

# HOLMESBURG

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## CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Big Thinking. Small School.



### **2022-2023**

## **Parent and Student Handbook**

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# Introduction to Holmesburg Christian Academy

## Mission Statement

The mission of Holmesburg Christian Academy is to challenge and prepare a diverse family of learners to make a positive impact in our ever-changing world by growing their faith through academic, spiritual, and social experiences that integrate creative thinking and a Biblical worldview, all for the glory of God.

## Beliefs

We believe:

- In one true God who is the infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Creator and Sustainer of all life and who is made of three equal but separate persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God, comprised of 66 books and is our only standard of authority for faith and practice.
- Man was created in the image of God, but Adam, through sinful disobedience, brought sin and death upon all mankind condemning all to Hell. Therefore, man needs a Savior because of his sin nature.
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God, born of a virgin, who came to bring salvation to all. Salvation is provided through His substitutionary and sacrificial death on the cross. Jesus Christ then rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father interceding for believers. He provides forgiveness of sins and redemption for all those who put their trust in Him.
- Salvation of sinful man is a free gift through the grace of God received by placing one's faith in Christ's finished work on the cross and not by any works of man.
- The Holy Spirit's present ministry is to indwell all believers to help them live godly lives and to minister within the Church, which is comprised of all believers both locally and worldwide.
- Each student is capable of excellence regardless of talents, personality, or special needs.
- Effective education develops the whole child spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially.
- Academic excellence is best achieved when there is a partnership of shared responsibility between the school, student, and family.
- Integrating high academic standards, creative thinking, and a Biblical worldview will prepare students for academic success both at HCA and at their educational institutions beyond our walls.
- Students are called by God to demonstrate the love of Christ by serving their school, family, church, and community. The school is to play a direct role in modeling, teaching, and providing opportunities to practice this skill at all grade levels.

## Profile of Graduate

Upon leaving Holmesburg Christian Academy, our students will be equipped to:

- Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and utilize tools they were given to help them mature spiritually
- Reach their full potential at local high schools by using their creative thinking skills to apply their well-rounded knowledge of various subjects to future academic endeavors
- Make decisions based on a Biblical worldview
- Demonstrate the love of Christ in service to those around them
- Be active citizens in their local church, school, and community

## History

The Holmesburg Christian Academy began as a Nursery School with one class in 1975. As the Nursery School expanded, interest grew in developing an Elementary School. The first Kindergarten class began in September 1978 and first grade was added in the next school year. Each year a class was added until the present status of Pre-school through Eighth Grade was established.

HCA is located within and is sponsored by the Holmesburg Baptist Church. During the summer of 1985, property located adjacent to the church on Decatur Street was purchased. The property was renovated and now houses Middle School students and the computer lab. In May of 1994 the Academy added two new rooms on to the Decatur Street facility. Enrollment has grown from 16 in 1975 to our current enrollment of over 200 students.

## Sponsor and Board

The School is sponsored by the Holmesburg Baptist Church and is a mission of the Church and to the community at large. The School is directed by a School Board made up of parents of students, members of the Church and the community at large.

The basic elements of theology and beliefs that we teach are contained in the School's **Statement of Faith**. Within that context, HCA offers an education that recognizes other evangelical positions of faith and practice that derive their convictions from the Holy Scriptures and root their faith in Jesus Christ.

## Philosophy

The educational philosophy of the Holmesburg Christian Academy is founded on the Bible, which provides the viewpoint for interpreting any subject or any school activity [2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21]. Education has its highest meaning and purpose only as it relates to God's sovereign plan and purpose. God, being the Creator and foundation of all wisdom, is the source and authority of all truth [John 1:1-3]. Because the Christian approach to learning differs significantly from the secular viewpoint, the curriculum of the School is rooted in the authoritative and inerrant truths of the Word of God. Bible study is not just a subject added to the curriculum, but is the foundation from which all truth is understood;

“... that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” [Colossians 2:2-3].

We endeavor to bring every student to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to guide them to a place of maturity in Him while developing the whole individual. The School desires to provide its students with a college-preparatory education set in the framework of Christian instruction and example. This philosophy channels our energies to promote high academic standards while helping the students to achieve skills in creativity and critical thinking. We strive to prepare students to be responsible, participating citizens and workers, and to serve God throughout their lives.

In order to implement this educational process, the teacher is the essential instrument. Teachers shall be skilled in their subject areas and have clear objectives supporting the position of the School. The School employees shall seek to instill a desire for excellence in every student and treat each as an individual. All teachers, administrators and staff members shall be born-again Christians.

Parents who have committed themselves to a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and who foster a sense of individual responsibility at home will find these same values promoted in the School. While teachers represent parents during the school day, this representation does not relieve the parents of their primary responsibility for the total development of their child(ren) [Deuteronomy 6:7-8 and Proverbs 22:6]. The School will be known by the family for its caring environment. The School endeavors to function as an extension of the Christian home and to work with parents in the education of each child.

## **Statement of Faith**

1. We believe and teach that there is one true and living God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things. He is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, and is revealed to us as the Godhead existent in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - and that these three are all one God, having the same nature, attributes, and perfections, thus being worthy of the same exact homage, confidence and obedience.

[Genesis 1:1; Ephesians 1:3-6, 13-14; John 1:1, 3, 14, 18;  
Philippians 2:5-8; Matthew 28:19; Isaiah 9:6; 1 Corinthians 15]

**God the Father** - The first person of the Trinity who orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace, continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events for His own glory. Fatherhood denotes spiritual relationship, first within the Trinity, second within mankind, creatively in relation to all men, but spiritually only in relation to those who have been saved by His grace from their sin and come to Him through Jesus Christ.

**God the Son** - Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity and possesses all of the divine Excellencies and is co-equal, and consubstantial with the Father. The Son is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ, born of a virgin in the fullness of time,

who died on the cross to redeem man from sin, rose from the dead in physical form to provide justification for every believer, and ascended to the right hand of God where He is exalted at the right hand of God the Father fulfilling the ministry of Representative, Intercessor and Advocate for all believers, and will again in the fullness of the Father's time, return in visible triumphant personal form to overthrow sin, judge the world, and establish His kingdom in its millennial manifestation.

**God the Spirit** - The Holy Spirit of God is the third person of the Trinity, possessing all of the divine Excellencies, thus co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial with Father and Son. He was sent from God to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and to regenerate, cleanse and secure from sin. He is the indwelling guide, teacher and strengthener of the believer.

2. We believe and teach that the Bible is the inerrant, verbally inspired Word of God, infallible as originally given by God, and that the Bible's absolute truth and trustworthiness extend equally to all parts of the writings - historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic - thus constituting our only standard of faith and practice.  
[2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:18]
3. We believe and teach that man was created in innocence directly and immediately by God for the purpose of fellowship with Him and for His glory. Man was tempted by Satan and sinned, and because of this all men have been born in sin since that time and are by choice, by practice, and by nature sinners. We believe that Satan is a created being, the highest created angel who fell through pride, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall, the spiritual father of all who do not believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, and the open and declared enemy of God and man. Satan with his angels continually wages war against the godly and their God to thwart His purposes. Satan and his angels will be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. Sin is basically rebellion against God and the end of sin is eternal separation from God.  
[Genesis 1:26-28, 3:1-19; Romans 5:12; Revelation 20:10; Isaiah 14:12-17]
4. We believe and teach that Jesus Christ is the only Savior from sin. He provided forgiveness and accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice and that all who trust Jesus Christ as their personal Savior are cleansed of all their sin and given eternal life at the moment they receive Him. He rose from the grave in physical body to provide life and justification. Apart from Christ, there is no salvation. All men are under condemnation through personal sin, and deliverance from condemnation comes only by grace through faith. The Spirit regenerates or gives new life to the one who makes this life commitment to Jesus. This salvation is complete in Heaven where the believer, in resurrected and glorified body, will live eternally and rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ.  
[Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8, 9; John 3:16-19, 5:24, 6:47, 10:28-30; 1 John 3:2-3]
5. We believe that the universal Church of Jesus Christ is a spiritual organism made up of all born again persons of this age and that every believer is placed into this Church at the



moment of his conversion by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We believe that a New Testament church is a voluntary association of baptized believers in Christ who have covenanted together to follow the teachings of the New Testament in doctrine, worship and practice.

[Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Timothy 3:15, 4:13-16; Hebrews 10:25]

6. We believe and teach the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.  
[John 17:21-23; Ephesians 2:14-22, 4:1-6]

## **Goals of the School**

1. To teach that the Bible is the inspired and the only infallible authoritative Word of God, thus developing attitudes of love and respect toward it.  
(II Tim. 3:15, 16, 17; II Pet. 1:20, 21)
2. To teach the basic doctrines of the Bible. (Titus 2:1)
3. To provide opportunities for the student to confess Christ as Savior and Lord.  
(Rom. 10:9, 10)
4. To teach the student to know and obey the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures, thus equipping the student to carry out God's will daily.  
(Rom. 12:1, 2; II Tim. 2:15; Deut. 26:16, 17)
5. To impart an understanding of each Christian's place in the Body of Christ, and its worldwide mission, providing opportunities for the student's involvement in this task.  
(Eph. 4:12; I Cor. 12:1-31; Matt. 28:19, 20)
6. To teach Biblical character qualities and provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate these qualities. (I Sam. 16:7, Gal 5:22, 23)
7. To teach the student how to develop the mind of Christ towards Godliness.  
(Phil. 2:5; I Tim. 4:7)
8. To encourage the student to develop self-discipline and responsibility from God's perspective (I Tim. 4:7; I Cor. 9:24-27)
9. To teach the student the respect for and submission to authority from God's perspective. (Rom. 13:1-7; Heb. 13:17; Eph. 6:1-3)
10. To help the student develop a Christian world view by integrating life, and all studies, with the Bible. (II Pet. 1:3)
11. To teach the student to hide God's Word in his heart through memorization and meditation. (Ps. 119:11; Ps. 1:1-3)
12. To teach the student how to study God's Word. (II Tim. 2:15)

13. To help the student develop his self-image as a unique individual created in the image of God and to attain his fullest potential. (Ps. 139:13-16)
14. To teach the student to treat everyone with love and respect as unique individuals created In God's image. (Phil. 2:1-4; Eph. 5:21)
15. To teach the student how to become a contributing member of his society by realizing his need to serve others. (Gal. 5:13; Rom. 12:10)
16. To teach the student Biblical skills for personal and social relationships. (Ps.119:9; Eph. 4:12)
17. To teach the student the Biblical view of dating, marriage and the family. (I Thess. 4:1-7; I Tim. 4:12; Gen. 2:18-25; Eph. 5:22-33)
18. To teach the student physical fitness, good health habits, and wise use of the body as the Temple of God. (I Cor. 6:19, 20)
19. To teach the student Biblical attitudes toward material things and his responsibility for using them to God's glory. (I Tim. 6:17-19; Matt. 6:19, 20; I Cor. 10:31)
20. To teach the student an appreciation of the Fine Arts.
21. To teach the student to understand and use the fundamental processes in communicating and dealing with others (such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics). (II Cor. 5:20)
22. To teach and encourage the student to use good study skills and habits. (II Tim. 2:3-7)
23. To teach the student how to research and to reason logically from a Biblical perspective. (Heb. 5:14; Rom. 12:2)
24. To teach the student creative and critical thinking based upon the proper use of Biblical criteria for evaluation. (II Tim. 3:14-17)
25. To teach the student good citizenship through an understanding and appreciation of our Christian and American heritages (home, church, nation). (I Cor. 10:11; Rom. 13:1-7)
26. Use current affairs in all areas, teaching the student how they can relate to God's plan for man.
27. To teach the student an understanding of and an appreciation for God's world, developing an awareness of man's role in his environment and his God-given responsibility to subdue, use and preserve it properly. (Ps. 8:6; Heb. 2:6-8)

In addition, in working with the homes from which the students come, the school aims:

1. To bring those whom we find that are not Christians to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. (II Pet. 3:9; I Tim. 2: 4)
2. To aid families in Christian growth and to help them develop Christ-centered homes. (Eph. 5:22-33; II Pet. 3:18)
3. To cooperate closely as servants to the parents in every phase of the student's development, especially as it relates to the school program. (Mark 10:45)
4. To help the parents to understand the school's purpose and program.
5. To assist parents in keeping up with the changing culture and its effect on the home and the implications for their children.
6. To encourage regular attendance and involvement in the local church. (Heb. 10:24,25)
7. To encourage parents to realize and shoulder their responsibility for the spiritual, moral and social education of their children. (Deut. 6:4-7; Prov. 22:6)
8. To help young men and women realize their full potential. Teaching them that God has a plan for their lives, plans of good not evil, plans that hold hope for their future. (Jer. 29:11)

## **Affiliation**

The Holmesburg Christian Academy (HCA) is recognized and registered with the Department of Education, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-public, non-profit religious institution. The School is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Christian School Association (MACSA). HCA is accredited by the Commission on Elementary Schools of the Middle States Association of Colleges.

## **Faculty**

Administration and teachers are degreed professionals. All teachers are certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and/or the Association of Christian Schools International. Each Staff member is a born-again Christian, and collectively they represent a diversity of evangelical churches. Several faculty members hold a masters degree, others are working toward their master's degree and all faculty members continue with studies applicable to their teaching assignments.

## **Curriculum**

Our curriculum is designed to meet the educational needs of our children. Due to the developmental stages of children, there are different principles taught at different ages. The program is designed not only for the acquisition of knowledge but also for the development

of thinking skills. The teacher is responsible for presenting subject material as it is seen through the truths of God's Word. The curriculum includes all major subjects recommended by the Department of Education. Additional disciplines, not required by the commonwealth, are taught to enrich the academic program and equip students for success in our ever changing world.

**Pre-School** classes are designed to build social, psycho-motor and academic skills, while preparing children for Kindergarten. Readiness includes working with numbers, letters, and word recognition. Activities include art, Bible stories, music and physical education.

The **Elementary** (K-5) curriculum contains Bible, reading, phonics, spelling, arithmetic, science, English, social studies, handwriting, music, art, computer literacy, and physical education.

The **Middle School** (6-8) program includes major subject areas of Bible, English, mathematics, pre-algebra, algebra, geography, American history, civics, earth and space science, introduction to biology and introduction to physical science. Minor studies comprise music, health, physical education and computer instruction.

## **Admission and Registration**

Any parent who desires to have their child enroll at HCA should obtain the proper forms from the School Office or website. All forms must be received by the School Office before acceptance is granted. The non-refundable application fee must accompany the *Application Form*, and a non-refundable evaluation fee is due at the time of pre-admission testing.

Enrollment is open to any Christian parent or guardian who wants their child(ren) to have a Christ-centered education. Acceptance is dependent upon the academic strength of the student and review of all requested student records, the parents' testimony of faith, the parents' agreement to policy, and the completion of all forms and the parent interview with the admissions committee. Recommendations and records from previous schools may be considered.

Children from non-Christian or un-churched homes may be considered for enrollment on an individual basis.

Applications will be accepted for testing in the order of the date of receipt of *Application Form* and evaluation fee. Acceptance or rejection of applicants will be made by written notice.

### **Age Requirements for Preschool and Kindergarten**

Prospective Pre-School children must be three years of age by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the school year to be admitted to the 3-year old program; prospective Pre-School children must be four years of age by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the school year to be admitted to the 4-year old program.

Prospective Kindergarten students must be five years old by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the school year; prospective first grade students must be six years old by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the school year.

### **Trial Admission Period**

Pre-School children are accepted for a trial period of nine (9) weeks to determine their ability to adjust and benefit from the program. All children must be toilet trained before admission. Prospective students to Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are accepted for a trial period to extend to the end of the first semester. The student will be monitored by the teachers and administration.

### **Children with Learning Difficulties**

Holmesburg Christian Academy accepts applications for children with physical and learning disabilities, Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), and Behavioral Support Plans, and works with families to determine if HCA is an appropriate educational setting for the child. We will make reasonable physical and educational accommodations and can provide additional support services (some at extra cost) within our school environment.

However, some students require resources beyond what we can provide, creating a difficult environment for that child and the other students in the school. For this reason, the School maintains the right to refuse admittance to a student with educational, disciplinary, psychological, and/or physical problems as determined by the School to be of a nature that H.C.A.'s program will not benefit or meet the child's educational needs.

## **Home Environment**

Holmesburg Christian Academy's Biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, sexual immorality, homosexual sexual orientation, or inability to support the moral principles of the school. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

## **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students**

Holmesburg Christian 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, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **Grade Acceleration**

Prior to advancing a student a full grade level, consideration must be given to the student's age, ability to adjust socially and teacher recommendations.

