students. Normal activities take place; however, no one is allowed to leave campus or classroom under any circumstances.

#### Code Green

All clear/emergency is over.

### **Student Safety**

Grace Academy must adhere to policies and guidelines set forth by the NC Department of Non-public Education. G.S. 7B-301 requires all persons and institutions to report any "cause to suspect" abuse or neglect of juveniles. Therefore, DNPE recommends that the non-public school administrator immediately contact the Director of the Department of Social Services in the North Carolina county where the juvenile resides or is presently located.

### **Requirement to Report Abuse from DNPE**

G.S. 7B-301. Duty to report abuse, neglect, dependency, or death due to maltreatment: Any person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent, as defined by G.S. 7B-101, or has died as the result of maltreatment, shall report the case of that juvenile to the director of the department of social services in the county where the juvenile resides or is found. The report may be made orally, by telephone, or in writing. The report shall include information as is known to the person making it including the name and address of the juvenile; the name and address of the juvenile's parent, guardian, or caretaker; the age of the juvenile; the names and ages of other juveniles in the home; the present whereabouts of the juvenile if not at the home address; the nature and extent of any injury or condition

resulting from abuse, neglect, or dependency; and any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the need for protective services or court intervention. If the report is made orally or by telephone, the person making the report shall give the person's name, address, and telephone number. Refusal of the person making the report to give a name shall not preclude the department's assessment of the alleged abuse, neglect, dependency, or death as a result of maltreatment.

Upon receipt of any report of sexual abuse of the juvenile in a child care facility, the director shall notify the State Bureau of Investigation within 24 hours or on the next workday. If sexual abuse in a child care facility is not alleged in the initial report, but during the course of the assessment there is reason to suspect that sexual abuse has occurred, the director shall immediately notify the State Bureau of Investigation. Upon notification that sexual abuse may have occurred in a child care facility, the State Bureau of Investigation may form a task force to investigate the report.

Any person or institution who knowingly or wantonly fails to report the case of a juvenile as required by subsection (a) of this section, or who knowingly or wantonly prevents another person from making a report as required by subsection (a) of this section, is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

A director of social services who receives a report of sexual abuse of a juvenile in a child care facility and who knowingly fails to notify the State Bureau of Investigation of the report pursuant to subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1979, c. 815, s. 1; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 923, s. 2; 1993, c. 516, s. 4; 1997-506, s. 32; 1998-202, s. 6; 1999-456, s. 60; 2005-55, s. 3; 2013-52, s. 7.)” - From NC General Assembly Legislature

[http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter\\_7B/GS\\_7B-101.html](http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_7B/GS_7B-101.html)

## SCHOOL DAY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### **Attendance**

Attendance at Grace Academy on school classroom days and Extended Learning days for those enrolled, is expected in order for your child to receive teacher instruction and explanation of the week's assignments. Parents of students who need to miss school classroom instruction for any reason should contact the student's teacher ahead of time or as soon as possible (as circumstances allow) in an attempt to keep the student current with assignments. Depending on the age of the student, it is always the student's and/or parent's responsibility (not the teacher's) to initiate recovery of missed information and to pursue the make-up of assignments and tests. School classroom instruction cannot be delayed or repeated for a returning student who has been absent and is not current with the assigned work.

#### Excused Absences

All absences will be considered excused if the student is current with all assignments when returning to class. If a student is not able to meet any requirement or deadline because of extended absences or extenuating circumstances, parents and/or the student must make special arrangements with the child's teacher(s) to produce a reasonable and agreeable plan for assignment completion. In such cases, if the student is able to complete assignments adequately under these new special arrangements, the absences will be considered excused.

#### Unexcused Absences

If the parent and/or student has not made an honorable effort to be current with the material and complete all assignments according to the above guidelines, the absences will be considered unexcused. Excessive unexcused absences, because they severely hinder the student's academic success at Grace Academy, will place the student in jeopardy of suspension. The Grace Academy board, in consultation with the teacher and administration, will have the final determination in this judgment.

