

Gardendale Christian Academy



“Home of the King’s Knights”

2017-2018

Handbook

Thirty-Five Years of Excellence in Education

1800 Decatur Highway

Gardendale, AL 35071

205-631-9465

gdalechristian.org

Gardendale Christian Academy

Home of the King's Knights

The school mascot was chosen to represent the qualities of a developing Christian faith.

The knight was dedicated to a certain cause and was faithful in his duties. He attained knighthood by diligent training, passing certain tests of courage and ability, and pledging allegiance to the king.

We strive to encourage the development of the following Christian principles in the lives of children:

To be honest and hardworking in the area of academics;

To be a friend and help those in need;

To prepare children to live a Christian life in the real world;

To give their allegiance to the King of kings, Jesus Christ.



*Our school colors are **blue** and silver.*

***Blue** represents faithfulness and loyalty. Faithful is what God has been to us in the building of the day care and school. Loyalty to the Bible and Christian principles is our goal. Silver represents purity. We intend to develop an atmosphere that will direct children to holy living. Silver goes through a refining process before it is useful. The Bible refines.*

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Welcome to GCA

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Gardendale Christian Academy! Thank you for trusting our teachers and staff to assist in the educational needs and the spiritual development of your child. This is an awesome responsibility, and we take it very seriously.

We strive to provide quality education in a safe, caring, loving, and spiritual environment. Our Christian staff and faculty will not only teach your child and help him/her to excel academically, but we will also pray with him/her and teach the principles found in the Bible.

We hope you will find the materials and information contained in the handbook to be very helpful. We urge you to contact the school for any additional information or assistance you may need. Thanks again for the privilege of serving your children.

Sincerely,

Rev. John Parrish

Senior Pastor

Sincerely,

Linda Wheeler

School Director

Gardendale Nazarene Ministries

SCHOOL FORUM

Gardendale Christian Academy (GCA) is a non-profit Nazarene Christian school. Our emphasis is placed on helping families raise their child(ren) to have a Christian-based education that supports their Christian values and beliefs.

The ultimate authority for governing and operating the school is the church board of the Gardendale Church of the Nazarene.

GCA is a member of Alabama Christian Education Association (ACEA) and American Association of Christian Schools (AACS). Our website is gdalechristian.org.

NONDISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

GCA admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admissions policies, educational policies, and/or other school-administered programs.

VISION STATEMENT

Students from Gardendale Christian Academy will exhibit the qualities of wisdom, knowledge, and biblical worldview as evidenced by a lifestyle of character, leadership, service, stewardship, and worship. Specifically, the young men and women who are products of Christian schooling will mature to love God with all their heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37); will grow in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52); will be willing to stand apart from the world as "salt and light" (Matthew 5:13-14); and will give sacrificially of themselves and their resources, thus reflecting the essence and love of the Christ who lives and dwells within them. (Romans 1:1).

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement of Gardendale Christian Academy is to enable our teachers and school to effectively prepare students to develop the skills and character essential to meet the challenges of life.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Gardendale Christian Academy exists for the following purposes...

- to provide a quality education with high academic standards within an evangelical Christian environment, to pursue academic excellence, and to encourage personal faith in Christ.

•to work closely with parents in training children in the highest principles of:

Christian leadership
self-discipline
personal integrity
good citizenship
appropriate manners
morality, ethics, and Christian behavior

to offer experiences that assist children in growth toward physical, social, academic, and spiritual maturity.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe: ...in one God-the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ...that the Bible is God's inspired Word and holds the answer for man's needs. ...that all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. ...that God offers forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. ...that the believer, through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, can live a holy, radiant, useful Christian life. ...that the Church exists for the purpose of evangelizing the world and helping the Christian grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. ...that the Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Gardendale Christian Academy believes that all truth is God's Truth, and His Truth is revealed through the Bible, which is infallible and is the standard for living a successful life. Only by recognizing God as the Creator, Designer, and Organizer of the universe can a proper understanding and mastery of facts and knowledge be possible. Gardendale Christian Academy believes that Christian education is a process in which Christian teachers who encourage a high standard of academic excellence accomplish teaching and learning through developmentally appropriate activities. We believe God's Word is the highest authority and strive to bring all knowledge into a living relationship with His Truth. Gardendale Christian Academy is committed to educating and empowering young people to fulfill their God-given calling and purpose in life. GCA is a beacon in our community, providing an environment of academic excellence with a Biblical worldview and encouraging our students to develop a relationship with Christ and Christ-like character. The union of GCA, our families, and their churches will equip our students to pursue a Spirit-led life of excellence and integrity.