In addition students must meet the following criteria:

- A student must be in the third grade or above
- Student must have an academic record that reflects consistently high academics in all disciplines
- Standardized test results (CAT, Terra Nova, PSSA, etc.) must reflect overall achievement at the 95 percentile and/or an IQ of 130 or above.

## **Health Requirements**

To comply with Commonwealth and city laws, the school requires all children entering school to have proper medical records. All students must have proper immunization.

(Commonwealth law requires immunization against Diphtheria Toxoid, Tetanus Toxoid, Poliomyelitis, Rubella [Measles], Rubella [German Measles], Mumps, Hepatitis B and Varicella. A signed medical form must verify these shots. **Improper or lack of health records will cause exclusion from School.** Physical reports from a family doctor are needed at intervals during the school years. All newly admitted students from out of State, and

Kindergarten and sixth grade students must have a physical examination. A copy of each child's birth certificate must be on file in the School Office.

## **Photographic Release**

Parents/legal guardians are asked to sign a “Photographic Release Form” giving HCA the right to use photographs and videos of HCA students for reproduction in any medium for the purposes of advertising, trade, display, exhibitions, editorial use or website.

## **Promotion and Retention**

All students who have successfully completed the grade level curriculum will be promoted to the next grade. Notice will be given at the final report card. In certain cases, a child may be retained, or held back to repeat the grade. This can be a result of academic performance or social and behavioral performance. Retention is recognized to be a serious action with long term meaning. For that reason, retention is decided upon carefully. Written notice of potential retention will be given before the last report date. The general policy will be to retain a child no more than one time while enrolled at HCA. This would include being put back one grade as a result of admission testing. (See *Grade Acceleration* criteria for grade advancement)

## **Re-Registration**

Acceptance of re-registering students is dependent upon previous school-year performance, financial standing, and completed paperwork. After the re-registration period, enrollment will be open to families from outside the school.

## **Withdrawal**

Parents wishing to withdraw their child(ren) must make arrangements through the School Office. Written notification must be provided to the School Office. Teachers will provide grades to the point of withdrawal. All financial arrangements are detailed in the *Financial Policy* which is supplied to the parents. No academic records will be released until all accounts and fees are paid.

## **Release of Liability**

In consideration for admission, attendance, and participation in the activities of the school, all parents are required to sign a Release of Liability form that states the following:

“In consideration for admission, attendance, and participation in the activities of Holmesburg Christian Academy, the parents/guardians and minor child hereby release and discharge Holmesburg Baptist Church and Holmesburg Christian Academy, their agents, employees, officers, and volunteers, including successors and assigns, from all claims, demands, actions, and judgments which the undersigned parents/guardians and/or the minor child, their heirs, executors, and administrators may have or claim to have for all

personal injuries known or unknown and injuries to property caused by or arising out of the above described attendance and activities.”

## **Christian Mediation and Binding Arbitration**

In consideration for admission, attendance, and participation in the activities of the school, all parents are required to agree to Christian Mediation and Binding Arbitration for all claims that arise out of the school relationship. As stated in the Parent-School Agreement, all claims between parents, students, Holmesburg Christian Academy and Holmesburg Baptist Church shall be settled by Christian mediation and binding arbitration.

We believe that the Bible commands us to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of I Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-20. Therefore, any claim or dispute arising out of, or related to, any aspect of the school relationship, including any claim, tort claim or statutory claims, shall be settled by biblically-based mediation.

If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from such efforts, the matter shall then be submitted to a panel of three arbitrators for binding arbitration. The selection of arbitrators and the arbitration process shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation as printed in the Guidelines for Christian Conciliation handbook [(406)256-1583].

**THESE METHODS SHALL BE THE SOLE REMEDY FOR ANY CONTROVERSY OR CLAIM ARISING OUT OF THE SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP OR THE PARENT-SCHOOL AGREEMENT AND THE PARTIES EXPRESSLY WAIVE THEIR RIGHT TO FILE A LAWSUIT AGAINST ONE ANOTHER IN ANY CIVIL COURT, EXCEPT TO ENFORCE A LEGALLY BINDING ARBITRATION DECISION.**

Each party, regardless of the outcome of the matter, agrees to bear the cost of his, or her or its own arbitrator and one-half of the fees and costs of the neutral arbitrator and any other arbitration expenses.



## Parent Responsibilities

The Academy and their teachers are an outreach of the family. The responsibility of parenting remains with the parent. H.C.A. is here to support you as you "*train up a child in the way he should go*" (Proverbs 22:6a).

Your support is necessary to ensure your child's success in school. The following are ways you can support your child and H.C.A.

- Parents are encouraged to participate in school functions and the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF).
- Keep HCA updated on data changes such as phone numbers, residency changes, emergency contacts, health, medical and/or psychological conditions.
- The school MUST be provided with new or updated custody orders immediately.
- Parents have a responsibility to see that their student attends class regularly, that they arrive prior to the scheduled start time, and are picked up from school promptly at the scheduled dismissal time. (See *Late Student Pick-Up*). School staff will escort late arriving students to class.
- Be positive about the school with your children, assist students with homework nightly and maintain accurate school records.
- Students may not remain at school unsupervised for an event later in the day or evening. See the *Parent & School Agreement* and *Extended Care* arrangements.
- Parents should avoid taking their children out of school for doctor's appointments, vacations, etc. Medical appointments should be made after school if at all possible.
- Calendar events and important information may be found on the HCA website, [www.holmesburgchristian.org](http://www.holmesburgchristian.org), *Jupiter Ed*, and the monthly newsletter *The Paw Print*.
- Middle School Parents are expected to regularly check *Jupiter Ed* to stay abreast of their child's performance. Parents are encouraged to arrange conferences with teachers if there are academic or social concerns.
- Parents lift the school up in prayer and pray with your children.

## **Clearances**

In accordance with *Pennsylvania's Act 153 of 2014* all parents must provide security clearances if it is their intention of volunteer in the school in any capacity. Clearances are valid for 60 months. These clearances include:

1. **Criminal History Record** (SP4-164) – obtained from the PA State Police online at <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>.
2. **The Child Abuse Clearance** (CY113) – obtained through the PA Department of Human Services online at: <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>
3. **Federal Criminal History Record** (FBI Fingerprints) - obtained by submission to PA State Police or FBI. This check may be waived for volunteers who “swear or affirm” in writing that they have resided in PA for 10+ years and have never been convicted of any crime.

*There are no exceptions to this policy.*

## **Late Student Pick-Ups**

It is important that children be picked up promptly at the scheduled dismissal time. We understand that occasionally a parent or assigned person may be delayed in traffic or have automobile problems; however, repeated late pickups will not be allowed. Students not picked up by 15 minutes after the dismissal time will be placed in Extended Care and the parents will be charged the afternoon weekly fee for Extended Care use. See the *Parent – School Agreement*, item #7.

## **Non-Registered Children**

Parents bringing children to the School who are not registered at H.C.A. accept the full responsibility for their safety in the parking lot and any part of the church or school grounds. Special attention is needed if the child(ren) is allowed to play in the yard. Yard play for non-registered children is not approved by the Church or the School. No responsibility is accepted or assumed by the Church or the School for injuries or problems incurred by non-registered children or adults accompanying them.

## **Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF)**

The Parent Teacher Fellowship exists to assist and enhance the school in the spiritual and educational development of our children. PFA sponsors, with the cooperation of members, such programs as: School Lunches, Spring Fair, Christmas Shop, Holiday Treats and much more. There will be fund raisers during the year to support extra-curricular activities and other functions. Funds raised benefit the students of H.C.A. Parents are asked to join the PTF during their membership drive at the beginning of the school year.

## **Student-Teacher Communications**

It is the policy of HCA that employees will not communicate with any student of HCA on any social networks sites. It is appropriate for teachers to communicate electronically with students through Jupiter Ed or teacher homework blogs regarding homework and school related activities only.

## **Visitors**

All parents and visitors are to sign in with the Secretary to receive a VISITOR'S PASS. No one is permitted to move about the building without a pass.

Teachers are instructed not to engage in mini-conferences or conversations with anyone who does not have an appointment and/or a visitor's pass. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Parents are asked to dress appropriately and modestly when entering the school during school hours or attending a school function.