Please schedule doctor and other appointments for your children outside of school classroom times. Also, please consider our inclement weather policy when scheduling appointments on Wednesdays and Fridays during the months of possible snowy weather. Grace Academy occasionally schedules school classroom make-up days on Wednesdays and Fridays when school is cancelled the same week due to inclement weather.

### **Tardiness**

Grace Academy considers tardiness an important issue. Students who are tardy to class interrupt the teacher and distract other students from learning. Being on time exhibits respect for teachers and classmates and is a skill that is important for our students to acquire. In emergency situations (for instance: car trouble, illness, car accident, icy roads, etc.) a tardy will not be designated as an offense. The parent must report to the office either in person or via phone or email to explain the emergency situation. Tracking of tardiness for the purpose of enforcing the policy below will be handled in the office. School exterior doors are locked at 8:00am. Students are expected to be in the classroom unpacked, seated and ready to begin the day at 8:00am.

A student must be accompanied to the office by a parent if they arrive after 8:00am. For every three instances of tardiness within a quarter, the student will receive one day of unexcused absence from school. Tabulation begins at the start of each quarter. On the sixth offense within a quarter, parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Administration to discuss the issue of tardiness.

### **School Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures, Traffic Flow**

Parents may drop students off beginning at 7:35am. Please refer to Appendix A for the traffic flow pattern and parking information at Mt. Vernon. All visitors to Grace Academy should only enter the parking lot entrance marked as the Grace Academy entrance. There will be only one accessible entrance to the

building for Grace Academy at Mt. Vernon. Parents and students should not use any other building entrance at Mt. Vernon. Parents utilizing the carpool line for drop-off and/or pick-up should follow the appropriate arrows (See Appendix A map). When you are waiting in the carpool line, please do not block any of the crosswalks.

No student will be released from the building until a teacher has connected him/her with an authorized adult. If someone other than a parent is picking up your child, call the office or send a note to your child's teacher. No student will be allowed to leave early unless a parent has given prior written approval to the Head of School or teacher. To avoid congestion in the building and disruptions to class, early pickups between 2:30pm and 3pm are strongly discouraged. Grace Academy may charge a late fee of \$5.00 for each increment of 15 minutes that a student is picked-up late.

### **Snow Days**

Grace Academy does not follow the public-school system on closings and delays. Decisions for delays and closings will be made by 6:30am. In the event of inclement weather, a text alert will be sent. If inclement weather occurs once the school day has begun and a decision is made to close early, Grace Academy will use the same procedure as stated above.

Snow days will be made up on the Wednesday or Friday of the week that they are missed unless inclement weather that day requires rescheduling. If more than two instruction days are missed, make-up days may be added on to the end of the school year. If school is cancelled, some students may have assignments that will need to be completed at home regardless of inclement weather. A final decision will be made at the time of the event based on a number of factors including but not limited to: the number of days already missed, the grade of the student, and the timing of the school calendar.

### **Dress Code**

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that students are dressed appropriately and according to dress code. Our dress code is effective any time a student is on the Grace Academy campus for class, on campus for an after-school activity, in our Extended Learning Program, or on a field trip in the community. We want our students to be modest and decent in the way that they present themselves.

#### Girls: Shirts

- Must have a collar or turtleneck (collar not required for 9<sup>th</sup> grade and above for blouses; no t-shirts)
- Solid color in either red, black, white, or gray
- No logos except for Grace Academy logo (small manufacturer's emblem is acceptable)
- May not be sleeveless or tightfitting
- No cleavage or midriff showing

#### Girls: Dresses/Jumpers

- Must have a collar, turtleneck, or crew neck
- Solid color in either red, black, gray, khaki, or navy
- Must not be more than 2 inches above the knee
- Black or white tights, leggings, or shorts must be worn underneath dresses and jumpers

#### Girls: Pants/Shorts/Capris/Skirts

- Solid shades of black, gray, khaki, or navy (no blue jeans)
- May not be tightfitting, too loose, torn, frayed, or dragging the floor (pants)
- Must be worn at the waistline and be appropriately sized
- Shorts and skirts must not be more than 2 inches above the knee
- Black or white tights, leggings, or shorts must be worn underneath skirts