POLICIES

The policies set forth in this handbook are subject to change at the discretion of the administration.

Typically, revisions are made in the spring prior to the start of the next School year. However, if during the course of the year, it becomes evident that a policy is needed or should be changed, GCA reserves the right to make the change at the discretion of the administration. Parents should review the handbook each August for revisions, but be aware that additions or changes to this handbook can occur during the course of the year without notice.

Attendance at this school is a privilege and not a right. We strive to train students in the highest principles of Christian leadership, self-discipline, individual responsibility, personal integrity, and good citizenship. Gardendale Christian Academy stands without apology for the gospel of Jesus Christ, without any denominational emphasis.

Gardendale Christian Academy reserves the right to inspect any package, book bag, etc. that is brought on campus.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Gardendale Christian Academy is open to anyone interested in securing a Christian education, from kindergarten and up, whom the school finds qualified for admission and who agrees (and whose parents agree) that he or she shall abide by Gardendale Christian Academy rules. It must always be understood that attendance at Gardendale Christian Academy is a privilege and not a right. Any student who does not conform to the school's standards of conduct and/or who is unwilling to adjust to our environment may forfeit this privilege.

Parents of children enrolling in GCA can obtain the necessary enrollment forms from the receptionist's office. After completing all required paperwork and payment of registration fees, the child will be allowed to enroll based on space availability. If the class is full, the child will be placed on a waiting list and called in order when a spot becomes available. Registration fees are due at time of enrollment and are **not refundable**. Returning students cannot be enrolled in the academy for an upcoming school year unless all fees and tuition are current from the previous school year.

Admission includes: Academy registration and book fees, student registration application, financial agreement, and teacher information sheet. Also, a copy of the child's birth certificate, social security card and a valid Alabama Certificate of Immunization record is required. Children entering K5 must have reached their fifth birthday on or before September 1st.

Parents must attend the orientation meeting, which will be held the week prior to school beginning.

GCA reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment to any student of families who have demonstrated disharmony regarding the purpose, objectives, standards, policies, rules and regulations of the school.

If there are custody agreements involved with your child, you must provide the academy with a copy of court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The academy will not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation. The academy will not be involved with any custody issues.

FINANCES

As a non-profit organization, GCA seeks to provide the best quality education at a minimum cost. As a Christian school, we are not entitled to tax revenue and must receive funds for operating the school from parents, sponsors, and others called to support this ministry. Financial responsibility is one of the key factors in maintaining a quality Christian school for your child. Your cooperation will enable GCA to maintain a positive Christian testimony by having funds necessary to meet our financial obligations in a timely manner. All gifts received by GCA, for which no services are rendered, are tax deductible.

The administration of Gardendale Christian Academy will announce tuition prices in April for the following school year. The annual tuition may be paid by using any one of the following methods:

1. One annual payment—the total annual tuition is due on August 1.
2. Ten equal payments – The first payment is due August 1 or at the time of registration after August 1. This is non refundable. The remaining nine payments are due on the first of each month, September through May.

Parents must choose a method of payment and sign a tuition agreement. Signing this form constitutes a contractual agreement between the school and the parent for the payment of the tuition.

An annual registration fee will be due at time of registration. **Registration fees are NOT refundable.**

School tuition does not include day care needed on school holidays. If child care is needed, consult the office for fees and availability.

A student book fee is due by July 1 each school year. This fee is charged per student to cover the cost of textbooks, workbooks, student planner, etc. used by the student during the year. **This fee is non refundable.** Once purchased, the books become the property of the student. (see page 10)

A payment drop box is located in both the day care and gym Lobby for your convenience. Please

make sure that your payment is marked with your name, child's name, and amount of the payment.

DISCOUNTS (only one discount per family, choose one of the four, accounts MUST remain current to keep discount, proof is required)

1. Multiple Child Family Discount – is applicable when a family has more than one student attending GCA. A discount will be given for each additional student.
2. Pastor's Discount – Full time pastors / ministers receive a 10% discount off tuition.
3. Church members of Gardendale Church of the Nazarene receive a 10% discount off tuition.
4. Active Military Discount – 10% off of tuition for a parent in the military.

Additional Discounts

1. Pay tuition in full by first day of school and receive \$100 credit for K5 - 5th grade only.
2. A \$150 tuition credit will be given to any student that has recruited another student for the K5 or grade school programs. The following requirements must be met:
 - The student recruited must be enrolling for the first time.
 - The parent of the student recruited must sign a statement that they were influenced to enroll because of your encouragement.
 - The student must meet the handbook requirements for enrolling and must be approved by administration.
 - New recruits cannot be immediate family members or anyone already enrolled in Gardendale Nazarene Day Care.
 - Only applicable in the student's first year.