# **General Information**

## **Achievement Tests**

Each spring, the students in grades First through Eighth inclusive, are given standardized achievement tests; testing generally takes one week to complete. These tests measure strengths and weaknesses in the student's development. They also give the school a guide to compare scholastic achievement locally and nationally.

## **Athletic and Performing Arts Programs**

The school offers an athletic program and performing art opportunities. These programs are designed to promote physical growth and social interaction. All students involved should maintain the highest standards of Christian conduct. Participation in these programs are dependent upon maintaining high academic and behavioral standards. A failure in either of these two areas may result in temporal or permanent removal of the student from the program at the staff's discretion.

Transportation to games and practice is the parent's responsibility. A student may be removed from the team if transportation becomes a problem or repeated late pick-up occurs.

## **Cell Phones, Tablets, Cameras, Smart Watches**

Many students utilize various technology to keep in contact with their parents before and after school. This contact is important for their safety and the ability to communicate. However, when used during the school day the privacy and safety of students and staff is jeopardized. To help ensure our staff and students' safety and privacy the following policy will be strictly enforced.

Students who bring electronic devices to school must turn them into their classroom teacher or advisor upon entering the classroom. Electronic devices include cell phones, tablets, Kindles, Apple Watch and other smart watches, and game systems. All devices must be turned off when on school property during the hours between 7:30 AM and 2:15 PM. Devices will be returned at dismissal. Students found to have an electronic device in their possession during the school day will have their device confiscated and receive a detention. The devices will be held in the office until a parent or guardian picks the phone up from the office. Additional penalties will be given to students using their devices during restricted times. Additional violations will result in additional penalties (pages 47-50).

We prefer that children not bring devices at all. If they must, we strongly recommend that you NOT send an expensive device with your child. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices. Parents who need to contact their child during the school day may call the office at 215-335-4323.

## **Computer and Technology Policy**

Technology is a necessary tool in most aspects of today's education and social arena. Holmesburg Christian Academy is committed to teach its faculty, staff, students, and school community to utilize technology and to ensure responsible and safe use.

Specific rules and guidelines will be provided to students at the beginning of the school year. Usage of the computer lab by students is contingent upon the completion of the *Computer Agreement Contract* signed by students at the start of the school year.

## **Financial Policy and Information**

For additional information regarding the school's complete financial policy see the information distributed at re-registration or included in the enrollment packet. This information may be found on the school's website, [www.holmesburgchristian.org](http://www.holmesburgchristian.org). For specific questions regarding your account, contact the financial secretary at 215-335-4324 in the school office.

## **Head Lice**

Students who encounter Pediculosis (head lice) must be treated with an appropriate shampoo. The student is asked not to return to school without proof of treatment (empty box or bottle). Home cleaning is recommended to eliminate the possibility of reoccurrence.

Head lice is not a condition to be embarrassed by and is not caused by poor hygiene. It is, however, contagious and a nuisance. Therefore, the above measure is recommended by the School Board to help lessen the possibility of spreading this pesky problem. Your cooperation and understanding will be appreciated by everyone. Ongoing re-occurrence may result in an extended period of exclusion from school.

## **Honor Roll**

The Honor Roll is determined at the end of each report period. The list will be published in the school newsletter. Students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> must have all A's and are allowed one (1) B or S in a minor subject for High Honors. Students must have all A's and B's and are allowed one (1) C in a minor subject for Honors. Students with a conduct or subject grade lower than S (S- is lower than S) or a C (C- is lower than C) will not be considered for Honor Roll. A student will not be considered for the Honor Roll with any grade lower than 70. A student who achieves Honor Roll all four marking periods will be recognized at the end-of-the-year Awards Chapel.

## **Lost and Found**

The school keeps a lost and found in the main building. All students and parents should check it periodically for their belongings. Articles will be disposed of every 30 days.

Middle School students are responsible to secure their books, clothing and other materials in the lockers and with H.C.A. issued locks. The School will not be responsible for losses when the locks and lockers are not properly secured. Problems with locks or lockers must be reported.

## **Lunch**

All students have a lunch period of twenty minutes followed by a recess period outside (weather permitting). Lunch will be held in the lunchroom unless otherwise noted. Students are required to bring a lunch. Students without a lunch will not have permission to leave campus to get lunch. Students who forget their lunch may have it brought to the School Office by their parent. It will be the responsibility of the student to get their lunch from the office. There are no refrigerators or microwaves available for student use. Do not send beverages in glass bottles; soda is not permitted in any type of container.

Lunchroom guidelines and expected behavior will be reviewed by the lunchroom staff at the start of the school year.

## **Medication**

The school will dispense Tylenol only as appropriate, unless notified in writing by the parent. Office Staff will only administer non-aspirin pain reliever. For approval to administer additional medication during school hours for students, parents must supply a *Request for Medication Administration* (parent form) and *Physician Statement of Need* (doctor form).

Body temperatures over 100<sup>0</sup> F in school will be cause for parents to be notified to come and pick up the child.

New forms (parent/physician) must be submitted at least once a year. Any medicine brought to School must be in their original containers and stored according to the physician's request. The medicine MUST be brought to the school office where it can be dispensed to the child when needed. Students may not keep medications on their person. All medication dispensed will be logged in medical records.

## **Office Hours**

The School Office is open during the regular school day and for 30 minutes following dismissal. If you need to visit at another time to make a tuition payment or discuss finances, an appointment is required. Please call the office to make an appointment.

Summer hours (after the close of school in June and before the start of the fall semester) for the School Office are 9:00 AM to 12 Noon. Always call ahead during the summer if you need to stop in the office.

## **Parking Lot and Drop Off Safety**

The parking lot is an extremely busy area, and can be very dangerous. Motorized vehicles should move at not more than 8 miles per hour in this area. Park in appropriate parking space to keep the flow of traffic moving. Please observe the reserved parking spaces for School and Church personnel.

When dropping-off or picking-up students, parents should wait along the parking/yard fence and leave clear the ramp area for students and staff to move. Before and after regular school hours the yard should be clear of non-school children. The yard is needed for students gathering and for extended care activities.

Incidents of damage done to cars or injury to persons in the parking lot are reported to the Philadelphia Police Department. All witnessed incidents are reported to the Philadelphia Police Department.

1. The parking lot behind the school will be closed to vehicular traffic during student arrival and dismissal times on school days. Please do not move or drive around cones to try to get into the parking lot.
2. School buses will discharge and pick up students in the 7900 block of Charles Street. Cars parked in the bus pick up and discharge area may be ticketed.
3. Parents who wish to park their vehicles and walk their children to school or pick them up, can park legally on the east side of Charles Street, by Aldworth's Funeral Home, and along Decatur Street.
4. **Parents are asked not to park on the sidewalk. Do not park or stop in front of or otherwise block any driveways.**
5. At dismissal time parents must meet the students in the parking lot and escort them to their car.

## **Parties**

During the year the class will have parties. These parties are for special occasions. Teachers are told not to plan school birthday parties. Parents may send in special food items with their child on their birthday to share with the class on prior approval of the classroom teacher.

## **Physical Education**

Every student at HCA is required to take Physical Education. A medical excuse from a physician is needed for long term illness. Notes from home will excuse students for short term illness. All students are to come to class ready to participate each day. Students with disabilities that keep them from participating will be required to complete other assigned work for a grade.

## **Preschool Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

Half-day preschool children will be met at the grass area, **North** side of the building and enter the building as a class. Parents are responsible for staying with the children until a staff member takes them into the school. Full Day preschool children should also enter from the north side of the building upon arrival.

During inclement weather, drop-off and pick-up for half-day preschool children will be in the gym; parents will enter and exit the building through the ramp door on the ground floor.

Dismissal of half-day students to parents/guardians with ID will be from this same area. School-day and full-day students are dismissed from the classroom. Parents or other individuals permitted to pick students up must sign children out.

## **School Nurse**

Nurse service is provided to H.C.A. in a mandated program. This program consists of an annual vision screening for all students, hearing screening in K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th grades. You will be notified of any hearing or vision difficulty. It is important that you have these problems checked by your doctor.

Children entering Kindergarten, 6th grade and all new students are required to have a physical examination by their doctor. Forms will be issued and it is imperative that these are returned to the nurse. See **Health Requirements**. Illness cannot be treated in school. When your child is sick, please keep him/her home.

## **School Yard Rules**

General school yard rules will be reviewed by H.C.A. staff at the beginning of the school year. Students are expected to be respectful and courteous to other students and to staff overseeing yard time.