### Boys: Shirts

- Must have a collar or turtleneck
- Solid colors in either red, black, white, or gray
- No logos except for Grace Academy logo (small manufacturer's emblem is acceptable)
- May not be sleeveless or tightfitting
- Must be tucked in

### Boys: Pants/Shorts

- Solid shades of black, gray, khaki, or navy (no blue jeans)
- May not be tightfitting, too loose, torn, frayed, or dragging the floor (pants)
- Must be worn at the waistline and be appropriately sized
- Shorts must not be more than 2 inches above the knee
- Pants and shorts must be worn with a belt

### All Students: Acceptable Outerwear in Classrooms

- Sweater Vests, Cardigans, Sweaters, Sweatshirts, Fleece Jackets, or Pullovers
- Collared shirt or turtleneck must be worn underneath
- Solid shades of red, black, white, or gray
- No logos except Grace Academy logo (small manufacture's emblem is acceptable)
- No hoodies

### Lands' End Options: At this time, the following items may only be purchased from Land' End

- Grace Academy logo items
- Red/Graphite plaid skirts and jumpers for girls

### All Students: General Guidelines

No sweat pants, athletic wear/uniforms, overalls, or sleepwear. No undergarments should be visible. Shoes must be worn and tied. Sandals and clogs with a back strap are allowed. No flip-flops. No hats, bandanas, or head coverings allowed in the buildings. No tattoos or body piercings, but girls may wear earrings. Hair should be neat and of a natural color. Students should also practice good personal hygiene. Grace Academy reserves the right to make decisions on appropriateness of dress. When in doubt, choose not to wear the article of clothing in question.

### Grace Academy Logo

For those who want to purchase items with a school logo, we have created a school account with Lands' End. Items may be purchased at <https://www.landsend.com/myschool>. Our school number is **900193871** or you can search by name and location.

### Special House Days

On the first Thursday of each month, students may wear their House-issued t-shirt and jeans to school. Jeans should not be tight fitting or have rips or tears. If students do not wear their House-issued t-shirt, they should follow the regular school dress code and may not wear jeans.

### **Food/Drink Limitations**

Snack/break time is provided each day, mid-morning, in grades K-5. Snacks may be eaten in classrooms, but only dry and/or solid foods (no pudding, for example) will be allowed. Water is the only beverage allowed in the building and should be sent in a bottle with a push-down or flip-top spout, not a screw-off top. Candy or gum is not allowed in the building. Please do not pack high-sugar food that might keep your

child from focusing during classroom instruction time. There are no refrigerators or microwaves available for the use of students.

### **Personal Property**

All personal property of the students should be properly labeled with their name. Students should bring only personal effects necessary for classes and programs at Grace Academy, and all materials should be brought to school and kept in the student's book bag until needed during class time. All iPods, hand-held electronic games, cameras, etc. are not allowed in the Grace Academy classroom and should be left at home. **Cell phones and smart watches should be kept off and inside backpacks. If these items are out or visible during school hours, they will be taken and held in the school office until dismissal. Parents will be asked to come to the school office after school to retrieve any items confiscated.** See Computer Usage Guidelines section for information about personal technology that is allowed in the classroom.

### **Philosophy of Computer Use in the Classroom**

The computer is a tool, and, like any tool, it has its appropriate place and use. Grace Academy recognizes the benefits of such a tool, and actively encourages its use for word processing productivity, accounting and administration, and to assist students in some of their learning. The functional use of computers is simple to learn and should be accomplished at home by parents who can set guidelines for and supervise their use.