FINANCIAL CONTRACT

It is understood that the enrollment contract made with Gardendale Christian Academy is contract made with between the parent and the school for payment of the monthly or weekly fees, and that these fees are due and payable as to all terms of the contract except:

1. When the student moves out of town at an unreasonable distance that the school sees as a problem for transportation.
2. When in the case of mutual agreement between the school and the parent that it is in the best interest of the child's education with curriculum material more suited to the child's personal learning needs.

Parents must choose a method of payment and sign a tuition agreement. Signing this form constitutes a contractual agreement between the school and the parent for the payment of the tuition.

An annual registration fee will be due at time of registration.

Registration fees are NOT refundable.

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A student book fee is due by July 1st each school year. This fee is charged per student to cover the cost of textbooks, workbooks, student planner, etc. used by the student during the year. **This fee is non refundable.** Once purchased, the books become the property of the student. (see page 10) A payment drop box is located in both the day care and gym Lobby for your convenience. Please make sure that your payment is marked with your name, child's name, and amount of the payment.

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1. When the student moves out of town at an unreasonable distance that the school sees as a problem for transportation.
2. When in the case of mutual agreement between the school and the parent that it is in the best interest of the child's education with curriculum material more suited to the child's personal learning needs.
3. Death of a child.
4. If there is a loss of income, equal to the amount of tuition, such as a job loss in the immediate family of the student.

Parents or legal guardians of each student will be required to sign a contract stating that early withdrawal from Gardendale Christian Academy still holds them responsible to complete tuition payments. There is a two-week withdrawal notice for K4.

WITHDRAWALS AND/OR DISMISSALS

When a student is withdrawn from GCA, written notification must be given directly to the administration ten days prior to last attendance day. Official transcript papers will be given when all tuition fees, library books, and resource books have been turned in to the teacher. Books will be given on last day of attendance if notification was given 10 days in advance. Books will be held after a student's dismissal or withdrawal for two weeks at which time GCA will take possession.

All grades and records will be held until all outstanding balances are paid. No grades will be released on the same day a student withdraws.

Parents must complete all withdrawal papers and pay all fees and tuition payments due in order for the school records to be sent to the receiving school. Withdrawals from school must be signed and processed through the school offices. Withdrawal is not complete until the withdrawal forms are turned into the office. An account left open will incur additional tuition fees until withdrawal papers are returned to the administration office.

Parents will be asked to withdraw their child(ren) for the following reasons:

1. Violation of school policies as outlined in this handbook.
2. A student's conduct, attitude, or lack of academic effort makes it mandatory for that child to withdraw from GCA. In some cases, dismissal may be necessary.
3. GCA tuition is 30 days delinquent.
4. Parents/students are not in harmony with the mission and philosophy of the academy/ministries.

PAYMENTS

1. All payments for tuition will be due on the first day of each month. A late fee of \$10.00 will be added to any account with a balance due after the 7 of the month.
2. Weekly day care fees are due on Monday of the week of service and late fees are posted after 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday.
3. A 1.5% monthly finance charge will be added to all unpaid balances once a child is dropped from enrollment.
4. Morning K4 classes dismiss at 11:30 a.m. Children who are not picked up by 11:40 a.m. will be charged a late pick-up fee, and this fee will increase at 12:00. Please refer to school brochure for current prices.
5. K5 and grade school classes dismiss at 3:00 p.m. Children who are not picked up by 3:10 p.m. will be charged a late pick-up fee and this fee will increase at 3:30. Children who are not picked up by 3:10 automatically go to day care. They cannot wait by themselves or at the office. Refer to the current schedule of fees for prices.
6. No counter checks will be accepted. Checks must have all information printed by your financial institution.
7. A 3% fee will be added to all debit or credit payments.

RETURNED CHECK FEE

A \$30.00 returned check fee will be charged for each returned check. If a check is returned, the person who wrote the check will be contacted and a date agreed upon to replace the check. The time for replacement will not exceed one week. If a second check is returned for any reason, that family will be placed on a cash-only basis.

CURRICULUM

GCA uses Bible-based A Beka curriculum for grades K4 and up.

CHRISTIAN TRAINING

Since one of the basic purposes of GCA is developing Christian leadership in our students, it is only natural that Christian training has an important place in the life of the academy.