1. The only balls to be used for K-5<sup>th</sup> are Nerf balls. Middle School may use basketballs for playing basketball only in the Middle School yard.
2. Acceptable playground equipment is determined by grade level.
3. **Rough play, pushing, hitting, play resulting in injury (intentional or accidental) or name calling will result in disciplinary action and temporary loss of recess privileges.**

## **Sending Money to School**

Any money sent to school for activities, pictures, fund raisers, etc. should be sent in a sealed envelope and labeled with the student's name, and purpose. Please send exact amount as the school cannot give change.



## **Summer Reading and Math Packets**

Reading is a critical skill and foundational to all education. We support an active reading program to maintain that skill throughout the student's time at the school. Summer math and reading packets are distributed to students at the end of the school year. Completion of summer work and turning it in on time will have a positive effect on a student's first marking period grade.

## **Suspected Child Abuse**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires Holmesburg Christian Academy to report allegations of suspected child abuse to the proper governmental authority when there is a reasonable suspicion or reasonable basis for believing that physical or emotional abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, inadequate supervision, neglect or other forms of abuse have occurred. The school/staff will not to contact parents in advance of making a report to legal authorities or discuss the report with parents/guardians following the report. All school staff are considered mandated reporters and are required, by law, to report suspected child abuse to the proper authorities. The authorities will investigate and review the report to determine if there is abuse.

## **Textbooks**

Students are issued textbooks which are school property. They are provided for the year and must be returned at the conclusion of the year. A textbook that is lost or damaged will be replaced at the expense of the student. Student may be required to cover some textbooks.

## **Tuition**

Tuition and other fees are to be paid on time. The school operates primarily on tuition making a constant cash flow necessary to meet the financial obligations of HCA.

Although we do not wish to penalize the children, parents must realize that failure to keep an up-to-date account can keep your child from attending school. The Financial Administrator is available for questions by emailing [finance@holmesburgchristian.org](mailto:finance@holmesburgchristian.org) or by phone at 215-335-4323. All tuition information is mailed to the parents prior to the date of the first tuition payment.

# Programs and Activities

## Academic Project Fairs

Middle School holds a Project Fair in the Spring to explore the elements of research, develop creative thinking skills, and excite students about learning and to have students experience healthy academic competition through a judging panel and award presentation. Participation is mandatory for Middle School students. Failure to adhere to project timelines and required work may result in a failing grade.

To encourage an appreciation for research and learning in different subjects and capitalize on the younger child's natural curiosity, an Elementary Project Fair is also held. Students must complete the project at home and bring their science fair materials or boards the day before the fair. They will give an oral presentation to their teacher. This experience prepares students for advanced presentations associated with Middle School project presentations.

1st grade – ELA project (Flat Stanley or another book/series)

2nd grade – Science project (Animal habitats)

3rd grade – Personal heritage project (Research something that is unique/special about your family's culture and bring it/present it - ex. food, dance, music, holiday, clothing)

4th grade – State project (Research project on one of the 50 United States)

5th grade – Science project

6th grade – History project (Research the biography and accomplishments of a historical figure and make a presentation in character as that person.)

7th grade – Science project

8th grade – Service project (Volunteer in community service over an extended period of time, and present a project based on that organization and their work.)

## Athletic Banquet

Student athletes and their parents are invited to the annual Spring Athletic Banquet to celebrate good sportsmanship and athletic achievement. The expected and appropriate attire for this banquet activity will be for girls to wear tasteful and modest dress. Boys are encouraged to wear a suit or dress shirt and tie. (See **Dress Code for Special Events**)

## Awards

A Student-of-the-Month Award is announced in the last Chapel/Assembly of each month. Athletic achievement is acknowledged at the annual Athletic Banquet. Science Fair and Project Fair Awards are distributed the evening of competition. An Awards Assembly will take place during the final days of the school year. Students are recognized for their achievements

## **Back to School Night**

At the beginning of the school year, a Back to School Night will be held. The Middle School and Elementary School will have separate meetings. The purpose of these nights is to introduce the teachers, review course materials, and to communicate important information. This is not a time for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Parents will meet in the student's classroom.

## **Chapel**

Weekly Chapels will be held for all students in K-8<sup>th</sup> grade. The Chapel service is generally held separately for elementary students and middle school students. The Chapel is set aside for the purpose of worship. This is a time for students to develop a deeper relationship with God.

## **Clubs**

Club sessions and offerings will vary from year to year as the faculty develops and introduces new options for the students. Depending upon the club fee, students may be charged for participation.

## **Enrichment**

See *Learning Center*, page 24

## **Extended Care**

Working parent(s) and those with special time limitations may have their student participate in an Extended Care program which is available for both before-school hours and after-school hours. Extended Care service is available in the morning from 6:30 AM to 7:20 AM and after school from 2:15 PM to 6:00 PM. Contact the school office for additional information.

### **Late Pick-up Policy for Elementary and Middle School Students:**

Parents picking up children after 6:00 PM will be assessed a late fee for every ten minutes. See the *Extended Care* form for current costs. Late fees are assessed per child. All assessed fees are due the next school day and are paid directly to the caregiver. **Repeated late pick-up of a student may result in removal of the student from Extended Care.**

### **Late Pick-up Policy for Pre-School Students:**

Pre-School students must be picked up at 11:30 AM from morning sessions, 2:15 PM from school day sessions, and 6 PM from full day sessions. If pick-up is delayed the parents will be charged according to the costs listed on the *Pre-School Late Pick-up Policy* form. The fee is due the next school day or the late fee will be doubled. Late fees outstanding after two (2) weeks will precipitate School Board action. Repeated late pick-up of a student may result in removal of the student from the Pre-School Program.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Sports are open to students in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade who meet the eligibility requirements. See page 16, *Athletic and Performing Arts Programs* for participation guidelines.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are a valuable off-campus experience. They are usually related to classroom study, but on some occasions, they are an addition to the curriculum. Each student must have a signed parent permission slip before they can go on the trip. Students without written permission will not participate. Telephone permission will not be acceptable but forms may be faxed. Transportation will be provided through bus or by parents. Parents who drive must have proper insurance and current clearance as required by the PA Act 153 of 2014. The vehicle must be equipped with operable seat belts. Seat belts are to be worn at all times. The dress code will be announced before the trip. Money for field trips must be in cash only, no checks or money orders or other form of payment is accepted.

Field trips are a privilege, not a right. Students may be denied participation due to poor behavior. Disciplinary action involving any field trip shall be at the discretion of the classroom teacher, with the approval of the Head of School. Students who do not participate in a trip for disciplinary or other reasons must remain home under parental supervision, and may be required to do additional work as assigned by the classroom teacher(s). This will be considered an unexcused absence.

## **Graduation**

A graduation worship service is held at the end of each school year for members of the Eighth grade class. Parents, family and friends are invited to attend, students will be issued tickets depending upon the size of the class. Awards for achievement and a challenge to the students are part of this service that honors our Lord and recognizes the achievements of our young people. A small reception follows the service for the graduates and their families.

## **Home School Connection**

H.C.A. recognizes each child's journey is different to reach their God given potential. The Home School Connection is a hybrid educational program that establishes a partnership between home school parents and the Academy. Parents may choose from a variety of offerings and options that meet the needs of their child and their family. The Academy offers academic, spiritual and social support within the framework of a Christ-centered program.

## **Learning Center**

The Learning Center works closely with the classroom teacher to provide appropriate instructional accommodations and strategies for enhancing academic success. Every child learns differently. The learning center staff is comprised of trained professionals who are experienced in the area of educational support and special needs.

The Learning Center also offers a program designed to expand and enrich the learning opportunities for qualifying students. The Enrichment Program challenges academically talented students to expand their visions and think critically from a biblical worldview. Participation in the Enrichment Program is by invitation and is offered to students following a qualification process for students who have completed second grade and beyond.

## **Outdoor Education**

Each spring the 5th grade class participates in a program at Camp Sankanac or another facility. Camp Sankanac is located in Spring City, PA. Our program enriches the science curriculum as students explore God's creation. Camp Sankanac is dedicated to the purpose of encouraging youth to accept Christ as their Savior. The camp provides instructors, meals, and housing. Several parent chaperons will be invited to help. Non-attendance is an unexcused absence unless a doctor's note is provided for illness. Students who do not attend may be required to do additional work to compensate for the missed science work completed at camp.