Grace Academy also recognizes that computers have their deficiencies as well, including, but not limited to, relatively passive learning and distraction to other students in the classroom. Grace Academy strongly advocates personal, interactive, classroom instruction that conforms to The Seven Laws of Teaching by John Milton Gregory. Whereas personal computers can greatly aid in the accomplishment of work and studies, they are no replacement for capable Christian instructors who love their Lord, love their students, love their subject, and have a passion to communicate that love to their students. Therefore, Grace Academy is opposed to the use of computers for core instruction of students. However, their use as a supplemental tool on a limited basis in the school classroom at the initiation of a faculty or staff member for activities such as viewing images of historic architecture or maps, computer animation of science processes, audios of historic music, video clips of reenacted battles, etc. is considered beneficial and acceptable.

### **Student Use of Computers in the Classroom**

Students may bring personal computers, Kindle-type equipment, iPads, etc. to school for student use ONLY as an aid as specified by a physician.

Inappropriate use of computers or similar equipment by a student will lead to disciplinary action.

### **Student Drivers**

Parents of any students who wish to drive to school and park a vehicle on campus are required to submit a parking permit application with the office. Once approved, the student will receive a non-transferable parking permit placard to display in the vehicle while parking on campus.

- Students are required to follow North Carolina General Statutes DMV Chapter 20 laws regarding driver's license privileges and restrictions at all times.
- Students who drive to school are expected to do so responsibly. Driving to school is a privilege that may be revoked, if necessary.
- Students must drive slowly on campus (below 10 mph). Driving which endangers the safety of others will result in the immediate loss of driving privileges.
- Special attention should be paid before and after school to students in the parking lot and drop off/pickup line.
- Students will park in an assigned area of the parking lot.

- Cars are to be locked while they are on school grounds. They are not to be occupied during the school day. As soon as students arrive at school, all must leave the car and go immediately into the school building. Students are NOT allowed to go to their cars during the school day.
- Students are not to transport other students unless both parents have submitted written detailed permission, including the names of all passengers.
- Students who are truant or have excessive absences (3 in one month, 6 in one semester) are subject to having parking privileges revoked.
- Students are responsible for their vehicles and the contents within them. Vehicles can and will be searched if there is suspicion of illegal and/or prohibited items. Students will have their parking privileges revoked and face legal and/or disciplinary action if said items are found.