Chapel – Weekly chapel services will be held in the Old Sanctuary. On occasion, special guest speakers may be invited. Attendance is required. Honor's Chapel is held every nine weeks in the New Sanctuary.

Daily devotions will be held in each classroom.

Bible – A vital part of the curriculum is Bible memorization and familiarization with Bible stories and events. The King James version is used.

Programs – Special programs are designed to foster self-confidence, showcasing of talents, and to bring a presentation of what the students have achieved in their classrooms.

BEFORE-AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

This program is offered for the convenience of working parents who wish to have their children arrive prior to and remain after school hours. See the tuition sheet for before and after school program rates.

DAILY SCHEDULE

No students may be on campus before 7:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. without supervision and/or approval.

School hours:

Kindergarten (K4)	8:00-11:30
Kindergarten K5	8:00-3:00
Kindergarten (K4) extended care	11:30-6
After school care (K5 - 5th grade)	3:00-6:00

Summer Care:

K4 - 5th Grade	7:00-6:00
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INSURANCE

Each student has accidental school insurance through his or her registration fees. The school also carries insurance on each child. However, the parent's insurance and/or student insurance is primary (pays first) and the school insurance is secondary (pays only after primary insurance has paid all considered by them to be eligible). Student insurance may take care of some or all of the deductible from family insurance.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

School administration works diligently to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all our students. Parent cooperation with the school health-and-safety policies are necessary in order to avoid accidents and to properly care for our students.

1. Faculty will not administer medication without the written authorization from the parent. The school does not keep aspirin or Motrin for fevers or headaches. It is the parent's responsibility to provide any medication for students.
2. Parents must fill out a medication slip (these can be picked up at the front office) with dosage, date, and time. All medication must be in the original container from the pharmacy, properly labeled with the student's name and with clear directions.
3. If a child is injured during school hours, the parent will be notified. If care for the child is more than the school can provide, the child will be taken to a medical facility. If the injury is a scrape, small cut, etc., the school will wash the area and apply a bandage. No other ointments will be administered to the area.
4. Students diagnosed with a communicable disease (meaning an illness which arises as a result of a specific infectious agent which may be transmitted either by a susceptible host, infected person, or animal to another person) must be kept home until the possibility of the contagious infection has passed. The school administration must be notified immediately of a diagnosis of a communicable disease. A doctor's note is required for re- entrance.
5. Head lice is not a disease but is contagious. We maintain a nit-free policy. For this reason, any student diagnosed as having lice will not be permitted back into the classroom until the child and his/her home has been treated. The school administration must inspect the student prior to re-entry. The administration can at any time require a child having head lice on a constant basis to see a physician before being allowed to return to school.
6. In the interest of every student's wellbeing, parents are requested to keep their children home when they are sick. If a child has symptoms, such as a fever of 100 degrees or more, rash, vomiting, excessive nasal discharge, or diarrhea you must keep your child home. If the child develops these symptoms during school the parent will be called to pick up student as soon as possible. If we cannot reach the parents, we will notify the next person listed on the student information card.
7. A student who has pink eye will be sent home. This is very contagious.

The following is a partial AHD exclusion list of certain illnesses that will make temporary removal of a student from school necessary.

Vomiting – Student may not attend if vomiting has occurred twice in 24 hours. May return 24 hours after last vomiting occurrence.

Fever – Student must not attend or remain at school if fever is 100 degrees or higher. Student may return when fever free for 24 hours.

Diarrhea – Student may not attend or remain at school if diarrhea has occurred twice in one hour. May return 24 hours after last occurrence.

Head lice – student may not attend School. May only return when nit-free. **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)** – Student may not attend with white or yellow eye discharge. May return 24 hours after beginning medical treatment.

Rash – Faculty/administration will notify parent when rash is observed. If rash spreads or is accompanied by another symptom, the student must leave the school.

Respiratory infection – Student must not attend with uncontrolled cough, difficulty breathing or wheezing. May return when symptoms subside.

Strep – Student may return 48 hours after beginning antibiotic treatment as long as fever-free.

Please do not bring your student to school with a contagious disease. Keep your child at home for at least 24 hours or until symptoms subside.

Your help in this area is of utmost importance. If you bring your student to the school with these symptoms, sickness will continue to spread through the class.

1. In the event of injuries, a parent will be called to discuss further treatment.
2. If a student is injured while at school, an accident report will be completed. If the accident is of a serious nature, a parent will be contacted immediately.
3. Whenever possible, all medical and dental appointments should be scheduled outside school hours. Academic problems often develop when students continually leave School for medical appointments.