## **Report Card Conferences**

Parents are required to attend a Report Card Conference at the end of the first marking period for all students in K-8th grade. These conferences are scheduled through the School Office. In addition to the first marking period conference, teachers are available for an optional report card conference at the end of the second or third marking periods.

Other conferences may be arranged during the year. Parents may call the School Office or contact the teacher to schedule a time. No conferences will be held without an appointment.

## **School Directory**

The school will publish an annual *Family Directory*. The Directory will include family name, address, phone number, names of children and class grades. The Directory is not to be used for solicitation in or outside of the school family. The Directory also includes a listing of faculty, staff and School Board members. Families not wanting to be included in the *Directory* should contact the School Office in September.

## **Service Projects**

Each year students will participate in a class service project. The idea is to help the children develop a servant's heart and realize that when serving others, we serve Christ. Projects will vary both in intensity and time and will be age appropriate. Colossians 3:23-24

## **Spiritual Emphasis Month**

Spiritual Emphasis Month offers special Chapel services to place emphasis on the spiritual growth of the students. A guest speaker addresses the need for salvation and dedication of one's life to the Lord Jesus as a prime objective for each student.

## **Yearbook**

A Yearbook is produced and may be purchased by all students. The yearbook is a compilation by many people. The cost is kept to a minimum by advertising and is available to students in grades Preschool through 8<sup>th</sup>. 8<sup>th</sup> graders receive a yearbook as a gift and do not need to purchase a book.

# Daily Routine

## Attendance

Attendance is a key to successful academics. All parents are urged to encourage their children to have perfect attendance. All absences should be carefully evaluated by parents. The educational process is interrupted by even the shortest of absences. Any student who misses more than nine days in one 9-week marking period may be given a marking period grade of F in all daily subjects upon evaluation of the absences. A student who misses more than 20 days in one semester may be given a semester grade of F in all daily subjects if absences are not valid. Exceptions can only be made in cases of extended illness accompanied by a Doctor's statement. Extended illness is generally considered to be five consecutive school days or more of school time. The Head of School will have the final decision in all cases. Excessive absences may be reasonable cause for reporting potential child abuse.

Parents are required to evaluate carefully a student's physical health after an illness before that student returns to school. A student who has displayed an oral temperature of 100.5°F or more must not return to school until that temperature has returned to normal. If the fever responds to medication, returns to normal and does not rise again; it may be permissible for the student to return to school provided s/he is free of other symptoms of illness. Students with vomiting and/or diarrhea should be symptom free for 24-hours before returning to school. Students with contagious conditions will not be permitted in school without a physician's written note indicating the child may return to school. Precautions are necessary to protect the health of all students. Parents have a mutual responsibility to guard the health of other students as well as their own child.

When students are sent home from school with a fever or serious illness two consecutive school days, they may be evaluated on returning the next day and, if not properly recovered, required to obtain a physician's note indicating that the student may return to school.

## Absences

### EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Illness or injury
2. Death in immediate family
3. Doctor's Appointment
4. Family Emergency
5. Transportation problems
6. Approved Vacation (up to 5 days)

### UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Any excuse not listed as an excused absence
2. Suspensions
3. Failure to bring notice of absence within 2 days
4. Vacations more than 5 days

Parents of students (taken on vacation during the regular school year) must apply by letter to the Head of School two weeks in advance of the absence to have the absence recorded as excused. Parents must be able to show in writing the educational values of that vacation, and have the Head of School approve the absence as valid educational time before the time of absence. Students must make up missed work within one week of return to school.

## **Bus Transportation**

Bus transportation is provided by the School District of Philadelphia for students in grades 1-8 who live at least one and a half miles from the School. Transportation and route assignments are at the discretion of the School District. Bus forms will be filled out by the parents at registration. Any student who is not taking the bus home must notify the Transportation Coordinator by note or by phone. All children are expected to act with Godly conduct and show respect to other students and those in authority. Failure to obey proper bus policy may result in temporary or permanent loss of bus privileges or other consequences depending on the infraction.

## **Early Dismissals**

Students who need to leave School early due to doctor's appointments or other valid reasons, must bring a note from their parents and present it to their teacher in the morning. The note should indicate the time the student is to be dismissed, the reason for the dismissal and the person who will be picking up the child. All students must be signed out at the School Office. Children who leave school early because they have become ill during the school day are to be picked up at the school office where they will be signed out. Any student leaving before 1:00 PM will be marked absent for a half day.

## **Fire Drills**

These drills are held monthly as required by the State. These drills prepare students for a real emergency and teach self-control. Drills should be taken seriously by all involved. A fire drill diagram is posted in each classroom.

## **Homework**

Homework is a vital part of the educational process at HCA. Homework strengthens the subject matter presented in the class and gives the student the chance to practice. Parents are responsible to be aware of the teacher's homework policies and to ensure the student complies.

The following guidelines are approximate lengths of time for homework. Remember, the time will vary daily.

Kindergarten	15 minutes	Grades 3-5	30 – 50 minutes
Grades 1-2	20 minutes	Grades 6-8	40 – 90 minutes

Homework that is not turned in on the proper day will be given a zero. If it is brought in the next day, it will be move up to the lowest C- (75). If it is not turned in on the second day, it will be permanently recorded as a zero. The teacher has the option of holding the student after school or from an activity to get the work done.

Excessive amounts of work not finished can result in an incomplete report card grade and cause the student to face disciplinary action.



## **Late Arrival**

When students arrive at school more than 10 minutes after the scheduled start time, they must report to the School Office. Students arriving more than 2 hours late will be marked absent for a half day. Office staff will escort late students to their class.

Students should have a note explaining the reason for being late. Failure to have a note explaining the lateness will cause the lateness to be unexcused. A total of 3 unexcused lateness, within one marking period, will result in a detention.

## **Pledges**

Each morning, school will begin with the recital of pledges. We will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Christian Flag. This will be followed by opening prayer and scripture reading. This will take place together as a school in the gym, before students are dismissed to their classes. On chapel days, we will recite the pledges in chapel.

## **Records**

The School maintains a very complete set of records to assist in pupil guidance. The cumulative permanent record for each pupil enrolled lists complete personal data concerning the pupil and can include his/her complete scholastic and citizenship grades, a full report of the student's attendance, activities, honors, scores on performance tests, achievement, aptitude, vocational interest tests, and a health record. Records are kept secured to maintain confidentiality. The records of academic summary, attendance summary and health are transferred to the student's next school if all financial obligations have been met.

Copies of additional records can be provided as available at the written request of the parent(s) and the school to which the student has been accepted. Itemized requirements are to be in writing. The cost of the duplication is \$ 5.00 (minimum) per student for one school per year and the record set must be picked up by the parent(s).

## **Report Cards**

Report Cards will be sent home every nine weeks. The purpose of these reports is for the parents to see progress or lack of progress. Parents are to look at the report card, sign it, and return it to the teacher. They should be returned within 5 days of being issued.

## **Progress Reports**

It is essential that parents review and gauge their child's academic performance throughout the year, not only at report card time, so that appropriate guidance and help can be provided to improve academic performance and prevent failing a class or a grade. Parents are encouraged to regularly use the *Jupiter Ed* system to view their student's grades and to communicate with your child's teachers. Please note that printed mid-quarter progress

reports will no longer be sent home. This information is available at any time in *Jupiter Ed*. If you are unable to use the online system, the school office or your child's teacher will be able to provide you with a printed progress report upon request.

## Grading Scale

The scale for letter grades seen on tests and report cards represents the following numerical scale:

A+	98 - 100	C	77 - 78.9
A	94 - 97.9	C-	75 - 76.9
A-	90 - 93.9	D+	74 - 74.9
B+	87 - 89.9	D	71 - 73.9
B	84 - 86.9	D-	70 - 70.9
B-	80 - 83.9	F	69.9 or below
C+	79 - 79.9		

Outstanding =	90-100
Satisfactory =	79-89
Needs Improvement =	70-78
Unsatisfactory =	69.9 and below

## Academic Probation

Probation is invoked when a student has a problem academically. It is intended to make the student and parent aware of the need to improve. Academic Probation will keep a student from being involved in any extracurricular activity. Students are expected to remove themselves from probationary status within one semester. Students may be mandated to participate, at a separate cost, in the *Learning Tree*. Students may be prohibited from participating in events if grades are not satisfactory. This is at the staff's discretion.