## **SCHOOL STANDARDS**

**Motto and School Anthem:** “Adoramus te Christe” / “Christ, we do all adore Thee.”

**School Colors:** Red, Black & White

**School Verse:** “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Proverbs 9:10

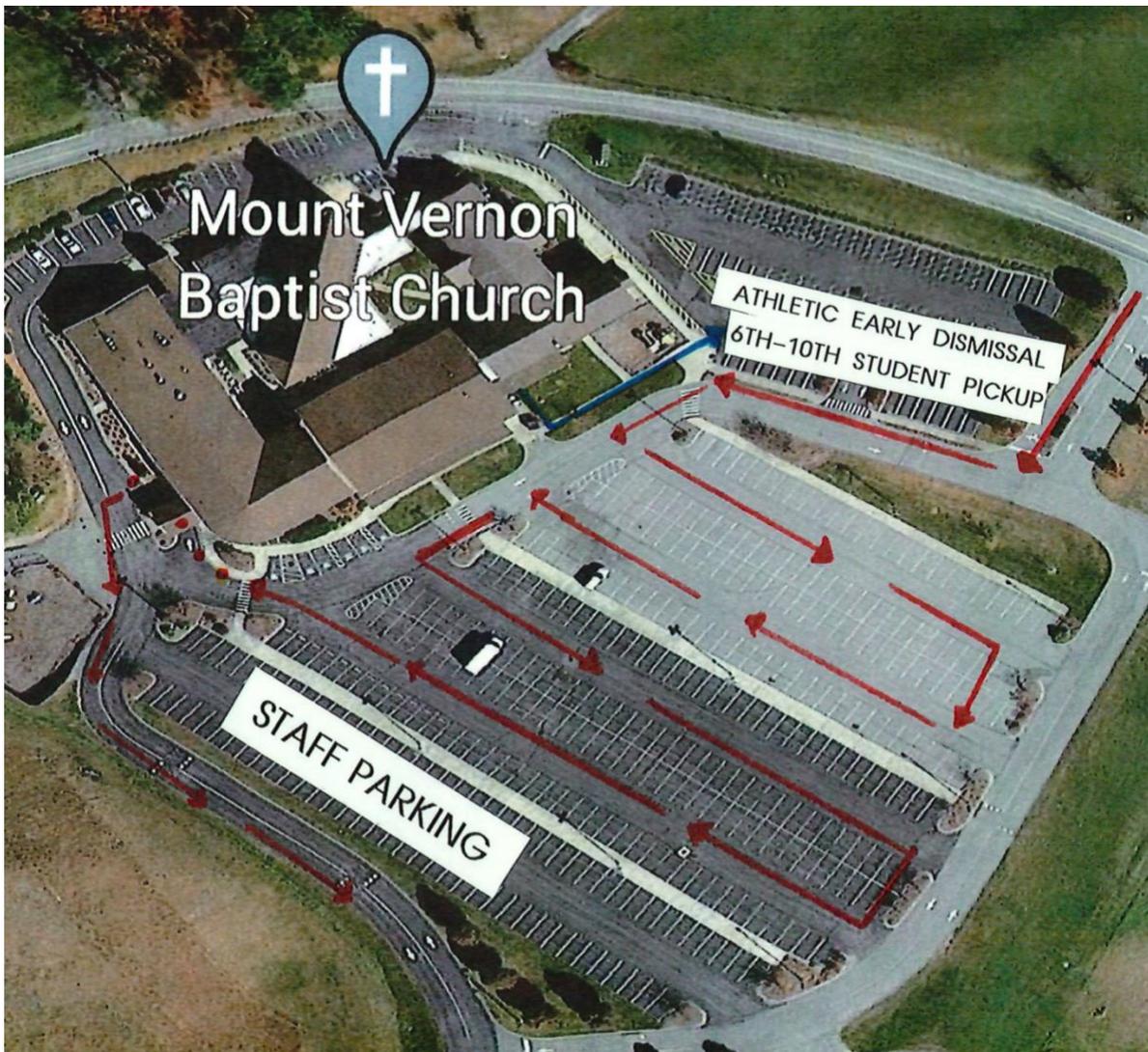
**School Mascot:** Knights

## APPENDIX A – CAMPUS MAP

**Morning Drop-Off:** All drivers should use the outer driveway for drop-off. Do not weave through the parking lot. That traffic pattern (as indicated by the red arrows on the map) is only for pick-up at the end of the day.

**3:00pm Pick-Up:** K-5<sup>th</sup> grade parents should follow the red arrows on the parking map below for pick-up. The outer driveway should be kept clear for emergency access and for those entering and exiting the staff parking area. If parents need to park and enter the building, please use the outer driveway and park in the staff parking area.

**3:15pm Pick-Up:** Parents of students in Grades 6<sup>th</sup> and up should park in the Athletic Early Dismissal & 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Student Pick-up Lot and wait for your student to walk out. Drivers and passengers should remain in their vehicles. For safety, please do not allow younger siblings to loiter in the parking lot.



## **APPENDIX B - DAMAGED & MISSING BOOKS**

Each year students will be issued books that are the property of Grace Academy. These books are designated by a barcode or a number on the book. To insure the longevity of these items, all books that are property of Grace Academy must be covered the first week of school.

When books are returned, Grace Academy will assess each item. If returned books are damaged, families will be charged 20% of the retail value of the book for repairs. If the book is not returned or damaged beyond use for the next school year (as deemed by the Administration), families will be charged 100% of the books retail value.