GCA has fire drills, tornado drills, and lockdown procedures to ensure each student's safety. Crisis management procedures can be viewed in the school director's office.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to act in an orderly and respectful manner, maintaining Christian standards of courtesy, kindness, language, morality and honesty. Students must agree to strive toward excellent character in dress, conduct, and attitude.

1. Be respectful to school personnel at all times.
2. Follow school handbook guidelines.
3. Be respectful of the rights and property of others.
4. Be punctual.
5. Be attentive and responsive to your teachers.
6. Abide by the dress code.
7. No defacing of school property. Profane language will not be tolerated.
8. GCA has a zero drug tolerance program in place for the protection of our students and preservation of school atmosphere. Possession and/or use of drugs, tobacco, and alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden. This is grounds for immediate dismissal of the student. Non educational

materials (iPod, iPad touch, MP3's, Nintendo DS, squirt guns, cell phones etc.) are not allowed in the classroom. If brought, they will be left in the office for the parent to pick up.

9. No toys are to be brought from home except on "show-and-tell" days, which will be set by 10. each individual teacher. GCA will not be responsible for items lost or stolen.

11. Students are responsible for personal property. Parents are encouraged to label all personal items (especially coats and sweaters) for easy identification.

12. Cell phones are not allowed.

13. Students are not allowed to use computers without permission or go to website addresses without permission.

14. Students are not allowed to put any degrading or harmful information about the school, students, or employees on any web site.

15. Only G-rated movies can be viewed at GCA.

16. Gum is not allowed.

17. Bullying will not be tolerated at GCA. Please see "Bullying" section in this handbook.

DRESS CODE

GCA desires to set a standard of modest dress and general appearance for students that will:

1. Be a testimony for the whole student body.
2. Be a testimony for the Christian atmosphere of our school.
3. Not distract from the educational process.

This guide is established to remind parents and students that dress and appearance is an issue of the heart. Modesty, neatness, and cleanliness are the main concerns of our dress code. Our overall goal is to assist parents in preparing and nurturing your children's hearts to bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ in how they look, what they wear, and how they conduct themselves before others.

When the administration or faculty observes a student who is in noncompliance with the dress code the parents or legal guardians will be notified. After three violations, a conference with the administrator will be scheduled. Since this normally works a greater hardship on the parents or guardians than the students, parents are asked to supervise their child's dress on a daily basis.

Hairstyles

Boys are to have a neatly trimmed haircut that does not obstruct vision or hinder participation in the classroom. Hairstyles that are extreme, disruptive, or have distracting colors or style are not acceptable. The administration reserves the right to make that determination on such issues. **Girls** must wear their hair in a style that does not obstruct vision or hinder participation in the classroom. Hairstyles that are extreme, disruptive, or have distracting colors are not acceptable. The administration reserves the right to make that determination on such issues.

Jewelry

Boys – are allowed to wear bracelets, necklaces, and rings. Earrings, dog chains, or body piercing are not permitted.

Girls – may wear bracelets, necklaces, rings, anklets, and earrings (two piercings per ear only). Body piercing is not permitted.

Tattoos

Visible temporary and permanent tattoos are unacceptable for both boys and girls.

Hats

Hats are not to be worn on campus during school hours, except on designated days.

Attire

1. Shirts may be either long, or short-sleeved. No sleeveless shirts will be allowed.
2. Shirts are to be loose fitting.
3. Students must wear their shirts to prevent the midriff from showing, regardless of the posture of the student.
4. No distracting, offensive writing, or pictures are permitted on shirts, sweaters, or jackets.
5. Students may wear denim, khaki, or cargo-type pants (solid or print).
6. Girls may also wear Capri pants that are loose-fitting and fall below the knee.
7. Leggings without a proper length dress or long shirt, tight pants or baggy pants are not
8. allowed.
9. Pants must not have holes or frayed hems.
10. Pant legs must not be so long that the student walks on them.
11. Girls may wear knee-length dresses or skirts. Sleeveless dresses are not allowed. For modesty, K5 and 1st-grade girls must wear shorts under skirts or dresses.
12. Shoes must be worn at all times. Sandals and open-toed shoes are discouraged.
13. **K4** students may wear shorts in warm weather with a three-inch inseam.
14. **K5 students may not wear shorts.**

REQUIREMENTS

K4 - Must be completely potty trained
nap mat for those staying all day (can be purchased in School office) change of clothes with child's name on them
book bag (can be purchased in school office)

K5 - book bag (can be purchased in school office)

change of clothes with child's name on them

school supplies (list provided with registration)

1-5 book bag (can be purchased in school office)

school supplies (list provided with registration)

DISCIPLINE

Discipline, which is firm, consistent, fair, and tempered with love, is maintained at GCA. Our faculty maintains standards of behavior in the classroom through kindness, love, and a genuine regard for

their students. However, when disciplinary action becomes necessary, it is firmly carried out, tempered by good judgment and understanding.