Students will be placed on probation if they receive an F on their report card. This will be an automatic probation lasting a maximum of one full marking period, or at the discretion of the Head of School until improvement is seen within that marking period. A student will also be placed on probation for performing below C level in any combination of two classes (major or minor). Students placed on probation forfeit any fees paid toward extracurricular activities which they are not permitted to participate in as a result of the probation. A student may request to be removed from Academic Probation after four weeks, by submitting a letter to the Head of School, accompanied by a support letter from their classroom teacher or advisor, indicating they are supporting the request. This request will only be granted one time during the school year.

## Research Work

When completing research work, the student needs to give proper credit for information gathered. Work should never be quoted word for word without using quotes and recognizing the author. **Plagiarism** is a serious offense that does not reflect high academics. Teachers

will inform students of the proper format to reference websites, reference books, textbooks or interviews. Please note, **“Wikipedia” is never an acceptable source of information for a research report.** Failure to follow this policy will result in a zero for the research project.

## **School Hours**

The school day begins at 7:30 AM and ends at 2:15 PM. Students may arrive between 7:20 and 7:30 and proceed directly to their classrooms.

If care is needed from 6:30 AM until 7:20 AM or after 2:15 PM please contact the school office to arrange for extended care.

## **Security Drills**

Our first priority is the safety of our students and staff. To that end, in addition to the routine fire drills the school has established both a **“lockdown”** procedure and a **“shelter-in-place”** procedure. Practice drills for these procedures take place several times during the school year. Students are required to fill a Crisis Emergency-Preparedness Bag should an actual lockdown or shelter in place be required for an extended period of time. Bags are to be sent at the start of the school year and will be returned to students at the end of the school year.

## **Snow Days**

Our snow number is **#159**. KYW (1060 AM dial) is the only station to which we relay closing information. Information regarding school closing may be found by:

- Checking our website: [www.holmesburgchristian.org](http://www.holmesburgchristian.org)
- Checking the school’s Facebook page
- KYW’s web site: [www.kyw1060.com](http://www.kyw1060.com) or at [www.CBSPhilly.com/schools](http://www.CBSPhilly.com/schools).
- Call KYW at 215-925-1060
- Via School Closing Text Alerts. Sign up at [CBSPhilly.com/schools](http://CBSPhilly.com/schools) to subscribe
- Scrolled on the screen of TV stations CBS 3 and Eyewitness News on The CW Philly

The School may not be closed when Philadelphia Public and/or Parochial Schools are closed. It is the parent's responsibility to assess the travel conditions and ultimately decide if it is safe to send a child to School.

# Discipline

## **Purpose**

The parent is given the responsibility of discipline in the home. Since the school is the acting parent during the school day, the school does have the responsibility to discipline students. The school and home need to work together to form a strong discipline system. The quality of education can be greatly reduced with poor discipline.

Discipline is not for the purpose of punishment and humiliation. Although punishment is involved, the principle involves correction, submission to authority, and self-discipline to uphold righteousness. Discipline will be conducted with love and respect. The outcome should be a positive result.

## **Standard for Conduct**

Biblical standards and conduct are expected at all times from both students and family members. Students and family members are to be courteous and respectful to all students, teachers and staff. Respect involves taking care of the building and property. Behavior not in accordance with biblical standards will result in appropriate consequences as determined by staff and administration.

## **Discipline Policy Limits**

The discipline policy applies to students while on campus, on the school buses, or at school functions. However, behavior that damages the reputation of the student, another student and/or the School cannot be ignored regardless of where it occurs. Offenses will be dealt with at the discretion of the Head of School. Discipline may range from detention to expulsion.

## **Disciplinary Code**

The teacher or aide has the primary responsibility to maintain the rules and order of the classroom.

Teachers will handle problems in the classroom or will assign an afterschool detention if it is warranted. When a student receives a second detention, the parents of that student will be notified that the student must work towards correcting behavior; this notification will serve as a warning of impending suspension. At the third detention, the student will be assigned a Suspension. Further detentions will lead to further disciplinary action by the Head of School and the School Board.

The following list of serious offenses can lead to automatic detention:

***THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST***

3 Dress Code Violation (uniform notices)	Lying
3 Unexcused lateness to School or to class in one marking period	Defiance and/or arguing with a member of the faculty or staff
3 Deficiency Reports/Conduct Referrals	Rough physical contact that has potential for bodily injury
Use of offensive language	Destruction of property
Continued repetitive action or noise which results in disturbance to a class and/or interrupts the educational process	Middle School student – three missing assignments for a class
Serious breach of lunchroom rules	Possession of cell phone during the school day
Bullying of any sort	
Cutting class	

The following major offenses on or off campus can lead to automatic suspension and/or expulsion from school:

***THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST***

Leaving School without permission	Destruction of property
Possession of illegal substance	Cheating
Sexual immorality	Stealing
Use of drugs or alcohol	Smoking
Possession of weapons	Fighting
Habitual offenses of lesser nature	Slander
Inappropriate Internet activity	Bullying
Possession or display of sexually suggestive material	Terroristic Threats

## **Detentions**

Detentions will be a time of correction and reproof. Students will either sit quietly in isolation, or do a writing assignment. The detention will last 30 minutes for students in grades Kindergarten through 3, and one hour for students in grades 4 through 8. Detention periods are scheduled for Thursday afternoons.

Notice of date and time of detention will be sent home prior to execution of the detention. The detention notice must be signed by a parent and returned to School on the first school day after the detention notice is received. Detention periods begin at 2:25 PM for all students; closing at 2:55 PM for students in grades Kindergarten through 3, and closing at 3:25 PM for students in grades 4 through 8.

Transportation must be provided or the child may be placed in Extended Care. **Students may not participate or attend extracurricular activities on days they are serving a detention.** Failure to comply with these procedures could result in suspension.

## **Suspensions**

Suspension will be assigned by the Head of School. Teachers may recommend but not assign a suspension. The length of time that the suspension lasts will depend on the Head of School.

The parent will be notified by phone and letter of the suspension. In severe cases, the parent will be asked to pick up the child during the day. At the time the student receives a third detention, the student will be assigned a one-day suspension. As a minimum every third detention to follow will result in a higher level of suspension leading to expulsion. Suspensions will generally be assigned in the following order:

### 1 DAY OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

- 1 day in length
- The student will take assigned work home that must be completed that day. All work must be returned to School on the next school day.
- Student will be kept at home and under adult supervision.
- Student will be placed on disciplinary probation.

### 2 DAY OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

- 2 days in length
- The student will take assigned work home to be completed on those days. All work must be returned to School on the next school day.
- Student will be kept at home and under adult supervision.
- Parent/Student/Head of School conference will be held.
- Student will be placed on disciplinary probation.

### 3 DAY OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

- 3 days in length
- The student will take assigned work home to be completed on those days. All work must be returned to School on the next school day.
- Student will be kept at home and under adult supervision.
- Parent/Student/Head of School conference will be held.
- Student will be placed on disciplinary probation.

A suspension of greater length might be assigned for severe situations.

## **Expulsions**

Expulsion will be executed by the Head of School on a provisional basis pending permanent action by the School Board. Parents will receive written notification of the Board's Action.

Expulsion will be used only when all other means of correcting a problem have been exhausted. The following are possible reasons for expulsion:

1. After suspensions have been used to handle discipline and other problems.
2. For a student's behavior that is damaging to the School's reputation, even when this does not happen at a School function.
3. Failure of parents to comply with discipline measures.
4. Failure of parents to pay tuition or fees. In this case, the student may be readmitted after finances are brought up to date.
5. A negative, threatening, or detrimental attitude by parents or students towards the School or School personnel.
6. Failure or inability of a student to keep up with the academic responsibilities.

A hearing can be arranged through the Chair of the School Board for the student and parent to appeal any expulsion executed by the School Board.

## **Disciplinary Probation**

Any student who receives a suspension will be placed on Disciplinary Probation. This probation will last for one full marking period (or 45 consecutive school days) for each suspension. During that time, the student may not participate in extracurricular activities. Fees paid for extracurricular activities will be forfeited, if a student is placed on Disciplinary Probation.