**APPENDIX C – THE CLASSICAL TRIVIUM**

<b>Grammar</b>	<b>Dialect or Logic</b>	<b>Rhetoric</b>
<b>Grades K-6</b>	<b>Grades 7-9</b>	<b>Grades 10-12</b>
<p><b>Student Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likes chants and clever, repetitious words/sounds</li> <li>• Can assimilate another language well</li> <li>• Easily memorizes</li> <li>• Excited about new, interesting facts</li> <li>• Likes to talk – explain, figure out, tell a story, relate own experience to a topic</li> <li>• Likes collections, organizing things</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In need of being challenged</li> <li>• Quick to judge, debate, criticize</li> <li>• Likes to show off knowledge</li> <li>• Wants to know “behind the scenes” facts</li> <li>• Curious about “Why?” and able to handle abstract concepts</li> <li>• Thinks, acts as though more knowledgeable than adults</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interested in justice, fairness</li> <li>• Strong desire to express own feelings and ideas</li> <li>• Concerned with present events, especially in own life</li> <li>• Is more responsible and independent</li> <li>• Generally idealistic</li> <li>• Can synthesize concepts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Teaching Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorizing, chanting, singing, telling</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questioning, arguing, relating</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing, convincing, synthesizing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Special Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factual elements of all subjects, Latin</li> </ul>	<p><b>Special Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Special Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech/Debate, Rhetoric</li> </ul>

## **APPENDIX D – COLLABORATION GUIDELINES**

### **Faculty Responsibilities**

- Introduce new memory work
- Introduce new subject concepts
- Reteach previous concepts as needed
- Complete selected portions of work with the class
- Lead discussions and group activities
- Assign homework
- Administer tests in class
- Grade tests
- Issues grades on report cards

### **Parent Responsibilities**

- Supervise student's completion of assignments after school on School Classroom or EL days and at home on Home Classroom days
- Check student work
- Correct student work with the student
- Reteach concepts as needed
- Participate in various home discussions, activities, projects as assigned

## APPENDIX E – HOMEWORK GRADING GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

### What is homework?

Homework refers to any work completed at home by the student. This may be work that a student didn't finish in class (either on an instruction day or extended learning day) or work assigned to the student specifically to be completed at home (i.e. extra practice, home classroom assignments, etc.).

### Why do parents grade homework?

By grading their child's homework, a parent is able to collaborate with teachers and together assess the level of mastery a student has in a particular subject area.

### How do parents grade homework?

The guidelines below will apply to most homework assignments. Occasionally, the grading method will be different and, in those cases, teachers will give specific guidelines to parents.

#### 1. Circle

- When your child finishes an assignment, check the work and circle any incorrect answers.
- Write the number missed in a circle at the top of the page. -3

#### 2. Collaborate

- Assist your child in identifying mistakes.
- Reteach any concepts that are needed to correct the wrong answer.

#### 3. Correct

- Have your child correct their work by writing the new answer beside the incorrect answer.

#### 4. Check

- Check your child's work again to make sure answers are correct.
- If answers are correct, put a check mark by the corrected answer and initial beside the circle at the top of the page. -3 **RK**
- If there are still incorrect answers, repeat steps 2-4.

### Helpful Tips

1. Use publishers' solutions manuals/answer keys or answers provided.
2. Mark students' papers with something other than a pencil or red pen (reserved for teacher use only) so parents grading/correcting marks are easily seen by teachers.
3. Place complete homework in the back of the Student Binder (K-5).

If you are struggling to re-teach a concept to your child or if after repeated collaboration your child is still struggling to grasp a concept, write a note at the top of the page to your child's teacher asking them to reteach a concept.

## APPENDIX F – HOME CLASSROOM TIPS

### **Establish a setting conducive to learning**

- Use the kitchen table or a desk
- Keep materials and supplies gathered nearby

### **Establish a routine**

- Begin school around the same time every day
- Require all children to be fed and dressed before beginning academics
- Begin with prayer for and with your child(ren)
- Tackle the hardest subjects first
- Do not short change memory work

### **Eliminate distractions**

- Turn off screens
- De-clutter study area beforehand
- Reduce interruptions by retuning voicemails afterward
- For families with younger children: Include younger siblings at the work table and in memory work whenever you can. However, you will need some one-on-one time with your child(ren) so create ways to occupy younger ones close by for periods of time so that you have some uninterrupted time with older children

### **Establish relationship**

- Disciple your child(ren) by establishing yourself as the loving authority in the home classroom
- Trust the Lord and call on Him daily to meet your needs
- Enjoy this fleeting time with your growing children

## APPENDIX G – EXTENDED LEARNING PROCEDURES

The purpose of the EL program is to assist students in completing their home classroom assignments and for Grace Academy teachers to re-teach or expand assignments as needed. In addition, teachers may plan other extra-curricular or enrichment activities as time permits.