If detention and other more minor types of discipline are not effective, corporal punishment, as a last resort, which consists of paddling a child on his/her buttocks, will be administered. The parent will be notified when this step of discipline has been necessary. The school director in the presence of another adult will administer corporal punishment. When the parents have failed to give written permission for corporal punishment, they will be asked to come to the school to administer such or to pick up their child if he/she becomes unruly.

A child may be dropped from enrollment in the school if he and/or the parents manifest unwillingness to rectify behavior. Remember, attendance at this school is a privilege and not a right.

Discipline issues will only be discussed with the parent or legal guardian of the child. If you wish to speak to an employee regarding your child, you must have the director present. If a parent disrupts or disturbs classes by yelling, arguing, using inappropriate language, or exhibiting aggressive behavior, he/she will be asked to leave the campus. If the parent does not comply the Gardendale Police Department will be called and the child will be dismissed from enrollment.

Bullying

Gardendale Christian Academy has high behavior standards and a reputation for well-behaved students. GCA strives to maintain a safe learning and work environment that is free of bullying. Students, staff, and the school community are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, Christian manner and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity toward others. Bullying is harmful behavior initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student or students. Bullying is repeated, intentional aggressive behavior.

Examples of Bullying:

1. Verbal: name calling, put-downs, racist remarks, teasing, threats, spreading rumors, sending inappropriate (violent, sexual, malicious, etc.) notes or pictures in any medium (magazine, over a cell phone or Internet, etc.,)
2. Physical: pushing, hitting, shoving, biting, hair-pulling, scratching, spitting, tripping, damaging or stealing the victim's property, locking a person in a room, making mean faces or rude gestures, initiating or forcing inappropriate touching, etc.
3. Psychological: acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety
4. Miscellaneous: any act that insults or demeans an individual in such a way as to cause distress, reluctance to attend school, a decline in work standards, or problem behaviors.

Reporting Bullying

Students and staff are prohibited from knowingly falsely accusing another of bullying. Disciplinary action, up to, and including expulsion/suspension for students and termination for staff, shall be taken if they knowingly make false reports.

Any reported bullying shall be addressed as soon as possible. The staff member shall assess the situation to determine if the behavior meets the criteria for bullying or if the behavior is an isolated

incident that can be resolved within the classroom. Not all conflict constitutes bullying. If it is indeed a form of bullying, the school director shall be notified immediately.

The school director will meet with the victim, witness, and bully privately. Appropriate actions (corporal discipline, or possible suspension) will be taken depending on the age of the child and

the form of bullying-at the discretion of the school director. Parents of all children involved will be contacted.

Cheating

GCA expects all school students to do their best, performing all schoolwork in an honorable and honest fashion. Any instance of cheating will result in an automatic zero for all parties actively involved and possible suspension.

You will not receive a refund for your child's tuition or weekly fees if they are suspended, expelled, or dismissed from GCA.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order to gain the most from school, each student must be regular in attendance. Alabama State Law requires that if a student has nine unexcused absences per semester, that student will fail all subjects in that semester. When a student, first grade and above, has five unexcused absences, we are required by law to report them truant to the state authorities. Excused absences (listed below) do not count against the nine unexcused absences per semester.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Doctor-excused absences.
2. Severe illness in the immediate family with doctor's note.
3. Death in the immediate family.
4. Participation in an approved school activity.
5. Approval by the administration; e.g., for severe weather.
6. Illness – three or more days requires a doctor's note.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

All other absences, including suspension (tardy or behavior) count against the nine unexcused absences. A note explaining the reason for the absence should be written by the parent and sent to the teacher, who forwards it to the office for filing in the student's attendance record. All absences are initially entered as unexcused and are changed to excused absences when supporting documentation is supplied.

It is the student's responsibility to see that work is made up as soon as possible. Teachers set the deadline for making up work. Assignments made before the absence retain the original due date. For example, a spelling quiz is assigned at the beginning of the week for Friday. The student is absent on Thursday. Since he was present when the assignment was given, he will not be exempt from the quiz. He is still responsible for the assignment unless arrangements are made with the classroom teacher.

PREARRANGED ABSENCES (Doctor's appointment, trips, etc.)