# Dress Code

## Purpose

The Academy has a designated uniform dress code for all students in Kindergarten through 8th grades. Home schooled children, enrolled in *The Home School Connection*, are asked to honor the dress code. The purpose of the dress code is to promote modesty and uniformity. Clothes that are too casual tend to set a mood of recreation which does not create a positive learning atmosphere. We expect our students to be dressed in a manner that lends itself to an atmosphere of Christian learning. The responsibility of dress code compliance is in the home. When the home does not properly monitor student's dress, the Academy must get involved.

It is not possible to cover every possible hairstyle or clothing combination. If you have any questions regarding the dress code, please contact the school office, your child's teacher or administration for clarification. Ask before you purchase any item you are uncertain may not comply with dress code.

The Head of School or his/her appointee reserves the right to make all final decisions in regard to the dress code. Non-compliance will result in Uniform Violation and additional consequences. See *Dress Code Violations*.

## Regular Uniform

- Khaki uniform slacks (pants). Khaki uniform shorts (no cargo, stretch shorts, or jeggings) may be worn from the beginning of school until September 30 and from April 15 until the end of school.
- Black or brown belt
- Hunter green polo shirt, short or long sleeve
- If desired for cold weather, hunter green uniform sweater or sweater vest (no sweatshirts)
- All-black sneakers or black or brown shoes
- Socks should always be worn

Note: there is no separate uniform policy for chapel days. This is the uniform for every day except for a student's gym day. Skirts and jumpers are no longer part of the school uniform.

## Gym Attire

The gym uniform will be worn all day on the student's gym day. Students will not change at school.

- Black athletic pants with white stripe(s), or Hunter green gym shorts, or Grey sweatpants (**NO** tights or form fitting sweatpants)
- Grey t-shirt (shirt with HCA logo preferred, available from DiGiulio's)



- Sneakers (low cut styles are preferred)
- White ankle or calf-length athletic style socks

Being unprepared for gym will result in a dress code uniform notice. Three uniform notices will result in a detention. After a student receives 2 violations the student may not be permitted to participate in the next school or PTF sponsored dress down, including class trip dress downs when appropriate.

## **Dress and Appearance Standards**

The following standards apply for all students, for both the regular and gym uniforms, and on dress-down days. These standards don't cover every possibility, but the principle is *Christian modesty*. The Head of School has the authority to determine what is appropriate. If you have questions, please feel free to ask.

- No tight pants, tights, or leggings. Sweat pants should be baggy and not form fitting. Shorts should be loose athletic or basketball shorts or similar.
- For the regular or gym uniform, shorts should come to just above the knee. Short shorts are not allowed.
- Shoelaces must be tied.
- No jackets or sweatshirts may be worn in the classroom.
- No hats may be worn in the buildings
- Hairstyles must be traditional, neat and well groomed. Colored hair must be a natural color that is not extreme or draws undue attention. Boys hairstyles must be short and evenly tapered or blocked in the back; hair may not touch the collar, ears or eyebrows. Boys with braids or cornrows must keep their hair neatly groomed and off the collar. Boys must be clean shaven.
- Girls may wear earrings (one in each ear), but the earrings may not dangle more than 1 inch in length. Boys may not wear earrings. Body piercing is not permitted for either boys or girls.
- Tattoos are not permitted.
- Make-up is not allowed in Elementary Grades (K-5). Girls in Middle School (6-8) may wear light, modest make-up, limited to blush, lip-gloss and mascara.
- Girls may wear nail polish in clear or light colors.

## **Dress Code Violations**

The dress code will be strictly enforced. Teachers are primarily responsible to make sure that the dress code is strictly enforced. Students that do not meet the dress code will be given a dress code/uniform notice. Students who are unprepared for Gym will receive a dress code/uniform notice. After a student receives 2 violations the student may not be permitted to participate in the next school or PTF sponsored dress down, including class trip dress downs when appropriate. After three dress code/uniform notices, a detention will be served. Any student that is severely violating the dress code will be sent to the School Office. At the school office, they will have to call their parents and wait until the parents bring satisfactory clothing. Any class time missed will be unexcused.

## Casual or Special Event Dress

During the school year there are certain days when the students are not required to wear their school uniforms. Casual dress days include some field trips as designated by the teacher, overnight retreats, school Spirit Day, the Spring Fair. Special dress up events may include recitals and banquets. Teachers will notify students of the acceptable dress attire for the occasion (i.e. casual or special). Any student that violates the dress code will be sent to the School Office and may not participate in the school activity. At the school Office, the student will have to call his/her parent and wait until the parent brings satisfactory clothing.

- Tops:** Appropriately fitting short/long sleeve shirts or sweaters. See **WARM WEATHER DRESS OPTION.**  
No exposed bra straps.  
Tops must cover shoulders  
No low cut tops  
No writing or pictures of any kind that conflicts with the standards of the Academy may be displayed on the clothing.
- Pants/Shorts:** Appropriately fitting casual pants or shorts. No tight or form fitting shorts or pants permitted unless worn under a top/dress which is no shorter than 3" above the knee.  
Shorts may be no more than 2" above the knee.  
No pants with rips, tears, or fringed hems.  
Girls may wear Capris during the warm weather dress period for casual dress.
- Skirts:** May not be shorter than 2" above the knee
- Shoes:** Sneakers with socks, crew, athletic or ankle.  
No Sandals, Flip Flops, Clogs.  
No Dress Shoes with heels over 1"
- Dresses:** No exposed bra straps.  
Shoulders must be covered by the dress or by a sweater.  
No low cut dresses  
May not be shorter than 2" above the knee

For special dress events boys may be asked to wear a tie and jacket depending on the occasion.

## Middle School

In addition to the previous information contained in the handbook, the following information is relevant to Middle School students.

### Final Exams and Mid Term Exams

The middle school students will take exams at the end of each semester (the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> marking periods). The Mid-Term and Final Exams will count as 1/9 of the total semester grade.

### Homework and Behavior Room

Students who do not turn in assignments will be required to complete their work during their next lunch period.

Students who do not comply with school policies and behavior expectations will serve a lunch detention during their next lunch period as a consequence for the misbehavior.

Three visits of infractions for homework or three for behavior will result in an after school detention in addition to the lunchtime consequence.

### Lateness to Class

Students who are late to class three (3) times without a proper pass or excuse will serve an after school detention. There are only three (3) minutes between classes and students need to move directly from one class to the other.

### Locks and Lockers

Locks and lockers are issued to all Middle School students. Students are required to pay a \$5.00 deposit at the time the lock is issued; an additional \$5.00 will be required, for a total of \$10.00, if the lock is lost. The deposit will be returned at the end of the school year when the lock is returned. **Students are not permitted to bring in their own locks.** Only school locks are acceptable. Locks not issued by H.C.A. will be removed; this may include cutting locks off if necessary. Lockers are to be used for outer clothing, gym clothing, books and other school related materials. Heavy winter coats may need to be kept on the coat rack. Lockers are to be locked at all times. Students are expected to keep their lockers clean inside and out. No food is to be kept in the locker overnight.

Lockers will be checked periodically. The Administration has the right to enter student's locker with probable cause.

Students may use lockers before school, during break during lunch and after school. Students should not share their locker combination with other students.

## **Math and English Placement Testing**

Math and English final exams are important in determining the overall proficiency of middle school students in these two critical subjects. Therefore, all students who earn a 69% or below will be required to receive tutoring over the summer.

At the start of the following school year, the student must show proof of having been tutored and re-take the exam to earn a 70% or greater. Students who do not earn 70% or greater on the retest will be required to sign up for Learning Center services at a cost to the parent.

## **National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)**

The NJHS is a service organization for middle school students. Membership is by invitation only. Criteria for membership are available upon request.

## **Promotion**

Middle School students must pass Bible, English, Math and at least one other major subject area to be promoted to the next grade. Summer school may be recommended for some students. See the **ACADEMIC INFORMATION** section of this *Handbook* for the policy concerning summer school.

## **Student Council**

The Student Council develops leaders, promotes school spirit, and allows students to serve others. The members of the Council plan activities (skiing, ice skating, bowling, parties, etc.), special days, and service projects in which the whole Middle School may participate.

## **Study Period**

A Study Period is designed for students to do homework, complete class work or participate in a life skill course. Study periods are not free periods.

## **Eighth Grade Trip**

The eighth grade class will participate in a class trip at the end of the school year. Information about the class trip will be supplied to parents and students in the spring outlining all the necessary requirements and itinerary. All eighth grade students are expected to participate in the trip. However, this is a privilege and a student may be prohibited from attending if acceptable behavior is not exhibited throughout the school year.

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