### Important Reminders:

- Students should always bring their Student Binder with a copy of their Lesson Plan to EL.
- There is no guarantee that all homework will be completed during EL.
- Read aloud, memory recitations, and songs should be practiced at home.
- Some extended writing assignments will require parental involvement at home.
- Teachers will do their best to assist students in completing work assigned for that particular day but will not be able to assist with make-up work or assignments from previous days.

### Teachers will do the following daily:

- Take attendance
- Direct and supervise students in completion of their homework
- Initial the Lesson Plan beside work completed and checked during the day and direct student to place work in the back of the student binder.
- Circle items on the Lesson Plan not completed during the day.

### Parent should do the following daily:

- Look at all work completed by their child to understand how their child is doing.
- Look at the Lesson Plan and make sure that work designated as completed is in the back of the student binder with checking and correcting marks written by the teacher.
- Have student complete any unfinished work, check/correct, and mark off on the Lesson Plan.

## APPENDIX H – LEARNING STYLES

### Seven Kinds of Learning Styles, by Thomas Armstrong

Children who are strongly:	Think	Love	Need
Linguistic	In words	Reading, writing, telling stories, playing word games, etc.	Books, tapes, writing tools, paper, diaries, dialogue, discussion, debate, stories
Logical-Mathematical	By reasoning	Experimenting, questioning, figuring out logical puzzles, calculating, etc.	Things to explore and think about, science materials, manipulatives, trip to the planetarium, and science museums
Spatial	In images and pictures	Designing, drawing, visualizing, doodling	Art, LEGOs, video, movies, slides, imagination games, mazes, puzzles, illustrated books, trips to art museums
Bodily-Kinesthetic	Through somatic sensations	Dancing, running, jumping, building, touching, gesturing	Role play, drama, movement, things to build, sports and physical games, tactile experiences, hands-on learning
Musical	Via rhythms and melodies	Singing, whistling, humming, tapping feet and hands, listening	Sing-along time, trips to concerts, music playing at home and school, musical instruments
Interpersonal	By bouncing ideas off other people	Leading, organizing, relating, manipulating, mediating, partying	Friends, group games, social gatherings, community events, clubs, mentors/apprenticeships
Intrapersonal	Deeply inside of themselves	Setting goals, meditating, dreaming, being quiet, planning	Secret places, time alone, self-paced projects, choices

Thomas Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1994), p. 27.  
 (Permission to reproduce this chart obtained from ASCD)

## APPENDIX I – RECITATION AND MEMORY WORK

Recitation and memorization are an important part of a classical education. Many people would argue that memorization isn't necessary during our age of information where everything is available with the click of a mouse. But memory work is more than memorizing a list of facts to have stored away for a future date.

Memorization can:

- Provide a rich vocabulary
- Train the brain for critical thought processes
- Strengthen the brain
- Build complex language patterns

Recitation goes hand-in-hand with memorization. The act of standing and reciting poems or historical information cements that information in your child's brain. It also provides other valuable skills. Recitation can:

- Strengthen communication skills
- Develop solid presentation techniques
- Provide a strong foundation for later rhetoric-level skills

Four times throughout the academic year, students will have a Memory Assessment. These Memory Assessments culminate in our annual Recitation held at the end of the school year. Below are some aids in teaching memory to children.

### Memory Work – Why It's Important

History of "Memory Work"

- Many ancient civilizations spent centuries with no written language.
- Classical methodology of teaching by developing the human memory is not new.

Effects of Modern Mentality

- With on-set of written language, for centuries now we have ignored our natural capacity.
- Modern brains are like atrophied muscles.