It is the student and/or parent's responsibility to check with his/her teachers before the absence to find out what assignments will be made while he/she is gone. On the day he/she returns to class, the student with prearranged absences will be responsible for turning in any assignments due while he/she was gone as well as any assignments due the day he/she returns. Parents should make arrangements with the teacher for making up missed quizzes or tests.

UNPLANNED ABSENCES (Sickness, injuries, etc.)

It is strongly advised that assignments should be picked up from your child's teacher if he/she is absent two or more days from school. It is the student and/or parent's responsibility to check with his/her teacher as soon as he/she returns to school to determine what assignments he/she missed. The student will then have one day for each day of his/her unplanned absence in which to turn in those completed assignments. If more time is needed to complete assignments, parents should make arrangements with the student's teacher.

Parents, please call the office the day of the absence to notify faculty that the student will not be in school. Homework may be picked up in the school office after 3:00 p.m.

Students must be present five hours to be counted present for the school day. Any time a student checks in late or out early they are counted tardy. If students are checked in after 1:00 p.m. or out before 1:00 p.m. they will be counted absent.

TARDINESS

Like absenteeism, tardiness is a disruption of the learning process for the student and to other members of the class. It is important to teach punctuality as an integral part of life. The parent must set the example by making appropriate adjustments in order to be assured of being at school at the appropriate time. Excessive tardiness requires a conference between student, parents, and school administration.

All students should be in class at 7:55 a.m. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. should report to the office and receive a tardy slip before going to the classroom.

If a student is tardy due to a doctor's or dental appointment, the student is responsible for bringing a note from the parent before the planned late arrival. The note should state anticipated time of arrival and reason for the late arrival. The student is responsible for notifying teachers in advance and for making up the work missed.

HOMEWORK

Believing that homework is a very important part of the school program and has a powerful effect on learning, each teacher is at liberty to give homework each day. Each student is expected to complete all assigned work. Parents are expected to sign and date student planners each day. Teachers are under no obligation to accept late work or permit makeup assignments except in the case of an excused absence.

GRADES

Grading Scale for K5 and up:

100-99	A+	98-92	A	91-90	A-
89-88	B+	87-82	B	81-80	B-
79-78	C+	77-72	C	71-70	C-
69-68	D+	67-62	D	61-60	D-
59-0	F				

Progress reports are sent out each three-week period, and report cards are given out each nine-week period. Conferences are held after the first and third nine-week periods. Parents may request a conference at other times as needed. GCA will host an Open House once a year.

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts are forwarded to a school upon a student's transfer or completion at GCA if the account is current. Additional transcripts will incur a charge, but will be provided if account is current.

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

GCA offers a nutritious lunch program. All-day K4 students are provided a lunch. K5 and grade school students are charged per day (includes milk, check brochure for price) or 35¢ for milk if a lunch is brought from home. Soft drinks are not allowed during school hours unless approved by the school director. Monthly menus are provided and can be found on the school website. The complete nutrition policy may be viewed on the wall in the front hallway of the school.

Breakfast is offered from 7:00-7:30 each morning. Check the brochure for price.

Restaurant/fast foods may not be brought into the lunchroom by anyone under any circumstances. GCA cannot refrigerate any student's lunch, nor can students use the microwave.

FIELD TRIPS

1. Classes may go on four field trips during the school year to nearby points of interest. Parents will be advised beforehand of any such trips. Money in the form of cash should always be given to the teacher.
2. Consent forms must be signed for each student and be on file in the office.
3. Field trips are part of the classroom activities. Students are expected to attend.
4. It is important that all parents realize that they are acting as Christian role models for our students. Please be an example by demonstrating maturity in actions, attitudes, and dress. The teacher will be in charge of each field trip and will direct the parents as to what help is needed of them.
5. Parents should refrain from purchasing special treats for the children unless all students in the class benefit equally.
6. Only students enrolled in the class may go on the field trip.
7. School shirts must be worn on all field trips.
8. No smoking, gum, shorts, halter-tops, or other immodest dress is allowed on field trips.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Parents will be provided a list of necessary school supplies.

UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS

For unscheduled school closings or delays, call the office, watch your local news, or listen for a phone call from School Cast.

1. GCA does not always follow Jefferson County on unscheduled school closings.
2. GCA may, on occasion, have an unscheduled closing due to providential or safety issues. Whenever possible, the administration will attempt to inform parents in advance of such closings.
3. If GCA needs to close or start school later, we will inform parents by way of School Cast. Make sure the school office has any phone number changes.