Purpose of Memory for Classical Student

- Teaches memory of pertinent facts.
- These memorized masses of information form fundamental framework for future learning.

How Memory Works

- Introduction
- Sensory Memory: impressions of sensory input via sight, hearing, and touch
- Short-Term Memory: the "brain's Post-It note"
- Long-Term Memory: the permanent record
- Moving info from short to long term memory:
  - Repetition
    - Forcing re-entry into short-term
    - Hammer & nails analogy
    - "Repetitio est mater studiorum."
  - Effects on efficacy of repetition
    - Frequency is most important.
    - Physical and emotional stimulation creates a chemical effect.
    - Small bits of familiar info should be gradually tagged with new words/phrases in one memory episode.

- Sleep on it.

## **Memory Work – How to Teach It**

The Goal: Automaticity

The Method: Repetitio mater studiorum est.

The Means

- Engaging the senses
  - Audial
  - Visual
  - Kinesthetic
  - Tactile
- Engaging the emotions
- Engaging the mind

Some Strategies

- Chunking and linking of phrases
- Creating familiarity
- Playing games

The Assessment

- Privately by teachers
- Publicly by parents and friends

## APPENDIX J – READING ALOUD

### Why Reading Aloud to Children Is Important and How to Do It

*“The single most important activity for building knowledge for [students’] eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”* REPORT: “Becoming a Nation of Readers”, Commission on Reading, 1985.

A few of the many benefits of reading aloud with a child of any age are as follows:

- Encourages a love of reading
- Increases vocabulary and language skills
- Builds listening skills
- Increases reading comprehension
- Creates intimate relational bonds between parent and child

Grace Academy curriculum incorporates read-aloud opportunities in every grade level.

- At least one literature book in each grade is designated as a read-aloud for all parents/students.
  - The teacher will introduce the book and read at least portions of it aloud in class.
  - The teacher may assign portions of all of the book to be read aloud at home by the parent to the student or vice-versa.
- Non-read-aloud Books: All grades incorporate reading of varied difficulty levels to meet the needs of students. If a book or part of a book is too difficult for the child, the parent may modify the assignment by choosing to read that book/section aloud to the child.
- In the younger grades, repetitive reading aloud of the same book is assigned in order to build fluency.
- For Middle School grades, reading aloud is assigned in order to teach recognition and appreciation for poetic language.

Parent tips for reading aloud are as follows:

- Parents should always offer the child the opportunity to read aloud to him or her for a time.
  - Do not force this if the child is unwilling.
  - Parent and child may alternate reading aloud.
- Give the child the opportunity to follow along in the text as you read.
- As you read, encourage your child to participate in the “story world”.
  - Inspire initial or continued interest in the story.
    - What questions can you create about the book/chapter title or picture that evokes interest?
    - What info can the student relay from the introduction given in class by the teacher?
    - Can the child narrate events from former chapters?
    - Pre-read any comprehension questions that are to be answered afterward.
  - Read with inflection to add meaning to the text.
    - Can be done even when parent is unfamiliar with story.
    - Should be done especially with character dialogue.
- Periodically check student’s grasp of sequence of events, especially if character dialogue is unclear.

Aid the child in imaging the “story world”. This is done through visualization.

- Visualization is a necessary and important first step in reading comprehension.
- Visualizing begins with hearing, then moves into the mental realm of the imagination.
- Visualizing settings, characters, character actions, and events,
  - Stop and enjoy descriptions.
  - Talk it out.
  - Draw it.

Relate and connect to the “story world”.

- Stop to define any vocabulary that might hinder the child’s understanding of the story.
- Observe and recognize the characters’ actions and/or feelings.
- Empathize or criticize the characters for their actions and/or feelings.
- Act out the scene – even change the details or ending.

Relate the “story world” to life.

- As the story comes to a close, reflect on the events and characters to confirm story themes.
- Discuss significance of the theme(s) to the reader’s life – for older students, to the author’s life.
- Notice and appreciate literary conventions, e.g., strong adjectives, effective sentence structure, use of flashback, etc.