PICTURES

Individual student pictures will be taken in the fall and spring of the school year. Class pictures will be taken in the spring. These photographs will be available to purchase.

FUNDRAISING

GCA has a fall and spring fundraiser. We encourage each family to help. The profits from these fundraisers help pay for our Mac Lab and iPad lab, software, and any other major items that are needed.

PARTIES

Each class is allowed three parties for the year. It is at the teacher's discretion which holidays will be observed.

BIRTHDAYS

1. Your child's birthday may be celebrated with his/her classmates. Parents will need to contact the teacher one week in advance to make arrangements. The teacher will give the time of the birthday celebration to you.
2. Parents are to bring all supplies, including napkins, plates, cups, forks, spoons, a knife to cut the cake if needed, etc. Nothing is to be used from the kitchen.
3. BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS may not be given out at school unless the invitations include every child in the classroom.

NUTRITION POLICY

- All food served at Gardendale Christian Academy shall comply with USDA recommendations for Meals and Snacks
- Water shall be available at all meals and snacks
- No sugar-sweetened beverages shall be served to children
- Only 100% **juice**

- No more than 6 ounces per day
- Only served at meal or snack time
- Only for children over 12 months
- Children 2 years and older (milk with 1% or less milk fat)
- Unless medical documentation is provided for child
- Food items that shall be served at least once a week
 - Orange vegetable-for vitamin A
 - Dark green vegetable-for iron, vitamins A and C, and fiber
 - Legume-for protein, iron, B vitamins
- At least half of grains served each week shall be whole grains
- Menus shall be
 - posted in view of parents and food preparation staff
 - prepared at least 2 weeks in advance
- Special diet needs and food allergies shall be kept on file in food preparation areas and in the children's eating area

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Each child shall have an opportunity for the appropriate amount of active play each day. Active play shall take place outdoors when weather and environmental conditions permit. When the weather and/or environment do not permit outdoor activity, active play shall take place indoors. It is at the discretion of the school director if outside play is permitted when the temperature falls below 55 degrees or rises above 95 degrees. All children should dress appropriately for cold or hot weather.

SCREEN TIME

Screen time is defined as the use of television, videos, video games, and computers. Screen time shall be:

- offered as a free choice
- limited to no more than a total of 2 1/2 hours per week
- prohibited during meal or snack time

SMOKING IS PROHIBITED:

- at all times in Gardendale Christian Academy - including before and after hours of operation within 10 feet of any entrance or exit
- in any vehicles used by Gardendale Christian Academy to transport children on any field trips

TRAFFIC FLOW AND PARKING

For you, your child, and our employees, the traffic flow around the building is one-way at all times. Parking spaces are furnished when bringing a child into the building. Please do not park at the curb outside the school office as this disrupts the flow of traffic and other parents from backing out of parking spaces.

PICKUP AND DROP OFF

For your child's safety there will be someone from 7:15 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. each school day to open car doors. Teachers will bring students out to the car line at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. For your child's safety, **all** children must exit cars on the right or passenger side of the car.

FERPA Regulations

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education rights.

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

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great travel distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge for copies.
 - Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
 - Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows the school to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:
 - school officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - other Schools to which a student is transferring
 - specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the School;
 - accrediting organizations;
 - to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.
- Schools may disclose, without consent, directory information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the School not disclose directory information about them. GCA will not disclose student's names, addresses, phone numbers, date and place of birth to any third-party requests without parent's approval.

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN DISCLOSURE

Parents or legal guardians are required to disclose any physical, emotional, or behavioral limitations, needs, or concerns about their child in writing prior to registration. The director reserves the right to deny your registration if it is determined that our program is not suited or staffed to meet your child's needs. Gardendale Christian Academy reserves the right to withdraw any child from our program at any time if behavioral and/or emotional problems with a child disrupt class time, threaten another person's safety, or the child makes it unreasonably difficult to meet the needs of the other children in the school.

CAMPUS VISITORS

For the safety of all children and employees, all visitors to the school grounds must follow proper check-in procedures. Everyone must come to the receptionist's office to sign in and out when visiting the school and day care. All doors are locked except at the front desk, and we ask all visitors to exit at the front desk.

LOST AND FOUND

Items that are lost or found can be turned in or looked for in the Lost & Found Box located in the stairwell in the gym lobby. Items not claimed are disposed of twice a year.

SCHOOL CLOSURE DAYS

GCA is closed on, but not limited, to the following days:

New Year's Day

MLK Day

Veteran's Day

Good Friday

Spring Break (announced each school year)

Memorial Day

Thanksgiving Day

Friday after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day